

4.2

# Stem-changing verbs: Tutorial

## e→ie, o→ue

**ANTE TODO** Stem-changing verbs deviate from the normal pattern of regular verbs. When stem-changing verbs are conjugated, they have a vowel change in the last syllable of the stem.

**CONSULTA**

To review the present tense of regular -ar verbs, see **Estructura 2.1**, p. 50.

...

To review the present tense of regular -er and -ir verbs, see **Estructura 3.3**, p. 96.

INFINITIVE

empezar  
volver

VERB STEM

empez-  
volv-

STEM CHANGE

empiez-  
vuelv-

CONJUGATED FORM

empiezo  
vuelvo

► In many verbs, such as **empezar** (*to begin*), the stem vowel changes from **e** to **ie**. Note that the **nosotros/as** and **vosotros/as** forms don't have a stem change.

### The verb **empezar** (e:ie) (*to begin*)

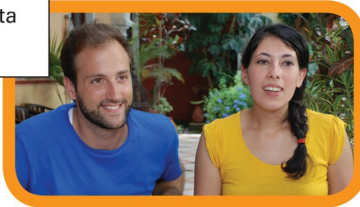
**Singular forms**

yo empiezo  
tú empiezas  
Ud./él/ella empieza

**Plural forms**

nosotros/as empezamos  
vosotros/as empezáis  
Uds./ellos/ellas empiezan

Los chicos empiezan a hablar de su visita al cenote.



Ellos vuelven a comer en el restaurante.

► In many other verbs, such as **volver** (*to return*), the stem vowel changes from **o** to **ue**. The **nosotros/as** and **vosotros/as** forms have no stem change.

### The verb **volver** (o:ue) (*to return*)

**Singular forms**

yo vuelvo  
tú vuelves  
Ud./él/ella vuelve

**Plural forms**

nosotros/as volvemos  
vosotros/as volvéis  
Uds./ellos/ellas vuelven

► To help you identify stem-changing verbs, they will appear as follows throughout the text:

**empezar (e:ie), volver (o:ue)**

## Common stem-changing verbs

## e:ie

<b>cerrar</b>	to close
<b>comenzar (a + inf.)</b>	to begin
<b>empezar (a + inf.)</b>	to begin
<b>entender</b>	to understand
<b>pensar</b>	to think
<b>perder</b>	to lose; to miss
<b>preferir (+ inf.)</b>	to prefer
<b>querer (+ inf.)</b>	to want; to love

## o:ue

<b>almorzar</b>	to have lunch
<b>contar</b>	to count; to tell
<b>dormir</b>	to sleep
<b>encontrar</b>	to find
<b>mostrar</b>	to show
<b>poder (+ inf.)</b>	to be able to; can
<b>recordar</b>	to remember
<b>volver</b>	to return

## ¡LENGUA VIVA!

The verb **perder** can mean *to lose* or *to miss*, in the sense of "to miss a train."

**Siempre pierdo mis llaves.**

*I always lose my keys.*

**Es importante no perder el autobús.**

*It's important not to miss the bus.*

- **Jugar** (to play a sport or a game) is the only Spanish verb that has a **u:ue** stem change. **Jugar** is followed by **a** + [definite article] when the name of a sport or game is mentioned.

Ella juega al tenis y al golf.



Los chicos juegan al fútbol.



- **Comenzar** and **empezar** require the preposition **a** when they are followed by an infinitive.

**Comienzan a jugar** a las siete.  
*They begin playing at seven.*

Ana **empieza a** escribir una postal.  
*Ana is starting to write a postcard.*

- **Pensar** + [infinitive] means *to plan* or *to intend to do something*. **Pensar en** means *to think about someone or something*.

¿**Piensan** ir al gimnasio?  
*Are you planning to go to the gym?*

¿**En** qué **piensas**?  
*What are you thinking about?*



## ¡INTÉNTALO!

Provide the present tense forms of these verbs.

## cerrar (e:ie)

- Ustedes cierran.
- Tú \_\_\_\_\_.
- Nosotras \_\_\_\_\_.
- Mi hermano \_\_\_\_\_.
- Yo \_\_\_\_\_.
- Usted \_\_\_\_\_.
- Los chicos \_\_\_\_\_.
- Ella \_\_\_\_\_.

## dormir (o:ue)

- Mi abuela no duerme.
- Yo no \_\_\_\_\_.
- Tú no \_\_\_\_\_.
- Mis hijos no \_\_\_\_\_.
- Usted no \_\_\_\_\_.
- Nosotros no \_\_\_\_\_.
- Él no \_\_\_\_\_.
- Ustedes no \_\_\_\_\_.

## recursos



WB  
pp. 41–42



LM  
p. 22



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Lección 4

## 4.3 Stem-changing verbs: e→i Tutorial

**ANTE TODO** You've already seen that many verbs in Spanish change their stem vowel when conjugated. There is a third kind of stem-vowel change in some verbs, such as **pedir** (*to ask for; to request*). In these verbs, the stressed vowel in the stem changes from **e** to **i**, as shown in the diagram.



▶ As with other stem-changing verbs you have learned, there is no stem change in the **nosotros/as** or **vosotros/as** forms in the present tense.

**¡LENGUA VIVA!**

As you learned in **Lección 2**, **preguntar** means *to ask a question*. **Pedir**, however, means *to ask for something*:

**Ella me pregunta cuántos años tengo.**

*She asks me how old I am.*

**Él me pide ayuda.**

*He asks me for help.*

### The verb **pedir** (e:i) (*to ask for; to request*)

**Singular forms**

yo	pido
tú	pides
Ud./él/ella	pide

**Plural forms**

nosotros/as	pedimos
vosotros/as	pedís
Uds./ellos/ellas	piden

▶ To help you identify verbs with the **e:i** stem change, they will appear as follows throughout the text:

**pedir (e:i)**

▶ These are the most common **e:i** stem-changing verbs:

**conseguir**

*to get; to obtain*

**decir**

*to say; to tell*

**repetir**

*to repeat*

**seguir**

*to follow; to continue; to keep (doing something)*

**Pido** favores cuando es necesario.  
*I ask for favors when it's necessary.*

Javier **dice** la verdad.  
*Javier is telling the truth.*

**Sigue** con su tarea.  
*He continues with his homework.*

**Consiguen** ver buenas películas.  
*They get to see good movies.*

▶ **¡Atención!** The verb **decir** is irregular in its **yo** form: **yo digo**.

▶ The **yo** forms of **seguir** and **conseguir** have a spelling change in addition to the stem change **e:i**.

**Sigo** su plan.  
*I'm following their plan.*

**Consigo** novelas en la librería.  
*I get novels at the bookstore.*

**recursos**



**¡INTÉNTALO!**

Provide the correct forms of the verbs.

**repetir (e:i)**

- Arturo y Eva repiten.
- Yo \_\_\_\_\_.
- Nosotros \_\_\_\_\_.
- Julia \_\_\_\_\_.
- Sofía y yo \_\_\_\_\_.

**decir (e:i)**

- Yo digo.
- Él \_\_\_\_\_.
- Tú \_\_\_\_\_.
- Usted \_\_\_\_\_.
- Ellas \_\_\_\_\_.

**seguir (e:i)**

- Yo sigo.
- Nosotros \_\_\_\_\_.
- Tú \_\_\_\_\_.
- Los chicos \_\_\_\_\_.
- Usted \_\_\_\_\_.