

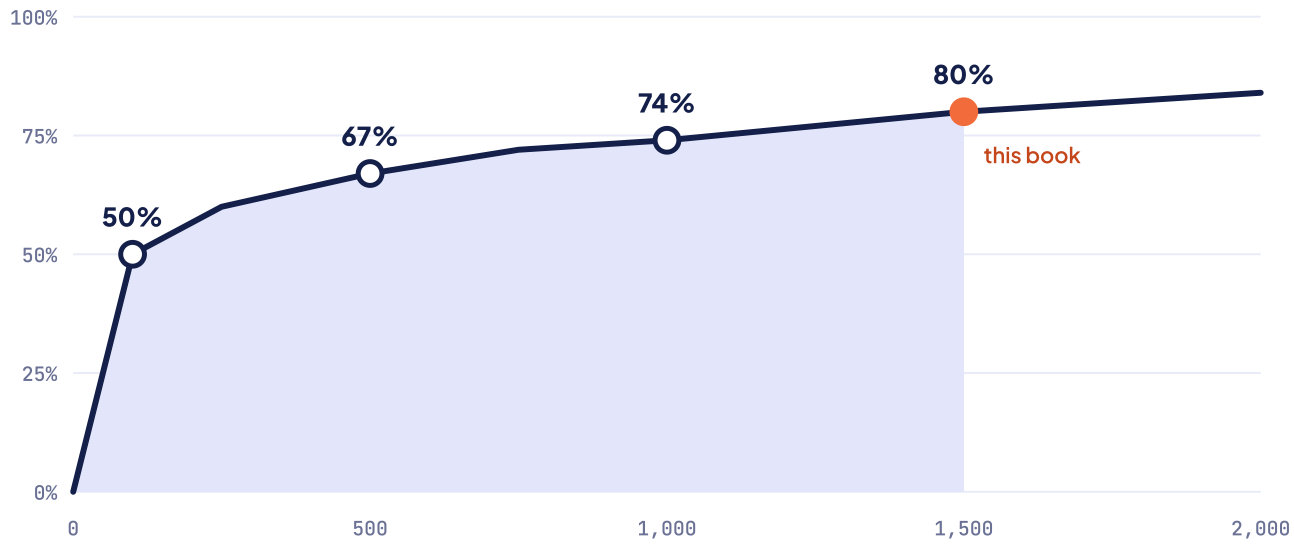
1,500

The Top 1,500 Spanish Words

The words that cover 80% of everyday Spanish. 30 units, a fixed method, and enough practice to make them stick.

Why 1,500 words

Spanish, like every language, runs on a small core. A handful of words appear in almost every sentence; most words are rare. Learn the core first and every hour of study pays back more.



100	**Half of what you hear.** ser, estar, tener, que, de. The words inside almost every sentence.
500	**A basic conversation.** Your day, work and family, without stalling on every line.
1,000	**Headlines and subtitles start to make sense.** You follow the thread of most dialogue.
1,500	**Four out of five words, understood.** Context fills in most of the rest. This is where real Spanish becomes usable.

Four passes per unit

Every unit goes through the same four passes. You never have to decide what to do next, and you always know when a word counts as learned.

PASS 1 · READ

Meet the words

Go through the two word pages. Say each word and its example sentence out loud. Notice the article on nouns: **el** or **la** is part of the word.

PASS 2 · RECALL

Cover and test yourself

Cover the English column with a sheet of paper. Say the meaning of each word, then check. Tick the first box if you got it in under three seconds.

PASS 3 · USE

Do the exercise page

Gap-fill, matching, translation and a mini-story. Write your answers in the book. Check them in the answer key at the back and correct in a different colour.

PASS 4 · REVIEW

Come back twice

Three days later, cover the English again and tick the second box. A week later, the third. A word with three ticks is learned.

The mastery rule. A unit is mastered when at least 45 of its 50 words have all three ticks. Words without ticks go on a sticky note on the inside cover; read them once a day until they stick.

Your 3-day rhythm

Each unit takes three days at about 20 minutes a day. Thirty units take about 90 days. Add a day for each review test and you finish in roughly 14 weeks.

DAY 1

Read and recall

Pass 1 and pass 2 on the new unit. Tick box 1.

DAY 2

Exercise page

Pass 3. Check your answers in the key and fix mistakes.

