

Talk Spanish 2 in the classroom: Units 1–5

Unit 1

1.1 Getting to know people

Learners work in small groups practising the key questions **¿Cómo te llamas?**, **¿Dónde vives?** and **¿En qué trabajas?** If they don't already know each other, they answer with information about themselves; if they know each other from a previous class, you can supply fictional identity cards for them to work from. Using the information they've found out, each person then introduces another learner and provides information about them in the third person. This is done within different groups, ideally of about six or seven. To finish off, these groups work together to come up with at least one sentence in the third person plural with the information they've gathered, for example **A y B viven en ...**

1.2 Talking about people

Ask learners to bring in a photograph or picture showing several people (it could be a family photo or a picture from a magazine, such as a celebrity family) and to prepare a few sentences about it. At least one of these must include **desde** or **desde hace**.

Brainstorm with the whole group the questions needed to find information about people.

Working in small groups, each learner then talks for a couple of minutes about their picture and answers questions from the other learners about it. It doesn't matter if questions relate to information already given – it's an opportunity to field simple questions and to reinforce vocabulary.

If preparing for [Asset Languages external assessment](#), this activity could be revisited at a later stage and comparisons brought in, using **más** and some simple adjectives such as **viejo**, **grande**, etc.

1.3 Asking and saying why

Write the reasons given on page 11 for wanting to learn Spanish onto cards or slips of paper, one per card. Since you need enough for each learner to have a card, you can modify some of the reasons, for example **Me gusta mucho el Real Madrid**, **Me encantan las Islas Baleares**.

Learners mingle, asking **¿Por qué quieres aprender español?** and answering according to the card they hold. They need to jot down the reasons they're given. You can pull the activity together at the end by asking, for example, **¿Quién quiere trabajar en España?**, simply expecting a name in reply. This will get them used to the idea of understanding what you're saying without necessarily being able themselves to supply accurate detailed answers at this stage.

1.4 Professional introduction

Particularly if you're teaching those who are learning Spanish for work, encourage learners to introduce and talk about themselves as if they were at a professional meeting. This could involve their finding out for themselves some key vocabulary relating to their work.

Practice for this activity could include reading a selection of personal profiles and assuming another person's identity. You can find any number of these on the internet, allowing you to extend vocabulary, for example occupations. It makes useful listening practice for the rest of the group and is an opportunity for you to focus on linguistic detail appropriate to your class.

1.5 Verb endings

An excellent way of getting to grips with verb endings is for learners to work in small groups, each group having a small stack of cards with a regular verb on each card, ideally with an image of the action on it too. Each group also needs a die, with a personal pronoun on each face: **yo, tú, él/ella/usted, nosotros/nosotras, vosotros/vosotras, ellos/ellas/ustedes**. Such dice are available commercially.

Learners take turns to pick a card (from the pile face down on the table), throw the die, and give the correct ending for the verb according to which pronoun they've thrown. The others verify the ending.

Encourage groups to speed this up as it progresses.

Unit 2

2.1 24-hour clock

These activities should get learners thoroughly familiar with the 24-hour clock and with **hasta**, **antes de** and **después de** – meaning that they can listen at home to the Talk Spanish 2 audio for page 16, having already been prepared.

- It's straightforward to recreate airport announcements for learners to listen to for key information. Having revised numbers and listened to some times, they could practice simple role-plays at a check-in desk, where one partner asks the times of flights to a few destinations, another replies and they check for comprehension.

Alternatively, you can create a 'departures screen' by writing a list of places with the departure time and a flight number against each one. Make three copies: keep one as your master, and on the other two blank out different information. Learners work in pairs, filling the gaps by asking each other the appropriate questions.

- A picture of a departures screen can be used as a prompt for describing what you see. It practises statements such as **El vuelo para Bilbao sale a las ...** or **No hay vuelo para Londres hasta ...**

2.2 12-hour clock and daily life

Make two lists, both headed **Busca alguien que ...** On the first, follow this with phrases involving time, for example, **Se levanta temprano casi siempre**, or **Se acuesta antes de las diez**. On the second, put more general phrases, such as **Trabaja desde casa**, **Hace ejercicio**, etc.

