

# Overview of Nouns and Articles

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## WHAT'S COVERED

In this lesson, you will learn about how nouns function in the Spanish language, and how to determine the correct articles to accompany them. Specifically, this lesson will cover:

1. Los Sustantivos (Nouns)
  - a. Gender
  - b. Number

## 1. Los Sustantivos (Nouns)

A noun is a person, place, or thing (e.g., pharmacist, pharmacy, prescription). In Spanish, all nouns are either masculine or feminine.

However, this is not to say that "la computadora" is a girl and that "el teléfono" is a boy. Linguistic gender is very different from how we typically view gender.

### 1a. Gender

Linguistic gender was carried into Spanish from Latin. It is a very important part of each noun. The gender of a noun determines the form of any adjective or article that describes it.

You will thus use the article "el" with masculine words and "la" with feminine words. They both mean "the." You will also want to remember the following rules:

- Generally, if a noun ends in the letter "o," it is masculine.
- Generally, if a noun ends in the letter "a," it is feminine.

Of course, there are exceptions to these rules, such as "el agua," "la mano," "el día," "la radio," etc.



### HINT

The safest way to memorize the gender of a noun is to memorize its article ("el" or "la" ) with it. You can color-code nouns on flash cards to help you remember their gender.

Here are some nouns for you to learn.



Masculine Noun	English Translation	Feminine Noun	English Translation
el papel	paper	la computadora	computer
el bolígrafo	pen	la forma	form
el libro	book	la caja	cash register
el dinero	money	la tarjeta de crédito	credit card
el dinero en efectivo	cash	la tarjeta de débito	debit card
el cheque	check	la calculadora	calculator
el cupón	coupon	la botella	bottle
el lápiz	pencil	la farmacia	pharmacy
el medicamento	medication	la receta	prescription
el seguro	insurance	la medicina	medicine
el hospital	hospital	la droga	drug
el teléfono	telephone	la oficina	office
el mensaje	message	la clínica	clinic

If the noun is a person, the linguistic gender is always the same as the physical gender.

Masculine Noun	English Translation	Feminine Noun	English Translation
el hombre	man	la mujer	woman
el chico / el muchacho	boy	la chica / la muchacha	girl
el niño	little boy - child	la niña	little girl - child
el novio	boyfriend / fiancé	la novia	girlfriend / fiancée
el amigo	male friend	la amiga	female friend
el farmacéutico	male pharmacist	la farmacéutica	female pharmacist
el técnico	male technician	la técnica	female technician
el doctor	male doctor	la doctora	female doctor
el enfermero	male nurse	la enfermera	female nurse
el secretario	male secretary	la secretaria	female secretary
el esposo / el marido	husband	la esposa / la mujer	wife
el padre	father	la madre	mother
el hijo	son	la hija	daughter
el hermano	brother	la hermana	sister
el abuelo	grandfather	la abuela	grandmother
el tío	uncle	la tía	aunt
el primo	male cousin	la prima	female cousin
el paciente	male patient	la paciente	female patient
el cliente	male customer	la cliente	female customer

## 1b. Number

Now that you've learned about the gender of nouns, you must learn the other aspect: number. This one is much easier. All nouns have two forms: singular and plural.

To make a singular noun plural, follow these rules:

- If the word ends in a vowel, simply add an "s" to the end.
  - *Amigo* (friend) → *amigos* (friends), *farmacia* (pharmacy) → *farmacias* (pharmacies)
- If the word ends in a consonant, add an "es" to the end.
  - *Ciudad* (city) → *ciudades* (cities)



### SUMMARY

In this lesson, you learned about **nouns** in the Spanish language. When using nouns, there are two important aspects to consider. First, you must know the linguistic **gender** of the noun. Nouns in Spanish are either masculine or feminine, and this gender will determine which article to use with the noun. Second, you must determine the **number** of the noun. To make a singular noun plural, you will simply need to add an "s" or "es" to the end of the word.

¡Buena suerte!

## Support

If you are struggling with a concept or terminology in the course, you may contact [SpanishforNursesSupport@capella.edu](mailto:SpanishforNursesSupport@capella.edu) for assistance.

If you are having technical issues, please contact [learningcoach@sophia.org](mailto:learningcoach@sophia.org).

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