

ENGLISH VERB TENSES FOR **SPANISH** SPEAKERS

By

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You will be happy to know that English verb tenses are **easy to learn** in comparison to Spanish verb tenses. Let's look at the charts below and compare the English with the Spanish:

Present Tense:

I	I speak
You	You speak
He/She/It	She speaks
We	We speak
You (plural)	You speak
They	They speak

Yo	hablo
Tú	hablas
Él/Ella/Ud.	Ella habla
Nosotros	hablamos
Vosotros	habláis
Ellos/Ellas/Uds.	Ellos hablan

Past Tense:

I	I worked
You	You worked
He/She/It	She worked
We	We worked
You (plural)	You worked
They	They worked

Yo	trabajé
Tú	trabajaste
Él/Ella/Ud.	Ella trabajó
Nosotros	trabajamos
Vosotros	trabajasteis
Ellos/Ellas/Uds.	Ellos trabajaron

Future Tense:

I	I will live
You	You will live
He/She/It	She will live
We	We will live
You (plural)	You will live
They	They will live

Yo	viviré
Tú	vivirás
Él/Ella/Ud.	Ella vivirá
Nosotros	viviremos
Vosotros	viviréis
Ellos/Ellas/Uds.	Ellos vivirán

So, it is fairly easy to know how to conjugate verbs in English because the verb remains the same at all times **except for the third person singular** in the Present Tense.

Let's move on to learning the first English tense in this course – the Present Tense.

PRESENT TENSE

We use the Present Tense (**el Presente**) when talking about something that is factual, repeated, or usual. **Con este tiempo verbal, hablamos sobre un hecho, un hábito ... sobre la vida normal.**

Examples:

I do homework every day.	Hago la tarea todos los días.
I have the book and the dictionary.	Tengo el libro y el diccionario.
We eat spicy food.	Comemos comida picante.
We hear the cat.	Oímos el gato.
The boys don't know how to paint.	Los muchachos no saben como pintar.
We live around the corner.	Vivimos a la vuelta de la esquina.
Do you know where John is?	¿Sabes dónde está Juan?
What city do you live in?	¿En qué ciudad vive usted?

Es muy fácil, ¿no es cierto? This tense is very easy to learn because it is normally the first tense that people learn when learning any language, plus the Present Tense in English is nearly identical to **el tiempo Presente** in Spanish.

In this course we are **not focusing on verb conjugations** because you can find them everywhere on the internet, but instead we are focusing on the **16 English verb tenses**. But before we go on to the next verb tense, we will review the verb “to be” in English because you will need it when forming the next tense in this course.

Verb “To Be” in English

The infinitive form (**el infinitivo**) in English always includes the word “to” with the verb. So, in Spanish the infinitive **vivir** is expressed in English as “to live” ... **comer** in Spanish is “to eat” in English ... **caminar** in Spanish is “to walk” in English.

One thing that makes English easy to learn is that the Spanish verbs **ser** and **estar** are both covered by the one English verb “to be.” So in Spanish when you say “I am Mario” you use the verb **ser** to say “Soy Mario” ... but if you say “I am here” you use the verb **estar** to say “**Estoy aquí.**” “I am tall” in English is “**Soy alto**” in Spanish ... but “I am happy” in English is “**Estoy feliz**” in Spanish.

Spanish language learners such as myself try to remember which verb to use by thinking of **ser** as something **permanent** and **estar** as something **temporary**, but it is more complicated than that. The **good news** for you is that you only have to learn the one verb “to be” in English. Here are **ser** and **estar** and the verb “to be”:

I	I am
You	You are
He/She/It	She is
We	We are
You (plural)	You are
They	They are

Yo	soy
Tú	eres
Él/Ella/Ud.	es
Nosotros	somos
Vosotros	sois
Ellos/Ellas/Uds.	son

Yo	estoy
Tú	estás
Él/Ella/Ud.	está
Nosotros	estamos
Vosotros	estáis
Ellos/Ellas/Uds.	están

Now that we have reviewed the English verb “to be,” let’s continue by moving on to the Present Progressive Tense.

