

Present Progressive Tense

To describe something happening in the present, we use the Present Tense in Spanish. For example:

María habla.
Yo como.

María speaks.
I eat.

However, there is a more precise way to explain something in the process of happening: use the Present Progressive. Do this by combining a form of the verb *estar* (*to be*) with a present participle (the "-ing" form of a verb). For example:

María está hablando.
Yo estoy comiendo.

María is speaking.
I am eating.

So, in order to form the Present Progressive, you must know how to conjugate the verb *estar*, and how to form the present participle. To form the present participle for AR verbs, replace the ending with "ando". To do so for ER or IR verbs, replace the ending with "iendo".

estar = to be

estoy	estamos	hablar - ar + ando = hablando (talking)
estás	estáis	comer -er + iendo = comiendo (eating)
está	están	

Exceptions

Notice that we use the Progressive in English to refer to future actions, as in "I am studying with Ana tonight." In Spanish, however, that is not proper.

I am studying now.
(use present progressive)

I am studying with María tonight.
(do not use present progressive)

How NOT to Use the Present Progressive

In English, we often misuse the Present Progressive and say things like "I like swimming," when we really should say, "I like to swim."

Here are examples of how the Present Progressive can be misused, which you should avoid.

NO: Ayudando a mi hermana es difícil en la mañana.
YES: **Ayudar** a mi hermana es difícil en la mañana.

NO: En la noche me gusta haciendo mi tarea para mañana.
YES: En la noche me gusta **hacer** mi tarea para mañana.

NO: El dentista dice que cepillando los dientes es importante.
YES: El dentista dice que **cepillarse** los dientes es importante.

In other words, just use the infinitive to avoid this problem.

Irregular Forms

To form the present participle of these **IR stem-changing verbs**, change *e* to *i* and *o* to *u* in the stem, and then replace the ending with "iendo".

decir: diciendo	divertir: divirtiendo	dormir: durmiendo
morir: muriendo	pedir: pidiendo	poder: pudiendo
preferir: prefiriendo	repetir: repitiendo	requerir: requiriendo
sentir: sintiendo	servir: sirviendo	seguir: siguiendo
venir: viniendo	vestir: vistiendo	

Sometimes when forming the present participle it is necessary to change the spelling of a word so that it agrees with the way it is pronounced. For example:

caer: cayendo	creer: creyendo	destruir: destruyendo
huir: huyendo	incluir: incluyendo	influir: influyendo
ir: yendo	leer: leyendo	oír: oyendo
seguir: siguiendo	traer: trayendo	

Quiz

Please translate the following sentences on another sheet of paper.

1. John is eating bread.
2. Mary and Carmen are speaking with us.
3. I am studying Spanish.
4. He is taking a test.
5. We are swimming in the river.

