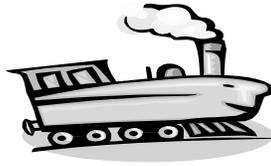


# VERBS



Verbs are considered to be the “engine” of a language. They are the words that express ACTION. In the preceding pages, we discuss adjectives. Whereas adjectives require nouns, verbs, of course, require subjects.

As you know, a verb in its infinitive form is one that does not reflect either a subject or a tense (present, past, or future). The infinitive verb is spotted in English when it has the preposition “to” in front of it. Example, “I want to eat.” Once a verb is conjugated, it is assigned a subject and a tense. Example, I eat, you eat, he eats, etc.

To illustrate an important point, let’s consider the verb ‘to teach’ in the first-person singular. The present tense in Spanish that we are about to study means not only “**I teach,**” but also, “**I am teaching**” and “**I do teach.**” This is the tense you will use to refer to the near future, as in “**I’m teaching tomorrow.**” Finally, “**I do teach**” is EXTREMELY important, because this is how you will ask a question of someone, as in “Do you teach Spanish?” There is no need to look for a translation of “do you”, as it’s already included within the verb itself. In other words, the auxiliary words that we use with our verbs in English, (**do, does, doesn’t** and **don’t**), ARE NOT TRANSLATED. Have you ever had a native Spanish-speaker come to you and ask, “Speak Spanish?” It’s easy now to understand why the “do you” is missing. The concept of using an auxiliary word with a question in this fashion is not found in Spanish. The only time the word “do” is used in Spanish is when it is acting as the action verb of the sentence, as in “I do the laundry,” or “we’re doing the grocery shopping.”

The “rule” in English for conjugating a verb in the present tense is to delete the word “to” and add the letter –s to the third person singular. The third person singular in English, of course, refers to “he, she, who and it.” Before going on with the conjugation of our verbs in Spanish, we will need to take a look at the subject pronouns and discuss one important difference between English and Spanish.

**Nota:** Conjugated forms of verbs do not appear in your dictionary. You will find the infinitive form, but not all the different conjugations. You may wish to consider purchasing a book that contains nothing but conjugated verbs.

## I OBJECT! I AM NOT AN OBJECT

On the previous page, we learned about reflexive pronouns. Just like English, there are several sets of pronouns in Spanish as well. A very common pronoun is the direct object pronoun. The direct object of a sentence answers the question **who?** or **what?** More often than not, we replace the object NOUN with the object PRONOUN. Speakers usually do this to avoid redundancies in conversation. For example:

- “Do you have your homework?”
- “No, I don’t have my homework.”
- “Where is your homework.”
- “My dog ate my homework.”

Obviously, we usually don’t speak this way. We would normally replace the object noun, “homework” with the pronoun, “it.” This same dialogue, therefore, would read:

- “Do you have your homework?”
- “No, I don’t have it.”
- “Where is it?”
- “My dog ate it.”



Now that we know what an important role gender plays in Spanish, it only makes sense that the object pronoun will be the same gender as the noun that it replaces. For example, we know that the word “homework” in Spanish is feminine. So, we will need the feminine, singular pronoun here. The feminine object pronoun that replaces the noun is the word *la*.

You might think, at this point, that the Spanish dialogue will look like this:

- *¿Tienes tu tarea?*
  - *Sí, ~~tengo~~ la.*

TAKE A PEN OR PENCIL AND DRAW A **BIG, FAT X** OVER THE **BIG, FAT X** IN THE SENTENCE IN THE BOX. YOU SHOULD NEVER SAY THIS!!

In English, we put our object noun **AFTER** the verb. In the above sentence, we tried to do the same thing, but discovered that Spanish syntax is different in regard to placement of pronouns. Turn the page to find out where to place that pronoun!