PRESENT PROGRESSIVE TENSE

The Present Progressive Tense (sometimes called the Present Continuous Tense) is often used to describe something that is happening right now – **ahora mismo!**

Examples:

You are learning English.	Estás aprendiendo inglés.
I am eating pizza.	Estoy comiendo pizza.
We are watching television.	Estamos mirando la televisión.

Or, you can talk about something that you are doing today, this month, this year, etc. ... Which means that you can talk about something you might not be doing at this very moment but something that you are in the process of doing over a longer period of time.

Examples:

I am working at the store this month.	Estoy trabajando en la tienda este mes.
They are learning a lot about sports at school.	Ellos están aprendiendo mucho acerca de deportes en la escuela.
I am studying to be a lawyer.	Estoy estudiando para ser un abogado.

Finally, you can use the Present Progressive Tense in English to talk about something that will happen in the future. **¡Atención!** – In Spanish you do this with **el tiempo Presente** and **not el Presente Progresivo**.

Examples:

I am playing soccer with friends after work.	Juego el fútbol con amigos despues de trabajo.
My mother is cooking dinner tonight.	Mi madre cocina la cena esta noche.
Tomorrow we are meeting to have coffee.	Mañana nos vemos para tomar café.
I am calling you this afternoon.	Te llamo esta tarde.

How to Form the Present Progressive Tense:

You form the Present Progressive Tense in English by combining the Present Tense of the verb “to be” with a verb that ends in the letters “ing” – Another name for this “ing verb” is the present participle. The **Presente Progresivo** tense in Spanish is formed the same way by combining the verb **estar** with the **gerundio**.

The present participle “working” is the **gerundio** “trabajando” ... the present participle “drinking” is the **gerundio** “bebiendo” ... the present participle “living” is the **gerundio** “viviendo” ... and so on.

(¡Atención! ... the “present participle” in English is called “gerundio” in Spanish, however a “gerund” in English is not the “gerundio” in Spanish. In English a gerund is a noun that is made from a verb by adding the letters “ing” for example “Reading helps you learn English.” In this sentence we mention the thing that is known as “Reading”).

Okay ... so far we have learned the Present Tense, and then we reviewed the verb “to be” before learning the Present Progressive Tense. Now that we have done that ... now that we have studied those first two tenses ... now that we have made some progress, let’s learn the tense that I have used 3 times in this **very long** sentence – we have done, we have studied, and we have made – let’s learn the Present Perfect Tense.

PRESENT PERFECT TENSE

The English language Present Perfect Tense is considered a past tense in Spanish, and therefore this tense is called **Pretérito Perfecto** or **Antepresente** in Spanish.

The **Pretérito Perfecto** tense in Spanish describes "**una acción terminada en un tiempo no terminado**," and the unfinished time can be today, this week, this month, this year, a lifetime, or any period of unfinished time.

The **easiest way** to understand the Present Perfect Tense in English is to think of it as action that **started in the past** and **continues in the present**. **Acción que comenzó en el pasado y continua en el presente.**

Examples:

I have already seen that movie.	Ya he visto esa película.
Have you spoken with the doctor?	¿Has hablado con el medico?
The boys have spoken with the teacher.	Los niños han hablado con el maestro.
She has eaten in this restaurant.	Ella ha comido en este restaurante.
We have always played soccer.	Siempre hemos jugado el fútbol.
Do you know if the girls have gone to the store?	¿Sabes si las chicas han ido a la tienda?
We have lived in this house for five years.	Hemos vivido en esta casa por cinco años.

How to Form the Present Perfect Tense:

The Present Perfect Tense in English is formed the same way as it is in the Spanish language ... it is a compound tense (**tiempo compuesto**) that is formed by combining the present tense of the helping verb "have" or "has" with the past participle. For example ... You have done your work ... She has written a letter... We have told the truth.

In Spanish you combine the helping verb **haber** (to have done something) with the **participio** to form this tense. **Por ejemplo ... Has hecho tu trabajo ... Ella ha escrito una carta ... Hemos dicho la verdad.**

¡Atención! – In Spanish you **don't use** the verb **tener** (to have, to possess) as the helping verb in this tense, and likewise in English you **don't use** the verb "to have" (to possess) as the helping verb in this tense. So, when you say "She has a letter" (**Ella tiene una carta**) it means that she has a letter in her possession, but when you say "She has written a letter," it is translated into Spanish as **Ella ha escrito una carta.**

Examples:

I	I have written a letter.
You	You have written a letter.
He/She/It	She has written a letter.
We	We have written a letter.
You (plural)	You have written a letter.
They	They have written a letter.