DAY 3

Review

Pass 4: box 2 for the unit you started three days ago, box 3 for the unit from a week ago.

How to read a word entry

#43	**dejar** verb	to leave · to let	Dejé las llaves en la mesa. I left the keys on the table.	☐☐☐

#43 Frequency rank: this is the 43rd most common word in Spanish.

Meaning The one or two meanings you will meet most often. Cover this column in pass 2.

Three boxes Day 1, day 3 and day 7 recall. Three ticks = learned.

Article Nouns come with el or la. Learn them together.

Example A real, everyday sentence with its translation.

Missed a day? Do not start over. Pick up where you left off and do one review day before the next new unit.

Unit 1

#	WORD	MEANING · COVER IT	EXAMPLE	1·3·7
#1	**ser** verb	to be (permanent) · being	Mi hermano es médico. My brother is a doctor.	☐☐☐
#2	**estar** verb	to be (temporary) · to be located	La sopa está fría. The soup is cold.	☐☐☐
#3	**ir** verb	to go · to match	Mañana vamos al cine. Tomorrow we are going to the movies.	☐☐☐
#4	**tener** verb	to have · to hold	¿Tienes tiempo para hablar? Do you have time to talk?	☐☐☐
#5	**haber** verb	to have · to be (there is/are)	He terminado el proyecto a tiempo. I have finished the project on time.	☐☐☐
#6	**qué** pron.	what · how	¿Qué quieres? What do you want?	☐☐☐
#7	**hacer** verb	to do · to make	¡Hazlo! No tengas miedo. Do it! Don't be afraid.	☐☐☐
#8	**poder** verb	to be able to · power	No puedo abrir la puerta. I can't open the door.	☐☐☐
#9	**te** pron.	you · yourself	Te vi ayer en el mercado. I saw you yesterday at the market.	☐☐☐
#10	**con** prep.	with	Voy al cine con mis amigos. I'm going to the movies with my friends.	☐☐☐
#11	**decir** verb	to say · to tell	Ella dice que vendrá mañana. She says she will come tomorrow.	☐☐☐
#12	**querer** verb	to want · to love	Quiero un café, por favor. I want a coffee, please.	☐☐☐
#13	**saber** verb	to know · knowledge	No sé la respuesta. I don't know the answer.	☐☐☐
#14	**si** conj.	if · whether	Si llueve, nos quedamos en casa. If it rains, we stay home.	☐☐☐
#15	**ver** verb	to see · to watch	Sin mis gafas no puedo ver los letreros. Without my glasses I can't see the signs.	☐☐☐
#16	**bien** adv.	well · okay	Ella canta bien. She sings well.	☐☐☐
#17	**eso** pron.	that	Eso no me gusta. I don't like that.	☐☐☐
#18	**pero** conj.	but · objection	Quería ir, pero no pude. I wanted to go, but I couldn't.	☐☐☐
#19	**tu** det.	your	¿Dónde está tu libro? Where is your book?	☐☐☐
#20	**yo** pron.	I	Yo no lo hice. I didn't do it.	☐☐☐
#21	**aquí** adv.	here	Puedes dejar las llaves aquí sobre la mesa. You can leave the keys here on the table.	☐☐☐
#22	**este** det.	this · this one	Este celular es mío. This phone is mine.	☐☐☐
#23	**ese** det.	that · that one	Me gusta ese libro. I like that book.	☐☐☐
#24	**esto** pron.	this	¿Qué es esto? What is this?	☐☐☐
#25	**creer** verb	to believe · to think	No te creo. I don't believe you.	☐☐☐

