

Estructuras

5. The present tense of regular *-ar* verbs



- Spanish verbs are classified into three groups according to their infinitive ending (**-ar**, **-er**, or **-ir**). Each of the three groups uses different endings to produce verb forms (conjugations) in the various tenses.

HABLAR (*to speak, to talk*)

SINGULAR FORMS				PLURAL FORMS			
	STEM	ENDING	VERB FORM		STEM	ENDING	VERB FORM
yo	habl	+ o	hablo	nosotros/as	habl	+ amos	hablamos
tú	habl	+ as	hablas	vosotros/as	habl	+ áis	habláis
él/ella, Ud. }	habl	+ a	habla	ellos/as, Uds. }	habl	+ an	hablan

The following verbs are regular **-ar** verbs that are conjugated like **hablar**.

ayudar	<i>to help</i>	mirar	<i>to look at</i>
bailar	<i>to dance</i>	nadar	<i>to swim</i>
buscar	<i>to look for</i>	necesitar	<i>to need</i>
caminar	<i>to walk</i>	practicar	<i>to practice</i>
comprar	<i>to buy</i>	preparar	<i>to prepare</i>
conversar	<i>to speak, to chat</i>	regresar	<i>to return</i>
enseñar	<i>to teach</i>	tomar	<i>to take; to drink</i>
escuchar	<i>to listen</i>	trabajar	<i>to work</i>
estudiar	<i>to study</i>	tratar de (+ inf.)	<i>to try (to do something)</i>
llegar	<i>to arrive</i>	viajar	<i>to travel</i>

The Spanish present indicative tense has several equivalents in English. In addition to the simple present, it can express on-going actions and even the future tense. Note the following example.

Estudio ingeniería.	} <i>I study engineering.</i> <i>I am studying engineering.</i>
Hablamos con Ana mañana.	
	<i>We will speak with Ana tomorrow.</i>



Study tips

Learning regular verb conjugations

1. The first step in learning regular verb conjugations is being able to recognize the infinitive stem: the part of the verb before the ending.

INFINITIVE		STEM
hablar	hablar	habl
estudiar	estudiar	estudi
trabajar	trabajar	trabaj

2. Practice conjugating several **-ar** verbs in writing first. Identify the stem, then write the various verb forms by adding the present tense endings listed on page 000. Once you have done this, say the forms you have written out loud several times.
3. Next, you will need to practice **-ar** verb conjugations orally. Create two sets of index cards. In one, write down the subject pronouns listed on page 000 (one per card). In the other set, write some of the **-ar** verbs you have learned. Select one card from each set and conjugate the verb with the selected pronoun.
4. Think about how each verb action relates to your own experience by putting verbs into a meaningful context. For example, think about what you and each of your friends study: **Estudio matemáticas. Juan estudia ingeniería.**