Yo	He escrito una carta.
Tú	Has escrito una carta.
Él/Ella/Ud.	Ella ha escrito una carta.
Nosotros	Hemos escrito una carta.
Vosotros	Habéis escrito una carta.
Ellos/Ellas/Uds.	Ellos han escrito una carta.

The English past participles are a little complicated, but fortunately in this course you receive a spreadsheet that lists many of the more common and difficult English **past participles** alongside the **infinitives** and **present participles** for each verb.

We've already covered the Present Progressive Tense – therefore, it is time to cover the Past Progressive Tense.

PAST PROGRESSIVE TENSE

The Past Progressive Tense (sometimes called the Past Continuous Tense) is used to describe something that was happening in the past.

Examples:

Roberto was sleeping in my office.	Roberto estaba durmiendo en mi oficina.
María was singing last night.	María estaba cantando anoche.
You were living in Granada.	Ustedes estaban viviendo en Granada.

Also, you can use this tense to describe something that was happening in the past that was interrupted by something else. **Se puede usar para describir algo que estaba ocurriendo en el pasado que fue interrumpido por otra acción.**

Examples:

I was eating when Jorge arrived.	Yo estaba comiendo cuando Jorge llegó.
We were cooking when the phone rang.	Estábamos cocinando cuando sonó el teléfono.

Finally, you can use this tense to describe two things that were happening at the same time in the past.

Examples:

I was singing while he was playing the guitar.	Yo cantaba mientras él tocaba la guitarra.
My sisters were dancing and my brothers were sleeping.	Mis hermanas estaban bailando y mis hermanos estaban durmiendo.

How to Form the Past Progressive Tense:

You form the Past Progressive Tense in English by combining the Past Tense of the verb “to be” with the present participle (also called an “ing verb”). I **was** studying. You **were** playing. Jose **was** working. They **were** reading.

In Spanish it is formed by combining the verb **estar** in the Imperfect Tense with the **gerundio**. **Yo estaba estudiando. Estabas jugando. Jose estaba trabajando. Ellos estaban leyendo.**

¡Atención! – The Imperfect Tense (**el tiempo Imperfecto**) **does not exist** in English ... we use the Past Progressive Tense in English to describe something that was happening in the past.

¡Perfecto! You have already learned four English language tenses – Present Tense, Present Progressive Tense, Present Perfect Tense, and Past Progressive Tense. But before we continue I want to remind you that the Present Perfect Tense describes **acción que comenzó en el pasado y continua en el presente** ... I want to remind you of that because it is now time to look at the Past Perfect Tense.

Are you ready?

PAST PERFECT TENSE

The Past Perfect Tense **es muy fácil en inglés** because it is just like the **Pluscuamperfecto en español** ... it describes **acción que comenzó en el pasado y terminó en el pasado**.

The Past Perfect Tense is also a compound tense (**tiempo compuesto**) that is formed by combining the helping verb “had” with the past participle.

Examples:

I	I had eaten the pizza before you arrived.
You	You had eaten the pizza before the concert.
He/She/It	She had eaten the pizza before going to bed.
We	We had eaten the pizza before Mom arrived.
You (plural)	You had eaten the pizza before the party.
They	They had eaten the pizza before getting married.

Yo	Yo había comido la pizza antes de que llegaras.
Tú	Habías comido la pizza antes del concierto.
Él/Ella/Ud.	Ella había comido la pizza antes de acostarse.
Nosotros	Habíamos comido la pizza antes de que Mamá llegara.
Vosotros	Habíais comido la pizza antes de la fiesta.
Ellos/Ellas/Uds.	Ellos habían comido la pizza antes de casarse.

Notice that you use the same helping verb “had” in every case both singular and plural ... I **had** eaten pizza, you **had** eaten pizza, she **had** eaten pizza, we **had** eaten pizza, you (plural) **had** eaten pizza, and they **had** eaten pizza.

