

# Spanish Subject Pronouns and Verb Conjugation Basics

➤ Verbs are action words.

➤ The infinitive form of the verb is the most basic form of the verb. In Spanish, the infinitive ends in -AR, -ER, or -IR. In English, the infinitive includes the word *to*.

*Examples:*

Verbs in the Infinitive Form	
English	Spanish
to run	➤ <i>correr</i>
to sleep	➤ <i>dormir</i>
to dance	➤ <i>bailar</i>
to sing	➤ <i>cantar</i>
to draw	➤ <i>dibujar</i>

➤ The verb changes to agree with the subject that is carrying out the action of the verb. *Who is performing the action of the verb? Who runs? Does he run, or do we run?*

➤ The subject pronouns represent the subject in the sentence.

Subject Pronouns					
Singular			Plural		
yo	➤	I	nosotros	➤	We
tú	➤	You	vosotros	➤	You-all
él	➤	He	ellos	➤	They (m.)
ella	➤	She	ellas	➤	They (f.)
usted	➤	You (formal)	ustedes	➤	You-all

➤ Each pronoun represents a *person* in grammar

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>yo</b> is first person singular.</li> <li>○ <b>tú</b> is second person singular.</li> <li>○ <b>él, ella</b> and <b>usted</b> are all third person singular.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>nosotros</b> is first person plural.</li> <li>○ <b>vosotros</b> is second person plural (only used in Spain).</li> <li>○ <b>ellos, ellas</b> and <b>ustedes</b> are third person plural.</li> </ul>
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➤ In the Spanish language, words can be masculine or feminine, singular or plural. Therefore, all nouns and subject pronouns **must agree** in gender (masculine or feminine) and number (plurality or singularity).

- *Ellos* and *ellas* both mean *they* in English.

- ☐ *Ellos* is a masculine plural subject pronoun and therefore refers to a **group of males** or a **group of males and females**.

- ☐ *Ellas* is a feminine plural subject pronoun and therefore refers to **ONLY** a **group of females**.

- ☐ Groups of males and females are **always** addressed as masculine plural (*ellos*).

➤ In Spanish, there is an **informal** and a **formal** way to address others when speaking to them.

- *Tú* and *usted* both translate to mean *you* in English. The difference between them is that one is more formal than the other.

- ☐ *Usted* is the more formal form. It is used in any situation where one would be polite, as when speaking to a stranger, elderly person, or a person of authority (like a boss or teacher).

- ☐ *Tú* is more familiar and used when speaking to family, friends, peers, or a child.

➤ In English, when speaking to a group of people, we would address the group as *you* or *all of you*. However, in Spanish a plural subject pronoun exists to say “you-all”. The subject pronoun for this is *vosotros* or *ustedes*.

- It is important to note that the pronoun *vosotros* is only used in Spain. Other Spanish-speaking countries prefer *ustedes*.

- *Ustedes* is a more formal form of the pronoun.

- ☐ This differentiation in formality is only noticeable in Spain. *Vosotros* is used in informal situations and *ustedes* is used in formal situations.

- ☐ In other Spanish speaking countries, *ustedes* is always used (informally *or* formally).