

Students' Basic Grammar of Spanish

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The map makers



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Introduction

What is the SBGS?

The *Students' Basic Grammar of Spanish* (SBGS) is a grammar book for students of Spanish at **elementary and intermediate level (A1-B1)** in the Common European Framework of Reference) who are looking for clear, useful and practical descriptions of how the Spanish language works.

The key features of the SBGS are:

- It explains the grammatical system of Spanish bearing in mind – both in the grammatical explanations and in the exercises – the **meaning** and real life **use** of the various resources.
- It uses a series of **design elements** (drawings, colours and other graphic conventions) in a consistent way to support and facilitate the understanding of grammatical features.
- It presents a **thorough, workable** and **reliable** description of the grammar features: the student will be able to apply the rules given in a meaningful and systematic way, as well as to limit possible mistakes.

Structure of the SBGS

The book is organised into seven sections that cover the main aspects of the grammatical system of Spanish: NOUNS AND ADJECTIVES; DETERMINERS; PERSONAL PRONOUNS; VERBS; PREPOSITIONS; SENTENCES, AND SPELLING.

These sections contain various units that alternate between grammar feature explanation files (accompanied by numerous examples and illustrations) and high-impact exercises (that allow the student to practise and check their assimilation of the previous explanation). The different units are linked together by thorough cross-referencing.

The SBGS also provides an **answer key**, **conjugated verb** tables (where you will find the conjugations of regular verbs and an alphabetical list of the most common irregular verbs), and a **thematic index** to make it easier to use and check up on the different grammatical features.

Grammar instructions and language examples

The **grammar instructions** (with few technical terms and a vocabulary adapted to the level), the **diagrams**, the **language examples** that accompany the explanations and the **drawings** have all been devised with the students' perspective in mind. We have taken into account their need to learn grammar in a way that bears in mind the systematic nature of the language, as well as the communicative value of the elements dealt with.

Exercises

The SBGS offers a wide range of exercises involving repetition, interpretation and production, as well as correction of the mistakes common to students' interlanguage, which have been designed and organised in such a way as to make the work **interesting, enjoyable** and **meaning-focused**. The exercises present the language in real and credible contexts and in this way, aid a better comprehension of the way the grammar works. The exercises have closed answers, so that the student can control their own learning by checking the **answer key** in the back of the book.

Educational contexts

As the SBGS is so easy to use and consult, it is an efficient tool for self-study for students at levels A1-B1. However, the SBGS is also useful for students with a more advanced level of Spanish, thanks to the fresh way in which the most common and frequently occurring problems in Spanish have been formulated, and for the reliability and usefulness of the rules provided.

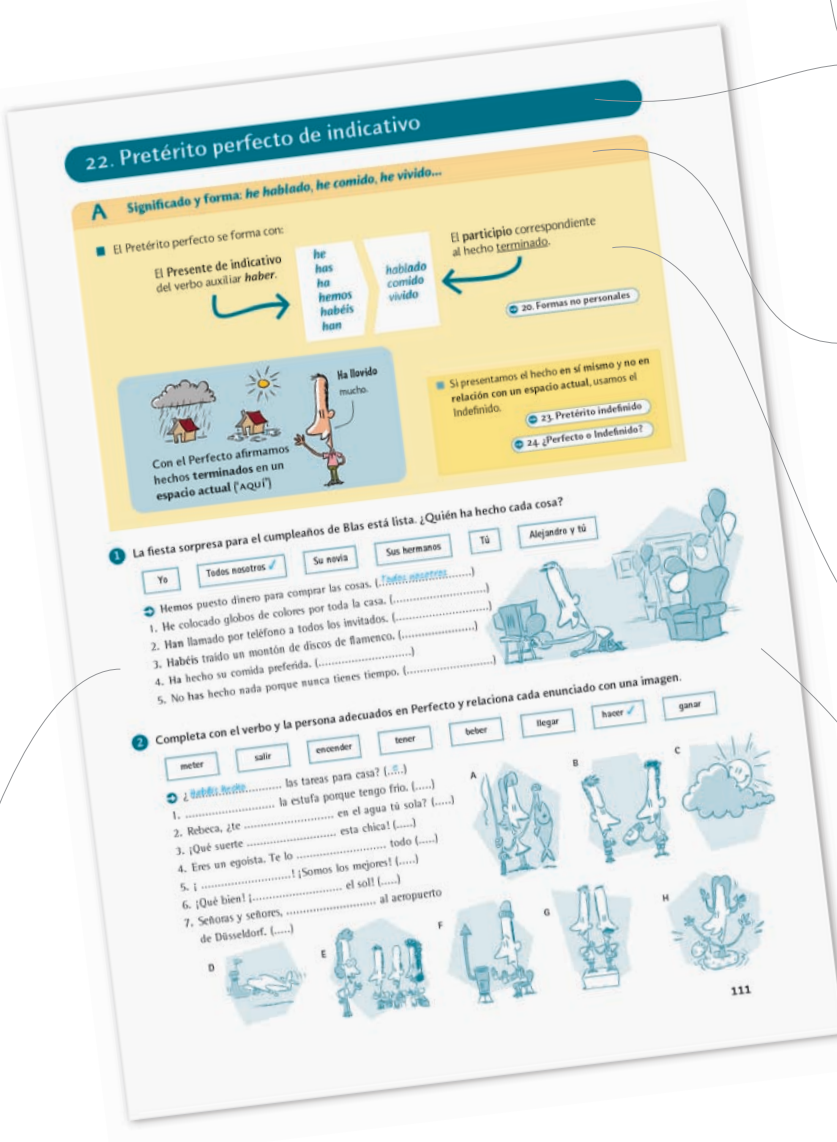
Furthermore, the SBGS can be used regularly in class both to present and to go more deeply into the various grammatical areas and practise them in the classroom context focusing on group correction, which can encourage thoughtful grammatical study.

