



Spanish for Beginners

Though you don't need to know Spanish to participate in and enjoy your experience in Nicaragua, knowing some simple phrases may enrich your interactions with local Nicaraguans. You can use this basic introduction to Spanish to communicate on the job site and to have some basic "get to know you" conversations with people in the community. You'll be surprised how patient and kind Nicaraguans will be when you make the effort to communicate! For your convenience and safety each group will have bi-lingual leaders and translators and some Spanish-speaking members of your group may help you translate.

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Greetings

Hello.	Hola.	How Are You?	¿Cómo estás?
Good Morning!	Buenos Días!		¿Qué fué?
Good Afternoon!	Buenas tardes!		¿Qué pasó?
Good Night!	Buenas noches!		¿Qué tal?
What is your name? (formal)	¿Cómo se llama usted?	Very well thank you, and you?	¡Muy bien!
What's your name? (informal)	¿Cómo te llamas?		¡Gracias! ¿Y Usted?
My name is Mary.	Me llamo María.	I'm thirsty.	Tengo sed.
I'm very pleased to meet you.	Mucho gusto.	I'm hungry.	Tengo hambre.
The pleasure is mine.	El gusto es mío.	I'm hot.	Tengo calor.
Allow me to introduce John.	Permítame presentar a Juan.	I have pain	Tengo dolor
		I'm tired.	Estoy cansado (a)

To ask someone if they feel thirsty, hungry, etc. change the verb "tengo" to "tiene" (pronounced tee-yen-ay).

Example: ¿Tiene hambre? Are you hungry?

Getting Acquainted

Where are you from?	¿De dónde eres?	Marketing	marketing
I'm from the United States.	Soy de los Estados Unidos.	Psychology	psicología
		Writing	escritura
Are you a student?	¿Eres un estudiante?	What do you do?	¿En qué se dedica su trabajo?
Yes! I am studying...	¡Sí! Estoy estudiando...	(Occupation)	¿En qué trabaja?
Art	arte	I am	Soy
Biology	biología	Artist	un artista
Business	negocios	Business man/woman	hombre/una mujer de negocios
Chemistry	química	Dentist	un dentista
Education	educación	Doctor	un doctor
Engineering	ingeniería	Engineer	un ingeniero
Geography	geografía	Government employee	el empleado del gobierno
International Development	desarrollo internacional	Lawyer	un abogado

Nurse	un enfermero	Teacher	un professor /
Office worker	un oficinista		maestro
Programmer	un programador	Therapist	un terapeuta
Salesperson	un vendedor		

Perhaps you're a dancer or a singer or a sports fanatic. Talking about common interests is a great way to get to know someone!

What do you like to do in your free time?

¿Qué te gusta hacer in su tiempo libre?

Gustar- to like

I like	Me gusta	(one thing)
I like	Me gustan	(more than one thing)

Examples:

Me gustan las manzanas.

I like the apples.

Nos gusta la película.

We like the movie.

Here are a few activities you might enjoy

To sing	cantar	Hike in the mountains	escalar, caminar en
Horseback riding	montar a caballo		las montañas
To dance	bailar	To play sports	jugar deportivos
Sailing	la navegación	To play baseball	jugar beísbol
To play guitar	tocar guitarra	To play basketball	jugar baloncesto
To act	actuar	To play soccer	jugar fútbol
Scuba diving	buseo	To swim	nadar
To travel	viajar	To play chess	jugar al ajedrez
To read	leer	To go shopping	ir de compras
To watch TV	mirar el televisor	To go out with friends	salir con mis amigos
To listen to music	escuchar musica	To sunbathe	tomar sol
To go to the movies	ir al cine	To meet people	conocer gente
To play cards	jugar a los naipes	To go to the beach	ir a la playa
To see a play	ver un obra de teatro		

We are family!

Wherever you travel in Central America, you'll find that many people are very family oriented. Family sizes, traditions, and characteristics are all great topics of "get to know you" conversations.

Mi or Mis precedes a singular and plural pronoun respectfully.

