SPANISH SYSTEM

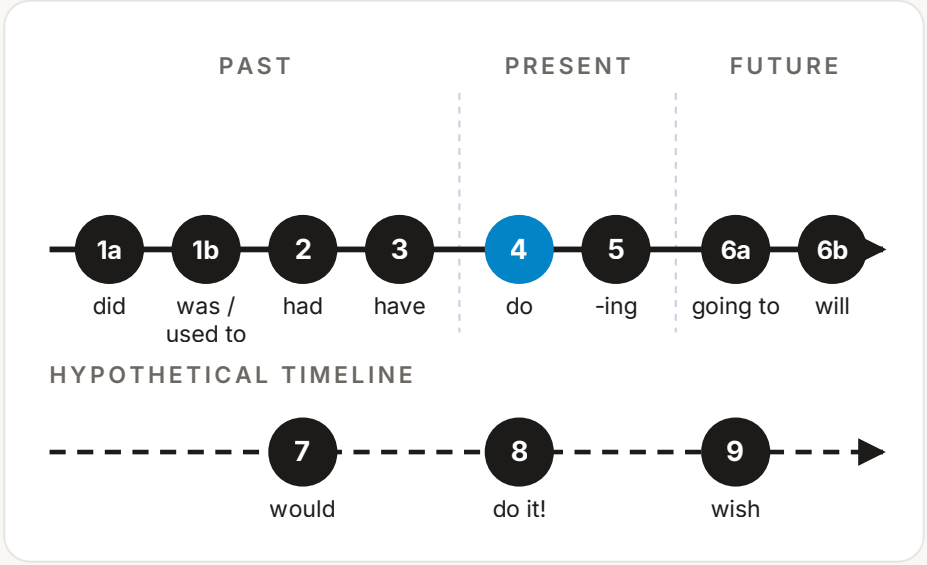
Learn pieces, not words.

LEVEL B

Manual B

Filling in the map

The little pronouns, the estar and haber engines, the mirror and if sentences.



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

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The map, filled in 17

B assumes all of A: the Sentence Builder, all nine slots, the topics. B1 is chapters 1–3 (the builder, filled in). B2 is chapters 4–7 (the Timeline, filled in).

Read this first

Manual A gave you the whole map. Manual B fills it in. Nothing here is a new place on the Timeline; it's the same nine slots used more fully, plus the small words that were missing from the Sentence Builder.

There are three ideas in this book, and two of them you were told to skip in A:

- **The little pronouns** (*me, te, lo, la, le, se*) are in almost every spoken sentence, and the builder gets a row for them.
- **The engines run in every slot.** Put *haber* or *estar* anywhere on the line and a new form appears for free. You met the pattern in A2's Shortcut boxes.
- **The alternate timeline has a past.** Slot 9 isn't one form; it's the main timeline again, on the hypothetical side.

Those three ideas produce everything that textbooks call intermediate Spanish. There is more detail here than in A, because by now you can carry it. But the rule is the same: pieces, not words, and nothing you learn here changes anything you learned before.

B1 · The builder, filled in

1 · The little pronouns

The idea

Lo quiero. Se me olvidó. Dímelo. Me gusta. You can't go ten seconds in spoken Spanish without one of these. In A you had exactly one, the *me* in *me gusta*. Here are the rest.

Pronoun	Means	Example
me	me	Me llamó. — He called me.
te	you	Te veo mañana. — I'll see you tomorrow.
lo / la	it, him / her	Lo quiero. — I want it. La conozco. — I know her.
los / las	them	Las compré. — I bought them.
le / les	to him, to her, to them	Le dije. — I told him.
nos	us	Nos vemos. — See you (we'll see each other).
se	himself, herself, each other, "one"	Se llama Juan. — His name is Juan.

Where they go

Two rules, and they never break:

1. **Before a conjugated verb.** *Lo quiero. No lo tengo. Me gusta. Te llamo.*
2. **Or stuck on the end of an infinitive, an -ing form, or a command.** *Quiero comprarlo. Estoy haciéndolo. Dímelo.*

With an Engine you get to choose, because there's a conjugated verb and an infinitive: *Lo quiero comprar* and *Quiero comprarlo* both mean "I want to buy it." Say whichever comes out. Speakers use both.