The lists need to include some items that will not easily be found, since the purpose is to allow adequate opportunity to practise asking and answering the questions.

You'll need enough copies for one per learner, and they'll need a few minutes to think about the questions. You can manipulate the rules depending on the strength of the group. For example, if the instruction is **Busca alguien que se levanta temprano**, you could simply expect them to use the wording on their list: **¿Te* levantas temprano?** or you could insist that they rephrase: **¿A qué hora te levantas normalmente?**

Learners then mingle, asking questions to find someone conforming to their list, and replying to others' questions at the same time. When they find a person conforming to the requirement on their list, they make a note of their name.

You can pull it together at the end by asking the whole group **¿Quién trabaja desde casa?** or **¿Hay alguien que se levanta después de las nueve?**, for example. This is also a good time to include the plural, for example **¿Cuántas personas se despiertan temprano?**

*This activity is more effective with **tú** than **usted**, since learners are then made aware of the change in verb ending.

2.3 Irregular verbs

One way of familiarising learners with the irregular verbs introduced in this unit is to use the pronoun dice, as suggested for regular verb endings in 1.5. Learners work in small groups, each group having a small stack of cards with an irregular verb on each card, ideally with an image of the action on it too. Each group also needs a die, with a personal pronoun on each face: **yo, tú, él/ella/usted, nosotros/nosotras, vosotros/vosotras, ellos/ellas/ustedes**.

Learners take turns to pick a card (from the pile face down on the table), throw the die, and give the correct ending for the verb according to which pronoun they've thrown. The others verify the ending.

Encourage groups to speed this up as it progresses.

2.4 Daily or work routine

- Working in small groups, learners take it in turns to talk to the rest of the group about their daily routine (or work routine). This need only involve about ten sentences and last a couple of minutes. Some preparation should have been done beforehand, both on the presentation and on compiling some questions to ask the speaker.
- Follow this up with the third person. Show some pictures of people working in various occupations, for example milkman, teacher, police officer, supermarket worker, housewife or husband, bank teller. Start by asking questions about their hours of work, moving towards encouraging learners to offer information. Being provocative, for example by saying teachers finish work at 3pm, can lead to quite heated debate in Spanish.

- If learners are interested in writing about this afterwards at home, suggest that they write about someone else's day in addition to their own. Or they could include a friend or partner and write in the first person plural.

Unit 3

3.1 Hay ...

You can familiarise learners with vocabulary and at the same time practise **algún, alguna/os/as** by using descriptions of Spanish towns from tourist brochures or the internet. Learners work in groups and you'll need one town per group.

Allow the groups plenty of time to work together to read about their particular town. Then bring the class together and brainstorm the vocabulary for the facilities they've found. From these, choose a list of about six, for example **catedral, restaurantes, museos**.

Give them the names of all the towns and ask them to circulate and find out what facilities from the list are available in the various towns. They ask one question at a time, for example **¿En X hay ...?** The person addressed gives the answer if they know it, otherwise they say **No lo sé** (unless you choose to teach **No conozco** plus the place).

You can stop the activity when you feel learners are comfortable with the form of the questions and answers, and follow up with a whole-class discussion or summary.

3.2 Poder

Poder can be practised, if necessary, using dice as outlined in 1.5. Learners work in small groups. Each group needs a die, with a personal pronoun on each face: **yo, tú, él/ella/usted, nosotros/nosotras, vosotros/vosotras, ellos/ellas/ustedes**.

Learners take turns to throw the die, and give the correct ending for **poder** according to which pronoun they've thrown. The others verify the ending.

Encourage groups to speed this up as it progresses.

