

Spanish Noun-Adjective Agreement

Master How Adjectives Match Nouns in Gender & Number

1. Agreement Rules Made Simple



The Golden Rule:

Spanish adjectives must agree with the nouns they describe in both GENDER (masculine/feminine) and NUMBER (singular/plural)!

2. Gender Agreement Patterns



Masculine Forms

- el gato negro (the black cat)
- el perro grande (the big dog)
- los libros nuevos (the new books)
- los coches rojos (the red cars)



Feminine Forms

- la gata negra (the black cat)
- la casa grande (the big house)
- las mesas nuevas (the new tables)
- las flores rojas (the red flowers)

Quick Rules:

- -o endings change to -a for feminine (negro → negra)
- -e endings stay the same (grande → grande)
- Consonant endings stay the same (azul → azul)

3. Number Agreement Rules

Making Adjectives Plural:

- Vowel ending + s: grande → grandes, rojo → rojos
- Consonant + es: azul → azules, fácil → fáciles

4. When Adjectives Go BEFORE the Noun

1. Emphasis & Emotional Nuance:

- un buen amigo = a good friend (emphasizes positive quality)
- una hermosa vista = a beautiful view (more poetic/emotional)

Placing adjectives before adds subjective or emotional meaning

2. Quantifiers & Numbers Always Go Before:

- tres libros (three books) • mucho dinero (a lot of money)
- pocos estudiantes (few students) • varios días (several days)
- algunos problemas (some problems) • cada persona (each person)

3. Always Go Before:

- bueno/malo: buen día (good day) • mal momento (bad moment)
- grande: gran hombre (great man) • gran idea (great idea)
- primero/tercero: primer piso (first floor) • tercer libro (third book)
- ninguno/alguno: ningún problema (no problem) • algún día (some day)
- ciento: cien personas (one hundred people)

5. Position Changes Everything!

GRANDE:

BEFORE: un gran hombre = a great man

AFTER: un hombre grande = a big man

VIEJO:

BEFORE: un viejo amigo = an old friend (longtime)

AFTER: un amigo viejo = an old friend (elderly)

NUEVO:

BEFORE: un nuevo coche = a different car

AFTER: un coche nuevo = a brand new car

POBRE:

BEFORE: el pobre hombre = the unfortunate man

AFTER: el hombre pobre = the poor man (no money)

6. Shortened Forms (Apocopation)



Before masculine singular nouns:

- bueno → buen: un buen día (a good day)
- malo → mal: un mal momento (a bad moment)
- primero → primer: el primer piso (the first floor)
- tercero → tercer: el tercer libro (the third book)
- grande → gran: un gran problema (a big problem)

7. Special Cases



Mixed Gender Groups = Masculine Plural:

- 2 chicos + 3 chicas = Los chicos altos
- El padre y la madre = Los padres simpáticos
- El perro y la gata = Los animales pequeños

Invariable Adjectives (Never Change!):

- Colors from objects: naranja, rosa, violeta
el coche naranja / la casa naranja / los coches naranja
- Compound colors: azul marino, verde oliva, gris perla
la camisa azul marino / los pantalones verde oliva

8. Common Mistakes to Avoid

 **Wrong: la casa blanco**

 **Right: la casa blanca**

Gender mismatch - feminine noun needs feminine adjective

 **Wrong: los perros grande**

 **Right: los perros grandes**

Number mismatch - plural noun needs plural adjective

 **Wrong: las mesas negro**

 **Right: las mesas negras**

Double mismatch - both gender AND number must match

9. Test Your Knowledge!



Practice Makes Perfect!

Choose the correct form of the adjective to complete each sentence.

1. Cat colours! How do you say "the black cat" (feminine)?

- | | |
|------------------|------------------|
| a) la gata negro | c) el gato negro |
| b) la gata negra | d) la gato negra |

2. Multiple books! What's the correct form for "interesting books"?

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| a) libros interesante | c) libro interesantes |
| b) libros interesantes | d) libres interesantes |

3. House description! How do you say "the big houses"?

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| a) las casas grande | c) los casas grandes |
| b) las casas grandes | d) la casa grandes |

4. Teacher talk! What's "a good teacher" (masculine)?

- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| a) un profesor buena | c) un profesor bueno |
| b) una profesor bueno | d) un professora bueno |

5. Flower power! How do you say "red flowers"?

- | | |
|-----------------|----------------|
| a) flores rojo | c) flor rojas |
| b) flores rojas | d) flores roja |

6. Car colors! What's the correct form for "the blue car" (masculine)?

- | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| a) el coche azul | c) la coche azul |
| b) el coche azula | d) el coche azules |

7. Girl descriptions! How do you say "the intelligent girls"?

- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| a) las niñas inteligente | c) los niñas inteligentes |
| b) las niñas inteligentes | d) la niñas inteligentes |

8. Art class! What's correct for "a green table" (feminine)?

- | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| a) una mesa verde | c) un mesa verde |
| b) una mesa verda | d) una mesa verdes |

9. Weather talk! How do you say "a good day" in Spanish?

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| a) un día bueno | c) una buen día |
| b) un buen día | d) un bueno día |

Visit spanishgrammar.co.uk/noun-adjective-agreement#quiz for answers and explanations