

Conjugating -ar verbs

All Spanish verbs fit into one of three categories: -ar, -er, or -ir verbs. In this section we will learn to conjugate regular -ar verbs. But let's review a little first.

Verb – A word that represents an action or a state of being.

Infinitive – the simple or basic form of the verb, the unchanged verb with the -ar, -er, or -ir still attached to the end of the word.
Generally means “to do something” ex: **hablar** – to speak

Subject – the person doing the action

Subject pronouns – Words that replace the person's name and used as the subject of a noun, in English: I, you, he, she, we, they, you all.
In Spanish: yo, tú, él, ella, Ud., Nosotros(as), ellos, ellas, Uds.

Conjugate – changing the verb to match the subject

Conjugations – the forms of the verb after it has been conjugated or changed to match the subjects

In Spanish we can tell which category a verb belongs to by looking at the ending of the infinitive.

Examples :

Hablar (to speak) is an -ar verb because it ends in -ar.

Comer (to eat) is an -er verb because it ends in -er.

Vivir (to live) is an -ir verb because it ends in -ir.

It's that easy!

Each category has its own endings. We will learn -er and -ir endings in a later chapter. For now let's look at regular present tense -ar verbs.

Hablar – to speak

usar – to use or wear

Buscar – to look for

Llevar – to take, to carry, to wear

Mirar – to look at

desear – to desire, to want

Necesitar – to need

trabajar – to work

Comprar – to buy

calzar – to wear (shoes)

Pagar – to pay

estudiar – to study

To conjugate -ar verbs follow these steps:

1. Take off the -ar ending.
 Hablar -ar = habl (this is called the stem)
2. Figure out who the subject is
 - a. Yo = I
 - b. Tú = you (informal, familiar)
 - c. Él = he
 - d. Ella = she
 - e. Usted (Ud.) = you (formal)
 - f. Nosotros (as) = we
 - g. Vosotros (as) = you all (Spain)
 - h. Ellos, ellas = they
 - i. Ustedes (Uds.) = you all
3. Add the appropriate ending

Example: Hablar - to speak

o	amos
as	áis
a	an

I speak = yo hablo	We speak = nosotros hablamos
You speak = tú hablas	You all speak = vosotros habláis
He speaks = él habla	They speak = ellos hablan
She speaks = ella habla	They speak = ellas hablan
You speak = Ud. habla	You all speak = Uds. hablan

Some people find “the box” helpful.

The box

Subject pronouns (Eng.)	Sub. Pronouns (Span.)	-ar verb endings	Hablar
I	Yo	-o	Hablo
You	Tú	-as	Hablas
He, she, you	Él, ella, Ud.	-a	Habla
We	Nosotros, nosotras	-amos	Hablamos
You all (Spain)	Nosotros, nosotras	-áis	Habláis
They, you all	Ellos, ellas, Uds.	-an	Hablan