> **Careful.** The pronoun goes *before* the negative word's verb, but *after* the *no*: *No lo quiero*, never *Lo no quiero*. And "it" has a gender: *lo* for an *el* thing, *la* for a *la* thing. *¿El café? Lo quiero. ¿La cuenta? La quiero.*

Three pieces to steal whole

- **Se me olvidó.** — I forgot. (Literally "it forgot itself on me." Don't analyze it; just use it.)
- **Nos vemos.** — See you.
- **No te preocupes.** — Don't worry.

The builder's new row

At Level B the site adds a **Pronoun** row between Engine and Action. Pick *lo* and the sentence card shows *Lo quiero comprar*; tap the toggle on the row and it becomes *Quiero comprarlo*. Both forms are right, and seeing them switch is the best way to stop fearing either.

> **Later.** Two pronouns at once (*Me lo dio*, *Dámelo*) have an order rule and one swap (*le* becomes *se* before *lo*: *Se lo di*). Manual C. You'll recognize them long before you need to produce them.

On the site: set Level B. Build *quiero comprar un regalo*, then replace the Thing with *lo* from the Pronoun row. Toggle the position. Save both. Do the same with *la película* → *la*.

2 · Descriptors that agree

In A you used descriptors that don't change: *grande, interesante, fácil, importante, caliente*. Most descriptors do change, in two ways, and they come after the noun.

	masculine	feminine
singular	un carro **rojo**	una casa **roja**
plural	dos carros **rojos**	dos casas **rojas**

Rules of thumb: if the descriptor ends in **-o**, it changes to **-a** for a feminine thing. If the thing is plural, add **-s**. Descriptors ending in **-e** or a consonant (*grande, fácil, azul*) only add the plural **-s** / **-es**: *casas grandes, carros azules*.

- La comida está fría. — The food is cold.
- Los niños están listos. — The kids are ready.
- Las playas son increíbles. — The beaches are incredible.

Careful. The thing decides, not the person speaking. A man says *la comida está fría* with an -a because *comida* is feminine. Beginners sometimes match the descriptor to themselves. Match it to the noun.

Shortcut. *Optional. If this doesn't click, skip it. Nothing later depends on it.* You already know the pattern from *el/la* and *un/una*. The descriptor copies the article: *el carro rojo, la casa roja, los carros rojos, las casas rojas*. Say the article and the ending comes with it.

On the site: at Level A the site agreed descriptors for you; you saw *fría* without being told why. At Level B, plural things appear and the Describe frame shows the agreement happening. Build six, three singular, three plural.

3 · Por and para, and the connectors that matter

Por and para

Both translate as "for," which is why English speakers mix them. The simplest version that holds:

- **para** = purpose or destination. Toward something. *Para ti* (for you), *para trabajar* (in order to work), *para mañana* (for tomorrow), *para Bogotá* (headed to Bogotá).
- **por** = reason, exchange, or passing through. Because of something. *Por eso* (that's why), *por diez dólares* (for ten dollars), *por la calle* (along the street), *por la mañana* (in the morning).

When in doubt, memorize the chunk, not the rule: **por favor, por qué, por eso, por la mañana, para siempre, para ti, para que.**

The connectors that give Spanish its texture

A gave you eight connectors. These are the next ten, and they're what make speech sound like speech:

Connector	Means	Example
aunque	although, even though	Aunque llueve, voy a salir.
sino	but rather (after a negative)	No es rojo, sino azul.
así que	so	Estoy cansado, así que me voy.
mientras	while	Mientras trabajo, escucho música.
por eso	that's why	Por eso no vine.
además	besides	Además, es caro.
sin embargo	however	Sin embargo, me gusta.
es que	it's just that	Es que no tengo tiempo.
para que	so that	Te lo digo para que sepas.
antes de que	before	Vámonos antes de que llueva.

