

## 3.1 Descriptive adjectives Tutorial

### ANTE TODO

Adjectives are words that describe people, places, and things. In Spanish, descriptive adjectives are used with the verb **ser** to point out characteristics such as nationality, size, color, shape, personality, and appearance.

### Forms and agreement of adjectives

#### COMPARE & CONTRAST

In English, the forms of descriptive adjectives do not change to reflect the gender (masculine/feminine) and number (singular/plural) of the noun or pronoun they describe.

*Juan is nice. Elena is nice. They are nice.*

In Spanish, the forms of descriptive adjectives agree in gender and/or number with the nouns or pronouns they describe.

Juan es simpático. Elena es simpática. Ellos son simpáticos.

- ▶ Adjectives that end in **-o** have four different forms. The feminine singular is formed by changing the **-o** to **-a**. The plural is formed by adding **-s** to the singular forms.

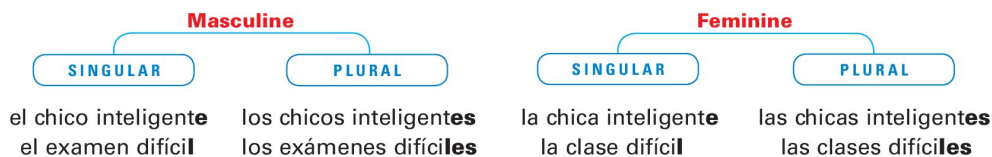


¡Qué bonitas son tus hijas, tía Nayeli!

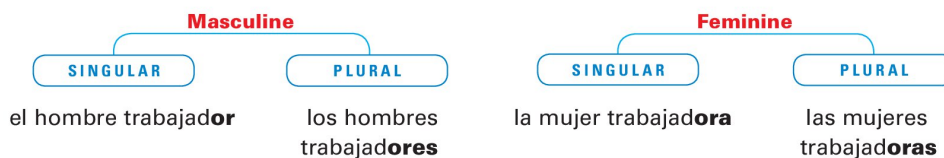


Felipe es gordo, antipático y muy feo.

- ▶ Adjectives that end in **-e** or a consonant have the same masculine and feminine forms.



- ▶ Adjectives that end in **-or** are variable in both gender and number.



**AYUDA**

Many adjectives are cognates, that is, words that share similar spellings and meanings in Spanish and English. A cognate can be a noun like **profesor** or a descriptive adjective like **interesante**.

**¡ATENCIÓN!**

Note that **joven** takes an accent in its plural form. **Los jóvenes estudian mucho.**

- ▶ Use the masculine plural form to refer to groups that include males and females.

Manuel es **alto**.

Lola es **alta**.

Manuel y Lola son **altos**.

**Common adjectives**

<b>alto/a</b>	<i>tall</i>	<b>gordo/a</b>	<i>fat</i>	<b>mucho/a</b>	<i>much; many; a lot of</i>
<b>antipático/a</b>	<i>unpleasant</i>	<b>grande</b>	<i>big</i>	<b>pelirrojo/a</b>	<i>red-haired</i>
<b>bajo/a</b>	<i>short (in height)</i>	<b>guapo/a</b>	<i>good-looking</i>	<b>pequeño/a</b>	<i>small</i>
<b>bonito/a</b>	<i>pretty</i>	<b>importante</b>	<i>important</i>	<b>rubio/a</b>	<i>blond(e)</i>
<b>bueno/a</b>	<i>good</i>	<b>interesante</b>	<i>interesting</i>	<b>simpático/a</b>	<i>nice; likeable</i>
<b>delgado/a</b>	<i>thin</i>	<b>joven</b>	<i>young</i>	<b>tonto/a</b>	<i>foolish</i>
<b>difícil</b>	<i>difficult</i>	<b>malo/a</b>	<i>bad</i>	<b>trabajador(a)</b>	<i>hard-working</i>
<b>fácil</b>	<i>easy</i>	<b>mismo/a</b>	<i>same</i>	<b>viejo/a</b>	<i>old</i>
<b>feo/a</b>	<i>ugly</i>	<b>moreno/a</b>	<i>brunet(te)</i>		

**Adjectives of nationality**

- ▶ Unlike in English, Spanish adjectives of nationality are **not** capitalized. Proper names of countries, however, are capitalized.

