



# GCSE SPANISH FOUNDATION TRANSLATION PRACTICE MATERIALS



**Nombre:**

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# Translation: English-Spanish Strategies

There are some different strategies to consider when you are translating from English into Spanish, partly because you will be able to understand the text you see so you don't need to try to work out any meanings before you start. However, most people would consider that translating into Spanish is more difficult.

When you have a passage or sentence to translate into Spanish, read the whole thing through once. Then work sentence by sentence or phrase by phrase bearing the following strategies in mind.



## Grammar

### Verbs

- Think carefully about the verb forms you need. Who is the subject of the verb (who is doing the action)? Is it more than one person? Make sure you know your verb endings.

We went to Spain.

*Fuimos a España.*

He went to Spain.

*Fue a España.*

Always read the English carefully to make sure you have identified which tense needs to be used in Spanish. Look for clues such as time markers to help you.

Last week, I visited my friend. → preterite tense needed

Next week, she will play tennis. → future tense needed

But remember that to say how long you have been doing/have done something in Spanish, you use *desde hace* + the present tense, when you would use the perfect tense in English. Don't let this catch you out!

We have played tennis for six years. *Jugamos al tenis desde hace seis años.*

- Take care with reflexive verbs in Spanish as these aren't always obvious from the English. Reflexive verbs are frequent in daily routine translations at GCSE.

I shower every morning.

*Me ducho cada mañana.*

- Remember that Spanish uses infinitives when English uses words ending in 'ing'.

I hate doing my homework.

*Odio hacer los deberes.*

- You might have to use modal verbs, so look out for 'can', 'must', 'should', 'allowed to' and remember that these verbs are followed by the infinitive in Spanish.

You should eat fruit every day.

*Se debería comer fruta todos los días.*

When translating verb forms into Spanish you won't normally need to translate the pronouns (I/you/he/she/we/they) as the verb ending will tell the reader who is doing the verb.

Try to remember which verbs are often followed by an infinitive.

### Nouns and adjectives

- Gender, articles and adjectival agreement and position are also really important when you are translating nouns into Spanish.

We have a **small** guinea pig. *Tenemos una cobaya pequeña.*

I ate some **delicious** prawns. *Comí unas gambas deliciosas.*

She has **brown** eyes. *Tiene los ojos marrones.*

Remember that the **-o** ending changes to **-a** when the adjective describes a feminine noun and the ending will become **-os** or **-as** when the noun is plural. If the adjective ends in a consonant, it does not change in the feminine singular but you need to add **-es** in the plural.

### Time phrases

- Learn common time and frequency phrases so you always have them ready to use: yesterday (*ayer*), today (*hoy*), tomorrow (*mañana*), every day (*todos los días*), etc.

Try to remember that *por la mañana* translates as 'in the morning' (and not 'for tomorrow'). You also use *por* with *por la noche* and *por la tarde*.

### Useful little words

- Build up your bank of vocabulary with useful little words, which you are likely to need in your translations, for example: intensifiers (quite – *bastante*, very – *muy*), quantifiers (a lot of – *mucho/a/os/as*, a little – *un poco de*), conjunctions (but – *pero*, because – *porque*), prepositions (with – *con*, from – *desde*).



## Word order

- You need to think carefully about word order when you are translating into Spanish. Remember the rules for adjectives and object pronouns:

### Adjectives

Spain has lots of beautiful beaches. *España tiene muchas playas **bonitas**.*

Most adjectives, including all colours, come **after** the noun they describe.

### Object pronouns

She has given **us** a present. ***Nos** ha dado un regalo.*

The pronoun **nos** comes **before** the verb.

Remember, when translating verbs such as 'like' and 'love' in English you need to think carefully about how you construct the sentence. For example, 'I like strawberries' would be translated as *Me gustan las fresas*, which literally translates as 'Strawberries are pleasing to me'.



## Translation skills

- Be careful with words which we miss out in English but which must be there in Spanish, and vice versa.

I don't like coffee. *No me gusta **el** café.*

On Sundays he plays football. *Los domingos juega **al** fútbol.*

My brother wants to be a journalist. *Mi hermano quiere ser **periodista**.*

- Avoid translating word for word when you translate into Spanish. Be particularly careful with the present continuous in English, which sometimes does not need to be directly translated into Spanish.

I **am listening** to music. ***Estoy escuchando** música.*

I **am studying** French at university. ***Estudio** francés en la universidad.*

Use the present continuous tense for something that you are doing right now.