How the SBGS is organised

- The SBGS is divided into seven **SECTIONS** which cover the main aspects of the grammatical system of Spanish. Each **SECTIONS** and the **units** it consists of are colour coded:



- The units are organised in **subsections**, where you will find **explanations** and **exercises**:



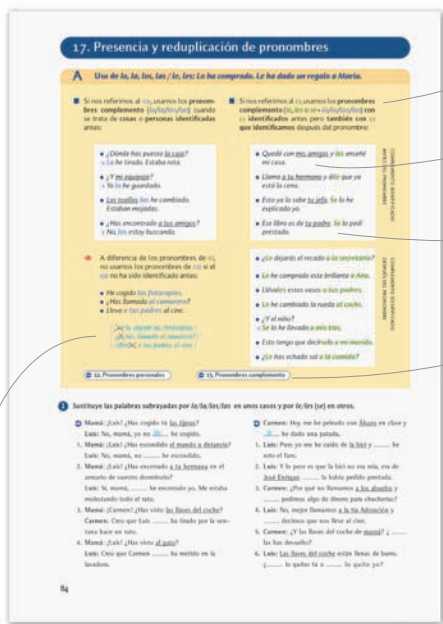
Number and **name** of the unit. The **colour** shows you which section it belongs to.

Each **subsection** is indicated by a letter (**A, B, C...**) and provides **explanations** with **examples** and **exercises**. The subsections are listed in the index.

The **explanations** with **examples** are presented in boxes with a cream-coloured background.

Following each explanation, there are **exercises** (transformations, comprehension and production) so you can start to use the features that you are studying. You can check your own answers by looking in the **answer key**.

In the **exercises**, the language forms are connected to the **meaning**: you should pay particular attention to the context and meaning of the sentences and texts.



The forms being introduced and the key concepts in the explanations are marked in bold.

Underlining is used to highlight elements directly related to the grammar point being taught.

The colours differentiate between some language forms and others to make understanding easier.

You will find cross references to other units in boxes in the colour of the section in question.

The most important grammatical information is marked with the symbol ■.

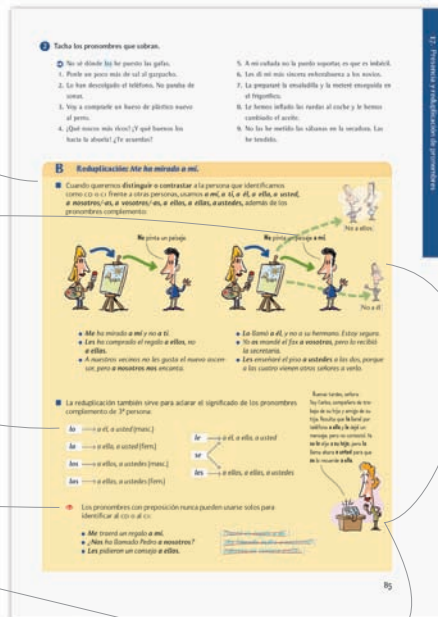
Examples are written in italics and inside square brackets [...], you will find explanations of the examples.