Mother	Madre	Sister	Hermana
Father	Padre	Daughter	Hija
Brother	Hermano	Son	Hijo

Granddaughter	Nieta	Grandmother	Abuela
Grandson	Nieto	Grandfather	Abuelo
Uncle	Tio	Cousin (male)	Primo
Aunt	Tia	Cousin (female)	Prima
Wife	Esposa		
Husband	Esposo		

How old are you?

How old are you?

¿Cuántos años tienes?

It translates directly to, "How many years do you have?"

I am ____ years old.

Tengo ____ años.

If you want to ask how old someone else (he or she) is ask:

¿Cuántos años tiene el/ella?

Numbers

How much?

¿Cuánto?

Zero	Cero	Seventeen	Diecisiete
One	Uno/Una	Eighteen	Dieciocho
Two	Dos	Nineteen	Diecinueve
Three	Tres	Twenty	Veinte
Four	Cuatro	Twenty-one	Veinte uno
Five	Cinco	Twenty-two	Veinte y dos
Six	Seis	Thirty	Treinta
Seven	Siete	Forty	Cuarenta
Eight	Ocho	Fifty	Cincuenta
Nine	Nueve	Sixty	Sesenta
Ten	Diez	Seventy	Setenta
Eleven	Once	Eighty	Ochenta
Twelve	Doce	Ninety	Noventa
Thirteen	Trece	One hundred	Cien/Ciento
Fourteen	Catorce	Five hundred	Quinientos
Fifteen	Quince	One thousand	Mil
Sixteen	Dieciseis	Five thousand	Cinco Mil

Days of the week

Days of the week.

Días de la semana.

Thursday

Jueves

Friday

Viernes

Saturday

Sábado

Sunday

Domingo

When?

¿Cuándo?

What day is today?

¿Qué día es hoy?

Today is Monday.

Hoy es Lunes.

Monday

Lunes

Today

Hoy

Tuesday

Martes

Yesterday

Ayer

Wednesday

Miércoles

Tomorrow

Mañana

Morning	La mañana	Evening/night	La noche
Afternoon	La tarde		

Telling time

What time is it?	¿Qué hora es?		-or- Son las cinco y cuarenta y cinco.
At what time?	¿A qué hora?		
It's one o'clock.	Es la una.	Minute	el minuto
It is three o'clock.	Son las tres.	Hour	la hora
It is three fifteen.	Son las tres y cuatro.	Day	el día
It is three-thirty.	Son las tres y media.	Week	la semana
It's five twenty.	Son las cinco y veinte	Month	el mes
It is a quarter to five.	Son las seis menos cuarto.	Year	el año

Exclamations!

Whether on the worksite, participating in activities in your free time or with the community or through simple conversation at the dinner table you may experience a moment where you'll feel so full of emotion you'll want to exclaim something.

How Scary!	¡Que susto!	Bless you!	¡Salud!
I hate it!	¡Lo odio!	What a shame!	¡Que lastima!
I love it!	¡Me encanta!	Enjoy your meal!	¡Buen provecho!
How Delicious!	¡Que rico!	How cute/beautiful!	¡Que linda/hermosa!
How funny!	¡Que chistoso!	How amusing!	¡Que divertido!
How Dirty!	¡Que sucio!	Of Course!	¡Por supuesto!
That's it!	¡Eso es!		

Expressions of Courtesy

Thank you very much.	Muchas gracias.
You're welcome.	De nada.
Yes, please.	Sí, por favor.
No, thank you.	No, gracias.
Pardon me. or Excuse me.	Perdón. (to seek someone's attention or forgiveness)
Pardon me. or Excuse me.	Con permiso. (to ask permission to pass by someone)

I Don't Understand!

I don't speak Spanish.	No hablo español.
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I understand.
I do not understand.
Do you speak English?

Comprendo.
No Comprendo.
¿Habla usted inglés?

Saying Goodbye

Goodbye.
See you later.
See you tomorrow.
See you Thursday.

Adiós.
Hasta luego.
Hasta mañana.
Hasta jueves.

Are you hungry?