Similarly, the imperfect tense in Spanish is a single word.

I **used to play** tennis. / I **was playing** tennis. ***Jugaba** al tenis.*

The same is true for 'will' in the future tense and 'would' in the conditional. They are not separate words in Spanish.

We **will go** to Tenerife in winter. ***Iremos** a Tenerife en invierno.*

She **would work** in an orphanage. ***Trabajaría** en un orfanato.*

- We are sometimes a little lazy with our written English, but Spanish does not allow this.

The city I visited... *La ciudad **que** visité...*

In English a more correct way to say this would be 'The city that I visited', and *que* is needed here in Spanish.

- When you are asked to translate from English into Spanish, you might need to look carefully at the sentence or part of the sentence which comes **before** the one you are translating.

Last year we bought a house in Spain. It is too small and very noisy.

*El año pasado compramos una **casa** en España. Es demasiado pequeña y muy ruidosa.*


The noun 'casa' comes before the adjectives which describe it. Because it is a feminine noun you need to change the endings of the adjectives to agree.

- If you don't know how to say something in Spanish, don't panic! Try to think of a synonym, a similar word, or another way to say it using vocabulary that you **do** know.
- Check your spelling, accents and grammar!
- If you have time, it is a good idea to try to translate what you have written back into English, to see if it really does match the translation you were asked to do.



As you are working through the translations on the following pages, try to avoid using translation software, lots of which is available online. Although online dictionaries can be helpful for individual nouns, there is no guarantee that any online translation service can provide you with a correct answer in any context. Don't just accept the first answer you find!

# Theme 1: Free time, self, family and friends

 Look at this sentence in English and its Spanish translation. Try to see how the translation was made.


Note that after verbs of liking/loving/hating the second verb must be in the infinitive.

I love playing basketball because it is fun.  
*Me encanta jugar al baloncesto porque es divertido.*

Remember *jugar* is followed by the preposition *a*.

Remember that you don't translate 'it' and 'is' separately. The verb conjugation lets the reader know who is doing the action.

Adjectives must agree with the noun that they describe.



## 1 Translate these sentences into Spanish. The first four have been partially translated to help you.

1 I like to play chess with my friends.

*Me gusta jugar al* \_\_\_\_\_

2 At weekends, she chats and sends messages on her mobile.

*Los fines de semana* \_\_\_\_\_

3 I often read magazines but I never read poetry.

*Leo revistas a menudo, pero* \_\_\_\_\_

4 He will never share his photos because it is dangerous.

*Nunca compartirá sus fotos* \_\_\_\_\_

5 Last week, I watched a reality show and it was very funny.

\_\_\_\_\_

6 I get on well with my best friend.

\_\_\_\_\_

7 Last night he fought with his sister.

\_\_\_\_\_

8 Yesterday we played volleyball on the beach.

\_\_\_\_\_

9 She is going to buy a hat for her sister's wedding.

\_\_\_\_\_

10 Tomorrow, I will use Skype to contact my family in Ireland.

\_\_\_\_\_

# Theme 2: Home town, region, travel and tourism



Look at this sentence in English and its Spanish translation. Try to see how the translation was made.

Last summer, I went to Benidorm and it was sunny.

*El verano pasado, fui a Benidorm e hizo sol.*

Remember that before words beginning with 'i' and 'hi' (when the sound is 'ee') the word for 'and' is e.

e.g. *Hablo español e italiano.*

*Padre e hijo.*

Remember that many weather expressions in Spanish are formed using the verb *hacer*. Make sure you look back at irregular tense verb formation on pp. 38 and 52.



## 1 Correct these translations.

1 Next winter, I will go to Sweden but it will be cold!

*El pasado invierno, ir a Suecia, pero ¡hacerá frío!*

2 Last April, I went to Wales and it was very windy.

*El pasado abril, fue a Gales y hacó mucho viento.*

## 2 Translate these sentences into Spanish.

The first four have been partially translated to help you.

1 I live in Leeds in the north of England.

*Vivo en Leeds*

2 During her holidays, she likes to swim in the sea.

*Durante sus vacaciones,*

3 I prefer living in the countryside because it is peaceful.

*Prefiero vivir en el campo porque*

4 We hate holidays in England because it's always bad weather.

*Odiamos las vacaciones en Inglaterra porque*

5 Next year we're going to go to the south of France with our grandparents.

6 Every day my friend and I go to the park in our town.

7 I would like to visit Italy because my mother is Italian.

8 You can go shopping in the *Gran Vía* in Madrid.

9 They went to Barcelona and they saw a match at the Camp Nou stadium.

10 When I visited Mallorca I lost my sunglasses on the beach.



Break each sentence down into small, manageable and logical chunks and think carefully about spellings and accents.