#	WORD	MEANING · COVER IT	EXAMPLE	1·3·7
#26	**esta** det.	this · this one	Esta casa es muy antigua. This house is very old.	☐☐☐
#27	**ya** adv.	already · yet	Ya terminé el informe. I already finished the report.	☐☐☐
#28	**como** prep.	like · as	Corre como un loco. He runs like a madman.	☐☐☐
#29	**bueno** adj.	good · OK	Es una buena idea. It's a good idea.	☐☐☐
#30	**le** pron.	him · her	Le di el libro a él. I gave him the book.	☐☐☐
#31	**todo** det.	all · everything	Todos los estudiantes entregaron el trabajo. All the students turned in the assignment.	☐☐☐
#32	**lo** pron.	it · him	El cerebro es increíble; aún no lo entendemos por completo. The brain is incredible; we still don't fully understand it.	☐☐☐
#33	**más** adv.	more · most	Quiero más café. I want more coffee.	☐☐☐
#34	**deber** verb	to have to · to owe	Mañana debo levantarme temprano. Tomorrow I have to get up early.	☐☐☐
#35	**dar** verb	to give · to hit	Me dio un regalo. He gave me a gift.	☐☐☐
#36	**muy** adv.	very	Es muy interesante. It is very interesting.	☐☐☐
#37	**ahora** adv.	now · currently	Ahora no puedo hablar; te llamo luego. I can't talk now; I'll call you later.	☐☐☐
#38	**algo** pron.	something · anything	Quiero algo dulce. I want something sweet.	☐☐☐
#39	**pasar** verb	to pass · to spend (time)	El tren pasa por aquí a las ocho. The train passes by here at eight.	☐☐☐
#40	**nos** pron.	us · ourselves	¿Nos puedes ayudar? Can you help us?	☐☐☐
#41	**tú** pron.	you	¿Tú vienes mañana? Are you coming tomorrow?	☐☐☐
#42	**así** adv.	like this · like that	Hazlo así, por favor. Do it like this, please.	☐☐☐
#43	**dejar** verb	to leave · to let	Dejé las llaves en la mesa. I left the keys on the table.	☐☐☐
#44	**hablar** verb	to speak · to talk	Ella habla español con fluidez. She speaks Spanish fluently.	☐☐☐
#45	**nada** pron.	nothing · at all	Nada es permanente. Nothing is permanent.	☐☐☐
#46	**cuando** conj.	when	Te llamaré cuando llegue a casa. I'll call you when I get home.	☐☐☐
#47	**otro** adj.	other · another	Los otros estudiantes ya llegaron. The other students have already arrived.	☐☐☐
#48	**cómo** adv.	how	¿Cómo lo hiciste? How did you do it?	☐☐☐
#49	**venir** verb	to come	¿A qué hora vienes a casa? What time are you coming home?	☐☐☐
#50	**mucho** det.	a lot of · a lot	Desde la playa se ven muchas estrellas por la noche. A lot of stars are visible from the beach at night.	☐☐☐

Use the words

A Fill the gap. The dictionary form is in brackets; change it to fit.

1. ¿ _____ estás hoy? Te veo un poco cansado. *(cómo)*
2. Mi jefe _____ que la reunión es a las diez. *(decir)*
3. No _____ dónde están mis llaves. *(saber)*
4. Si tienes tiempo, _____ a cenar con nosotros. *(venir)*
5. Mi madre _____ muy cansada después del trabajo. *(estar)*
6. Este fin de semana vamos a _____ a mis padres. *(ver)*
7. Hoy tengo _____ trabajo en la oficina. *(mucho)*
8. ¿Puedes _____ las bolsas en la cocina? *(dejar)*

B Match each word to its meaning.

1.	☐ más	a.	already
2.	☐ tener	b.	to do
3.	☐ creer	c.	to give
4.	☐ ir	d.	to go
5.	☐ querer	e.	here
6.	☐ bien	f.	more
7.	☐ aquí	g.	to have
8.	☐ hacer	h.	well
9.	☐ dar	i.	to want
10.	☐ ya	j.	to believe

C Say it in Spanish.

1. I want another coffee, please.
2. We can't go now.
3. My sister is a teacher.
4. I think he's at home.

D Mini-story: La cena sorpresa. Fill the 8 gaps from the box.

quiero · nada · muy · más · viene · Tu · está · sabes

Hoy es el cumpleaños de mi mujer y [1] _____ hacer una cena especial. Llamo a mi hermano y le pregunto: «¿Tú [2] _____ cocinar paella?». Él dice que sí, pero que está [3] _____ ocupado. Así que busco una receta y empiezo a cocinar. Paso tres horas en la cocina. Cuando todo [4] _____ listo, ella llega a casa. «¡Qué bien huele!», dice. Prueba la paella, me mira y no dice [5] _____. Después saca el teléfono y pide una pizza. « [6] _____ paella está bien, pero hoy prefiero pizza», dice. Al final, comemos pizza y mi hermano [7] _____ a casa a comer la paella. Él dice que es la paella [8] _____ rica de su vida.