

Study Techniques for Spanish

How much we remember

Receptive	Reading	10%
	Hearing	20%
	Seeing	30%
	Seeing and Hearing	50%
Active	Talking	70%
	Doing	90%

By getting involved and participating in class, you can learn Spanish quicker and easier because you will remember more. Here are some more specific things to do:

1. **Relax!** You are not expected to be able to translate every word to English that is said or written in Spanish. You will be able to get enough of the general idea from the vocabulary you know and visual or context clues to participate.
2. **Speak in Spanish as often as possible.** We do a lot of partner activities. Speak in full sentences and complete the full activity. People often have to repeat something 10 times to have it go to long term memory. You may also speak Spanish outside of class, say your homework out loud at home, talk with a friend, or practice at a Spanish restaurant.
3. **Make full use of YOUR class time.** Pack full all 50 minutes with **practice**. When someone else is speaking, think of what you would answer and if you agree with their answer. That way you are still active and remembering more. If you just sit back and daydream, then you are wasting class time and piling up extra studying you will have to do at home to catch up.
4. **Create a vocabulary list.** Fold your paper in half (the hot dog way). In one column write the Spanish vocabulary words and on the other side have the English translation. By folding the paper in half you can self check yourself. Can you say the words from Spanish to English and from English to Spanish?
5. **Create vocabulary flashcards.** Use index cards cut in half or quarters. Write the English word or draw a picture on one side, with the Spanish word on the other. Practice saying the words aloud if possible. Practice often. Shuffle the cards as you practice. (This is the advantage to flashcards - the order of the words can change.) You can create an "I know" and an "I don't know" pile or you can time yourself to add some variety.
6. **Practice small units.** Don't try to memorize a large body of material at once. Break it up into small units, memorize each of these units separately and over a few days, then combine all the units together and practice.

7. **Give yourself a pre-test.** Use your vocabulary cards and place them randomly in rows on your table. As you look at each card write the meaning of the word on a piece of paper. Check your answers, including spelling. Redo the ones you got wrong in random order. You may also use your vocabulary list and write the English out of order on a new piece of paper, put away your notes and translate them to Spanish. Check your answers.

8. **Practice with a friend or relative.** Work out loud with a partner. If they know Spanish, they can speak with you, help with homework, listen to you speak, or practice vocabulary with you. If they do not know Spanish, they can read you the English from your flashcards or give you a spelling test. Call a friend from class to help or practice with you.

9. **Take notes.** Keep a log of what we are working on in class, what vocabulary and grammar topics we practiced. Write down any rules or patterns. At night, you can use that to go back and help you focus on what to study.

10. **Look for English similarities.** Look to see if the word looks like anything you know in English or a related field. For example: **chimenea** is a chimney and **aeropuerto** is an airport. When you say it out loud it sounds even more similar. The word **impermeable** looks like the word impermeable which means that water can not penetrate it. Impermeable is a raincoat.

11. **Make up sayings** to help yourself remember. For example: you sit in a silla, it's a chair. A rana is a frog and it says ribit ribit. I find if you use the same first letter it helps.

12. **Use actions.** When you learn the word **nadar** we will move our arms like we are swimming, with **bailar** we will dance. When you remember by doing an action you remember more easily. If you need to make small actions during a test it may help jog your memory.

13. **Find the pattern.** Spanish has a lot of patterns. For example: almost all nouns end in an **o** or an **a**. Also, every present tense verb that is in the **yo** (I) form ends in the letter **o**. You need to memorize the patterns and rules.

14. **Memorize.** In Spanish you will have to practice the material you have heard in class over and over until it becomes second nature. It is as simple -- and as hard -- as that.

15. **Extra tutoring** is available. Ask the teacher. I will be happy to set up a time to work with you. Often, something just needs to be clarified and it makes a lot more sense.

16. **Don't fall behind.** If you have to miss class for any reason check what we learned the prior day by looking at the calendar. If you don't understand the material, ask your partner or the teacher. Make up all work by the next school day. Spanish builds on itself and if you fall behind in your work or in understanding something, it will probably come back to haunt you.

17. **Study every night.** Take 10 to 20 minutes each night to practice what we learned in class, review notes, use your flashcards, and do your homework. By doing this each night you will remember the information by putting it to your long term memory. This is important because you will still be using these same words in high school, college and the real world.