

ser vs estar

@studylang

BASIC POINTS

- Both **ser** and **estar** are translated as **to be** in English.
- Both are irregular in some tenses. Here they are in the present tense:

ser - to be		estar - to be	
soy	somos	estoy	estamos
eres	sois	estás	estáis
es	son	está	están

- Both are used as auxiliary verbs. **ser** is used in the **passive voice** and **estar** in **progressive tenses**.
- Basic definitions:
 - ↳ **ser** is used to describe **permanent** or more lasting situations.
 - ↳ **estar** is used to show **location** and describe **temporary** situations.

WHEN IS SER USED?

Use **ser** to indicate:

- The identity of the subject
 - ↳ **Soy Pedro** - I am Pedro.
- Someone's occupation or profession:
 - ↳ **Somos estudiantes** - we are students

(Note that in Spanish you don't need articles between **ser** + professions)
- Inherent qualities not likely to change such as nationality and religion.
 - ↳ **Felicia es cubana**. - Felicia is Cuban
 - ↳ **Dalia es católica**. - Dalia is catholic.

- Characteristics of personality or physical appearance :
 - ↳ Charly es alto, rubio y simpático - Charly is tall, blonde and kind.
- relationships, even after death or dissolution.
 - ↳ John es su ex-marido - John is your ex-husband.
- time :
 - ↳ Son las cinco - It's five o'clock
- place and date of event :
 - ↳ mañana es mi cumpleaños - tomorrow is my birthday
- origins, possession and the material of objects using **de**
 - ↳ mi reloj no es de oro - My watch isn't gold.
- quantity and price
 - ↳ ¿Cuánto es? - How much is it?

WHEN IS ESTAR USED?

Use *estar* to express :

- location ; permanent, temporary, short term, long term, real or imaginary.
 - ↳ Estaré afuera en dos minutos - I will be outside in 2 minutes.
- Temporary physical conditions
 - ↳ Los niños están enfermos - the children are ill.
- Temporary mental conditions or moods
 - ↳ Estas deprimida - You are depressed.

ADJECTIVES THAT CHANGE MEANING

ser aburrido/a - to be boring
 ser listo/a - to be clever
 ser malo/a - to be bad
 ser orgulloso/a - to be vain
 ser rico/a - to be rich
 ser seguro/a - to be safe
 ser viejo/a - to be old

estar aburrido/a - to be bored
 estar listo/a - to be ready
 estar malo/a - to be ill.
 estar orgulloso/a - to be proud
 estar rico/a - to be tasty
 estar seguro/a - to be sure
 estar viejo/a - to look old