3.3 Me gusta

An effective way of practising **me gusta(n)** is to use dice with smiley faces on them. The commercial ones usually have six different gradations of liking which could equate to **me gusta, me gusta mucho, lo que más me gusta, no me gusta, no me gusta mucho** and **a mí no me gusta nada**. Alternatively, you could make your own, just showing **me gusta, no me gusta** and **lo que más me gusta** twice.

You also need a set of cards depicting various leisure activities.

Learners work in pairs asking **Te/Le gusta?** plus the activity on the card picked from the pile. The answer depends on how the die is thrown.

3.4 Who likes what?

A survey provides free practice of **me gusta(n)**. Put together a short list of leisure interests and ask learners to circulate, asking others whether they like to do these – and they make a note of who does and doesn't. Learners reply according to their own preferences.

You then bring learners together and ask true or false questions, for example **A tres personas no les gusta el fútbol. ¿Verdadero o falso?** Learners tend to find such constructions difficult, particularly at this stage, so this is an opportunity for them to hear and understand plenty of them – without having to produce the language themselves.

3.5 Me and nos

For this activity practising **interesa(n)** and **poder** and gaining familiarity with plural forms, you need sets of about 10–12 cards with symbols or words on them representing large categories, for example nature, water sports, food, historical monuments, walking. You also need a separate list of sentences relating to them, representing, for example, **hacer senderismo, los deportes náuticos, cocinar.**

Working in pairs, one learner picks a card and says **Me interesa(n)** or **Nos interesa(n)** plus what's on the card. The partner has to find a suitable item from their list and start the response with **puede** or **pueden**, depending on whether Partner one has used **me** or **nos**.

3.6 Es necesario

Find some images, for example sightseeing, sailing, swimming. Display them one by one to the class, saying you're going to do the activity shown and inviting them to come up with a relevant piece of advice, for example **Es aconsejable comprar un mapa de la zona, Es necesario reservar.**

3.7 Describing a place

Particularly if your learners are preparing for external assessment, get them to prepare a promotional presentation for a town, city or region, describing its main features and saying what there is to do and see there. They could include their likes and dislikes and make some recommendations.

Class preparation for this could centre on a picture or photo of a town known to all learners.

Unit 4

Most of the activities for Unit 4 feature pictures of properties on paper or card. It's very useful to have a wide selection – they're readily available from magazines, local and national newspapers, the internet, estate agents' offices, etc.

4.1 Types of property

In this very simple survey, learners circulate, asking everyone in the class **¿Cómo es tu/su casa?** and making a note of the reply. Only the type of property is needed here, for example **una casa de pueblo, un apartamento, un ático**. You can get them to reply according to where they really live or you can give everyone a picture to answer from.

After the questions, learners work in pairs or small groups. Using their notes, they summarise the survey results, for example **Una persona vive en un ático, Tres personas viven en pisos**. Finally the whole class can discuss the findings.

4.2 Understanding property descriptions

Provide about ten pictures of different properties and, separately, written descriptions for six of them. Learners work in pairs or small groups to identify which properties are featured in the written descriptions.

Learners then work in pairs to produce a written description for any two of the remaining properties. Collect these (unsigned) descriptions and redistribute them at random, asking learners to identify the picture they refer to. Following this stage with a general discussion gives you the opportunity to focus on detail and accuracy.

4.3 Describing a property

Learners work in small groups, with a selection of pictures spread out before them. They take it in turns to say three statements about one of these properties; the others have to deduce which it is. If they can't, then the speaker has to produce a fourth statement. Encourage the use of **muy, un poco, bastante, tan**.

4.4 Who lives where?

To link up with previous units and provide revision, give out pictures of a number of different properties and invite learners, working in small groups, to create a profile of the people who might live in them.

4.5 Finding out about a house to rent

You need some cue cards for this activity, using words or symbols. A card has up to six items of information on it, such as location, age, number of bedrooms, garden, parking, and the activity works best if several cards are similar in some of the detail. As the class will be divided into two groups, you will only need enough different cue cards for half of your class, and you need two copies of each card. If you use different coloured paper or card for each group, it makes life easier.