Are you hungry? ¿Tiene Hambre?
Breakfast desayuno
Lunch almuerzo
Dinner/Supper cena

Cup taza
Fork tenedor
Glass vaso
Knife cuchillo
Napkin servilleta
Plate plato
Spoon chucharra

Fruit *fruta*
Apple manzana
Banana platano
Grapefruit toranja
Juice jugo
Lemon/Lime limon
Mango mango
Orange naranja
Pineapple piña
Strawberry fresa

Vegetables *verduras*
Avocado aguacate
Beans frijoles
Carrots zanohorias
Celery apio
Corn elote

Cucumber pepino
French fries papas fritas
Lettuce lechuga
Mushrooms hongos
Onion cebolla
Peas chicharos
Potatoes papas
Radish rabano
Salad ensalada
Spinach espinacas
Squash calabaza
String beans ejotes
Tomato tomate

Dairy Products
Butter mantequilla
Cheese queso
Cream crema
Eggs huevos
 Fried fritos
 Scrambled revueltos
 Soft boiled pasados por aqua
 Hard boiled duros
Milk leche

Starches
Bread pan
Sweet rolls pan dulce
Toast tostada
Rice arroz

Meat, poultry and fish

Bacon	tocino
Chicken	pollo
Chop	chuleta
Fish	pescado
Ham	jamon
Lamb	cordero
Liver	higado
Lobster	langosta
Marinated fish	ceviche
Meat	carne
Pork	puerco
Poultry	pollo
Roast	asado
Sausage	chorizo
Shrimp	camarones
Steak	filete
Trout	trucha
Turkey	guajalote

Turtle	tortuga
Veal	ternera
Beverages	bebidas
Beer	cerveza
Coffee	cafe
Black	negro
With cream	con leche
Milk	leche
Tea	te
Water	agua pura
With ice	con hielo
Without ice	sin hielo
Wine	vino
Desserts	postres
Cake	pastel
Cookies/Crackers	galletas
Ice cream	helados
Pastries	pastel

Words for the workplace

Materials

Bucket	el balde	Sand	el alicate
Cement	el cemento	Scaffolding	la arena
Cement block	el bloque	Shovel	el andamio
Cement tray	el cajone	Shovel	la pala
Gloves	los guantes	Tool	el herramiento
Hammer	el martillo	Trowel	la cucharra
Ladder	la escalera	Wheelbarrow	la carretilla
Measuring tape	la cinta metrica	Wire	el alambre
Nail	el clavo	Wood	la madera
Pliers	la tenaza		

Direction

Above	encima	Beside	al lado de
After	despues	Far	lejos
Around	alrededor	Forward	adelante
Backward	hacia atras	Higher	mas arriba
Before	antes	Lower	mas bajo
Behind	detras de	Near	cerca

(On the) left (a la) izquierda
(On the) right (a la) derecha
Opposite frente a

Toward hacia

Parts of the House

Ceiling el cielo raso or el techo
Door la puerta
Floor el piso
Foundation la fundacion
Frame la armadura
Furniture los muebles

House la casa
Roof el techo
Room el cuarto
Wall la pared
Window la ventana

Expressions for the Workplace

Bring me the... Traiga me el/la...
Watch out! ¡Cuidado!
Do you need help? ¿Necesita ayuda?
I'll help him/her. Le ayudare.
I'll help you. Te ayudo.
Come here! ¡Ven aca!
Do you want? ¿Quiere?
Do you need? ¿Necesita?
Do you have? ¿Tiene?
I'm sorry! ¡Lo Siento!
Can I have the... Puedo tener la/el...
Look for it. Busquela.
Pick it up. Recojalo.

Put it here. Pongala aqui.
Take it. Tomela.
Let's... Vamos...
There are / are there...? ¿Hay...?
There is/ is there...? ¿Esta...?
It's lost. Esta perdido.
Take out the... Saque...
Put away the... Guarde lo...
It's wet. Esta mojado.
I don't understand. No intiendo.
Where are you going? ¿Adónde vas?

I'm a Doctor!

This section is for volunteers working with one of community healthcare projects or anyone who needs to see a doctor or describe an ailment.