Mistakes that you should avoid are written in blue and crossed-out in red.

The white background is used to highlight important information: models, forms, categories, classifications, etc.

A highlights information you should pay particular attention to.

The illustrations will make it easier for you to understand each feature.



■ In addition to the units, this grammar book also provides you with conjugated verb tables, an answer key and a complete thematic index:

The conjugated verb tables show conjugation models for regular verbs and the most common irregular ones. The stressed syllable is underlined. Irregularities are shown in green.

With the page, unit and exercise numbers you can look up the answers in the exercise answer key.

The thematic index will help you to easily find any feature dealt with in this grammar book.

SECTION 1

Nouns and Adjectives

- 1 Noun. The gender of things
- 2 Noun. The gender of people and animals
- 3 Noun. Number
- 4 Adjective

¡Camarero!

¡Hay un mosca en mi sopa!

No es **un** mosca, es **una** mosca.

¡Caramba, qué vista tiene usted!



1. Noun. The gender of things

In Spanish, **all nouns always have a gender**, which can be **masculine** or **feminine** (there are no neuter nouns). It is very important to know if a noun is masculine or feminine, as all the elements that refer to it (articles, adjectives, demonstratives...) have to take the same gender:

- *Éste es el edificio más alto de esta ciudad.*
- *Toma otra taza, porque ésta está rota.*

A General rule: *el edificio, la casa...*

- Nouns that refer to things (physical objects, ideas, feelings, etc.) **have only one gender**: some are always masculine and others are always feminine. Generally, the masculine ends in **-o**, and the feminine ends in **-a**:

MASCULINE IN **-o**: *el bolígrafo, el dinero, el edificio, el florero, el pañuelo, el vaso...*

FEMININE IN **-a**: *la cara, la casa, la mesa, la palabra, la plaza, la taza, la ventana...*

1 Connect each sentence to the object it refers to.

➔ Tengo dos así, rojos, muy parecidos a éstos.

1. Tienes que lavarlo, porque está un poco sucio.
2. No están mal, son bonitas, pero me parecen un poco caras.
3. La mía es más grande que la suya.
4. Éstos son muy baratos.

- casa
- pañuelos
- gafas
- vaso
- floreros

2 Write in the noun endings. They all follow the general rule.

➔ Carmela tiene el pel.?. muy negro y la car.?. muy blanca.

1. Nunca escribo con bolígraf.... azul o negro. Escribo con una plum.... de mi abuela que me gusta mucho.
2. Nuestro pis.... es bastante pequeñito, pero tenemos una cas.... en Asturias que es bastante grande y muy bonita.
3. ¿Quién es el marid.... más simpático del mundo? ¿Quién me va a hacer un regal.... precioso?
4. Los Martín son una famili.... muy numerosa. Son ocho hermanos, creo.



B Special rules: *el problema, la mano...*

- There are a few **masculine nouns ending in -a** that don't follow the general rule (of these, the majority end in **-ema**):

MASCULINE IN **-a**: *el clima, el día, el idioma, el mapa, el planeta, el programa, el sofá... el esquema, el poema, el problema, el sistema, el tema...*
(PERO: la crema)

- There are also a few **feminine nouns that end in -o**:

FEMININE IN **-o**: *la foto (fotografía), la mano, la moto (motocicleta), la radio...*

■ Nouns ending in **-aje** and **-or** are generally **masculine**:

-aje: *el masaje, el garaje, el paisaje, el pasaje, el peaje, el potaje...*

-or: *el amor, el dolor, el error, el olor, el sabor, el terror...* (PERO: una flor)

■ Nouns ending in **-ción, -sión, -dad** and **-tad** are **feminine**:

-ción: *la canción, la relación, la traducción...*
-sión: *la expresión, la prisión, la televisión...*

-dad: *la bondad, la ciudad, la verdad...*
-tad: *la amistad, la lealtad, la libertad...*

■ In all other cases, the gender cannot be told from the form of the word. Remember, however, that a dictionary will always tell you the gender of each noun:

nave. (Del lat. *navis*, f.) Embarcación. 1. Barco. 2. Embarcación.