The last two, and sometimes *aunque* and *cuando*, send the next engine into slot 9. On the site these connectors carry a small 9 badge, and when you tap one, the second part's engines flip into their slot-9 forms. That's the alternate timeline being entered by a connector instead of a trigger phrase.

> **Careful.** *Sino* only appears after a *no*: *No quiero café, sino té.* Everywhere else "but" is *pero*. If you've said *no* and you're correcting it, *sino*; otherwise *pero*.

On the site: build a sentence, add *para que*, and build the second part. Watch the engines. Then do the same with *porque* and notice they don't change. That difference is the whole of chapter 7.

B2 · The Timeline, filled in

4 · The estar engine

In A2 slot 5 was *estar* + -ando. The Shortcut said: put *estar* in another slot and the -ing form follows it anywhere. Here it is in full.

estar in…	You get	Example
4 · present	estoy trabajando	I'm working (now)
1b · it was going on	estaba trabajando	Estaba trabajando cuando llamaste. — I was working when you called.
1a · it happened	estuve trabajando	Estuve trabajando toda la noche. — I spent the whole night working.
6b · will	estaré trabajando	Mañana a esta hora estaré trabajando. — This time tomorrow I'll be working.
7 · would	estaría trabajando	Estaría trabajando si no fuera domingo. — I'd be working if it weren't Sunday.

Nothing new to memorize except *estar* in each slot, which is one verb:

estar · 1a: estuve, estuviste, estuvo, estuvimos, estuvieron · 1b: estaba, estabas, estaba, estábamos, estaban · 6b: estaré… · 7: estaría…

Careful. *Estaba trabajando* and *trabajaba* both mean "I was working." The first stresses that it was in progress at that moment; the second is the plain background. In most sentences either is fine. Spanish uses the plain 1b far more than English uses "was working," so when in doubt, drop the *estar*.

On the site: at Level B, the *When* strip grows compound choices. Move a slot-5 sentence to "estar in 1b" and "estar in 6b."

5 · The haber engine

Slots 2 and 3 were *haber* + -ado. Put *haber* in another slot and the rest of the "have" family appears.

haber in…	You get	Example
4 · present	he trabajado	I have worked (slot 3)
1b	había trabajado	I had worked (slot 2)
6b · will	habré trabajado	Para el viernes habré terminado. — By Friday I'll have finished.
7 · would	habría trabajado	Habría venido, pero no sabía. — I would have come, but I didn't know.

Habría + -ado is the one you'll actually need: "would have." Everything you say about regrets, excuses and what-ifs runs on it.

haber · 6b: habré, habrás, habrá, habremos, habrán · 7: habría, habrías, habría, habríamos, habrían

> **Shortcut.** *Optional. If this doesn't click, skip it. Nothing later depends on it.* *Habrá* + -ado is also how Spanish guesses about the past: *Habrá salido* — he must have left, I suppose he's left. Not required, but you'll hear it.

On the site: build *tengo que trabajar*, move *haber* to 7: *habría tenido que trabajar*. Say it. Yes, it's a mouthful. It's also exactly "I would have had to work," and you built it from three pieces.

6 · The mirror: the alternate timeline's past

In A2, slot 9 had one form, the present (*trabaje*), and a Sidebar called it the alternate timeline. Here's the rest of that timeline. Every slot-9 form is the twin of a main-timeline slot you already have.

Main timeline	Alternate timeline (slot 9)	Example
4 · trabajo	presente: **trabaje**	Espero que trabaje mañana. — I hope he works tomorrow.
1b · trabajaba	imperfecto: **trabajara**	Esperaba que trabajara. — I hoped he would work.
3 · he trabajado	perfecto: **haya trabajado**	Espero que haya trabajado. — I hope he has worked.
2 · había trabajado	pluscuamperfecto: **hubiera trabajado**	Esperaba que hubiera trabajado. — I hoped he had worked.

Same trigger phrases as A2, just shifted into the past: *Quiero que trabajes* → *Quería que trabajaras*. When the wanting is in the past, the wished-for thing is in the past too.

