

Overview of Nouns and Articles

by Sophia Tutorial



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 PharmacySpanishSupport@capella.edu for assistance.

If you are having technical issues, please contact learningcoach@sophia.org.

Source: This content has been adapted from "Pharmacy Spanish" by Stephanie Langston.