

Irregular Verbs in the Present Tense

Many Spanish verbs do not follow the patterns of the regular verbs you have just studied. Instead, they change the root (or radical) of the verb, the conjugation endings, or both. Because they follow different patterns, they are considered *irregular* verbs. Since irregular verbs are so commonly used, a good strategy to identify and learn them is to focus on similarities, grouping them into patterns. Study the following groups of irregular verbs in the present:

- Verbs with irregular first-person singular only; all other forms in the present are regular.

caber	to fit	quepo	saber	to know	sé
caer	to fall	caigo	salir	to leave	salgo
dar	to give	doy	traer	to bring	traigo
estar	to be	estoy	valer	to be worth	valgo
hacer	to do	hago	ver	to see	veo
poner	to put	pongo			

ejercicio

1-10

Práctica. En español.

- I give. _____
- They put. _____
- You (Uds.) see. _____
- We fit in. _____
- I bring. _____
- I fall. _____
- You (tú) do. _____
- I go out. _____

The compounds of these verbs are also irregular in the **yo** form only; they add the consonant **g** between the radical and the verb ending. Compounds are easy to spot because they show a prefix (**des-**, **dis-**, **com-**, **con-**, etc.) preceding the radical. Here is a list of frequently used compounds of **hacer**, **poner**, and **traer**:

componer	to compose	compongo	proponer	to propose	propongo
deshacer	to undo	deshago	rehacer	to remake	rehago
disponer	to arrange	dispongo	reponer	to replace	repongo
distraer(se)	to distract	distraigo	suponer	to suppose	supongo

ejercicio

1-11

En español.

- I propose a break (**un descanso**). _____
- You (tú) suppose the worst (**lo peor**). _____
- They replace the money. _____

4. I undo the work. _____
5. She composes a song. _____
6. The girls distract the driver (**el conductor**). _____

ejercicio**1-12**

Pareados. Escribe la letra de la respuesta más lógica.

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| _____ 1. Sé | a. a mis compañeros de trabajo. |
| _____ 2. Distraigo | b. que trabajas mucho. |
| _____ 3. No quepo | c. música para mis canciones. |
| _____ 4. Compongo | d. en esa trampa (<i>trap</i>) a menudo. |
| _____ 5. Propongo | e. de la conferencia ahora. |
| _____ 6. Pongo | f. una solución para tu problema. |
| _____ 7. Salgo | g. el agua en un vaso. |
| _____ 8. Caigo | h. en estos pantalones. |

Other Verbs with Irregular Forms in the First Person

- Verbs that end in a vowel followed by **-cer** and **-cir** change **c** to **zc** in the first-person singular only. They are conjugated like **conocer**.

Conozco muy bien a Margo.

I know Margo very well.

-er verbs like *conocer*

agradecer	to thank, to be grateful	agradezco
aparecer	to appear	aparezco
complacer	to please	complazco
crecer	to grow	crezco
establecer	to establish	establezco
merecer	to deserve	merezco
ofrecer	to offer	ofrezco
padecer	to suffer	padezco
permanecer	to remain	permanezco
pertenecer	to belong	pertenezco
reconocer	to recognize	reconozco

-ir verbs like *traducir*

traducir	to translate	traduzco
conducir	to drive, to lead	conduzco
producir	to produce	produzco

ejercicio

1-13

Práctica. Escribe la forma correspondiente del verbo entre paréntesis.

1. Yo _____ (conducir) el coche.
2. Marta y tú _____ (salir) de casa juntos (*together*).
3. Yo no _____ (conocer) a esa familia.
4. ¿Quién _____ (ofrecer) más por este cuadro?
5. ¡Yo no _____ (merecer) este regalo!
6. Las asistentes del director _____ (obedecer) sus órdenes.
7. ¡Tú _____ (pertenecer) a una familia muy famosa!
8. Marcia _____ (conocer) a los padres de Luisa.

ejercicio

1-14

¿Y yo? Escribe en español. Usa el presente.

