



Useful Phrases to Ask for Directions in Spanish

Walking around in a new city is one of the best ways to know more about the local culture and find interesting places to visit.

But, what if you are in a Spanish speaking country? “No hay problema”, in this session we will learn words and phrases that will make the process of asking for directions in Spanish much easier and enjoyable.

First, we will go over a few casual phrases to greet someone, and then a list of phrases you can use to ask for directions in Spanish. As we go over the phrases, I will first say the phrase in Spanish so you can try to understand as much as possible. Then, I will say the phrase in English, and then I will repeat the same phrase in Spanish one more time so you can fill in the gaps and understand what you may have missed.

As a note, the phrases included in this session are based on the Spanish spoken in Mexico (which is VERY similar to the Spanish spoken in other countries) and they use a tone that is formal and relaxed. Considering you will usually use these phrases with strangers on the street, it is advisable to be polite in order to make things easier.

Now, let's get started.

A Few Casual Greetings:

Before asking a question to someone on the street, it is usually a good idea to greet them casually to get their attention so they can listen to your question.

For that, you can use a big smile and one of these casual greetings:

Hola - Hello

Disculpe - Excuse me

Buenos días - Good morning

Buenas tardes - Good afternoon

Buenas noches - Good evening



Optional preliminary phrases (“Excuse me...”):

Now, let’s go over a few optional phrases you can use after greeting someone, which are an easy way to get someone’s attention so they are ready to listen to your questions:

- Disculpe, ¿tiene un momento? - Excuse me, do you have a moment?
- ¿Tiene un minuto? - Do you have a minute?
- ¿Me puede ayudar? - Can you help me?
- Tengo una pregunta - I have a question
- Necesito un poco de ayuda - I need a little help
- ¿Puede ayudarme a encontrar algo por favor? - Can you help me find something please?
- Estoy visitando la ciudad y necesito un poco de ayuda - I am visiting the city and I need a little help
- Soy nuevo(a) en la ciudad y tengo una pregunta - I am new in town and I have a question



Asking for Directions in Spanish:

Sentence Structure 1:

Let's review a sentence structure that can be very useful when asking for directions:

- ¿Dónde está + "the place you want to find"?
- Where is "the place you want to find"?
- ¿Dónde está + "the place you want to find"?

Let's review a few examples that use this phrase structure:

- ¿Dónde está el metro? - Where is the subway?
- ¿Dónde está la Catedral? - Where is the Cathedral?
- ¿Dónde está el Hotel Casa Bonita? - Where is the Casa Bonita Hotel?

After hearing your question, people will usually use their hand to point you in the right direction. To make sure you understood, you can ask:

- ¿Por aquí?
- This way?
- ¿Por aquí?

As you use your own hand to point in the direction you are talking about.

Once you know which way to go, you'll need to find out how far you should walk in that direction, and you can use this simple question to get the answer:

- Caminando ¿cuántos minutos?
- Walking, how many minutes?
- Caminando ¿cuántos minutos?



Sentence Structure 2:

Now, let's review the next sentence structure.

- ¿Dónde puedo + “verb in infinitive” + “what you want”?
- Where can I + “verb in infinitive” + “what you want”?
- ¿Dónde puedo + “verb in infinitive” + “what you want”?

Here are a few examples that use this phrase as well as a few common verbs:

Encontrar - To find

- ¿Dónde puedo encontrar un taxi? - Where can I find a taxi?
- ¿Dónde puedo encontrar un buen restaurante? - Where can I find a good restaurant?
- ¿Dónde puedo encontrar un restaurante no muy caro? - Where can I find a restaurant that is not too expensive?
- ¿Dónde puedo encontrar un hotel? - Where can I find a hotel?

Comprar - To buy

- ¿Dónde puedo comprar agua? - Where can I buy water?
- ¿Dónde puedo comprar bloqueador solar? - Where can I buy sun block?
- ¿Dónde puedo comprar baterías para mi cámara? - Where can I buy batteries for my camera?

Comer - To eat

- ¿Dónde puedo comer paella? - Where can I eat paella?
- ¿Dónde puedo comer tacos? - Where can I eat tacos?
- ¿Dónde puedo comer comida barata? - Where can I eat inexpensive food?

Beber - To drink

- ¿Dónde puedo beber agua? - Where can I drink water?
- ¿Dónde puedo beber una cerveza? - Where can I drink a beer?
- ¿Dónde puedo beber alcohol? - Where can I drink alcohol?

Tomar - To catch transportation

- ¿Dónde puedo tomar un taxi? - Where can I catch a taxi?
- ¿Dónde puedo tomar el metro? - Where can I catch the metro?
- ¿Dónde puedo tomar un autobús que va al centro de la ciudad? - Where can I catch a bus that goes downtown?



Sentence Structure 3:

It's time to review the next sentence structure:

- ¿Cómo llego a + "the place you want to find"...?
- How do I get to + "the place you want to find"...?
- ¿Cómo llego a + "the place you want to find"...?

Here are a few examples...

- ¿Cómo llego al Hotel Villa Bonita? - How do I get to Villa Bonita Hotel?
- ¿Cómo llego a la Iglesia de La Sagrada Familia? - How do I get to the Sagrada Familia Church ?
- ¿Cómo llego al centro de la ciudad? - How do I get downtown?



Additional Sentences:

Now, let's look at a few additional phrases you can use to ask for directions:

- ¿Está lejos de aquí? ¿puedo llegar caminando? - Is it far from here? can I get there walking?
- Caminando ¿cuántos minutos? - Walking, how many minutes?
- Quiero ir a la catedral ¿voy bien por aquí? - I want to go to the Cathedral, am I heading in the right direction?
- ¿Está cerca del parque? - Is it near the park?
- ¿Es seguro caminar por ahí? - Is it safe to walk that way?
- ¿Hay algún autobús que pasa cerca de ese lugar? - Is there a bus that goes near that place?

If you have a Map, you can use these phrases:

- ¿Puede mostrarme en el mapa? - Can you show me on the map?
- ¿Dónde estamos en el mapa? - Where are we on the map?
- ¿Dónde está "a specific place" en el mapa? - Where is "a specific place" on the map?
- ¿Dónde está la catedral en el mapa? - Where is the cathedral on the map?
- Estoy buscando esta dirección, ¿cómo llego ahí? - I am looking for this address, how do I get there?

You can get access a free guide with the past participle conjugation of the 10 verbs most commonly used in conversational Spanish at <http://spanishforyourjob.com/topverbs/>

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