Notice also that the Past Perfect Tense is used to describe something that happened in the past before something else happened in the past – **pasado, pasado** – both events happened in the past, one before the other.

Or, you can think of the Past Perfect Tense as describing something that happened in the past before a specific time in the past.

Examples:

She had not seen the movie before Sunday.	Ella no había visto la película antes del domingo.
My friends had lived in Colombia before 1980.	Mis amigos habían vivido in Colombia antes de 1980.

Do you remember that I had said earlier that the Imperfect Tense does not exist in English? Similarly, what I call the Imperfect Progressive Tense does not exist in English (for example: **Yo estaba hablando con los gerentes**) – we call that the Past Progressive Tense. Additionally, the 4 tenses of the Subjunctive Mood do not exist in English.

Moreover, I want you to know that there are 4 verb tenses in English that are not called **tiempos verbales** in Spanish, and we will review them now. The two most commonly used in English are the Present Perfect Progressive Tense and the Past Perfect Progressive Tense, however occasionally we also use the Future Perfect Progressive Tense and the Conditional Perfect Progressive Tense.

PRESENT PERFECT PROGRESSIVE TENSE

This tense is actually quite easy to understand. It is formed just like the Present Perfect Tense, and then all you have to do is add a present participle (also called an “ing verb”).

To review, the Present Perfect Tense is a compound tense (**tiempo compuesto**) that is formed by combining the present tense of the helping verb “have” or “has” with the past participle ... and when you form the Present Perfect Progressive Tense you always use the past participle of the verb “to be.”

Examples:

I have been studying for the test.	He estado estudiando para la prueba.
You have been reading a book.	Tú has estado leyendo un libro.
She has been drinking a cup of coffee.	Ella ha estado bebiendo una taza de café.
We have been working at the store.	Hemos estado trabajando en la tienda.
You Spanish speakers have been learning English.	Vosotros hispanohablantes habéis estado aprendiendo el inglés.
They have been cleaning the carpet.	Ellos han estado limpiando la alfombra.

That’s all there is to it! The word “been” (pronounced like the name Ben) is the past participle form of the verb “to be.”

So, in the **Present Perfect Tense** you can say: “I have been happy,” “She has been funny today,” and “We have been dedicated to our English.” But, in the **Present Perfect Progressive Tense** you add a present participle to say: “I have been reading,” “She has been working,” and “We have been studying our English.”

Here is the formula for the Present Perfect Progressive Tense: have/has + been + present participle

PAST PERFECT PROGRESSIVE TENSE

All you have to do in order to form the Past Perfect Progressive Tense is change the “have” or “has” (shown above) to “had” in order to describe progressive action that started and ended in the past.

Examples:

I had been studying for the test.	Había estado estudiando para la prueba.
You had been reading a book.	Tú habías estado leyendo un libro.
She had been drinking a cup of coffee.	Ella había estado bebiendo una taza de café.
We had been working at the store.	Habíamos estado trabajando en la tienda.
You Spanish speakers had been learning English.	Vosotros hispanohablantes habíais estado aprendiendo el inglés.
They had been cleaning the carpet.	Ellos habían estado limpiando la alfombra.

The two other perfect progressive tenses in English are so rarely used that I will not explain them in detail. They are the Future Perfect Progressive Tense and the Conditional Perfect Progressive Tense, and here are a few examples:

FUTURE PERFECT PROGRESSIVE TENSE	In 30 more minutes we will have been studying English for at least an hour!
CONDITIONAL PERFECT PROGRESSIVE TENSE	I would have been studying English had I listened to my mother.

Let’s move on to more common tenses, and the Simple Past Tense is one of the most commonly used tenses.

