SPANISH SYSTEM

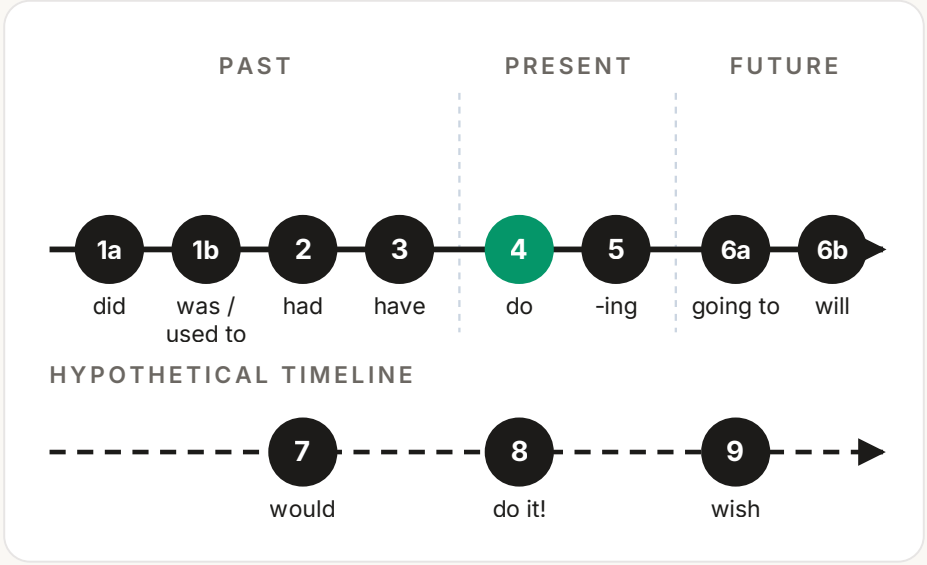
Learn pieces, not words.

LEVEL A · PART 2

Manual A2

The whole map

The other six slots of the Timeline, and topics for everyday situations.



Practice every chapter at **spanish-system.vercel.app**

Contents

Read this first 3

1 · Slot 5: right now 4

2 · Slots 3 and 2: have and had 5

3 · Slot 7: would 7

4 · Slot 8: commands 8

5 · Slot 9: wishes, hopes and doubts 10

6 · Topics 13

The whole map 15

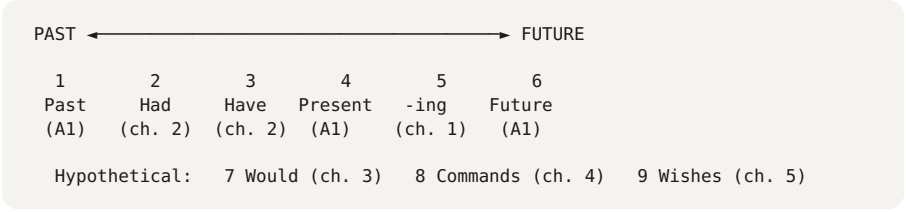
What you can now do 16

A2 assumes A1: the Sentence Builder, slots 1, 4 and 6, and the basics of the Ear.

Read this first

A1 gave you three points on the Timeline. A2 gives you the other six, and by the end of this book you own the whole map. That's the promise of Manual A, and it's worth saying plainly: after A2, no later book adds a new place on the line. B and C only fill in the places you already have.

The order here is the order that costs least. Each slot is either a small change to one you know, or the same word with something stuck on the front.



Two tools make most of it free, and they both come from A1:

- **estar + -ando / -iendo** gives you slot 5.
- **haber + -ado / -ido** gives you slots 2 and 3.

Learn those two patterns and half the book is done.

A2 also introduces **topics**: packs of pieces for a situation (ordering food, getting around a city) that plug into the same frames. The rows never change; only the pieces do.

1 · Slot 5: right now

Spanish name: presente continuo · **form:** estoy trabajando

Happening right now, this second. Not a tense: it's the verb *estar* plus the -ing form.

estar: estoy · estás · está · estamos · están **-ing form:** -ar → **-ando**, -er/-ir → **-iendo** · trabajando, comiendo, viviendo

A few shift a letter: leyendo (reading), durmiendo (sleeping), pidiendo (ordering), diciendo (saying), yendo (going).

