

Top tips for Spanish study

Suggestions for 'high practice' independent study activities

1. Grammar

- ★ **Grammar books.** Go to the MFL Sixth Form study room (in C2) and work through the grammar books there. Make sure you write any answers to exercises on a separate sheet of paper so that others can use the books after you. If you want to purchase a grammar book, we recommend [Practice Makes Perfect: Complete Spanish Grammar](#) by Gilda Nissenberg.
- ★ **SpanishDict.** Go to <https://www.spanishdict.com/guide> and scroll down. Click on a subheading (e.g. [Verbs](#)) to see all the lessons in that category. To open the lesson, click on the title (e.g. [Preterite tense forms](#)). For each topic, read carefully and take notes, then take the practice quiz when you have finished.
- **Conjugemos.** Practise your verb conjugations at <https://conjugemos.com/activities/spanish/verb/1> or do the grammar quizzes at <https://conjugemos.com/activities/spanish/grammar/1>.
- **Study Spanish.** Visit www.studyspanish.com. You can work through the grammar lessons systematically and there are also some short tests and quizzes you can do to practise.
- **Todo-claro.** Do the grammar exercises at https://www.todo-claro.com/English_grammar_overview.php.

2. Vocabulary

- ★ **Vocabulary book.** Keep a book in which you note down key words or phrases that you have to look up when reading, listening or translating. Revisit the lists periodically and quiz yourself on the vocabulary.
- ★ **Clozemaster.** Practice filling in gaps in sentences using the Clozemaster app or online at <https://www.clozemaster.com/languages/spa-eng/play?mode=multiple-choice&skill=vocabulary>.
- **Duolingo.** The Duolingo course covers a lot of grammar and vocabulary that A Level students can find difficult at times. You can take a placement test to skip the basics. Another benefit is that Duolingo lets you practise all four skills.
- **Speechling.** This is an alternative to Cloze Master that also helps your listening. <https://speechling.com/fillin/spanish>
- **Past papers.** Go through a past or specimen exam question and note down all the words you don't know. Find out their meanings and spend some time quizzing yourself on them. Then test yourself again in a week or two.
- **Word sets.** Try learning different sets of words, such as common verbs, numbers, parts of the body, etc. You can find lists easily online. This is a great thing to do if you identify a particular gap in your vocabulary (e.g. numbers).

3. Listening comprehension

- ★ **Podcasts.** Listening to podcasts is a great way to improve your listening comprehension. Here are some to try:
 - www.notesinspanish.com
 - spanishobsessed.com
 - audiria.com/index.php
 - www.podcastsinspanish.org/index.shtml
- ★ **Past papers.** Do a listening activity from a past or specimen AQA paper and then mark it yourself using the mark scheme. You can also try doing activities from past Edexcel or Eduqas papers.
- **Easy Spanish.** This Youtube channel has lots of videos with subtitles in which the presenter interviews native speakers on a range of themes. <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCAL4AMMMXKxHDu3FqZV6CbQ>.
- **Lyrics Training.** Listen to songs and fill in gaps in the lyrics: <https://lyricstraining.com/es>
- **Film and TV.** Watch a film or TV programme in Spanish, using Spanish subtitles. You can find some films in the MFL Sixth Form Study Room. There are Spanish series available to watch free on www.rtve.es/alacarta. If you have a Netflix, Amazon Prime or Hulu account, they also have Spanish-language shows you can watch.

4. Reading comprehension

- ★ **News articles.** Regularly reading news articles from Hispanic papers will help to improve your knowledge of language and your awareness of what is happening in the Spanish-speaking world. Try one of these papers:
 - [20 minutos](#) – Accessible articles and video clips.
 - [El país](#) – The most popular Spanish newspaper.
 - [El mundo](#) – The second most popular Spanish newspaper.
 - [El universal](#) – One of the biggest Mexican papers.
 - [Clarín](#) - the largest Argentinian newspaper.
- ★ **Past papers.** Do a reading activity from a past or specimen paper and then mark it yourself using the mark scheme.

- **Books.** Go to the MFL Sixth Form Study Room and choose one of the books there. Some have been designed to help learners. For example, they may have key words translated, or the English text on the opposite page, etc.
- **Magazines.** Find a Spanish language magazine online about a topic that interests you and read it regularly. For example, if you like sports, try [Marca](#).

5. Speaking

- ★ **Rosa.** Go to all your Rosa sessions and participate enthusiastically. If you cannot make a session for a legitimate reason, contact Rosa in advance and ask her if she wants you to do anything to catch up.
- ★ **Meet up.** Arrange a 'Spanish chat' with some other learners, perhaps over a coffee in a shared free period. You could do some past speaking cards, use some discussion questions from the textbook, or just have a chat in Spanish.
- **Apps.** Try using an app like [HelloTalk](#), where you practise your Spanish with a native speaker and they practise their English with you. Make sure you use anything like this sensibly and with your parents' full knowledge and consent.

6. Writing

- **Articles.** Research a topic or issue relevant to the course and write a short article about it. Ask a teacher for feedback.
- **Essays.** Do an essay question from a past or specimen paper and ask a teacher for feedback.
- **Creative writing.** Try writing a short story or producing a cartoon in Spanish.
- **Social media.** If you use sites like Instagram and Twitter, try following some Spanish speakers and posting in Spanish.

7. Translation

- ★ **Past papers.** Do a translation activity from a past or specimen AQA paper and then mark it yourself using the mark scheme.
- ★ **Parallel texts.** Find a site that allows you to read the same text in English and Spanish. Translate a text or excerpt yourself and then use the translation on the web page to check your work. Here are some places to start:
 - www.dualtexts.com
 - <http://paralleltxt.io/>
 - <http://onlinespanishclub.com/spanish-english-parallel-texts/>
- **Books.** Pick an article or excerpt from one of the books in C2 and translate it. If you translate a section from one of the parallel text books, you can correct the translation yourself by comparing it with the version in the book.
- **Online articles.** Find another article online to translate into Spanish or English.

8. Summarising

- ★ **Zig Zag pack.** Work through the Zig Zag summary practice activities available on the Year 12 Moodle page.
- ★ **Past papers.** Do a summary activity from a past or specimen AQA paper and then mark it using the mark scheme.
- **Articles.** Find a news article or similar text and write a summary of around 70-80 words in Spanish.
- **Easy Spanish.** Watch one of the [Easy Spanish](#) videos and write a summary of around 70-80 words in Spanish.
- **Podcasts.** Listen to a podcast in Spanish and write a summary.
- **Parallel texts.** You can use parallel text sites like those above to practise summaries. Choose a section of text, summarise it in Spanish, then look at the translation to check how well you understood.

9. *Crónica de una muerte anunciada*, Gabriel García Márquez

- Do an essay question from a past or specimen AQA paper.
- Read a part of the book and annotate it for vocabulary as well as your ideas.
- Read back over your notes on a particular theme, character or other aspect of the book. Quiz yourself on some of the key facts and/or quotes.
- After revising your notes on a particular theme, write a paragraph about that theme expressing your ideas.
- Spend some time working through a section of the *Crónica* study guide, doing the activities and taking notes.

10. *Volver*, Pedro Almodóvar

- Do an essay question from a past or specimen AQA paper. You could ask Miss P to check it for you.
- Re-watch a section of the film and note down your ideas about the techniques and themes evident in the scene.
- Read back over your notes on a particular theme, character or other aspect of the film and quiz yourself.
- After revising your notes on a particular theme, write a paragraph about that theme expressing your ideas.
- Spend some time working through a section of the *Volver* study guide, doing the activities and taking notes.