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## Spanish Grammar For Dummies

Cheat Sheet

From [Spanish Grammar For Dummies](#) by Cecie Kraynak

Spanish grammar covers a lot of territory. To start writing grammatically correct sentences in the present tense, you need to know about masculine and feminine nouns, adjectives, and regular verbs in Spanish.

### Telling a Masculine Noun from a Feminine Noun in Spanish

In Spanish grammar, you need to be able to distinguish a noun's gender (either masculine or feminine) so that you can use the correct gender of any article or adjective that describes it. You can follow some simple guidelines to help you identify a Spanish noun's gender.

Masculine nouns include the following:

- Most nouns that end in **-o**, such as **año** (*year*)
- Nouns that identify males, such as **tío** (*uncle*)
- Nouns that end in **-aje** or **-ambre**, such as **equipaje** (*luggage*) and **alambre** (*wire*)
- Certain nouns that end in **-or** or **-án**, such as **amor** (*love*) and **champán** (*champagne*)
- Nouns that end in **-ama**, **-ema**, **-oma**, **-ma**, or **-ía**, such as **programa** (*program*) and **dilema** (*dilemma*)
- Days of the week and months of the year
- Colors used as nouns
- Names of languages, rivers, seas, and oceans
- Compound nouns that consist of noun-verb combinations and that usually end in **-s**, such as **abrelatas** (*can opener*)

Feminine nouns include the following:

- Most nouns that end in **-a**, such as **ensalada** (*salad*)

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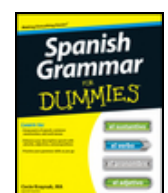
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- Nouns that identify females, such as **hija** (*daughter*)
- Nouns that end in **-dad** or **-tad**, such as **ciudad** (*city*) and **libertad** (*liberty*)
- Nouns that end in **-ie**, **-eza**, **-sis**, or **-itis**, such as **especie** (*species*), **riqueza** (*richness*), **tesis** (*thesis*), and **sinusitis** (*sinusitis*)
- Nouns that end in **-ción**, **-sión**, **-tud**, or **-umbre**, such as **canCIÓN** (*song*) and **misión** (*mission*)

## Making Spanish Adjectives Agree with the Nouns They Modify

In Spanish grammar, adjectives have to agree with the nouns they modify in both gender and number, no matter what:

- **Gender:** If a noun is feminine, like **la muchacha** (*the girl*), the adjective must be feminine, too. For example, to talk about a tall girl, you'd say **la muchacha alta** (*the tall girl*). If the girl has a brother who's also tall, you'd say **el muchacho alto** (*the tall boy*).
- **Number:** If a noun is plural, the adjective must also be plural. For example, to describe a group of tall girls, you'd say **las muchachas altas**. To describe a group of tall boys, you'd say **los muchachos altos**. Similarly, if a noun is singular, the adjective must be singular, too (see the preceding bullet for examples).

Following are some general rules about making adjectives agree with the nouns they modify:

- Like nouns, most adjectives follow the general rule that masculine adjectives end in **-o** and pluralize with **-s** and feminine adjectives end in **-a** and pluralize with **-s**.
- Adjectives that end in a consonant, **-e**, or **-ista** usually don't have masculine and feminine forms, but they do have singular and plural forms. To make an adjective that ends in **-e** or **-ista** plural, simply add **-s**. To make an adjective that ends in a consonant plural, add **-es**.
- With some adjectives that end in **-dor**, **-ón**, or **-án**, you add **-a** to form the feminine, **-es** to form the masculine plural, and **-as** to form the feminine plural.

Here are a few more examples of adjectives that agree with the nouns they modify in both gender and number:

- **un examen difícil** (*a difficult exam*)
- **una chica inteligente** (*a smart girl*)
- **unos peces caros** (*some expensive fish*)
- **unas reglas importantes** (*some important rules*)

## Conjugating Regular Spanish Verbs in the Present Tense

In Spanish grammar, as in English, you conjugate verbs to reflect the tense (when the action occurred, is occurring, or will occur) and to agree with the subject in person and number. To conjugate regular Spanish verbs ending in **-ar**, **-er**, or **-ir** in the present tense, you drop the ending and add endings to



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specify the subject (in person and number) that's performing the action. Here's what those endings look like:

<b>Verb Infinitive Ending</b>	<b>Present Tense Endings</b>
<b>-ar</b>	<b>-o, -as, -a, -amos, -áis, -an</b>
<b>-er</b>	<b>-o, -es, -e, -emos, -éis, -en</b>
<b>-ir</b>	<b>-o, -es, -e, -imos, -ís, -en</b>

Here's a conjugation chart for a regular **-ar** verb conjugated in the present tense:

### **cantar (to sing)**

yo <b>canto</b>	nosotros/nosotras <b>cantamos</b>
tú <b>cantas</b>	vosotros/vosotras <b>cantáis</b>
él/ella/usted <b>canta</b>	ellos/ellas/ustedes <b>cantan</b>

Here's a conjugation chart for a regular **-er** verb conjugated in the present tense:


### **beber (to drink)**

yo <b>bebo</b>	nosotros/nosotras <b>bebemos</b>
tú <b>bebes</b>	vosotros/vosotras <b>bebéis</b>
él/ella/usted <b>bebe</b>	ellos/ellas/ustedes <b>beben</b>

Here's a conjugation chart for a regular **-ir** verb conjugated in the present tense:

### **vivir (to live)**

yo <b>vivo</b>	nosotros/nosotras <b>vivimos</b>
tú <b>vives</b>	vosotros/vosotras <b>vivís</b>
él/ella/usted <b>vive</b>	ellos/ellas/ustedes <b>viven</b>

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