- No puedo hablar, estoy trabajando. — I can't talk, I'm working.
- ¿Qué estás haciendo? — What are you doing?
- Están comiendo. — They're eating.

Careful. English uses -ing constantly. Spanish doesn't. "I'm working in an office" (in general) is slot 4: *trabajo en una oficina*. "I'm going to the beach tomorrow" is 6a: *voy a ir a la playa*. Slot 5 is only for things happening as you speak. If you could add "right this second" to the English, use 5. If not, don't.

Shortcut. *Optional. If this doesn't click, skip it. Nothing later depends on it.* Put *estar* in a different slot and the -ing form follows it anywhere on the line: *estaba trabajando* (I was working, 1b), *estaré trabajando* (I'll be working, 6b). That's the whole of Level B's "estar engine" in one sentence. You don't need it yet.

On the site: turn on slot 5 in *Setup*, build three sentences and move them between 4 and 5. Notice which ones sound natural in 5 and which sound like a translation.

2 · Slots 3 and 2: have and had

These two share one pattern, so they come together.

The -ed form

Books call it the participle. Build it from the infinitive: -ar → **-ado**, -er/-ir → **-ido**. trabajado, comido, vivido.

Nine common ones are irregular, and you'll use all nine constantly: **hecho** (done) · **dicho** (said) · **visto** (seen) · **puesto** (put) · **escrito** (written) · **abierto** (opened) · **vuelto** (returned) · **roto** (broken) · **muerto** (died)

Slot 3 · Have

Spanish name: pretérito perfecto · **form:** he trabajado

A past that still touches now: today, this week, in my life, ever, never, not yet.

haber: he · has · ha · hemos · han + the -ed form

- ¿Has trabajado hoy? — Have you worked today?
- Hoy he comido mucho. — I've eaten a lot today.
- Todavía no he visto la película. — I haven't seen the movie yet.
- Nunca he estado en Bogotá. — I've never been in Bogotá.

Time words that point to 3: **hoy** (today) · **esta semana** (this week) · **alguna vez** (ever) · **nunca** (never) · **todavía no** (not yet) · **ya** (already)

> **Sidebar · Latin America.** Much of Latin America uses 1a where Spain uses 3: *Hoy comí mucho* instead of *Hoy he comido mucho*. Both are correct and understood everywhere. If you're learning in Colombia or Mexico, you'll hear 1a more; use whichever comes out, and recognize both.

Slot 2 · Had

Spanish name: pluscuamperfecto · **form:** había trabajado

A past before another past. "By the time X happened, Y had already happened."

haber in 1b: había · habías · había · habíamos · habían + the -ed form

- Cuando llegué, ya habían cerrado. — When I arrived, they had already closed.
- No había visto el mar antes. — I hadn't seen the sea before.

Notice: slot 2 is slot 3 with *haber* moved to 1b. Same -ed form. Learn it once.

> **Shortcut.** *Optional. If this doesn't click, skip it. Nothing later depends on it.* *Haber* in any slot plus the -ed form gives you the whole "have" family: *habré trabajado* (will have, 6b), *habría trabajado* (would have, 7). Level B. Skip for now.

On the site: turn on 2 and 3 in *Setup*. Build *he comido* sentences for today, then move them to 2 and add *ya* or *cuando llegué* in your head. Play "Hear the slot" with 2 and 3 on; the sound of *he* and *había* at the front is the giveaway.

3 · Slot 7: would

Spanish name: condicional · **form:** trabajaría

"Would." For being polite, for imagining, for advice. It sits on the hypothetical timeline because it isn't a time; it's something that hasn't happened.

Build it from the whole infinitive, like 6b, with a different set of endings, the same for every verb:

trabajar + **ía · ías · ía · íamos · ían** → trabajaría, trabajarías, trabajaría, trabajaríamos, trabajarían

The verbs that shorten for 6b shorten here too: tendría, podría, haría, diría, saldría, pondría, vendría, querría, sabría.

- Me gustaría trabajar menos. — I'd like to work less. (You've had this one since page one: it's an Engine.)
- Yo no haría eso. — I wouldn't do that.
- ¿Podría ayudarme? — Could you help me?
- Sería difícil. — It would be hard.

Careful. *Querría* (I would want) exists but nobody says it. Spanish uses *quisiera* or *me gustaría* for "I'd like." *Quisiera un café* is the single most polite way to order anything, and it's a Level B form you can steal early.

