

SPANISH VERB CONJUGATION

How verbs work in Spanish:

- There are 3 types or classes of infinitive verbs in Spanish, defined by their endings.
(Infinitive means, for example, the idea of talking without knowing who is talking: “to talk”)
- Verbs are recognized to have a stem and an ending. The three types (endings) are:
-**ar verbs** (verbos –ar, “ah ere”), -**er verbs** (verbos –er , “eh ere”), and -**ir verbs** (verbos –ir, “ee ere”)
- To conjugate a verb in Spanish, the rule is to remove the infinitive ending and replace it with the corresponding (conjugated) ending for each “person” (1st, 2nd, 3rd person, singular and plural). Each tense, or time (present, past, future) has very specific endings for each person, as you will see.
- Because of these specific endings, the use of personal pronouns (I, you, he, she, it, we, they) is not mandatory in Spanish, and is part of the reason it seems like sentences are reversed in Spanish. Still, you need to know them.
- Here are the personal pronouns in Spanish:

“person”	Singular	Plural
1 st	I =Yo	We =Nosotros
2 nd	You (informal) =Tú	You (informal) =Vosotros *we won't learn this form
3 rd	You (formal) = Usted	“You guys” (formal) = Ustedes
3 rd	He = él	They (masculine) = ellos
3 rd	She = ella	They (feminine) = ellas
3 rd	It = él/ella (depending on gender of the noun)	It = ellos/ellas (depending on gender of the noun)
	*notice that usted (formal “you”) conjugates the same as 3 rd person, and él is just like “the”-el, but has an accent	*masculine is the default for mixed gender groups

Here are the “rules” for present tense: Remove the infinitive ending and replace it with:

singular	Verbos –ar	plural	singular	Verbos –er	plural	singular	Verbos –ir	plural
1 st	o	amos	1 st	o	emos	1 st	o	imos
2 nd	as		2 nd	es		2 nd	es	
3 rd	a	an	3 rd	e	en	3 rd	e	en

To learn and practice these endings, say OUT LOUD, “o, as, a, amos, an/o, es, e, emos, en/o, es, e, imos, en until you really have it down, then every time you see a new verb, you can quickly run through its present tense conjugation to cement it into your mind. You will learn about irregularities in class and will see that your mind will categorize for you.

*notice that the endings for –er and –ir verbs are the same except for the first person plural.

Here are three regular present tense verb examples:

Hablar-to talk	habl/ar	Comer-to eat	com/er	Subir-to climb/go up	sub/ir
“Habl” is the stem and “ar” the ending		“Com” is the stem and “er” the ending		“Sub” is the stem and “ir” the ending	
Habl-o	Habl-amos	Com-o	Com-emos	Sub -o	Sub-imos
Habl-as		Com -es		Sub -es	
Habl-a	Habl-an	Com -ae	Com-en	Sub -ae	Sub -en

To learn and practice these verbs, say OUT LOUD, and I suggest using the pronouns at first: “yo hablo, tú hablas...etc.

*Irregular verbs have changes in their stems or, like the very irregular verb, ir (to go), have no stem at all.