**Some adjectives of nationality**

<b>alemán, alemana</b>	<i>German</i>	<b>francés, francesa</b>	<i>French</i>
<b>argentino/a</b>	<i>Argentine</i>	<b>inglés, inglesa</b>	<i>English</i>
<b>canadiense</b>	<i>Canadian</i>	<b>italiano/a</b>	<i>Italian</i>
<b>chino/a</b>	<i>Chinese</i>	<b>japonés, japonesa</b>	<i>Japanese</i>
<b>costarricense</b>	<i>Costa Rican</i>	<b>mexicano/a</b>	<i>Mexican</i>
<b>cubano/a</b>	<i>Cuban</i>	<b>norteamericano/a</b>	<i>(North) American</i>
<b>ecuatoriano/a</b>	<i>Ecuadorian</i>	<b>puertorriqueño/a</b>	<i>Puerto Rican</i>
<b>español(a)</b>	<i>Spanish</i>	<b>ruso/a</b>	<i>Russian</i>
<b>estadounidense</b>	<i>from the U.S.</i>		

- ▶ Adjectives of nationality are formed like other descriptive adjectives. Those that end in **-o** change to **-a** when forming the feminine.

chino → china

mexicano → mexicana

The plural is formed by adding an **-s** to the masculine or feminine form.

argentino → argentinos

cubana → cubanas

- ▶ Adjectives of nationality that end in **-e** have only two forms, singular and plural.

canadiense → canadienses

estadounidense → estadounidenses

- ▶ To form the feminine of adjectives of nationality that end in a consonant, add **-a**.

alemán → alemana  
japonés → japonesa

español → española  
inglés → inglesa

**¡ATENCIÓN!**

Note that adjectives with an accent on the last syllable drop the accent in the feminine and plural forms.  
inglés → inglesa  
alemán → alemanes

## Position of adjectives

- Descriptive adjectives and adjectives of nationality generally follow the nouns they modify.



El niño **rubio** es de España.  
*The blond boy is from Spain.*



La mujer **española** habla inglés.  
*The Spanish woman speaks English.*

- Unlike descriptive adjectives, adjectives of quantity precede the modified noun.

Hay **muchos** libros en la biblioteca.  
*There are many books in the library.*

Hablo con **dos** turistas puertorriqueños.  
*I am talking with two Puerto Rican tourists.*

- **Bueno/a** and **malo/a** can appear before or after a noun. When placed before a masculine singular noun, the forms are shortened: **bueno** → **buen**; **malo** → **mal**.

Joaquín es un **buen** amigo.  
Joaquín es un amigo **bueno**.

→ *Joaquín is a good friend.*

Hoy es un **mal** día.  
Hoy es un día **malo**.

→ *Today is a bad day.*

- When **grande** appears before a singular noun, it is shortened to **gran**, and the meaning of the word changes: **gran** = *great* and **grande** = *big, large*.

Don Francisco es un **gran** hombre.  
*Don Francisco is a great man.*

La familia de Inés es **grande**.  
*Inés' family is large.*

### ¡LENGUA VIVA!

Like **bueno** and **grande**, **santo** (*saint*) is also shortened before masculine nouns (unless they begin with **To-** or **Do-**): **San Francisco**, **San José** (but: **Santo Tomás**, **Santo Domingo**). **Santa** is used with names of female saints: **Santa Bárbara**, **Santa Clara**.



### ¡INTÉNTALO!

Provide the appropriate forms of the adjectives.

#### simpático

1. Mi hermano es simpático.
2. La profesora Martínez es \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Rosa y Teresa son \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Nosotros somos \_\_\_\_\_.

#### difícil

1. La química es difícil.
2. El curso es \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Las pruebas son \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Los libros son \_\_\_\_\_.

#### alemán

1. Hans es alemán.
2. Mis primas son \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Marcus y yo somos \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Mi tía es \_\_\_\_\_.

#### guapo

1. Su esposo es guapo.
2. Mis sobrinas son \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Los padres de ella son \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Marta es \_\_\_\_\_.

### recursos