Shortcut. *Optional. If this doesn't click, skip it. Nothing later depends on it.* Slot 7's endings are exactly the 1b endings of -er verbs (*comía, comías…*) stuck onto a whole infinitive. If you can say *comía*, you can say *trabajaría*.

On the site: turn on 7. Build *puedo* and *tengo que* sentences and move them to 7: *podría*, *tendría que*. Notice how much softer everything sounds.

4 · Slot 8: commands

Spanish name: imperativo. Telling someone to do something. Not a time but something you want to happen, so it sits on the hypothetical timeline.

Spanish has different commands for a friend (*tú*) and for someone you address politely (*usted*) or for a group (*ustedes*). The good news: all but one of them come from a form you're about to learn in chapter 5. The one exception comes from slot 4.

Who	Do it	Don't
tú (friend)	**trabaja** · the he/she form of slot 4	**no trabajes**
usted (polite)	**trabaje**	**no trabaje**
ustedes (group)	**trabajen**	**no trabajen**

Eight short irregular ones for *tú* that you'll hear every day: **di** (say) · **haz** (do) · **ve** (go) · **pon** (put) · **sal** (leave) · **sé** (be) · **ten** (have) · **ven** (come)

- Ven aquí. — Come here.
- Pase, siéntese. — Come in, sit down. (polite)
- Dime. — Tell me.
- No te preocupes. — Don't worry.

Sidebar · the seed. *Optional. If this doesn't click, skip it; chapter 5 works without it.* Here is a trick the author's teacher uses for remembering slots 8 and 9 together. Take the polite command, *trabaje*, *diga*, *tenga*. Call it the **seed**. Everything in slots 8 and 9 is the seed plus the four person endings Spanish uses everywhere: nothing, -s, -mos, -n.

Who	Slot 9 (wishes)	Slot 8 (commands)
yo	diga	—
tú	diga**s**	**di** / no diga**s**
usted	diga	diga
nosotros	diga**mos**	diga**mos** (let's say)
ustedes	diga**n**	diga**n**

Read across: the two slots are the same word with the same endings. Exactly one box is different, the friendly "do it," and that one comes from slot 4. So the whole of 8 and 9 is: learn the seed, add the ending, remember the one exception.

On the site: commands arrive as the *Tell someone* frame at Level B. For now, say the eight irregular *tú* commands to the *Listen* button until *ven, dime, ten* come out on their own.

5 · Slot 9: wishes, hopes and doubts

Spanish name: subjuntivo (presente) · **form:** trabaje

This one has no English twin, so here's the simplest way to hold it: **slot 4 reports what's real; slot 9 reacts to it**, with wanting, hoping, doubting, feeling, or "so that." You'll almost always see it after a trigger phrase and the word *que*.

Build it

Take the "I" form of slot 4, drop the -o, and add the *opposite* endings:

- -ar verbs take -er endings: trabaj**e**, trabaj**es**, trabaj**e**, trabaj**emos**, trabaj**en**
- -er/-ir verbs take -ar endings: com**a**, com**as**, com**a**, com**amos**, com**an**

Six irregulars: **sea** (ser) · **vaya** (ir) · **haya** (haber) · **sepa** (saber) · **dé** (dar) · **esté** (estar)

Trigger phrases

Memorize these as pieces, exactly like Engines. Each one is followed by *que* and then a slot-9 verb.

Trigger	Means	Example
quiero que	I want (someone) to	Quiero que trabajes conmigo.
espero que	I hope	Espero que estés bien.
es importante que	it's important that	Es importante que comas.
no creo que	I don't think	No creo que sea difícil.
para que	so that	Te llamo para que sepas.
ojalá (que)	hopefully, if only	Ojalá no llueva.
cuando (about the future)	when	Cuando llegue, te llamo.

- Quiero que trabajes conmigo. — I want you to work with me.
- Espero que estés bien. — I hope you're well.
- Ojalá no llueva. — Hopefully it won't rain.
- Cuando llegue, te llamo. — When I arrive, I'll call you.

The trigger does the work. If you memorize *quiero que* and *espero que* as Engines, slot 9 becomes just another Engine slot, one that happens to take different endings after it.

