

ADVANCED HIGHER SPANISH GRAMMAR BOOKLET

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The tenses at Advanced Higher

- Immediate future
- Present
- Present perfect
- Gerund/present continuous
- Conditional
- Simple future
- Imperfect
- Preterite
- Pluperfect
- Present subjunctive
- Imperfect subjunctive

Immediate future

The present continuous is used to as a method of describing actions that are right about to happen

The present continuous is normally translated as 'going to'

To form the present continuous we need to use the verb 'ir' in the present tense plus a, then the verb action in its infinitive form

** Remember 'ir' is an irregular verb in the present tense, we conjugate it as follows,

Yo - voy

Tú - vas

Él, Ella, Usted - va

Nosotros - vamos

Vosotros - vais

Ellos, Ellas, Ustedes - van

Examples:

Voy a comprar - I'm going to buy

Vamos a elegir - We're going to choose

Present Tense

The present tense is used to as a method of describing actions that are currently happening (in the present)

The infinitive endings in the present tense are as follows:

	-AR	-ER	-IR
I	o	o	o
You	as	es	es
He/she/it	a	e	e
We	amos	emos	imos
You (plural)	áis	éis	ís
They	an	en	en

Common irregulars:

<u>Tener</u>	<u>Ser</u>	<u>Estar</u>	<u>Hacer</u>	<u>Ir</u>	<u>Llamarse</u>
Tengo	Soy	Estoy	Hago	Voy	Me llamo
Tiene	Eres	Estás	Haces	Vas	Te llamas
Tienes	Es	Esta	Hace	Va	Se llama
Tenemos	Somos	Estamos	Hacemos	Vamos	Nos llamamos
Tenéis	Sois	Estáis	Hacéis	Váis	Os llamáis
Teinen	Son	Están	Hacen	Van	Se llaman

Present Perfect

The present perfect is used when we have just done something

It is translated as 'have' or 'has'

To form it, we first need to use the verb 'haber', in the present tense

** Remember 'haber' is an irregular verb in the present tense, we conjugate it as follows,

Yo - he

Tú - has

Él, Ella, Usted - ha

Nosotros - hemos

Vosotros - habéis

Ellos, Ellas, Ustedes - han

We then remove the -AR, -ER or -IR endings of the infinitive verb and add either 'ado' for -AR verbs or 'ido' for -ER and -IR verbs

Examples:

He hablado - I have spoken

Habéis comido - You (pl) have eaten

Gerund/Present Continuous

In Spanish, we use the gerund to express the idea 'ing', for example doing, playing, going etc. We normally pair it with the verb 'Estar' and this makes the present continuous

To form the gerund, we remove the -AR, -ER, -IR endings and add either -ando for -AR verbs or -iendo for -ER and -IR verbs

Examples:

Jugando - playing

Conduciendo - driving

Probando - trying

Irregulars:

There are a few irregulars when we use the gerund. Instead of using the above endings, they use -yendo as their ending.

Leer - leyendo

Traer - trayendo

Caer - cayendo

Destruir - destruyendo

Construir - construyendo

Oír - oyendo

Examples:

Estamos jugando - we're playing

Estoy oyendo - I'm listening

Conditional Tense

In Spanish, we use the conditional tense to express probability, possibility or wonder.

The conditional tense is usually translated as would, could, must have or probably.

We conjugate verbs in the conditional by adding the following endings to the verb; (the verb stays the same, nothing is removed)

- ía
- ías
- ía
- ímos
- íais
- ían

<u>Hablar</u>	<u>Comer</u>	<u>Vivir</u>
Hablaría	Comería	Viviría
Hablarías	Comerías	Vivirías
Hablaría	Comería	Viviría
Hablaríamos	Comeríamos	Viviríamos
Hablaríais	Comeríais	Viviríais
Hablarían	Comerían	Vivirían

The following are sentences in the conditional tense;

El alumno dijo que estudiaría una hora más.

The student said that he would study one more hour.

¿Qué hora sería?

What time could it have been?

The twelve common verbs that are irregular in the conditional tense are also irregular in the future tense. Their endings are regular, but their stems change in the same way they change in the future tense. Because the endings are the same as all other conditional tense verbs, we show only the “yo” form, and have underlined the irregular stem.

The irregulars are as follows;

caber

yo cabría

poner

yo pondría

decir

yo diría

haber

yo habría

salir

yo saldría

hacer

yo haría

poder

yo podría

tener

yo tendría

querer

yo querría

valer

yo valdría

saber

yo sabría

venir

yo vendría

Simple Future Tense

The future tense is used to tell what “will” happen in the future, or what “shall” happen.

