

Spanish Adjective Placement Adjectives That Go Before The Noun

Spanish adjectives are usually placed after the noun. They agree in gender and number with the nouns that they modify.



El libro rojo.



Las zapatillas rojas.

But, there are some Spanish adjectives that are placed before the noun. For example, *bueno* and *malo* go before the noun. They also agree in gender and number with the nouns that they modify.



Hace buen tiempo.



Hace mal tiempo.

Adjectives of quantity are placed before the noun.

mucho	a lot of, much, many	Isabella tiene muchos amigos.	Isabella has a lot of friends.
poco	a little, a few, not much, not many	Tengo poco dinero.	I don't have much money.
bastante	enough	En estos momentos ya tengo bastantes problemas.	Right now I already have enough problems.
ambos	both	Ambas hermanas tienen ojos azules.	Both sisters have blue eyes.
cada	each, every	Yo me levanto a las siete cada día.	I get up at seven o'clock every day.
varios	several	Hay varias posibilidades.	There are several possibilities.
alguno	some, any	Algún día lo comprenderá.	Some day you will understand.
ninguno	none, not any, any (any is used in a negative sentence)	No tengo ningún hijo.	I don't have any children.
otro	other, another	Jorge quiere otra taza de café.	Jorge wants another cup of coffee.
suficiente	enough	No ganan suficiente dinero.	They don't earn enough money.
todo	all, every	Alfonso trabaja todo el día.	Alfonso works all day long.

(Note that *bueno*, *malo*, *alguno*, and *ninguno* drop the –o before a masculine singular noun. *Algún* and *ningún* add an accent mark.)

Spanish Adjective Placement
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Practice.

Choose an adjective from the box to fill in the blank of each sentence.

algún, ambos, bastante, buenos, cada, mala, muchos, ningún, otra, pocos, toda, varios

1. Pedro y Juan son _____ estudiantes.

(*Pedro and Juan are **good** students.*)

2. El profesor dará el examen a _____ estudiantes.

(*The professor will give the exam to **both** students.*)

3. La biblioteca tiene _____ libros sobre la historia de España.

(*The library has **many** books about the history of Spain.*)

4. Es una _____ idea.

(*It's a **bad** idea.*)

5. Ella tiene _____ amigos.

(*She has only **a few** friends.*)

6. Rudolf trabaja _____ la noche.

(*Rudolf works **all** night.*)

7. No tengo _____ pluma.

(*I don't have **another** pen.*)

8. _____ casa tiene una piscina.

(***Each** house has a swimming pool.*)

9. Hay _____ sitio para todos.

(*There is **enough** room for everyone.*)

10. _____ alumnos están ausentes.

(***Several** students are absent.*)



La biblioteca tiene muchos libros sobre la historia de España.

11. Llámame si tienes _____ problema.

(*Call me if you have **any** problems.*)

12. Ellos no nos compran _____ regalo.

(*They don't buy us **any** gifts.*)

Spanish Adjective Placement Adjectives That Go Before The Noun

The adjectives *proximo*, *único*, and *último* are placed before the noun.



Vamos a Barcelona el próximo mes.

(*We are going to Barcelona next month.*)



Ella es la única francesa aquí.

(*She is the only French woman here.*)



La Nochevieja el último día del año.

(*New Year's Eve is the last day of the year.*)

Cardinal and Ordinal Numbers are placed before the noun.



Tengo diez libros.
(*I have ten books.*)



El día de Año Nuevo es el primer día del año.
(*New Year's day is the first day of the year.*)

(Note that *primero*, *tercero*, and *uno* drop the –o before a masculine singular noun.)

When an adjective is used to express the subjective judgment of the speaker, it is placed before the noun.



Hay bellas flores en la colina.
(*There are beautiful flowers on the hill.*) This is the opinion of the speaker. Others may not find the flowers to be beautiful.

Practice.

Translate the adjective to Spanish and write the correct form of the adjective in the blank.

1. Me bajo en la _____ (**next**) parada. (*I'm getting off at the next stop.*)
2. Juan es el _____ (**only**) estudiante que no tiene un iPad. (*Juan is the only student who doesn't have an iPad.*)
3. El viernes es el _____ (**last**) día laborable de la semana. (*Friday is the last work day of the week.*)
4. Tengo _____ (**two**) perros. (*I have two dogs.*)
5. El _____ (**first**) día de mi trabajo fue terrible. (*My first day at work was terrible.*)
6. Tenemos que leer una _____ (**long**) novela. (*We have to read a long novel.*)(hint: *largo/larga*)

Spanish Adjective Placement Adjectives That Go Before The Noun

A descriptive adjective is placed in front of the noun when it emphasizes an inherent characteristic or quality of a noun.



La blanca nieve cubre las montañas.
(The white snow covers the mountains.)

A descriptive adjective is placed before the noun in order to enhance a specific quality of the noun. In this case the adjective is not used to compare the noun to other nouns of the same kind.



Es un blanco caballo.
(It's a white horse.) The speaker wants to emphasize the color of the horse.



Es un caballo blanco.
(It's a white horse.) The speaker is comparing this horse to other horses.

Place the adjective in front of the noun in expressions that begin with *qué*.



¡Qué mala suerte!
(What bad luck!)

Practice

See if you can match the Spanish sentence with the English translation.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. _____ El generosa mujer le dio el dinero. | a. What a funny movie! |
| 2. _____ ¡Qué hermosa plaza! | b. It's a big garden. |
| 3. _____ El sótano es un oscuro lugar. | c. The generous woman gave him the money. |
| 4. _____ Ella es una buena madre. | d. It's a bad wound. |
| 5. _____ Eduardo es un alto muchacho. | e. What a beautiful plaza! |
| 6. _____ ¡Qué divertida película! | f. The basement is a dark place. |
| 7. _____ Es una fea herida. | g. Eduardo is a tall boy |
| 8. _____ Es un gran jardín. | h. She is a good mother. |

Spanish Adjective Placement
Adjectives That Go Before The Noun

Some adjectives change their meaning depending on their placement before or after the noun.

Adjective	Before The Noun	After The Noun
antiguo	former	ancient
cierto	certain	sure
grande	great	large
nuevo	new, different	brand new
pobre	unfortunate	penniless
puro	mere (just)	pure (uncontaminated)
viejo	old (a long time)	old (elderly)
mismo	same	myself, yourself, himself, etc.

(Note that *grande* becomes *gran* in front of a masculine singular noun.)

Match the Spanish phrase with the English translation.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. ____ su antiguo novio | a. a brand new house |
| 2. ____ una civilización antigua | b. it's pure milk |
| 3. ____ cierto día | c. a penniless woman |
| 4. ____ una cosa cierta | d. the doctor himself |
| 5. ____ un gran hombre | e. an unfortunate woman |
| 6. ____ un hombre grande | f. a new house |
| 7. ____ es pura leche | g. a large man |
| 8. ____ es leche pura | h. an ancient civilization |
| 9. ____ una pobre mujer | i. a great man |
| 10. ____ una mujer pobre | j. the same book |
| 11. ____ una nueva casa | k. it's just milk |
| 12. ____ una casa nueva | l. her former boyfriend |
| 13. ____ el mismo libro | m. a certain day |
| 14. ____ el doctor mismo | n. a sure thing |