> **Careful.** *Quiero trabajar* (I want to work: same person, Engine + Action) and *quiero que trabajes* (I want *you* to work: different person, trigger + slot 9). Slot 9 appears when the wanting and the doing belong to different people. If it's the same person, it's just an Engine, like page one.

Sidebar · the Back to the Future Spanish system. The Timeline is a line because that's how we think about time. But slots 7, 8 and 9 aren't points in time; the teacher draws them off the line "for visual purposes." The joke in his classroom is that slot 9 is an *alternate timeline*. Slot 4 is the world as it is. Say a trigger phrase, *quiero que, ojalá, para que*, and you cross over into the world as you wish, hope or fear it might be. The trigger phrase is the 88 miles per hour. Commands (slot 8) are you trying to force the alternate timeline into existence, which is why they borrow its forms. And "would" (slot 7) is where the consequences of the alternate timeline land back in the real one. It's a joke. It's also exactly right, and in Manual B you'll see the alternate timeline has a past, a "have" and a "had" of its own, mirroring this one. For now: when you hear *que* after a wish, you've left the main timeline.

Later. Slot 9 has a past (*trabajara*), a have (*haya trabajado*) and a had (*hubiera trabajado*). They mirror slots 1b, 3 and 2 exactly. Manual B.

On the site: slot 9 is never a button; it appears when you use a trigger. Build *quiero* + *trabajar*, then add the connector *para que* and watch the second part's engines change into their slot-9 forms. That's the alternate timeline, live.

6 · Topics

The idea

Every traditional Spanish book has chapters called "At the airport," "At a party," "At the doctor," and each chapter re-teaches the grammar with new words, so you never see the pattern. Here a topic is only a set of pieces. The frames don't change. The rows don't change. The Engines, Openers and Connectors don't change. Only the Things, a few Actions, and a handful of Ask and React pieces are new.

Pick "Order food and drink" and the Thing row fills with *un jugo, la cuenta, el postre*; the Action row gains *pedir, probar, pagar*; Ask gains *¿Me puede traer…?*; React gains *¿Qué me recomienda?* Everything else is what you already have. You get the restaurant chapter without leaving the system.

The first ten

Each pack is phrased as something you can do, not a place you can be in:

1. Greet people and introduce yourself
2. Order food and drink
3. Get around a city
4. Handle the airport
5. Talk about your family and friends
6. Talk about your day and schedule
7. Shop and pay
8. Make plans
9. Go to a party
10. Deal with a problem

Each one ships with ten to fifteen Things, a few Actions, two Ask pieces, two React pieces, and three scenarios: a situation in a sentence ("Your flight is delayed. Say what you need.") that you answer with the builder.

How to use a pack

1. Switch it on in *Setup* on the site. Its pieces move to the front of their rows.
2. Open *Topics* and do its three scenarios. Press *Done* on each; your sentence is saved.
3. Say the sentences out loud, from memory, the next day.
4. Pin the five pieces you'll actually use. Forget the rest for now.

That's a chapter. It takes an evening, not a month.

> **Later.** Manual B revisits the same ten topics with more pieces and more slots. You never start a topic over; you add to it.

The whole map

```
                  1a  it happened        trabajé
                  1b  it was going on    trabajaba
PAST ◄──────────  2   had                 había trabajado
                  3   have                 he trabajado
                  4   present              trabajo
                  5   right now            estoy trabajando
                  6a  going to             voy a trabajar
FUTURE ◄────────  6b  will                 trabajaré

Hypothetical:     7   would                trabajaría
                  8   commands             trabaja / trabaje
                  9   wishes               trabaje
```

Nine slots, two patterns (*estar* + -ando, *haber* + -ado), one alternate timeline. That is all of Spanish grammar that a beginner needs, and most of what an intermediate needs. You have it.

What you can now do

With A1 and A2 together you can:

- everything from A1, in all nine slots
- say what's happening this second → 5
- talk about today, this week, your life → 3
- tell a story with a before and an after → 2 with 1a and 1b
- be polite, imagine, give advice → 7
- give directions and instructions → 8
- want, hope, doubt, recommend → 9
- walk into ten everyday situations with the pieces you need → topics

Use it. Then, when you're ready, Manual B fills the map in: the little pronouns, how descriptors agree, the *haber* and *estar* engines across every slot, and the alternate timeline's own past.