

Spanish

AMONG AMIGOS

PHRASEBOOK

Conversation for Socially Adventurous Travelers

CHAT
ANYTIME,
ANYPLACE
IN
SPANISH

**NURIA
AGULLÓ**



Spanish

AMONG AMIGOS

PHRASEBOOK

Conversation for the Socially Adventurous

Nuria Agulló

McGraw-Hill

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Introduction

First of all, as you've probably guessed, this is not your basic Spanish phrasebook. That is, if you're looking for phrases to deal with waiters, sales clerks, and hotel receptionists, you've come to the wrong place. This is not about survival Spanish. We assume you can survive. We also assume you're interested in something more than getting by.

This phrasebook is about really conversing in Spanish. And yes, it's written with a special type of person in mind—someone who's already got a little Spanish under his or her belt and who's more into the living culture than being carted around to see the sights. In other words, all you adventurous souls who want to strike out beyond textbook or survival mode, and start really communicating with people.

So how does this phrasebook work? Basically it gives you the tools you need to carry on a conversation. Each unit zooms in on a key social function: greeting people, breaking the ice, relaying news and gossip, giving your opinion, and so on. Apart from ready-to-go phrases that'll get you sounding like a native, you'll also find grammar pointers, insights into Spanish culture, notes on idioms and slang, and tips on avoiding common blunders.

Along the way, you'll also be exposed to real-life conversations in Spanish among *amigos*. Enter Pepa and Pili, along with their friend Lola and Mark, an American whose Spanish doesn't quite measure up. You may have already met this duo from Madrid in *Spanish Among Amigos*, a hands-on vocabulary builder that later gave rise to the idea for this phrasebook. We've toned down the dialogues here to make them a little more accessible, but for those of you who aren't familiar with the original *Spanish Among Amigos* and are up for a bit more of a challenge after this, we recommend that you check it out.

That's all, folks! We hope this phrasebook not only opens up new horizons, but also has you chuckling along the way. And best of luck on your Spanish odyssey. May you make many new *amigos*!

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How to Use This Phrasebook

Here are a few tips that will help you get the most out of this book. Follow them, and you're in business!

Learn and Improvise

This book is not intended to be used as a script. Any conversation needs a good dose of spontaneity and improvisation. By all means keep this book handy for on-the-spot consultation, but we recommend that you try to learn and assimilate the phrases you think you'll need ahead of time.

Pick and Choose

As in English, there are many ways in Spanish to say hello, goodbye, give your opinion, offer advice, and so on. We've tried to make this phrasebook as comprehensive as possible, and you'll see that the lists of phrases are quite long and varied. Our recommendation: think of these lists as aisles in a language supermarket. It's good to see and be familiar with what's available, but you end up getting just one or two items from each aisle at any one time. Do the same here. Pick one or two phrases from each list to actively use: the shortest phrase, the one you like the look or sound of, or the one that's easiest for you to remember.

Observe the Natives

Ready-to-go phrases are fine, but it always helps to see them in context and observe how native Spanish speakers use them. That's why we've kicked off each unit with a dialogue featuring some of the unit's key phrases "in action." The dialogues, which are accompanied by "natural" English translations, will help give you a feel for the spirit and rhythm of everyday Spanish.

Brush Up on Your Grammar

Though you don't need perfect grammar to communicate, brushing up on the basics doesn't hurt. To this end, we've sprinkled *grammar flashes* throughout the units, with brief pointers and reminders on those structures you'll need to know. We've also included a Gram-

mar Bank at the end of the book to consult when you have questions or doubts. This contains the main building blocks you'll need to carry on a conversation among *amigos*.

Handle with Care!

This phrasebook also includes common idioms and slang, which we've flagged with emoticons (see "Abbreviations and Symbols Used in This Phrasebook"). Use these words and phrases to pepper your speech and give it a little added oomph. Be careful, though! Idioms and slang sometimes sound forced or inappropriate when used by nonnative speakers. Be particularly careful about how and when you use *hard slang* (words flagged by a surprised face). Our advice: go with it if you feel comfortable. When in doubt, don't.

Don't Be Fooled!

Yes, there are lots of false friends, or false cognates, out there—that is, words that look similar in Spanish and English, but have completely different meanings. We've highlighted common words that may be misleading in *false friend alerts*, to help you avoid misunderstandings and blunders on this front. We've also included *verb alerts* that zoom in on verbs that can cause confusion.

Get into the Spirit of Things

Language is also culture, and every culture has its traditions, quirks, and views. To give you a better grasp and get you into the spirit of things, we've inserted *culture flashes* throughout this phrasebook. Here you'll find comments on aspects of Spanish culture, particularly customs, views and/or attitudes that differ from those of English-speaking countries.

Flip to That Word

Don't know or can't remember a word? Look it up in the Word Bank at the end of the book. Here you'll find everyday words related to different topics. The Word Bank has been broken down into twenty categories, each containing various subheadings, to help you quickly find the word you need.

