

Verbs with Similar Meanings

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WHAT'S COVERED

In this lesson, you will learn about the differences between several verbs that appear to have similar meanings but should actually be used in different contexts. Specifically, this lesson will cover:

1. Los Verbos con Significados Semejantes (Verbs With Similar Meanings)
 - a. Ser and Estar
 - b. Saber and Conocer
 - c. Llenar and Surtir
 - d. Volver, Devolver, and Regresar
 - e. Preguntar and Pedir

1. Los Verbos con Significados Semejantes (Verbs With Similar Meanings)

Certain verbs in Spanish have very similar meanings. However, you do need to make a distinction between them since they are used differently. You can refer back to the verb list as you note these differences.

1a. Ser and Estar

Both **ser** and **estar** mean **to be**. "Ser" is used to describe the essence of something/someone, while "estar" is used to describe the state of being of something/someone.

In other words, "ser" is used to describe things that are more permanent and "estar" is used to describe things that are more temporary (like location and temporary conditions). "Ser" has many more uses and you will see examples of them throughout the rest of this program.

In the second module, you learned examples of descriptive adjectives. Now, you can look at some of those adjectives again to see whether they should be used with "ser" or "estar."

Examples of permanent characteristics (use "ser" with these adjectives):

Adjective	English Translation	Adjective	English Translation
grande	big	pequeño	small

bueno	good	malo	bad
alto	tall	bajo	short
delgado	thin	gordo	fat
joven	young	anciano	old (person)
nuevo	new	viejo	old (object)
dulce	sweet	agrio	sour
caro	expensive	barato	inexpensive

Examples of temporary characteristics (use "estar" with these adjectives):

Adjective	English Translation	Adjective	English Translation
sano	healthy	enfermo	sick
mejor	better	peor	worse
fuerte	strong	débil	weak
relajado	relaxed	preocupado	worried

1b. Saber and Conocer

Saber and **conocer** both mean **to know**. Use "conocer" when stating that you know (are familiar with) a person or place. Use "saber" when speaking of factual or procedural knowledge.

Example Sentence	English Translation
Ella sabe tomar la medicina.	She knows how to take the medicine.
Ella conoce a Juan.	She knows Juan.

1c. Llenar and Surtir

Llenar and **surtir** both mean **to fill**. However, "llenar" means "to fill out" as in a form, while "surtir" means "to fill" as in a prescription.

Example Sentence	English Translation
María llena la forma.	María fills out the form.
Yo surto la receta.	I fill the prescription.

1d. Volver, Devolver, and Regresar

Volver, **devolver**, and **regresar** all mean **to return**. Use "volver" or "regresar" when speaking of a person returning to a location. Use "devolver" to speak of an object that is being returned for a refund.

Example Sentence	English Translation
Yo vuelvo a casa.	I return home.
Pepe devuelve la receta a la farmacia.	Pepe returns the prescription to the pharmacy.

1e. Preguntar and Pedir

Preguntar and **pedir** both mean versions of **to ask**. "Preguntar" is used when asking a question, and "pedir" is

used when asking for something, such as a favor or an object.

Example Sentence	English Translation
Yo pregunto a la paciente que tipo de seguro médico tiene.	I ask the patient what type of medical insurance she has.
La paciente pide otro medicamento.	The patient asks for another medication.



SUMMARY

In this lesson, you learned that some **verbs in Spanish have similar meanings** even though they are used in different ways. These verbs include **ser and estar; saber and conocer; llenar and surtir; volver, devolver, and regresar; and preguntar and pedir**. Distinguishing between the usages of these verbs is essential to communicating clearly in Spanish.

¡Buena suerte!

Support

If you are struggling with a concept or terminology in the course, you may contact **SpanishforNursesSupport@capella.edu** for assistance.

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

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