

Level A1-A2
40 hours

Course programme



CONVERSATION A1-A2

Course summary

In this conversation course you speak Spanish from the first minute of class, with your classmates and with your teacher. Groups are small and classes are built around everyday topics: identity and customs, leisure and social life, food, the city and travel, personal experiences, opinion, and life in Spain. There are no exams and no grades: the aim is that you take part, widen your vocabulary and gain the confidence you need to manage outside the classroom, when you have to speak to native speakers.

Before you start

Before you come into class we do two things with you. First, a level test at the school, which includes a conversation with us and determines which band you start in, A1-A2 or B1-B2. Then, when you enrol, you tell us what interests you, why you are studying Spanish and what you want to achieve with it.

If, when you enrol, you mention any circumstance that could affect your learning, we open a form for you in the portal so that you can explain it to us properly, in your own time. With all of that your teacher knows from day one what pace to work at with you and which activities suit you best.

Course objectives

These are the objectives of the full cycle. You will reach the ones that correspond to the classes you have taken, and if you do the whole cycle you will cover them all:

- introduce yourself, give and ask for personal information, and explain why you are studying Spanish and what for
- follow a conversation with simple strategies: asking for something to be repeated, checking that you have understood, and using gesture to help you
- describe customs, habits and routines, and compare them with those of Spain
- talk about free time and social life, express likes and preferences, and invite, accept and decline
- talk about food and cooking, order in a bar or a restaurant, and describe dishes
- describe the city and the neighbourhood, get around them, ask for and give directions, and talk about travel
- tell experiences and anecdotes in the past, and react to other people's
- give an opinion, express agreement and disagreement, qualify what you say, negotiate and close a deal
- manage in everyday life in Spain, make friends, put stereotypes in perspective, and deal with culture shock

By the end of this course you will not only know more Spanish: you will know how to use it in real situations, understand the culture it is spoken in, and decide for yourself how you carry on learning. These are the three things the Instituto Cervantes Plan curricular brings together in the profiles of the social agent, the intercultural speaker and the autonomous learner.

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Main contents

Learning Spanish is not only learning words and rules. This course works on three things at once, because you need all three to communicate in Spanish outside the classroom.

What can you do in Spanish? Introduce yourself, ask for something, say what you did or defend your opinion, with the grammar and vocabulary each situation calls for. This is what is meant by being a social agent, the «agente social».

What do you need to know to get on with other people who speak Spanish? How people greet each other, how you address someone you do not know, what is taken for granted here and what is not. A lot of misunderstandings come not from your level of Spanish but from the customs being different. This is the intercultural speaker, the «hablante intercultural».

What do you need in order to carry on learning on your own? Recognising which mistakes you repeat and knowing where to look for what you need. That is what the tutorial, the school library and the portal resources are for. This is the autonomous learner, the «aprendiente autónomo».

In this course the content is not studied separately: it appears inside the conversations you have in class, because what matters is that you can use it when you speak. These are the main contents.

- Eight thematic units: identity and personal culture; daily life and customs in Spain; leisure, free time and social life; food and food culture; city, neighbourhood and travel; experiences and anecdotes; opinion and decisions, and fluency and integration
- Grammar for speaking: the present and past tenses, verbs of liking and opinion, connectors, and polite formulas
- Vocabulary: everyday life, leisure, food, services and practical life, and social relationships
- Pronunciation and culture: the intonation of questions, exclamations and disagreement, and the social conventions of the Spanish-speaking world

Course materials

You do not have to buy a coursebook, because the school produces all the material itself. For each session you will find a presentation with images and model phrases, worksheets, and the cards or boards that the day's activity calls for.

Course organisation

The course runs with continuous entry, so you can join whenever you want and stay for as long as you decide. These are its conditions.

- Two one-hour classes a week
- Monday and Wednesday, from 14:00 to 15:00
- Enrolment by the week, with a minimum of ten weeks, which is twenty hours of class
- Continuous entry: the content is not sequential and you can join at any thematic unit
- The cycle lasts twenty weeks and starts again when it ends
- Small groups, with a maximum of twelve students

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Assessment and monitoring

This course has no exam and no grades. That does not mean there is no monitoring: your teacher follows how you work from the first class and, on the basis of what they see, adjusts the activities to what the group needs and advises you on what you can improve.

Certification

At the end of the course, or whenever you need it, you can download from the portal a certificate of attendance stating the course you have taken and the hours you attended, whatever the number of hours you have done. This course has no certificate of achievement, because it has no final assessment.

Resources and support outside class

Outside the classroom it is worth carrying on practising on your own, and at ILA you have these resources within reach to do so.

- Tutorials. You have one free fifteen-minute tutorial a month, which you book from the portal, to clear up questions, raise a change of timetable or talk about how the course is going.
- The support of a classmate during your first few days, because in this course everyone joins a group that is already under way
- The school library, with graded readers, fiction and non-fiction, dictionaries and verb books, Spanish coursebooks and children's and young adult literature, all classified by level
- The language exchanges, held once a term, with the students of TEFL Iberia
- The cultural activities run by the school, for practising Spanish outside the classroom
- The catalogue of freely available digital resources on the ILA portal, classified by level and by type
- El club de los viernes. A learning-support session outside class hours, which you leave with a personal study plan.

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