



Indirect Object Pronouns



First things first: What's a pronoun?

A pronoun is a word used to take the place of a noun (a person, place or thing) so that we don't have to keep saying the noun over and over. We do this all the time in English and it is equally common in Spanish.

This is especially useful if the noun is a long word or name!



An example would be something like this:

Johosaphat Rumsmiller Farkwad came to school. I gave Johosaphat Rumsmiller Farkwad a piece of cheese. We told Johosaphat Rumsmiller Farkwad the story. Man am I ever tired of saying Johosaphat Rumsmiller Farkwad!

It is so much easier to just say this:

Johosaphat Rumsmiller Farkwad came to school. I gave **him** a piece of cheese. We told **him** the story. I like saying **him**!

Can you think of times when you use pronouns?

Hey!! You in the back!
Wake-up!!

This is important!!



Indirect Objects:

An indirect object is a noun in a sentence. Not all sentences have an indirect object. To find out, first, we find the verb in a sentence and ask the question: To whom or for whom is the subject doing something?

For example:

I bought *her* the shoes (*for Jill*).

Or

She told *them* the story (*to Tom, Dick and Harry*).



An easier way:

In those sentences it would be easier to just say:

I bought the shoes for her.

Or

She told the story to them.

☀ **We just used indirect object pronouns!!** ☀

Sometimes we even switch the word order in English.

We say:

I bought *her* the shoes. And She told *them* the story.



Now: in Spanish!

Here is a complete list of English and Spanish indirect object pronouns.

EnglishSpanish

me	us	me	nos
you	(ye)	te	(os)
him/her	you/them	le	les
y'all*	all y'all*		

*Deep South only



Let's try some!

Which Spanish indirect object pronoun would you use to replace the following nouns?

I give *her* candy (to my daughter).

le

They threw *us* the ball.

nos

She told *me* the truth.

me

We sold *them* the car.

les



Now, the bad news!

- ❖ Placing pronouns in English is easy for us since we've been doing it for a long time. Doing it in Spanish will require us to put aside our customary way of doing it and follow Spanish rules.
- ❖ Yes, it is important to place them correctly because just like in English, a sentence can sound strange if the pronouns are in the wrong places. For example:

Tell it me! vs. Tell it to me!

Or:

Please pass the butter me. vs. Please pass me the butter.



Pronoun placement

- ❖ There are five places a pronoun (any kind, not just indirect object pronouns) may be placed in a sentence in Spanish.
- ❖ Directly before a conjugated verb
- ❖ Tacked-on to the end of an infinitive (thus forming a longer word!)
- ❖ Tacked-on to the end of a command (imperative form)
- ❖ Tacked-on to the end of a present participle (-ing form)
- ❖ Before a negative command.



Before a conjugated verb

- ❖ This is very common and unfortunately backward from English. We say, “I gave her the book.” in Spanish they say “(I) to her gave the book.”
- ❖ Let’s try it. I want to say “We give them the book.”
(Nosotros) ___ damos el libro.
Which pronoun goes there?
les
- ❖ How about; “She gives him her phone number.”
(Ella)___ da su número de teléfono.
le



Tacked-on to an infinitive

❖ This is much easier. Remember, an infinitive is an unconjugated verb. (It ends in “r”.)

❖ Let’s try it!

❖ We want to send you (tú) a letter.

___ Queremos mandar ___ una carta.

Notice **te** can go in either spot-Why?

❖ She is going to tell us the answer.

Ella __ va a decir __ la respuesta.

This time **nos** can go in either blank.



Tacked-on to a command

❖ This one sounds more like English.

We say “Tell me!” and Spanish does the same!

❖ Place the pronoun directly at the end of the command.

How would we write “Tell us!”

¡Di___!

nos

How about “Write to your grandmother!”

¡Escribe___!

le



Tacked-on to a present participle (-ing verb)

- ❖ This situation will almost always afford 2 options. Remember how the pronoun can go before a conjugated verb? Present participles are almost always found in conjunction with a conjugated verb. So you'll almost always have 2 options. Both are correct and accepted.
- ❖ How do we say, “I am writing you (tú) a letter.”?
(Yo)___Estoy escribiendo___ una carta.

te

Either location is OK! You choose where to put it!



The end?

I hope this has been helpful for you. Be sure to ask me any questions you may have. (By the way, I just used 2 indirect object pronouns in the last 2 lines!)

If you'd like more help/practice, follow the links below!

Have fun!!

<http://www.studyspanish.com/lessons/iopro1.htm>

<http://www.studyspanish.com/lessons/iopro2.htm>

<http://www.studyspanish.com/lessons/iopro3.htm>