

2.1

Present tense of -ar verbs



ANTE TODO

In order to talk about activities, you need to use verbs. Verbs express actions or states of being. In English and Spanish, the infinitive is the base form of the verb. In English, the infinitive is preceded by the word *to*: *to study*, *to be*. The infinitive in Spanish is a one-word form and can be recognized by its endings: **-ar**, **-er**, or **-ir**.

-ar verb

estudiar | to study

-er verb

comer | to eat

-ir verb

escribir | to write

► In this lesson, you will learn the forms of regular **-ar** verbs.

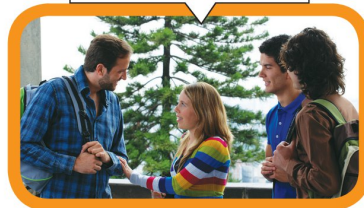
The verb estudiar (to study)

SINGULAR FORMS	yo	estudio	<i>I study</i>
	tú	estudias	<i>you (fam.) study</i>
	Ud./él/ella	estudia	<i>you (form.) study; he/she studies</i>
PLURAL FORMS	nosotros/as	estudiamos	<i>we study</i>
	vosotros/as	estudiáis	<i>you (fam.) study</i>
	Uds./ellos/ellas	estudian	<i>you study; they study</i>

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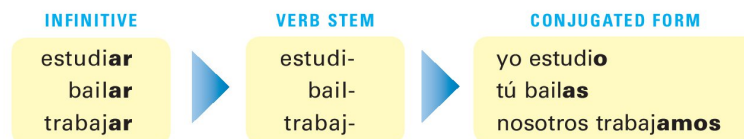


Y tú, ¿qué estudias, Miguel?



► To create the forms of most regular verbs in Spanish, drop the infinitive endings (**-ar**, **-er**, **-ir**). You then add to the stem the endings that correspond to the different subject pronouns. This diagram will help you visualize verb conjugation.

Conjugation of -ar verbs



Common -ar verbs

bailar	to dance	estudiar	to study
buscar	to look for	explicar	to explain
caminar	to walk	hablar	to talk; to speak
cantar	to sing	llegar	to arrive
cenar	to have dinner	llevar	to carry
comprar	to buy	mirar	to look (at); to watch
contestar	to answer	necesitar (+ inf.)	to need
conversar	to converse, to chat	practicar	to practice
desayunar	to have breakfast	preguntar	to ask (a question)
descansar	to rest	preparar	to prepare
desear (+ inf.)	to desire; to wish	regresar	to return
dibujar	to draw	terminar	to end; to finish
enseñar	to teach	tomar	to take; to drink
escuchar	to listen (to)	trabajar	to work
esperar (+ inf.)	to wait (for); to hope	viajar	to travel

► **¡Atención!** Unless referring to a person, the Spanish verbs **buscar**, **escuchar**, **esperar**, and **mirar** do not need to be followed by prepositions as they do in English.

Busco la tarea.
I'm looking for the homework.


Escucho la música.
I'm listening to the music.

Espero el autobús.
I'm waiting for the bus.

Miro la pizarra.
I'm looking at the blackboard.


COMPARE & CONTRAST

English uses three sets of forms to talk about the present: (1) the simple present (*Paco works*), (2) the present progressive (*Paco is working*), and (3) the emphatic present (*Paco does work*). In Spanish, the simple present can be used in all three cases.

Paco **trabaja** en la cafetería. 

1. Paco **works** in the cafeteria.
2. Paco **is working** in the cafeteria.
3. Paco **does work** in the cafeteria.

In Spanish and English, the present tense is also sometimes used to express future action.

Marina **viaja** a Madrid mañana. 

1. Marina **travels** to Madrid tomorrow.
2. Marina **will travel** to Madrid tomorrow.
3. Marina **is traveling** to Madrid tomorrow.

► When two verbs are used together with no change of subject, the second verb is generally in the infinitive. To make a sentence negative in Spanish, the word **no** is placed before the conjugated verb. In this case, **no** means *not*.

Deseo hablar con el señor Díaz.
I want to speak with Mr. Díaz.

Alicia **no** desea bailar ahora.
Alicia doesn't want to dance now.

- Spanish speakers often omit subject pronouns because the verb endings indicate who the subject is. In Spanish, subject pronouns are used for emphasis, clarification, or contrast.

—¿Qué enseñan?
What do they teach?

—**Ella** enseña arte y **él** enseña física.
She teaches art, and he teaches physics.

—¿Quién desea trabajar hoy?
Who wants to work today?

—**Yo** no deseo trabajar hoy.
I don't want to work today.

The verb **gustar**

- **Gustar** is different from other **-ar** verbs. To express your likes and dislikes, use the expression **(no) me gusta + el/la + [singular noun]** or **(no) me gustan + los/las + [plural noun]**. Note: You may use the phrase **a mí** for emphasis, but never the subject pronoun **yo**.

Me gusta la música clásica.
I like classical music.

Me gustan las clases de español y biología.
I like Spanish and biology classes.

A mí me gustan las artes.
I like the arts.

A mí no me gusta el programa.
I don't like the program.

- To talk about what you like and don't like to do, use **(no) me gusta + [infinitive(s)]**. Note that the singular **gusta** is always used, even with more than one infinitive.

No me gusta viajar en autobús.
I don't like to travel by bus.

Me gusta cantar y bailar.
I like to sing and dance.

- To ask a friend about likes and dislikes, use the pronoun **te** instead of **me**. Note: You may use **a ti** for emphasis, but never the subject pronoun **tú**.

—¿**Te gusta la geografía?**
Do you like geography?

—**Sí, me gusta. Y a ti, ¿te gusta el inglés?**
Yes, I like it. And you, do you like English?

- You can use this same structure to talk about other people by using the pronouns **nos**, **le**, and **les**. Unless your instructor tells you otherwise, only the **me** and **te** forms will appear on test materials until **Lección 7**.

Nos gusta dibujar. (nosotros)
We like to draw.

Nos gustan las clases de español e inglés. (nosotros)
We like Spanish class and English class.

No le gusta trabajar. (usted, él, ella)
You don't like to work.
He/She doesn't like to work.

Les gusta el arte. (ustedes, ellos, ellas)
You like art.
They like art.

¡ATENCIÓN!

Note that **gustar** does not behave like other **-ar** verbs. You must study its use carefully and pay attention to prepositions, pronouns, and agreement.

AYUDA

Use the construction **a + [name/pronoun]** to clarify to whom you are referring. This construction is not always necessary.

A Gabriela le gusta bailar.

A Sara y a él les gustan los animales.

A mí me gusta viajar.

¿**A ti** te gustan las clases?

CONSULTA

For more on **gustar** and other verbs like it, see **Estructura 7.4**, pp. 246–247.



¡INTÉNTALO!

Provide the present tense forms of these verbs. The first items have been done for you.

hablar

- Yo hablo español.
- Ellos _____ español.
- Inés _____ español.
- Nosotras _____ español.
- Tú _____ español.

gustar

- Me gusta el café. (a mí)
- ¿_____ las clases? (a ti)
- No _____ el café. (a ti)
- No _____ las clases. (a mí)
- No _____ el café. (a mí)

recursos



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Lección 2