Building the past of the alternate timeline

Take the "they" form of 1a, drop **-ron**, add **-ra, -ras, -ra, -ramos, -ran**:

trabaj**aron** → trabajara, trabajaras, trabajara, trabajáramos, trabajaran comi**eron** → comiera, comieras, comiera, comiéramos, comieran

Every irregularity from 1a carries over by itself: tuvieron → tuviera, fueron → fuera, dijeron → dijera, pudieron → pudiera. Learn 1a well and this form is free.

(You'll also see **-se** endings, *trabajase*, *comiese*. Same meaning, mostly Spain, mostly writing. Recognize, don't produce.)

Two things to notice:

- The last two rows of the table are the haber engine from chapter 5 running inside slot 9: *haya* is *haber* in 9-present, *hubiera* is *haber* in 9-past.
- There's no future in the alternate timeline. The present covers it: *cuando llegues* (when you arrive).

> **Sidebar · Back to the Future, part two.** In A2 the joke was that slot 9 is an alternate timeline you enter through a trigger phrase. Now you can see it's a full timeline: it has a present, a past, a have and a had, mirroring the main one slot for slot. The movie's rule holds too: go into the alternate past (*si hubiera sabido*, if I had known) and the consequences show up on the main timeline in slot 7 (*habría venido*, I would have come). That's chapter 7.

On the site: at Level B, trigger phrases in the past (*quería que, esperaba que*) flip the second part's engines into *-ra* forms. Build *quería que* + *venir* for *tú*. Say *quería que vinieras* until it stops sounding strange.

7 · If sentences

Once the mirror is in place, every "if" sentence is just a slot combination. There are three patterns, and they cover everything.

Kind	If…	Then…	Example
Real, likely	slot 4	4, 6a, 6b or 8	Si tengo tiempo, voy a trabajar. — If I have time, I'm going to work.
Imaginary, unlikely	9-past (*trabajara*)	slot 7	Si tuviera tiempo, trabajaría. — If I had time, I'd work.
Didn't happen	9-had (*hubiera trabajado*)	haber in 7 (*habría*)	Si hubiera tenido tiempo, habría trabajado. — If I'd had time, I would have worked.

Read the three rows aloud in order. The first is a plan, the second is a daydream, the third is a regret. Same sentence, three distances from reality.

Careful. Slot 9's present never follows *si*. *Si tenga tiempo* doesn't exist. After *si* it's slot 4 (real) or the 9-past (imaginary), never *tenga*. This is the one place where the alternate timeline's present is forbidden, and it's a very common beginner error.

Shortcut. *Optional. If this doesn't click, skip it. Nothing later depends on it.* The "would" half always rhymes with the "if" half. Both past: *tuviera… trabajaría* (-ra… -ría). Both "had": *hubiera… habría*. If the two halves don't sound like a pair, one of them is in the wrong slot.

On the site: Level B adds the connector *si* with the three patterns. Build each row of the table with your own pieces. Save all three. The drill will mix them.

8 · Reported speech

Short chapter, because you already have the pieces. When you report what someone said, the Timeline shifts one step back:

They said	You report
"Trabajo." (4)	Dijo que trabajaba. (1b)
"Trabajé." (1a)	Dijo que había trabajado. (2)
"Voy a trabajar." (6a)	Dijo que iba a trabajar. (1b of ir a)
"Trabajaré." (6b)	Dijo que trabajaría. (7)

Same move as English ("I work" → "he said he worked"). The only piece to learn is **dijo que** (he said that) and its friends: **me dijo que** (he told me that), **preguntó si** (he asked whether).

On the site: build any sentence in 4, then say *dijo que* and move it to 1b. Do the same from 6b to 7.

The map, filled in

Nine slots. Two engines (*estar*, *haber*) that run in all of them. A mirror of the main timeline on the other side of *que*. Three if-patterns that connect the two. The little pronouns in front of it all.

That is intermediate Spanish, and you built it out of pieces you had at the end of Manual A. Manual C is polish: the places where Spanish is subtler than the map, and the ways people actually sound.