

Spanish Gender Rules: A Simple But Complete Guide

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Spanish Gender Rules

Gender in Objects

In Spanish, all objects are either masculine or feminine. There are no neutral nouns.

Learning to identify masculine and feminine nouns will help you use adjectives and articles correctly.

In Spanish, all the words that modify a noun have the gender of the noun. Let me give you some examples.

Bolígrafo (pen) is a masculine noun. Notice that the words that modify it are masculine as well.

- **Este bolígrafo es negro. (This pen is black.)**

Mochila (backpack) is a feminine noun, and the words that modify it are feminine, too.

- **Estamochila es negra. (This backpack is black.)**

Masculine Nouns

In Spanish, masculine nouns usually end in:

– O

- **el carro** (the car)
- **el dinero** (the money)
- **el edificio**(the building)

– AJE

- **el mensaje** (the message)
- **el pasaje** (the alley)
- **el garaje** (the garage)
- **el paisaje** (the landscape)

– OR

- **el amor** (the love)
- **el dolor** (the pain)
- **el sabor** (the taste)
- **el olor** (the smell)

There are irregular masculine nouns. They don't follow the rules above. Here are some examples.

- **el clima** (the weather)
- **el día** (the day)
- **el idioma** (the language)
- **el mapa** (the map)

Feminine Nouns

In Spanish, feminine nouns usually end in:

– A

- **la casa** (the house)
- **la mesa** (the table)
- **la hoja** (the leaf)
- **la cara** (the face)

– DAD / – TAD

- **la bondad** (the kindness)
- **la ciudad** (the city)
- **la libertad** (the freedom)
- **la amistad** (the friendship)

– CIÓN / – SIÓN

- **la canción** (the song)

- **la traducción** (the translation)
- **la prisión** (the prison)
- **la televisión** (the TV)

There are irregular feminine nouns, too. Some examples are the following.

- **la foto** (the picture)
- **la mano** (the hand)
- **la moto** (the motorcycle)
- **la radio** (the radio)

Gender in People and Animals

Nouns that refer to people and animals usually have two genders, a masculine and a feminine one.

By default, so to speak, all nouns are masculine, and that's the way they appear in Spanish dictionaries.

Masculine nouns end in -o. To make them feminine, you only need to change that -o for an -a.

- **el chico** (the boy)
- **la chica** (the girl)
- **el gato** (the male cat)
- **la gata** (the female cat)

If a masculine noun ends in a consonant, just add an -a to make it feminine.

- **el doctor** (the doctor)
- **la doctora** (the doctor)
- **el león** (the lion)
- **la leona** (the lioness)

Just like in English, in some cases, there is a different word for each gender (mother and father, for example).

- **el padre** (the father)
- **la madre** (the mother)
- **el toro** (the bull)
- **la vaca** (the cow)

Finally, there are nouns that can be used for men and women.

- **el estudiante** (the student)
- **la estudiante** (the student)
- **el testigo** (the witness)
- **la testigo** (the witness)
- **el artista** (the artist)
- **la artista** (the artist)