I'm a Doctor! ¡Soy médico!
I need a doctor! ¡Necesito un médico!

Parts of the Body:

Ankle el tobillo
Arm el brazo
Back la espalda
Blood la sangre

Body el cuerpo
Bone el hueso
Brain el cerebro
Cheek la mejilla

Chest	el pecho
Chin	la barbilla
Ear	la oreja
Elbow	el codo
Eye	el ojo
Face	la cara
Finger	el dedo
Foot	el pie
Gland	la glandula
Hair	el pelo
Hand	la mano
Head	la cabeza
Heart	el corazón
Hip	la cadera
Kidney	el riñon
Knee	la rodilla
Leg	la pierna
Lip	el labio
Liver	el hígado
Lung	el pulmón

Mouth	la boca
Muscle	el músculo
Nail	la uña
Neck	el uello
Nose	la nariz
Rib	la costilla
Skin	la piel
Shoulder	el hombro
Spine	la espina
Spleen	el bazo
Stomach	el estómago
Throat	la garganta
Tongue	la lengua
Tooth	el diente
Urine	el orina
Waist	el talle
Wrist	la muñeca

Doctor – Patient Inquiry Questions:

Relax.

What happened?

When did it happen?

Has it happened before?

Do you have pain?

Where does it hurt?

Are you allergic to anything?

Does it hurt if I press here?

Relájese.

¿Qué ocurrió?

¿Cuándo ocurrió?

¿Le ha ocurrido antes?

¿Tiene dolor?

¿Dónde le duele?

¿Es usted alérgico(a) a cualquier cosa?

¿Le duele cuando aprieto aquí?

Patient Complaints:

I feel bad.

I have pain in my

Me siento malo.

Tengo dolor en mi

Symptoms and Illnesses:

Allergic reaction	una reacción alérgica
Blister	una ampolla
Broken bone	un hueso roto

Bruise	una contusión
Burn	una quemadura
Chills	un escalofrío

Cough	un tos	Infection	una infección
Cramps	un calambre	Rash	una erupción
Cut	un corte	Swelling	una inflamación
Diarrhea	una diarrea	Wound	un herido
Dizziness	el vértigo		
Fever	una fiebre		

A Brief List of Medical Supplies:

Antiseptic	el antiséptico	Iodine	el yodo
Band-aid	la curita	Oxygen	el oxígeno
Bandage	el vendaje	Pills	la pastillas
Cast	la armadura de yeso	Prescription	la receta
Cough syrup	el jarabe para la tos	Scissors	las tijeras
Condoms	los condones	Shot	la inyección
Cream	la crema	Soap	el jabón
Disinfectant	el desinfectante	Stitches	las puntadas
Drops	las gotas	Thermometer	el termómetro
Gauze	la gasa		

A Quick Lesson on Verbs

Verbs ending in -AR (to study: estudiar)

I study	Yo	estudi + o
You study	Tu	estudi + as
He/She studies	El/Ella	estudi + a
You study	Usted	estudi + a (<i>singular formal</i>)
We study	Nos	estudi + amos
They study	Ellos/Ellas	estudi + an
You study	Ustedes	estudi + an (<i>plural formal</i>)

Commonly used AR Verbs

To borrow	Prestar
To dance	Bailar
To finish	Terminar
To hug	Abrazar
To sing	Cantar
To speak	Hablar
To watch	Mirar
To work	Trabajar
To listen	Escuchar
To look for	Buscar

Verbs ending in -ER (to learn: aprender)

I learn	Yo	aprend + o
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Commonly used ER Verbs

To believe	Creer
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You learn	Tu	aprend + es	To drink	Beber
He/She learns	El/Ella	aprend + e	To eat	Comer
You learn	Usted	aprend + e (<i>singular formal</i>)	To learn	Aprender
We learn	Nos	aprend + emos	To understand	Comprender
They learn	Ellos/Ellas	aprend + en	To sell	Vender
You learn	Ustedes	aprend + en (<i>plural formal</i>)	Should, to owe	Deber