Regular verbs in the future tense are conjugated by adding the following endings to the infinitive form of the verb;

- é
- ás
- á
- emos
- éis
- an

There are twelve common verbs that are irregular in the future tense. Their endings are regular, but their stems change. Since the endings are the same as all other future tense verbs, we show only the “yo” form, and have underlined the irregular stem. We have also grouped them according to their patterns of change.

The irregulars are as follows;

caber

yo cabré

poner

yo pondré

decir

yo diré

haber

yo habré

salir

yo saldré

hacer

yo haré

poder

yo podré

tener

yo tendré

querer

yo querré

valer

yo valdré

saber

yo sabré

venir

yo vendré

Imperfect Tense

The imperfect tense is one of the two past tenses in the Spanish language.

We use the imperfect tense to talk about the past, especially for describing what happened or what used to happen. We also use it for descriptions.

Regular Imperfect Verb Endings

We conjugate verbs in the imperfect by removing the infinitive ending of the verb (-AR, -ER, -IR) and then add the imperfect ending.

	<u>-AR</u>	<u>-ER & -IR</u>
I	aba	ía
You	abas	ías
He/she/it	aba	ía
We	ábamos	íamos
You (pl)	abais	íais
They	aban	ían

The uses of the Imperfect Tense

1. Repeated actions
2. Actions that were in progress in the past
3. Times and dates
4. Age
5. Descriptions of characteristics, conditions and feelings

Irregulars

There are only 3 verbs which are conjugated irregularly in the imperfect tense. These are; ir, ser & ver.

	<u>Ir</u>	<u>Ser</u>	<u>Ver</u>
I	iba	era	veía
You	ibas	eras	veías
He/she/it	ibas	era	veía
We	íbamos	éramos	veíamos
You (pl)	ibais	erais	veíais
They	iban	eran	veían

Examples

Eran las tres de la tarde - *It was three o'clock in the afternoon*

Los perros **tenían** dos años cuando los adopté - *The dogs were two years old when I adopted them*

El campo **era** bello - *The countryside was beautiful*

Iba a clase cuando sonó el teléfono - *I was going to class when the telephone rang*

Almorzábamos cada día - *We used to eat lunch together everyday*

Preterite Tense

The preterite is used to describe actions completed at a point in the past.

This is the other form of past tense in the Spanish language.

Regular Preterite Verb Endings

As with the imperfect tense, there are only two sets of endings for the preterite tense.

	<u>-AR</u>	<u>-ER & -IR</u>
I	é	í
You	aste	iste
He/she/it	ó	ió
We	amos	imos
You (pl)	asteis	isteis
They	aron	ieron

The uses of the Preterite Tense

1. Completed events
2. Beginnings and ends
3. Specific times and dates
4. Events in a sequence

Irregulars

Four of the most common verbs that are irregular in the preterite are; Ser, Ir, Dar & Ver.

	<u>Ser</u>	<u>Ir</u>	<u>Dar</u>	<u>Ver</u>
I	Fui	Fui	Di	Vi
You	Fuiste	Fuiste	Diste	Viste
He/she/it	Fue	Fue	Dio	Vio
We	Fuimos	Fuimos	Dimos	Vimos
You (pl)	Fuisteis	Fuisteis	Disteis	Visteis
They	Fueron	Fueron	Dieron	Vieron

Examples

Roberto **nació** en Costa Rica - *Roberto was born in Costa Rica*

La película **terminó** con una sorpresa - *The movie ended with a surprise*

Vivió en Perú por tres meses - *He lived in Peru for three months*

Tú **entraste, bebiste** un vaso de agua y **comiste** una hamburguesa - *You came in, drank a glass of water and ate a hamburger*

Pluperfect Tense

In Spanish, we use the pluperfect to talk about an action that happened before another action in the past, if we think about a timeline, this tense would be furthest back in the past

To form the pluperfect tense, we simply use the haber in the imperfect form and add the past participle (ado or ido) to the verb

Examples

Había visto ya a mi primo.

I had already seen my cousin.

habían vuelto cuando ellos salieron.

You had returned when they left.

The Present Subjunctive

It is imperative at Advanced Higher level that you understand how the subjunctive works. Although we seldom use it in English, it is used all the time in Spanish and it will become a large part of your speaking exam. You will find that many different resources that you come across will try to provide you with a huge list of verbs and phrases that use the subjunctive but this isn't helpful when you're put on the spot and is also very time consuming. Let's take the word subjunctive for a moment. It applies *subjectivity*, i.e. the thing may or may not happen or has not yet taken place, then we use the subjunctive. If an action has already taken place or will definitely take place then we use the indicative. We recommend that you try to make a list of things yourself that might come under the category of 'subjunctive', such as; doubt, demands or requests (this is only a tiny portion of what the subjunctive is used for).

