

STOP START SPANISH

BOOK 2 / INTERMEDIATE / B1-B2

Okay... maybe study a little.



The Intermediate Reading Companion

A little clarity. A lot more story.

Quick grammar help for Stop Learning Spanish.

Start Reading It. Keep it nearby, look up what you need,
and get back to the good part.

NO POP QUIZ. NO GOLD STARS REQUIRED.

Just enough help to keep you reading.

 **START HERE**

Still here for the story.

A quick reference for the moments when the meaning almost clicks.

You already know the feeling: you understand the words, but the sentence takes an unexpected turn. A tense changes. A tiny *se* appears. Someone says what they wish would happen. This pack helps you follow those turns without turning your reading time into homework.

THE 30-SECOND DETOUR

Find the one pattern that is slowing you down. Check the matching page, reread the sentence, then return to the story. You are allowed to leave the rest of the chart alone.

Your very small table of contents

What happened? What was happening?	Two past-tense views	3
I have... / I did...	Perfect and preterite	4
Will, would, could	Future and conditional	5
Wishes, doubts, feelings	Subjunctive meanings	6
What does that form look like?	Present subjunctive chart	7
If this, then that	Conditional sentences	8
The many jobs of <i>se</i>	<i>Se</i> constructions	9
A sentence inside a sentence	Relative words	10
Two ways to say “for”	<i>Por</i> and <i>para</i>	11
She said what?	Reported speech	12
Stuck in a sentence?	Reading rescue	13

Print only what you need, or use these clickable links on screen. For vocabulary, check your book's Glosario. For the explanation connected to a story, revisit its Aprendizaje Clave.

PRETERITE / IMPERFECT

Two views of the past.

The preterite tells an event as complete. The imperfect shows a past scene, habit or action in progress.

Imperfect / the scene	Preterite / the event
Llovía. It was raining.	Empezó a llover. It started to rain.
Viajaba cada verano. I used to travel every summer.	Viajé el verano pasado. I traveled last summer.
Pagaba en la caja. I was paying at the register.	Se me cayó el vaso. I dropped the glass.

Pagaba cuando se me cayó el vaso.

I was paying when I dropped the glass. One action was underway; the other happened in that scene.

A few forms to recognize	Imperfect	Preterite
hablar / yo	hablaba	hablé
comer / yo	comía	comí
vivir / yo	vivía	viví
ser / él, ella	era	fue
ir / él, ella	iba	fue

IT IS ABOUT THE VIEW, NOT A STOPWATCH

A long event can use the preterite: **Viví allí diez años.** = "I lived there for ten years." The speaker presents the whole stretch as complete. Duration alone does not choose the tense.

PRESENT PERFECT / PRETERITE

I have... I did...

Both talk about the past. The perfect often connects it to now; the preterite presents an event as complete.

The perfect has two parts: a form of haber + a past participle. Regular participles end in -ado or -ido: hablado, comido, vivido.

Who?	haber	Add a participle
yo	he	comido
tú	has	comido
él / ella / usted	ha	comido
nosotros/as	hemos	comido
vosotros/as	habéis	comido
ellos / ellas / ustedes	han	comido

He perdido la tarjeta. / Perdí la tarjeta ayer.

I have lost the card. / I lost the card yesterday.

¿Has estado en Madrid?

Have you been to Madrid? This asks about an experience up to now.

SPANISH HAS MORE THAN ONE LOCAL HABIT

In much of Spain, **Hoy he comido aquí** is common. In much of Latin America, **Hoy comí aquí** is common for the same finished meal today. A recent event does not automatically require the perfect.

A few irregular participles: hecho (done/made), visto (seen), dicho (said), escrito (written), abierto (opened), vuelto (returned). After haber, they stay unchanged: **Ellas han vuelto.**

FUTURE / CONDITIONAL

Will. Would. Could.

The future often predicts or looks ahead. The conditional often imagines a result or softens a request.

For regular verbs, keep the whole infinitive and add an ending. These endings work with -ar, -er and -ir verbs.

Who?	Future / hablar	Conditional / hablar
yo	hablaré	hablaría
tú	hablarás	hablarías
él / ella / usted	hablará	hablaría
nosotros/as	hablaremos	hablaríamos
vosotros/as	hablaréis	hablaríais
ellos / ellas / ustedes	hablarán	hablarían

Mañana saldremos temprano.

Tomorrow we will leave early. Salir uses the stem saldr-.

¿Podríamos reservar una mesa?

Could we reserve a table? The conditional makes the request gentler.