Verbs ending in -IR (to live: vivir)

Commonly used IR Verbs

I live	Yo	viv + o	To receive	Recibir
You live	Tu	viv + es	To write	Escribir
He/She lives	El/Ella	viv + e	To assist	Asistir
You live	Usted	viv + e (<i>singular formal</i>)	To climb, to go up	Subir
We live	Nos	viv + imos	To decide	Decidir
They live	Ellos/Ellas	viv + en	To describe	Describir
You live	Ustedes	viv + en (<i>plural formal</i>)	To open	Abrir

Useful Irregular Verbs Conjugated in the Present Tense

Infinitive	I	You	He/She/ You	We	They/You
	Yo	Tu	El/Ella/ Usted	Nos	Ellos/as Ustedes
To go Ir	voy	vas	va	vamos	van
To be able to/can Poder	puedo	puedes	puede	podemos	pueden
To put/place Poner	pongo	pones	pone	ponemos	ponen
To want Querer	quiero	quieres	quiere	queremos	quieren
To have Tener	tengo	tienes	tiene	tenemos	tienen
To bring Traer	traigo	traes	trae	traemos	traen
To come Venir	vengo	vienes	viene	venimos	vienen
To see Ver	veo	ves	ve	vemos	ven
To know Saber	se	sabes	sabe	sabemos	saben
To be *temporary state i.e feelings, location Estar	estoy	estas	está	estamos	están

To be *permanent state Ser	soy	eres	es	somos	son
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Present Participle

The present participle is the “ing” verb form. (i.e. speaking, running)

For “AR” verbs: Drop the “ar” and add “ando” to the infinitive as in estudiando (studying).

For “ER” and “IR” verbs: Drop the “er” or the “ir” and add “iendo” to the infinitive as in comiendo (eating) or viviendo (living).

Examples:

Mariella is eating the black beans. Mariella está comiendo los frijoles negros.

The boy enters the living room singing. El niño entra cantando la sala.

* note: present participle verb forms (-iendo/-ando) are preceded by a helping verb- usually a form of the verb estar (to be).

Adjectives – Adjectivos

A		Blond	rubio	D	
Able	hábil	Bloody	sangriento	Dangerous	peligroso
Absent	ausente	Bold	atrevido	Dark-haired	moreno
Abundant	abundante	Boring	aburrido	Dead	muerto
Active	activo	Broken	quebrado	Dear	querido
Active (hyper)	inquieto	Burnt	quemado	Decent	decente
Agreeable	agradable	Busy	ocupado	Delicious	delicioso
Alike	parecido	C		Difficult	difícil
Alive	vivo	Careful	cuidadoso	Dignified	digno
All	todo	Cheap	barato	Dirty	sucio
Alone	solo	Clean	limpio	Distrustful	receloso
Angelic	angélico	Clear	claro	Dry	seco
Apart	aparte	Closed	cerrado	E	
Applicable	aplicable	Cloudy	nublado	Elderly	anciano
Appropriate	apropiado	Cold	frío	Elegant	elegante
Athletic	atlético	Comfortable	cómodo	Elementary	elemental
B		Comical	cómico	Empty	vacío
Bad	malo	Confused	confundido	Energetic	enérgico
Barely	apenas	Content	contento	Enormous	enorme
Beautiful	hermoso	Correct	correcto	Entertaining	divertido
Better	major	Crazy	loco	Excellent	excelente
Big	grande			Exciting	emocionante
Blessed	bendito			Expensive	caro