Just Say It!

Since we assume most of you are familiar with the way Spanish is written and sounds, we've opted not to include the phonetic

spelling next to each phrase or entry. We have, however, provided a pronunciation guide at the beginning of the book to consult if you have any doubts about pronunciation or word stress. This also includes a key to saying the alphabet in Spanish, to help you understand words being spelled to you, or else to spell a name or word yourself.

Get Creative

Forgotten an expression or aren't sure how to say something? (And, darn, you left this book at home!) Take the plunge, and do the best you can. Get creative. Take an English word, and give it Spanish pronunciation. If it's an adjective, tack on an *o* or *a* at the end. Since many English words have Latin roots, you'll hit the bull's-eye half the time. And when you don't, proceed to plan B. Use gestures, tone, body language, humor. Whip out any word that comes to mind. In the worst-case scenario, you'll entertain your *amigos* and they'll love you for it.

Keep at It!

This phrasebook is simply a tool. It will help you, but you have to do the legwork and keep at it. Remember also that striking out in another language is fun but can be defeating at moments. Take things one step at a time, and don't expect miracles overnight. Most important of all, stick with it and don't give up. At moments you may feel lost, but little by little, you'll pick up new phrases, and understand more and more of what people are saying. And one fine day you may realize you don't need this book anymore, and can give it to a friend . . .

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Abbreviations and Symbols Used in This Phrasebook

The following abbreviations and symbols appear throughout this phrasebook:

@ *o* or *a* ending of an adjective or noun. When you see a word ending in this symbol, it represents both its masculine (-*o*) and feminine (-*a*) forms.

amig@ amigo, amiga

This cyber symbol is becoming popular in Spain (since it looks like an *a* inside an *o*) as a way to indicate masculine and feminine forms of the same word, and we've decided to follow suit here.

@s *os* or *as* ending of an adjective or noun. This represents the plural masculine (-*os*) and feminine (-*as*) forms of adjectives and nouns.

amig@s amigos, amigas

☺ colloquial expression or idiom (used by people of all ages)

☺ "soft" slang (popular words and expressions used a lot by young people and accepted by everybody)

☹ "hard" slang (popular words and expressions that are potentially offensive and should be restricted to use among *amigos*)

[LA] word or expression used in most of Latin America

[SP] word or expression used only in Spain

sb somebody

st something

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Pronunciation Guide

Spanish is relatively easy to pronounce. It has only five vowel sounds (there are around 20 in English, including diphthongs), and many of the consonants sound like their English counterparts. Also, there are only a few pronunciation rules, and once you know them, you're in business. As for that rolled *r*, if you can do it, fabulous. If not, no sweat. Just use the English *r*, and you'll be understood.

Vowels

The five Spanish vowel sounds are very similar to the English vowel sounds below, though a little purer and crisper.

- A like the *ah* you say at the dentist's
- E like the *e* in *bet*
- I like the *ee* in *meet*, but less drawn out
- O like the *o* in *for*
- U like the *oo* in *cool*

Consonants

These consonants are pronounced pretty much like their English equivalents: F, K, L, M, N, P, S, T, X, Y.

The rest are pronounced as follows:

- B softer than the English *b*. (*tip*: keep your lips slightly closed—but not pressed together as you do with the English *b*)
- C before *a*, *o*, *u*, or a consonant (e.g., *cama*): a hard *c* as in *cat*.
Before *e* or *i* (e.g., *cena*):
 - [LA] a soft *c* as in *receive*
 - [SP] a *th* sound as in *thin*
- D when it's the first letter of a word (e.g., *decir*): like *d* in *dog*.
Elsewhere (e.g., *adorar*): like *th* in *that*
- G before *a*, *o*, and *u* (e.g., *gato*): like *g* in *gate*. Before *e* or *i* (e.g., *gente*):
 - [LA] like *h* in *house*
 - [SP] a harsh, guttural sound like *ch* in the Scottish *loch*
- H silent

- J** [LA] like *h* in *house*
 [SP] a harsh, guttural sound like *ch* in the Scottish *loch*
- LL** like *y* in *yes*
- Ñ** like *ni* in *onion*
- Q** like *k* in *key*; note that *q* is always followed by a silent *u*, and is only combined with *e* (e.g., *que*, *quedar*) or *i* (e.g., *quien*, *quitar*)
- R** single *r* (e.g., *venir*): rolled *r* sound
 initial *r* or double *r* (e.g., *ropa*, *perro*): strongly rolled *r* sound
- V** the same sound as the Spanish *b*
- Z** [LA] like *s* in *send* [SP] like *th* in *thin*

Stress

Words in Spanish have the stress on the second-to-last syllable

estupendo *estudiante* *casa* *hermano*

Unless . . .