Useful irregular stems for both: tener → tendr-; poder → podr-; salir → saldr-; hacer → har-; decir → dir-. Add the same endings: tendré, tendría.

NOT ALWAYS ABOUT THE FUTURE

Serán las nueve. = "It is probably nine." **Serían las nueve cuando cerró.** = "It was probably nine when it closed." Future and conditional forms can make guesses about now or the past.

Another way to look ahead: ir + a + infinitive: **Vamos a salir.** = "We are going to leave."

PRESENT SUBJUNCTIVE / MEANING

Wishes. Doubts. Feelings.

The subjunctive often appears when a sentence reacts to an event, wants it to happen or questions it.

The opening clue	Example / meaning
quiero que / I want...	Quiero que pruebes el pan. I want you to try the bread.
me alegra que / I am glad...	Me alegra que vengas. I am glad you are coming.
dudo que / I doubt...	Dudo que abra tan temprano. I doubt it opens so early.
es importante que / it matters...	Es importante que reserves. It is important that you book.
espero que / I hope...	Espero que no llueva. I hope it does not rain.
no creo que / I do not think...	No creo que llegue a tiempo. I do not think he will arrive on time.

SUBJUNCTIVE DOES NOT MEAN “UNTRUE”

In **Me alegra que estés aquí** (“I am glad you are here”), the person really is here. The subjunctive appears because the sentence expresses a reaction, rather than simply announcing the fact.

One subject or two? Quiero leer = “I want to read.” **Quiero que leas** = “I want you to read.” With *querer*, the infinitive works when the person wanting and the person acting are the same.

PRESENT SUBJUNCTIVE / FORMS

Recognize the shape.

A quick chart for the forms you meet after openings such as *quiero que* and *espero que*.

Who?	hablar	comer	vivir
yo	hable	coma	viva
tú	hables	comas	vivas
él / ella / usted	hable	coma	viva
nosotros/as	hablemos	comamos	vivamos
vosotros/as	habléis	comáis	viváis
ellos / ellas / ustedes	hablen	coman	vivan

For regular verbs, the vowel swaps sides. -ar verbs use e endings; -er and -ir verbs use a endings. Compare *habla* → *hable* and *come* → *coma*.

Verb	Useful forms / yo, él, ella, usted
ser / be	sea
estar / be	esté
ir / go	vaya
tener / have	tenga
hacer / do, make	haga
poder / can	pueda

READ THE WHOLE PAIR

Es mejor que pidamos ahora. = “It is better if we order now.” The opening *es mejor que* explains why *pidamos* appears. Learn the little phrase as a unit; the ending makes more sense that way.

SI / CONDITIONAL SENTENCES

If this, then that.

A condition can be a live possibility or an imagined situation. The verb forms tell you which view the speaker takes.

A live possibility	An imagined situation
Si tenemos tiempo, iremos. If we have time, we will go.	Si tuviéramos tiempo, iríamos. If we had time, we would go.
Si abre la tienda, compro pan. If the shop opens, I will buy bread.	Si abriera la tienda, compraría pan. If the shop opened, I would buy bread.

The two common patterns:

Possible: si + present indicative → present, future or a command.

Imagined: si + imperfect subjunctive → conditional.

Si terminas temprano, llámame.

If you finish early, call me. The result can be an instruction.

THE "IF" HALF HAS ITS OWN RULE

For an ordinary future condition, use **Si tengo tiempo...**, not **Si tendré tiempo**. For the imagined pattern, use **Si tuviera tiempo...**, not **Si tendría tiempo**.

Forms to recognize: *tuviera / tuviese (had), hiciera / hiciese (did/made), fuera / fuese (was/went)*. The -ra and -se versions can both appear in these if-clauses.

A small accent with a big job: *si* = if; *sí* = yes. An imagined situation can be possible or unlikely; the grammar alone does not give you the odds.

SE CONSTRUCTIONS

One tiny word. Many jobs.

Se does not have one English translation. Look at the whole pattern before deciding what it means.

Pattern	Example / what it does
General / impersonal	Aquí se come muy bien. People eat very well here. No particular person is named.
Passive with se	Se venden entradas aquí. Tickets are sold here. Entradas is plural, so venden is plural.
Unplanned event	Se me perdió la llave. I lost the key. Me tells you who was affected.
Unplanned event, plural	Se me perdieron las llaves. I lost the keys. Llaves is plural, so perdieron is plural.

Se le rompió el vaso.

The glass broke on him/her. The sentence presents the breakage without directly naming someone as the person who broke it.