F		Impatient	impaciente	Older	mayor
Fabulous	fabuloso	Impenetrable	impenetrable	Open	abierto
Fantastic	fantástico	Important	importante	Optimistic	optimista
Far away	lejano	Improper	indebido	Overflowing	rebosante
Fat	gordo	Incomparable	incomparable	P	
Feminine	femenino	Incompetent	incompetente	Paid	pagado
Few	pocos	Incomplete	incompleto	Parallel	paralelo
First	primero	Inconvenient	inconveniente	Particular	particular
Flat ground	llano	Incorrect	incorrecto	Passed, gone	pasado
Flat	plano	Infectious	infeccioso	Patient	paciente
Fleeting	pasajero	Intelligent	inteligente	Pensive	pensativo
Flexible	flexible	Interesting	interesante	Perfect	perfecto
Foolish	tonto	Invisible	invisible	Permanent	permanente
Foreign	extranjero	Irritable	irritable	Persuasive	persuasivo
Free	gratis, libre	J		Picturesque	pintoresco
Fried	frito	Just, fair	justo	Playful	juguetero
Friendly	amable	K		Polite	educado
Frozen	helado	Known	conocido	Poor	pobre
Full	lleno	L		Popular	popular
G		Lazy	perezoso	Preferred	preferido
Generous	generoso	Logical	lógico	Pregnant	embarazada
Genius	genio	Long	largo	Prepared	preparado
Glorious	glorioso	Loose	flojo	Present	epresente
Good	bueno	Loyal	fiel	Pretty	bonito
Grand	gran	M		Previous	anterior
Grateful	agradecido	Magnificent	magnífico	Private	privado
grave, serious	grave	Manageable	manejable	Privileged	privilegiado
H		Many	mucho	Pure	puro
Hairy	peludo	Marine	marino	Q	
Handmade	hecho a mano	Mean, not nice	antipático	Quiet, still	quieto
Handsome	guapo	Melted	fundido	Quirky	caprichoso
Happy	alegre	Minimal	mínimo	R	
Happy	feliz	Musical	musical	Rainy	lluvioso
Hard, difficult	duro	N		Rapid	rápido
Harmful	perjudicial	Necessary	necesario	Reasonable	razonable
Heavy	pesado	New	nuevo	Rebellious	rebelde
Honest	honesto	Nice	simpático	Recent	reciente
Horrible	horrible	O		Recognized	reconocido
Hot	caliente	Old	antiguo	Recommended	recomendable
Humid	húmedo	Old	viejo	Recyclable	reciclable
Hungry	hambriento			Red-haired	pelirrojo
I				Rich	rico
Ignorant	ignorante			Ridiculous	ridículo

Ripe	maduro	Solid	sólido	Unjust	injusto
Romantic	romántico	Special	especial	Unknown	desconocido
Rotten	podrido	Spent, worn out	gastado	V	
S		Spicy	picante	Valiant	valiente
Sad	triste	Spoken	hablado	Variety, varied	varios
Safe	seguro	Sticky	pegajoso	W	
Same	mismo	Strong	fuerte	Washable	lavable
Scarce	escaso	Sweet	dulce	Waxed	encerado
Scary	espantoso	T		Weak	débil
Seasick	mareado	Tall, high	alto	Welcome	bienvenido
Select	selecto	Tasty	sabroso	Wet	mojado
Selfish	egoísta	Thick	espeso	Wicked	malvado
Serious	serio	Thin	delgado	Wireless	inalámbrico
Shameful	penoso	Tired	cansado	Wise	juicioso
Shocking	chocante	Together	juntos	Wonderful	estupendo
Short (height)	bajo	True	verdadero	Worried	preocupado
Short (length)	corto	Twisted	torcido	Written	escrito
Showy	llamativo	U		Y	
Sick	enfermo	Ugly	feo	Young	joven
Slow	lento	Unanimous	unánime	Younger	menor
Small	chico	Uncomfortable	incómodo	Youthful	juvenil
Small	pequeño	Uncovered	descubierto		
Smart, ready	listo	Uneven, odd	impar		
Smooth	liso	Unique, only	único		
Soft	suave				

*****An important note about adjective usage in Spanish:**

In Spanish, an adjective follows the noun it is describing.

Example: Tengo un gato negro. I have a black cat.

**Notice negro (black) follows gato (cat).

Mission Statement

Bridges to Community, Inc. is a non-profit, community development organization which takes groups of volunteers to developing countries to work, learn and reflect. Through the process of living and working with local communities on construction, health and environmental projects, Bridges promotes cross-cultural learning, a deepening awareness of our global interdependence, and a commitment to the common good.

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