MASCULINE

el café, el coche, el champú, el esquí, el hambre, el jersey, el pie, el sobre, el tabú, el taxi...

el árbol, el lápiz, el lavavajillas, el metal, el móvil (teléfono móvil), el microondas (horno microondas), el país, el papel, el paraguas, el salón, el sillón, el sol...

FEMININE

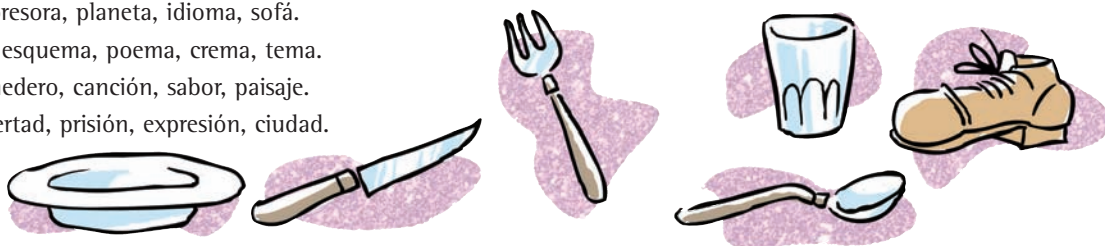
la clase, la carne, la fiebre, la frente, la gente, la llave, la muerte, la nave, la noche, la nube, la parte, la suerte, la tarde...

la cárcel, la cicatriz, la col, la crisis, la hipótesis, la imagen, la nariz, la sal, la sed, la síntesis, la tesis...

3 Which one is the odd one out?

→ día, pentagrama, clima, plaza, idioma. (*plaza is feminine and the other words are masculine.*)

1. mano, foto, brazo, moto, radio.
2. mapa, impresora, planeta, idioma, sofá.
3. problema, esquema, poema, crema, tema.
4. color, monedero, canción, sabor, paisaje.
5. garaje, libertad, prisión, expresión, ciudad.



4 Masculine or feminine? Put these nouns in the right box.

noche ✓ champú ✓ salón crisis luna sobre tesis taxi clase microondas
 café tarde sal pie leche nariz árbol carne sol lavavajillas

Masculine

El champú,

Feminine

La noche,

5 Mark the correct form of the article.

I Mariano:
He dejado el coche en el/la garaje
y he cogido el/la ordenador portátil.
Llego tarde al/a la clase de las siete.
Un beso.

IV Ana:
Hay un/una error en
el/La traducción del señor Weiss.
¿Puedes corregirlo?, por favor.

II Pepa:
Tienes el/la potaje en el/la microondas.
Compra el/la champú para el perro
y coge el/la paraguas, que llueve mucho.
¡Ah! Tienes que poner el/la jersey verde
en la secadora.
Gracias, cariño

V Raquel:
¿Hablamos mañana del/la ? ¿Vemos el/la ? ¿Venimos ? ?
Dime algo pronto.

III José:
Tenemos un/una problema
con el/La moto.
Y además, no encuentro los/las llaves.

VI Jacinto:
¿Puedes ir tú a Yanokea a recoger
el/La sillón? Tenemos un/una reunión
que me ocupará un/una parte
del/de la tarde.
Lláname al/a la móvil.

6 The singer-songwriter Joan Ismael Lumbago has written this song. Finish it with the articles el/la.



Vendo una canción

- ➔ Compra el lápiz de labios;
1. compra móvil,
 2. compra crema antiarrugas,
 3. compra paraguas para la lluvia.
 4. Pero nunca podrás comprar
poema que no te escribí,
 5. ni amor que nunca sentí,
 6. ni olor
 7. de flor que nunca te di.
 8. Compra champú,
 9. compra jersey,
 10. compra sal,
 11. compra papel.
 12. Pero nunca podrás comprar beso
 13. en frente al empezar día,
 14. ni sabor
 15. de noche del verano que termina.
 16. Compra café;
 17. compra reloj,
 18. compra leche,
 19. compra col.
 20. Pero nunca podrás comprar tarde
en que nos conocimos,
 21. ni paisaje,
 22. ni planeta en que tú y yo vivimos.
 23. Si no amas libertad,
 24. vida,
 25. canción que te canto,
 26. nube al pasar...,
¿qué podrás amar?