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El español y el inglés

Words That Are Similar in Spanish and English; How to Say "The" in Spanish

You'll have a lot of fun learning the Spanish language, and it will probably be easier than you think. Do you know why? Well, there are lots of words that are the same in Spanish and English. They may be pronounced differently, but they are spelled the same way and have exactly the same meaning. Also, there are many Spanish words that have a slightly different spelling (often just one letter) but can be recognized instantly by anyone who speaks English.

Let's look at some of them and pronounce them the Spanish way. Your teacher will show you how.

1

Words that are exactly the same in English and Spanish. Repeat them aloud after your teacher.



adorable	el actor	la banana
artificial	el animal	la base
criminal	el cereal	la plaza
cruel	el color	la radio
horrible	el chocolate	
natural	el doctor	
popular	el hotel	
probable	el mosquito	
sociable	el motor	
terrible	el piano	
tropical		

2

Here are some Spanish words that look almost like English words. Repeat them aloud after your teacher.



delicioso	el accidente	la ambulancia
excelente	el actor	la aspirina
famoso	el calendario	la bicicleta
gigante	el diccionario	la clase
importante	el elefante	la computadora
inteligente	el garaje	la familia
moderno	el plato	la frase
necesario	el profesor	la foto
ordinario	el programa	la gasolina
	el restaurante	la hamburguesa
	el tigre	la medicina
	el tren	la motocicleta
	el vocabulario	la rosa
		la secretaria
		la sopa

3

Some words in Spanish have an accent mark. An accent affects the pronunciation and in some cases the meaning of a word. Here are some Spanish words that have exactly the same or almost the same spelling as English words but also have an accent mark.



el automóvil	el estéreo	tímido
el café	la música	romántico
el león	la opinión	
el menú	la región	
el teléfono	la televisión	

4

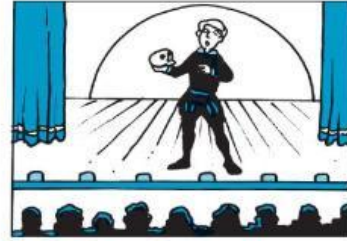
Here are some Spanish words that are different from English, but you'll probably be able to figure out their meanings. Repeat them aloud after your teacher.



la fiesta



el cine



el teatro



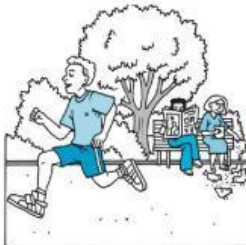
el amigo



la amiga



el estudiante



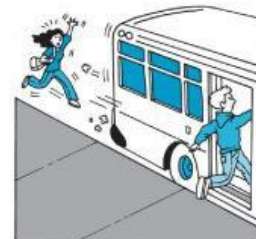
el parque



el aeropuerto



el avión



el autobús



la estación



la universidad



el banco



el jardín



la lámpara



la flor



el agua

5

Of course, there are many Spanish words that are quite different from the English words that have the same meaning. These words you must memorize. You will probably be able to learn many of them easily by connecting them with some related English word. For example: **libro** (book) is related to *library*—a place where there are many books; **pollo** (chicken) is related to *poultry*; **médico** (doctor) is related to *medical*; **enfermera** (nurse) is related to *infirm* (sick).

Here are some more words to add to your Spanish vocabulary.



el libro



la pluma



el estéreo



el árbol



la leche



la escuela



el hombre



la mujer



la gorra



la mano



la casa



la muchacha



el muchacho



el perro



la madre



el padre



el gato

6

Well, so much for vocabulary. Now let's learn a little Spanish grammar. Did you notice the words **el** and **la** before all of the nouns? These two words are Spanish words for *the*. That's right, Spanish has two words for *the* in the singular: **el** and **la**. The reason is that all Spanish nouns, unlike English nouns, have GENDER. Nouns are either MASCULINE or FEMININE: **el** is used before masculine nouns, and **la** is used before feminine nouns.

How do we tell which words are masculine and which are feminine? Compare these two groups:

I	II
<i>el</i> muchacho	<i>la</i> muchacha
<i>el</i> libro	<i>la</i> pluma
<i>el</i> sombrero	<i>la</i> casa

In what letter do the words in the first group end? _____. What about the second group? _____. You probably figured out the rule already.



When the noun ends in **-o**, the word for *the* is **el**. When the word ends in **-a**, *the* is expressed by **la**. There are a few exceptions: **mano** ends in **-o** but takes **la** (**la mano**).

Now it's your turn. Add the appropriate article (word for *the*).

_____ escuela	_____ teatro
_____ banco	_____ fiesta

With nouns ending in other letters (**el tigre**, **la leche**), there is no way of determining whether we use **el** or **la**. That's why we need to learn the article (*the*) as we learn each new word.

Let's see now if you can figure out the meaning of these ten sentences.