Recognising the subjunctive:

I want Pablo to go skiing

I tell Pablo to go skiing

I hope that Pablo goes skiing

I prefer that Pablo goes skiing

It is necessary for Pablo to go skiing

It is possible that Pablo will go skiing

****None of the statements above are factual, they may or may not happen and therefore would all be written using the subjunctive in Spanish**

Again in this sentence, the subjunctive is used

I will see Pablo when I go skiing

The reason is Pablo hasn't arrived yet and therefore there is doubt as to whether or not you will actually see him when you go.

However, if we said

I saw Pablo when I went skiing

This is the indicative because it did actually happen.

How to form the present subjunctive

It is in fact, relatively easy to form the present subjunctive. First we take the first person of the present indicative and remove the **-o**. You should notice that the endings are flipped between indicative and subjunctive tenses.

-AR	-ER	-IR
e	a	a
es	as	as
e	a	a
emos	amos	amos
éis	áis	áis
en	an	an

There are a few irregulars, but many of them you won't need until university.

Below is a table of the few necessary ones.

<u>Infinitive</u>	<u>Subjunctive</u>
Decir	Diga
Hacer	Haga
Oír	Oiga
Poner	Ponga
Tener	Tenga
Traer	Traigo
Salir	Salga
Venir	Venga

The verbs dar, ir, ser, estar and saber are all irregular in the first person present indicative and therefore are irregular the whole way through the subjunctive

<u>Dar</u>	<u>Ir</u>	<u>Ser</u>	<u>Estar</u>	<u>Saber</u>
Dé	Vaya	Sea	Esté	Sepa
Des	Vayas	Seas	Estés	Sepas
Dé	Vaya	Sea	Esté	Sepa
Demos	Vayamos	Seamos	Estemos	Sepamos
Deis	Vayáis	Seáis	Estéis	Sepáis
Den	Vayan	Sean	Estén	Sepan

Don't forget impersonal expressions!

- Es necesario
- Es preciso
- Es posible
- Es imposible
- Es bueno
- Es malo
- Es mejor
- Es aconsejable

Remember Expressions of Doubt!

If you start an expression with 'no' such as no pienso que or no es cierto then you have to use the subjunctive

The Imperfect Subjunctive

The imperfect and present subjunctive work with different tenses.

The present and future tenses use the present subjunctive.

The imperfect, preterite and conditional tenses use the imperfect subjunctive

Forming the imperfect subjunctive

When forming the imperfect subjunctive we use the 'they' part of the preterite tense minus the 'on'

Hablar

Hablar~~on~~

Habl~~ar~~ara

Vivir

Vivier~~on~~

Vivier~~a~~ara

-AR	-ER	-IR
ara	iera	iera
aras	ieras	ieras
ara	iera	iera
áramos	iéramos	iéramos
arais	ierais	ierais
aran	ieran	ieran

The other form

The imperfect subjunctive has two forms. The following form is used more in formal writing and you may find older generations using this form. The only difference between the two forms is that the verb endings are different

-AR	-ER	-IR
ase	iese	iese
ases	ieses	ieses
ase	iese	iese
ásemos	iésemos	iésemos
aseis	iseis	iseis
asen	iesen	iesen

Imperfect subjunctive irregulars

The imperfect subjunctive follows stem changing rules and irregular preterite verb rules. Again the 'they' form of the verb is used as the root

Sentir	Sintiera
Pedir	Pidiera
Andar	Anduviera
Estar	Estuviera
Tener	Tuviera
Poder	Pudiera
Poner	Pusiera
Saber	Supiera
Hacer	Hiciera

Querer	Quisiera
Venir	Viniera
Decir	Dijera
Traer	Trajera
Leer	Leyera
Ir	Fuera
Ser	Fuera

As noted below in the how to improve section, this guide especially on the subjunctive should be used as condensed guide only. We personally recommend that you use Schaum's outline of Spanish grammar to help you get a full understanding of Spanish grammar (we have no affiliation to Schaum, we just highly recommend it!)

How to improve your grammar

Grammar is an essential part of the Spanish language. It is used in all parts of the Higher exam.

You will need to know grammar for your writing element of the exam at Higher, but also having a strong understanding and knowledge of grammar can aid you in the reading and listening elements of the exam as well.

There are many websites you can use to improve your grammar such as:

- spanishdict.com
- grammar.collinsdictionary.com
- fluentu.com

Grammar booklets such as Schaums Outline of Spanish Grammar are really helpful, as they contain notes for all tenses and activities all the way up to university level.

This booklet was produced by Language learning Scotland Ltd.

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