



How to know if a word is Masculine or Feminine in Spanish

Welcome to a new session of Learning Spanish for Beginners Podcast. In this session, we will learn to understand the gender of nouns in Spanish.

Let's start by answering the question: What is a "noun"?

According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, a noun is defined as "a word that is the name of something (such as a person, animal, place, thing, quality, idea, or action)."

In Spanish, nouns are either masculine or feminine, and this mental shift is one of the most challenging aspects for English Speakers who are learning Spanish.

Masculine or feminine?

Although in English, there is no need to think about whether a pencil is a masculine or a feminine noun, it is essential in Spanish because the adjectives and articles of a sentence must match the gender and number of nouns.

Here are a few examples:

- The table is expensive – La mesa es cara ("mesa" is a feminine and singular noun)
- The dogs are pretty – Los perros son bonitos ("perros" is a masculine and plural noun)
- The food is ready – La comida está lista ("comida" is a feminine and singular noun)



How do you know if a noun is masculine or feminine?

Although this topic often needs to be clarified for beginners who try to guess if an object seems masculine or feminine (by the way, avoid this. It doesn't work.) We will review a few general guidelines that will make it easier to know if a noun is masculine or feminine.

However, don't worry too much about memorizing these guidelines or saying everything correctly. Just acknowledge them so you can understand sentences in Spanish that include a masculine or a feminine noun.

General Guidelines for Masculine Nouns:

Most nouns that end in "o," "e," "an accented vowel," or "ma," as well as those that end with consonants except "d," "z," or "ción" are generally masculine nouns.

Here are a few common examples:

Masculine nouns that end in "o":

The teacher – El maestro

The cat – El gato

The friend – El amigo

Masculine nouns that end in "e":

The man – El hombre

The perfume – El perfume

The shoe – El zapato



Masculine nouns that end in “an accented vowel”:

The coffee – El café

The dad – El Papá

The bamboo – El bambú

Masculine nouns that end in “ma”:

The problem – El problema

The program – El programa

The language – El idioma

Consonants that are not d, z or ción:

The sun – El sol

The truck – El camión

The tree – El árbol

There are a few Common Exceptions:

However, some exceptions need to be memorized. They will come naturally with practice, so don't worry about them. Here are a few of the most common ones:

Feminine nouns that end with “o” (common exceptions):

The photo – La foto

The hand – La mano

The radio – La radio

Feminine nouns that end with “e” (common exceptions):

The street – La calle

The meat – La carne

The phrase – La frase

The people – La gente

The night – La noche

The cloud – La nube

The afternoon – La tarde



The mother – La madre

The class – La clase

The key – La llave

Other common exceptions:

The Mom – La Mamá

The honey – La miel

The salt – La sal

The skin – La piel

The flower – La flor



General Guidelines for Feminine Nouns

Most nouns that end in “a,” “d,” “z,” or “ción” are generally feminine nouns.

Here are a few common examples that follow this guideline:

Feminine nouns that end in “a”:

The house – La casa

The friend – La amiga

The table – La mesa

Feminine nouns that end in “d”:

The truth – La verdad

The thirst – La sed

The health – La salud

Feminine nouns that end in “z”:

The nose – La nariz

The light – La luz

The childhood – La niñez

Feminine nouns that end in “ción”:

The song – La canción

The imitation – La imitación

The legislation – La legislación



Here are a few common exceptions that need to be memorized:

Masculine nouns that end with “a” (exceptions):

The water – El agua

The map – El mapa

The day – El día

Masculine nouns that end with “d” (exceptions):

The guest – El huésped

The record – El récord

The lawn – El césped

Masculine nouns that end with “z” (exceptions):

The rice – El arroz

The fish – El pez

The pencil – El lápiz

The corn – El maíz

In this session, we have reviewed a few simple guidelines for using masculine and feminine nouns.

You can get access to a free guide with the conjugation of the 10 verbs most commonly used in conversational Spanish so you can improve your Spanish faster at:

<http://spanishforyourjob.com/topverbs/>

Want more good stuff?

- Are you a **beginner** who wants to **speak basic conversational Spanish quickly**? This can help: [15 Minute Spanish Crash Course for Beginners](#)