SIMPLE PAST TENSE

The Simple Past Tense is another English verb tense that is just like the equivalent tense in Spanish, **el Pretérito Indefinido**. You use this tense to describe specific past actions that:

- Occurred at some fixed point in time
- Occurred a specific number of times
- Occurred during a specific time period

The most difficult aspect of learning the Simple Past Tense is learning how the English verbs change from the Present Tense to the Simple Past Tense. The spreadsheet that you receive with this course shows many of the most common verbs, but here are a few examples of **significant** changes:

Present Tense	Simple Past Tense	Pretérito
I do	I did	hice
I think	I thought	pensé
I go	I went	fui
I bring	I brought	traje
I buy	I bought	compré
I catch	I caught	agarré
I eat	I ate	comí
I find	I found	encontré
I leave	I left	dejé / me fui
I light	I lit	encendí
I seek	I sought	busqué
I sleep	I slept	dormí
I speak	I spoke	hablé
I take	I took	tomé
I understand	I understood	entendí

Nonetheless, the nice thing about English is that for virtually all of the verbs there is no change between the singular and plural, and no change based on the person (I, you, she, we, they). For example: I bought the car, you bought the car, she bought the car, we bought the car, you my friends bought the car, and they bought the car. We all bought the car!

Here are a few examples of the Past Tense in action:

Fixed Point in Time	I went to your house yesterday.	Fui a tu casa ayer.
Specific Number of Times/Items	You bought five pizzas.	Compraste cinco pizzas.
Specific Time Period	We ate for 2 hours	Comimos durante 2 horas.

In this course we have already covered all of the past and present tenses in English, a total of 10 tenses. There remains 6 English verb tenses to learn: Future Tense, Future Progressive Tense, Future Perfect Tense, Conditional Tense, Conditional Progressive Tense, and the Conditional Perfect tense.

¡Vamos!

FUTURE TENSE

I already showed you how you can use the Present Progressive Tense to talk about future events. For example: I am calling you this afternoon. (**Te llamo esta tarde**). You can also use the present participle of the verb “to go” in English much like **ir + a + el infinitivo** in Spanish to express future action.

Examples:

I am going to ride my motorcycle tomorrow.	Voy a montar mi motocicleta mañana.
Martin is going to do his homework.	Martin va a hacer su tarea.
The workers are going to travel to Nicaragua.	Los trabajadores van a viajar a Nicaragua.

The word “will” is often used to express the future in English.

Examples:

There will be a game at 8:00 PM.	Habr� un partido a las 8:00 PM.
I will help you learn English.	Te ayudar� a aprender ingl�s.
We will eat all the vegetables.	Comeremos todas las verduras.

On occasion you will hear someone say “shall” instead of “will,” but the word “shall” is rarely used anymore especially here in the United States where I live. For example: I shall teach you the best English in the world! Also, it is important to know that when you say something in the negative, the contraction “won’t” is normally used instead of “will not.”

There won't be a game at 8:00 PM.	No habr� un partido a las 8:00 PM.
They won't send an invitation soon.	Ellos no enviar�n una invitaci�n pronto.

FUTURE PROGRESSIVE TENSE

This tense expresses continuing action in the future, and it is formed by combining “will be” with the present participle.

Julio will be speaking with the President in the morning.	Julio estar� hablando con el Presidente en la ma�ana.
My friends will be studying in the library.	Mis amigas estar�n estudiando en la biblioteca.

FUTURE PERFECT TENSE

This is another tense that is not used very often in English, however it is used sometimes ... and fortunately the Spanish language has the same tense which is used the same way. This tense is used to express **what will have happened** in the future, or to **express probability or conjecture** about something that has recently happened. Here are some examples:

I will have arrived by Monday.	Habr� llegado para el lunes.
My parents will have purchased their tickets by tomorrow.	Mis padres habr�n comprado sus boletos para ma�ana.
We must have lost our fear of success.	Habremos perdido nuestro miedo del �xito.
The dog must have eaten the cookies.	El perro habr� comido las galletas.

Ahora, I would like to teach you the conditional tenses. Would you like to learn them?

CONDITIONAL TENSE

It is easy to recognize and form the Conditional Tense – just look for the word “would” (or sometimes “could”).

¡El condicional es fácil de formar y reconocer!