# Theme 2: Social and global issues

Look at this sentence in English and its Spanish translation. Try to see how the translation was made.

I want to protect the planet so I recycle paper and plastic.

*Quiero proteger el planeta, por eso reciclo el papel y el plástico.*

Remember the stem-changing verb *querer*.

Note that in English we miss out the definite article but in Spanish you have to put it in.

Make sure you are familiar with irregular verbs as these are often the most frequently used. Make a poster to put on your bedroom wall to help remember them.



## 1 Translate these sentences into Spanish. The first four have been partially translated to help you.

1 She is environmentally conscious because she separates the rubbish and recycles glass.

*Es ecológica porque*

2 We use public transport to reduce pollution in our town.

*para reducir la contaminación en nuestra ciudad.*

3 Yesterday I gave ten euros to a campaign to protect the rainforest.

*Ayer di diez euros*

4 Our children are going to live in a better world.

*Nuestros hijos*

5 My family always buys environmentally friendly products.

6 It is better to walk than to travel by car.

7 The worst problem is the destruction of the environment.

8 We must look after our beautiful planet.

9 You should not waste either water or energy.

10 I watched the World Cup on TV with my best friend Raúl.

# Theme 3: School and school life



Look at this sentence in English and its Spanish translation. Try to see how the translation was made.

I wear a grey skirt and a white blouse.  
*Llevo una falda gris y una blusa blanca.*



Adjectives usually come after the noun in Spanish.

The adjective is feminine and singular. It agrees in gender and number with the noun *blusa*.

## 1 Complete these English sentences and their Spanish translations.

e.g.	I don't like <u>geography</u> because it is boring.	No me gusta la geografía porque es aburrida.
1	On Mondays at 12.15 _____.	_____ tengo inglés.
2	My uniform _____ and comfortable.	_____ es elegante _____.
3	_____ blue _____ and a _____ shirt.	Llevo pantalones _____ negra.

## 2 Translate these sentences into Spanish. The first four have been partially translated to help you.

1 I go to school by car with my dad.

*Voy al instituto*

2 Bullying is a problem for my friends at school.

*El acoso escolar es un problema*

3 My friend Sara sings in the choir when I go to chess club.

*cuando yo voy al club de ajedrez.*

4 Yesterday, I walked to school with friends but it rained!

*con los amigos, ¡pero llovió!*

5 Chemistry is more difficult than physics.



School subjects have articles in Spanish.

6 In my primary school there were fewer students.

7 You are not allowed to use a mobile phone in lessons.


8 We are going to visit a Spanish school next week.

9 If I pass my exams, I will celebrate with my parents at home.

You need to say 'celebrate it' in Spanish.

10 My French teacher is the worst in the school.

# Theme 3: Jobs and future plans

 Look at this sentence in English and its Spanish translation. Try to see how the translation was made.

In order to be a mechanic, I have to do a three-year apprenticeship.

Para ser mecánico, tengo que hacer un aprendizaje de tres años.

When saying what job someone does, you do not use the indefinite article.

Remember that tener is an irregular verb and is followed by the infinitive when used with que.

## 1 Unjumble these translations.

1 I'm looking for a job with a good salary.

trabajo/un/sueldo/con/busco/buen/un

2 My brother is a mechanic and repairs cars.

coches/y/es/hermano/mecánico/mi/repara

## 2 Translate these sentences into Spanish. The first four have been partially translated to help you.

1 My father is a gardener and he has to look after the plants.

Mi padre es jardinero

2 I would like to be a teacher because I love children.

Me gustaría ser profesora

3 She is very ambitious so she wants to be a singer.

Ella es muy ambiciosa

4 I am going to travel and live abroad in the future.

Voy a viajar

5 My brother went to university in Scotland and studied Modern Languages.

6 Lady Gaga worked as a waitress before being famous.

7 Pablo is going to work as a volunteer in a hospital in South America.

8 It is more interesting working as an actor than being a shop assistant.

9 Sometimes customers are unfriendly and rude in supermarkets.

10 She is going to be an engineer in the future because she loves maths.

