

Spanish Pronouns

In order to complete a thought in virtually any language, you need two things: a *noun* (person, place, thing, or idea) and a *verb* (action). To simply say "Mary" is not enough. To just say "studies" is not enough. You need both to form a coherent thought: "Mary studies." You can go on from there to add details—for example, "Mary studies a lot."

First, let's look at nouns. We rely on special nouns called *pronouns* to refer to people, as listed on the table below.

	singular	plural
"1st person"	I	we
"2nd person"	you	you [all]
"3rd person"	he, she	they

Notice that the singular and plural forms match up on the chart. In other words:

"I" turns into "we" as a plural

"you" turns into "y'all" or "you guys" as a plural

"he" or "she" turns into "they" as a plural

Here is the same chart in Spanish:

	singular	plural
"1 ^a persona"	yo	nosotros, nosotras
"2 ^a persona"	tú	vosotros, vosotras
"3 ^a persona"	él, ella	ellos, ellas

Notice that in Spanish, all the plural pronouns have words to represent both male and female. For example, "ellos" implies that "they" are male, and "ellas" implies that "they" are female.



Two pronouns exist in Spanish that do not exist in English: *usted* (you) and *ustedes* (you all). These are used to express formality or reverence for authority. If you are speaking to an official, an employer, or an adult outside your family, you would address him/her as *usted*.

For example, rather than saying *¿Cómo estás tú?*, you should say: *¿Cómo está usted?* Rather than saying *¿Cómo estás vosotros?*, you should say: *¿Cómo están ustedes?*

Note: *Usted* and *ustedes*—abbreviated *ud.* and *uds.*—are grouped with the third person pronouns for grammatical purposes. Be careful not to confuse them with *él, ella, ellos*, or *ellas*.

	singular	plural
"1 ^a persona"	yo	nosotros, nosotras
"2 ^a persona"	tú	vosotros, vosotras
"3 ^a persona"	él, ella ud.	ellos, ellas uds.