DO NOT ADD A PERSON WHO IS NOT THERE

Se perdió la llave. = “The key got lost.” **Se me perdió la llave.** adds that it happened to me. The first sentence is still valid; it simply leaves that detail out.

Another se you will meet: before lo, la, los or las, indirect-object le/les becomes se. **Le doy el libro → Se lo doy.** = “I give him/her the book → I give it to him/her.” Here, se is not an accident or a passive.

RELATIVE WORDS

A sentence inside a sentence.

These little words attach more information to a person, a thing or an idea.

Word	Example / meaning
que / that, who, which	El libro que compré es bueno. The book I bought is good. Que links back to el libro.
quien / who, whom	La vecina con quien hablé es Ana. The neighbor I spoke with is Ana. Quien refers to a person.
cuyo/a/os/as / whose	La casa cuyo techo gotea es antigua. The house whose roof leaks is old. Cuyo matches techo.
lo que / what, the thing that	Lo que necesito es un mapa. What I need is a map. There is no named noun before lo que.

El pan que compré... / Lo que compré fue pan.

The bread that I bought... / What I bought was bread.

WHOSE WHAT?

Cuyo agrees with the thing possessed, not its owner: **la mujer cuya casa...** ("the woman whose house..."), but **la mujer cuyos libros...** ("the woman whose books...").

Keep it simple: que can refer to people too: **La mujer que vive aquí...** = "The woman who lives here..." Quien is especially useful after a preposition: con quien, de quien, para quien.

 POR / PARA

Two ways to say “for.”

The English word is not enough. Ask what relationship the Spanish sentence is expressing.

PARA / aim, destination, recipient	POR / reason, route, exchange
Leo para aprender. I read in order to learn. Purpose.	Gracias por la ayuda. Thanks for the help. Reason for the thanks.
Es para Ana. It is for Ana. Recipient.	Lo hice por Ana. I did it for Ana's sake. Motivation.
Lo necesito para el viernes. I need it by Friday. Deadline.	Pasamos por el mercado. We went through/by the market. Route.
Salimos para Madrid. We are leaving for Madrid. Destination.	Pagué veinte euros por el libro. I paid twenty euros for the book. Exchange.

DURATION: YOU MAY SEE POR, OR NO PREPOSITION

Caminamos por una hora and **Caminamos una hora** can both mean “We walked for an hour.” Usage varies by region. Do not add *por* automatically just because English says “for.”

Trabajo para Ana. / Trabajo por Ana.

I work for Ana: she is my employer. / I work in Ana's place or for her sake: context decides.

Try asking: **What is the goal?** (*para*) or **What is the reason?** (*por*). It is a useful first check, not a rule that covers every expression.

REPORTED SPEECH

She said what?

When a narrator retells someone's words, the viewpoint can shift: who is speaking, where they are and when they spoke.

Original words	A later report
Ana: "Estoy cansada."	Ana dijo que estaba cansada. Ana said she was tired.
Ana: "No puedo ir."	Ana dijo que no podía ir. Ana said she could not go.
Ana: "Llegué ayer."	Ana dijo que había llegado el día anterior. Ana said she had arrived the previous day.
Ana: "Iré mañana."	Ana dijo que iría al día siguiente. Ana said she would go the next day.

Names help you track the changes. Ana's *mi* can become *su*. Her *aquí* can become *allí*. Her *mañana* can become *al día siguiente*. Change them only when the new viewpoint calls for it.

IT IS NOT A MECHANICAL TENSE SWAP

Ana dijo que vive en Madrid can report where she still lives. **Ana dijo que vivía en Madrid** places it in the past frame. Context and the reporter's viewpoint matter.

That new past form: *había* + participle means "had..." *Había llegado* = "had arrived." It places an event before another past moment.

READING RESCUE

Follow the meaning.

The grammar can help you hear the story more clearly. It does not need to become the story.

01 / Find the time

Is the narrator showing a past scene, completing an event or connecting it to now? Check pages 3-4.

02 / Listen to the opening

Quiero que, dudo que and es importante que help explain the verb form that follows. Subjunctive: pages 6-7.

03 / Follow the links

Si sets up a condition. Se can hide an actor or mark who was affected. Que and lo que connect ideas. Check pages 8-10.

PUT IT BACK IN THE SCENE

Llovía cuando Ana dijo que no podía venir.

It was raining when Ana said she could not come.

Llovía sets the scene. Dijo gives the event. No podía venir is Ana's message, retold by the narrator. One sentence, three small jobs.

Close the guide. Open the story.

That is plenty of studying for now.