Here are some of the various uses of the Conditional Tense:

- To express desire – **Expresar deseo**: I would like to travel more. **Me gustaría viajar más.**
- To express courtesy – **Expresar cortesía**: Could you open the window? **¿Podrías abrir la ventana?**
- To express uncertainty – **Expresar incertidumbre**: I would buy the dress, but I don't have any money. **Yo compraría el vestido, pero no tengo dinero.**
- To express something hypothetical – **Expresar algo hipotético**: She would scream if she saw a fish. **Ella gritaría si ella viera un pez.** I would go to the moon if I could. **Yo viajaría a la luna si yo pudiera.**
- To express a future intention with a past tense verb – **Expresar el futuro junto con un verbo de tiempo pasado**: I said that we would do it tomorrow. **Dije que lo haríamos mañana.**
- To give advice or your opinion – **Dar consejos o tu opinion**: If I were you, I would go to Peru. **Si fuera tú, iría a Perú.**

CONDITIONAL PROGRESSIVE TENSE

This tense is similar to the Conditional, however the verb expresses and emphasizes continuous action. You form this tense by combining “would be” and the present participle. Here are some examples:

- Affirmative – She would be eating something healthy. **Ella estaría comiendo algo saludable.**
- Negative – I wouldn't be driving so long. **Yo no estaría conduciendo tanto tiempo.**
- Question – Would they be watching television? **¿Estarían viendo la televisión?**

CONDITIONAL PERFECT TENSE

Woulda Coulda Shoulda! That is an expression that we use in English to say that there is no use complaining about something in the past if there is nothing that you can do right now to change the past. Nonetheless, if you would like to be able to complain about the past, I will teach you the Conditional Perfect Tense so that you can do it.

We use the Conditional Perfect Tense to explain what might have happened in the past, to explain what you or someone else might have done in the past, or to talk about the hypothetical past.

Here is how you form this tense: would have + past participle. And here are a few ways to use it:

- Affirmative – You would have been rich if you had studied English. **Habrías sido rico si hubieras estudiado inglés.**
- Negative – They wouldn't have hired you if you did not speak English. **Ellos no te habrían contratado si no hubieras hablado inglés**
- Question – Would this course have cost more if the teacher were famous? **¿Habría costado más este curso si el maestro hubiera sido famoso?**

¡Lo hicimos!

ENGLISH VERB TENSES FOR SPANISH SPEAKERS

¡Eso es todo mis amigos y amigas! Here are all 16 English verb tenses in the order in which we studied them:

1	Present Tense	Presente
2	Present Progressive Tense	Presente Progresivo
3	Present Perfect Tense	Pretérito Perfecto (Antepresente)
4	Past Progressive Tense	Pretérito Imperfecto Progresivo
5	Past Perfect Tense	Pretérito Pluscuamperfecto (Antecopretérito)
6	Present Perfect Progressive Tense	Pretérito Perfecto Progresivo
7	Past Perfect Progressive Tense	Pretérito Pluscuamperfecto Progresivo
8	Future Perfect Progressive Tense	Futuro Compuesto Progresivo
9	Conditional Perfect Progressive Tense	Condicional Compuesto Progresivo
10	Simple Past Tense	Pretérito Indefinido (Pretérito)
11	Future Tense	Futuro
12	Future Progressive Tense	Futuro Progresivo
13	Future Perfect Tense	Futuro Compuesto (Antefuturo)
14	Conditional Tense	Condicional (Pospretérito)
15	Conditional Progressive Tense	Condicional Progresivo
16	Conditional Perfect Tense	Condicional Compuesto (Antepospretérito)

Here are all 16 English verb tenses in a chart that will help you remember them:

Past	Present	Future	Conditional
Past Progressive	Present Progressive	Future Progressive	Conditional Progressive
Past Perfect	Present Perfect	Future Perfect	Conditional Perfect
Past Perfect Progressive	Present Perfect Progressive	Future Perfect Progressive	Conditional Perfect Progressive

This entire course can be downloaded as a **document**, and there are other documents in the resources section. ¡Espero que no hay errores en mi español! Feel free to email me with any questions or suggestions that you might have (flywithspanish@gmail.com). On my website www.fotopala.com there are FREE resources that will help you:

- Learn English
- Teach ESL (English as a Second Language)
- Learn Spanish
- Be empowered

Julioandgringo.com/downloads/audiolibro is a bilingual audiobook (Spanish-English) that will not only help you learn English, but it will also empower you to live a happier and more successful life.

I hope that you have enjoyed this course and ... ¡Que te vaya bien!