

Learning Spanish

If you want to enjoy this wonderful country to the full, then quite simple, you need to learn Spanish.

Everybody, with the right help, has the ability to pick up a second language.

Foreign language teaching methods have changed so much over the past few years. Older methods, focusing upon reading and writing, are now seen as outdated and unproductive. After several years, students still struggled to verbally put together simple sentences when travelling to the countries whose language they had been studying.

My teaching methods are designed to avoid these frustrations and are totally focused upon speaking and listening and my aim is that from day one, you will be able to speak simple Spanish sentences.

In my opinion, it is very important to enjoy learning and this is why I use a variety of techniques such as songs, role plays, competitions, listening techniques and repetition during my classes. My lessons are an enjoyable experience, regularly filled with moments of laughter, which I find helps to relax my students, making them more receptive and open to the learning process.

As in any language, Spanish has a logical structure called grammar and nobody could learn this successfully, by rote, without understanding the meaning behind it. Spanish grammar is very different to that of the English language but once they have grasped the logic behind it, my students have generally found learning the rest quite a straight

forward and relatively fast process. One thing which a lot of people seem to take for granted is that the sentence, as in any language, is the key unit of meaning and that the central part of any sentence is the verb. Without verbs there is no meaning and we are left with simple words which have little or no connection.

Some of my students have lived in Spain for many years, but without these basic skills were unable to say simple sentences with any real meaning. Many beginners, who try to learn a language by themselves, soon lose confidence and motivation. They realise that the single words which they use when talking to people lack real meaning and they become embarrassed and stop trying. The missing part here tends to be the verb and with the right help this problem can be easily overcome and the joy and confidence gained from speaking Spanish correctly comes flooding back.

One encouraging thing about Spanish is that, phonetically speaking, it is a very simple language to learn. I have found that after only a couple of lessons, I have managed to teach the majority of my students how to read it correctly. Spanish has 28 letters and 28 sounds and this is why our phonetic and written codes are so similar. The English language on the other hand, uses an alphabet which has only 26 letters yet phonetically, it has over 40 sounds. You should have very few problems pronouncing any Spanish sound.

Five Good reasons for learning Spanish

1. Do not forget that learning is to the mind what exercise is to the body and keeping your brain active and healthy helps to slow down the mental effects of age and help prevent diseases such as Alzheimer.
2. If you are planning to live in or even regularly visit Spain, being able to talk to and communicate with the locals is an invaluable skill and will open up the country, its culture and its many, many fascinating and

wonderful traditions, not to mention the shops and markets.

3. Spanish is the second, most widely spoken language in the world.

4. Speaking foreign languages encourages an open-minded approach to understand new ideas and different cultures.

5. Learning another language can be great entertainment and a fantastic way of meeting people.

Just let me help you find the logic to my language and you will be speaking Spanish in a few months.

Some comments from two of my students:

I came to Maria knowing quite a lot of Spanish but, thanks to my lack of formal training, knowing it and using it badly. Thanks to her refreshing techniques, after only a few lessons I have now gained an invaluable insight into the mechanics of the language and am in far more control of the words which I have learned. I have gained the confidence to use what Spanish I know in everyday situations and it's great and thoroughly rewarding not to have to rely on my index finger when I go shopping. I've also discovered the delights of Julio Iglesias and singing in public!!

I have found Maria invaluable to me in increasing my confidence in speaking Spanish. It is essential if you are to string sentences together to learn verbs and she has an excellent method of teaching these.

Group lessons or one-to-one take place in El Estrecho, mornings and afternoons from Monday to Friday.

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