- a word ends in a consonant other than *n* or *s*. In this case the stress is on the last syllable.

español *estudiar* *venir*

- the word has a written accent. In this case, the stress is on the accented vowel.

café *estación* *pacífico*

The Alphabet

We're including this, as it could come in handy for spelling words, including names of people and places.

The vowel sounds in the alphabet have been represented as follows:

- ah Spanish *a* (that dentist "ah")
 eh Spanish *e* (like *e* in *bet*)
 ee Spanish *i* (like *ee* in *meet*)
 oh Spanish *o* (like *o* in *for*)
 oo Spanish *u* (like *oo* in *cool*)

In letters containing more than one syllable, the stress is on the syllable in italics.

A	ah
B	beh
C	[LA] seh [SP] theh
CH	ch eh
D	deh
E	eh
F	eh-feh
G	heh
H	ah-cheh
I	ee
J	hoh-tah
K	kah
L	eh-leh
LL	eh-yeh
M	eh-meh
N	eh-neh
Ñ	eh-nee-eh
O	oh
P	peh
Q	koo
R	eh-reh
S	eh-seh
T	teh
U	oo
V	oo-veh
W	oo-veh doh-bleh
X	eh-kees
Y	ee-gree-eh-gah
Z	[LA] seh-tah [SP] theh-tah

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Spanish

AMONG AMIGOS

PHRASEBOOK

1

Meeting and Greeting

It's been a while since Pepa and Pili last saw each other. They run into each other on the street . . .

- Pili ¡Hola, Pepa!
- Pepa ¡Hombre, Pili! (*Se dan dos besos.*) ¿Qué tal?
- Pili Estupendamente. ¿Y tú?
- Pepa Bien. Sin novedades.
- Pili Bueno, ¡cuánto tiempo! Pensé que habías desaparecido del mapa.
- Pepa Lo siento, es que he estado muy liada.
- Pili No pasa nada. Mira, te presento a Mark, un amigo de Estados Unidos. Estamos haciendo un intercambio.
- Pepa Hola. Encantada.
- Mark Hola. ¿Qué tal? (*Se dan dos besos.*)
- Pepa ¿Vives aquí en Madrid?
- Mark Sí, voy a estar un tiempo. Quiero mejorar mi español.
- Pepa ¡Ah! Pues con Pili vas a aprender mucho, ya verás.
- Pili ¡Ja, ja, ja! Desde luego. Oye, Pepa, ahora tenemos que irnos, pero a ver si nos vemos pronto.
- Pepa Venga, y así nos ponemos al día.
- Pili Estupendo. **Hablamos pronto.** (*Se dan dos besos.*)
- Pepa ¡Chao! ¡Pasadlo bien!
- Mark ¡Hasta luego!



Pili Hi, Pepa!
Pepa Hey, Pili! *(They kiss on both cheeks.)* How are you?
Pili Great. How about you?
Pepa Good. Not much happening.
Pili Wow, it's been a while! I thought you'd fallen off the face of the earth.
Pepa I'm sorry, I've been really tied up.
Pili Don't worry. Hey, **this is Mark**, a friend from the United States. We're doing a language exchange.
Pepa Hi. Nice to meet you.
Mark Hi. How are you? *(They kiss on both cheeks.)*
Pepa Do you live here in Madrid?
Mark Yes, I'm going to be here for a while. I want to improve my Spanish.
Pepa Oh! Well, you're going to learn a lot with Pili, just wait and see.
Pili Ha, ha! Of course. Hey, Pepa, we've got to go now, but **let's get together soon**.
Pepa OK, and that way we can catch up.
Pili Great. **Talk to you soon**. *(They kiss on both cheeks.)*
Pepa **Ciao! Have fun!**
Mark See you!

Saying Hello

¡Hola!	Hello!/Hi!
¿Cómo estás?	How are you?
¿Qué tal (estás)?	How are you?
¿Cómo andas?☺	How's it going?
¿Qué hay?☺	What's up?/What's new?
¡Hombre!☺ [SP]	Hey!/Well hello! (<i>used when you run into or hear from someone unexpectedly; hombre here is an exclamation of surprise and is used with both men and women</i>)
¿Cómo lo llevas?☺ [SP]	How's it going?/How are you doing?
¿Qué pasa?☺	What's up?/What's happening?
¡Buenos días!	Good morning!

And If It's Been a While

¿Qué tal todo?	How's everything?
¿Cómo te va (la vida)?	How's it going?/How's life?
¿Qué es de tu vida?	How's life?/What have you been up to?
¡Cuánto tiempo!	It's been a while!/Long time no see!
¡Hace siglos que no nos vemos!	It's been ages!
Pensé que habías desaparecido del mapa.	I thought you'd fallen off the face of the earth.
Vamos a ponernos al día.	Let's catch up.
A ver cuando nos vemos.	Let's get together sometime.
A ver si nos vemos pronto.	Let's get together soon.
A ver si quedamos pronto.	Let's get together soon.

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