Half the class want to rent a house with the features listed on their card. Only one person in the other half will have such a property and the aim is to find that person by asking questions about the property.

The cards can then be shuffled and the roles reversed.

4.6 Describing a home

In pairs, learners take it in turns to describe their home and answer simple questions. The description should include at least one feature they like or don't like.

It's worth repeating this with different partners as it tends to be more fluent the second time around. The activity can be followed up with learners working in threes or fours, saying where someone else lives and adding a couple of sentences about it.

An alternative is to ask learners to describe their dream home and to imagine they're showing someone round it.

4.7 Comparing houses and expressing an opinion

If preparing for external assessment, you could return to the contents of this unit after Unit 5, using it to consolidate vocabulary and practise comparison and contrast. Provide pairs of pictures, each pair being two properties that are very

different, and invite statements using **más** that highlight these differences. Learners could also give their opinion on the properties.

Unit 5

5.1 Giving and understanding directions

Although in the real world learners are far more likely to need to understand directions than give them out, it's useful to have an activity where they produce the language, because it tends to fix the vocabulary more effectively than listening on its own.

One simple way of doing this is for learners to work in groups, taking it in turns to give directions to a particular destination. Where it is depends on the class: if they're all local people, familiar with the area, they can be asked to imagine they're directing a Spanish-speaking visitor from one local landmark to another. Otherwise, a street map of any town will do, with everyone having a copy. The others listen (and follow the map, if used) and work out where the destination is.

5.2 Past participles

Learners appreciate staged practice of the perfect tense: first forming past participles, then using **haber**, then taking part in activities using the perfect tense.

One way of doing this is for learners to work in groups, first with verb cards. They pick a card up and provide the past participle. After a while, give out dice – and learners then provide the perfect tense of the verb they pick up, in the person indicated by the pronoun on the dice.

5.3 The perfect tense

A simple survey provides repetitive but meaningful practice of the perfect tense. Display about six phrases using known verbs in the infinitive, for example **perder algo, comer en un restaurante, ver una película, comprar una revista**. The aim is to find out how many learners have done each of these during the week. This is done by everyone circulating and asking, for example, **¿Has perdido algo esta semana?** The answers will vary according to learners' ability, and it's perfectly acceptable for them to range from a simple **Sí/No** to a full sentence, since the principal aim is simply to become comfortable with forming the perfect tense.

Tie it up by summarising the findings, which lets you bring in **han**.

5.4 Perfect and simple past

You can highlight the differences between the perfect tense and the simple past by using images depicting vocabulary from the first five units of Talk Spanish 2 that trigger statements about the past. For example a laptop, wallet, ticket, phone or passport could lead to, for example, **He perdido mi pasaporte** or **Perdí mi pasaporte**. A bag could elicit, for example, **He comprado un bolso** or **Abrí el bolso**. A place would be the trigger for **fui**, and so on.

First, brainstorm all the regular verbs and the common irregulars the class knows – and possibly add a couple of useful new regular verbs. Then display the images and tease out statements from the learners. It helps if you start the sentence with a time expression.

It may be quite slow at first, but if you have enough images the statements will become more confident and imaginative.

5.5 Directions and the simple past

Draw the unit together with another directions activity, similar to 5.1 but this time focusing on the first person singular of the simple past of **girar**, **cruzar**, **tomar**, **coger**, **seguir** and **ir**.

As for 5.1, destinations depend on the class – and can involve familiar local places or places from a map.

Learners work in groups, taking it in turn to tell others how they got to a particular place. Their story starts off with **desde** plus a known place, building or street.

The others work out the destination.

5.6 Consolidation and revision

For revision, you could draw together the language of Units 3, 4, 5 and 6 by getting learners to work together in small groups to create a presentation of a village or town of their choice (anywhere in the world will do; they can be as ambitious as they like, particularly if they have access to the internet during the preparation). The presentation could include what there is to do and see, describe a particular building and explain how to get there from another specified point. Encourage them to include at least one comparison and to express a preference or opinion about one aspect.