1. I deserve a raise. _____
2. Do I go out now? _____
3. I am grateful for your friendship. _____
4. I do not belong to this group. _____
5. I translate the instructions. _____
6. I seldom impose my ideas! _____
7. I remain quiet (**callado**[a]). _____

Other Frequently Used Verbs with Irregular Forms in the Present Tense

Study the conjugations of the verbs that follow. They have irregular forms in the present tense:

decir (<i>to say</i>)		ir (<i>to go</i>)		oír (<i>to hear</i>)	
digo	decimos	voy	vamos	oigo	oímos
dices	decís	vas	vais	oyes	oís
dice	dicen	va	van	oye	oyen

ser (to be)		tener (to have)		venir (to come)	
soy	somos	tengo	tenemos	vengo	venimos
eres	sois	tienes	tenéis	vienes	venís
es	son	tiene	tienen	viene	vienen

Note that **haber** is also irregular. One meaning of **haber** is *to have*. However, in the present as well as in other tenses, **haber** is more frequently used as an impersonal verb in the third-person singular form. The present tense form is **hay**. It means *there is* and *there are*.

Hay tres sillas en la sala.

There are three chairs in the living room.

Hay una posibilidad solamente.

There is only one possibility.

Compounds of **tener** have the same irregular forms.

Verbs like **tener**

contener	to contain	contengo
detener	to detain	detengo
mantener	to maintain	mantengo
obtener	to obtain	obtengo
retener	to retain	retengo
sostener	to sustain	sostengo

ejercicio

1-15

En español.

- There is one person. _____
- There are ten programs. _____
- I go now. _____
- I do not hear music. _____
- Do you (**Ud.**) see the bus? _____
- I tell the truth. _____
- You (**Uds.**) have time. _____
- They stop the car. _____

ejercicio

1-16

La televisión y la cocina. Escribe la forma correspondiente del presente.

- Nosotros _____ (estar) en un estudio de televisión con el Chef Horacio.
- Él _____ (ser) un apasionado de la cocina y _____ (decir) que sus platos son una obra de arte.
- _____ (Haber) muchos aficionados que ven su programa, "Cocina con Horacio".
- El Chef Horacio _____ (oír) los comentarios favorables de sus admiradores.

5. Ellos _____ (venir) al estudio para ver a su estrella favorita.
6. Luisa _____ (venir) para probar las creaciones exquisitas de Horacio.
7. Los técnicos _____ (estar) ocupados filmando el programa de hoy.
8. Sus admiradores _____ (ir) al estudio muy temprano.

Verbs with Spelling Changes in the Present Tense

In the present tense, certain verbs have spelling changes. These are determined by Spanish rules of pronunciation to preserve the sound appearing in the infinitive. The following groups of verbs have spelling changes before the verb ending **-o**, in the **yo** form only.

- Verbs ending in **-ger** or **-gir** change **g** to **j** before the **-o** ending.

coger (to catch, grab)		exigir (to demand)	
cojo	cogemos	exijo	exigimos
coges	cogéis	exiges	exigís
coge	cogen	exige	exigen

Verbs like **coger**

encoger	to shrink	encojo
escoger	to choose	escojo
proteger	to protect	protejo
recoger	to pick up	recojo

Verbs like **exigir**

dirigir	to direct	dirijo
 fingir	to pretend	finjo

Other **-gir** verbs have stem changes as well. Check the sections on stem-changing verbs in Unit 2.

- Verbs ending in **-guir** change **gu** to **g** before the **-o** ending.

distinguir (to distinguish)	
distingo	distinguimos
distingues	distinguís
distingue	distinguen

Verbs like **distinguir**

extinguir	to extinguish
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Other **-guir** verbs have stem changes as well. Check the sections on stem-changing verbs in Unit 2.

- Verbs ending in **-cer** and **-cir** change **c** to **z** before the **-o** ending.

convencer (<i>to convince</i>)	
convenzo	convencemos
convences	convencéis
convence	convencen

Verbs like **convencer**

ejercer	to practice (a profession)	ejerzo
vencer	to overcome	venzo

Some **-cer** and **-cir** verbs may have stem changes as well: **e** changes to **i** and **o** to **ue**.

elegir	to correct	elijo
torcer	to twist	tuerzo

ejercicio

1-17

“Yo también...” Marlo hace todo lo que Ramón hace. Write the present tense of the yo form of the verb in italics.

1. *Exige* una explicación. _____
2. *Escoge* los colores. _____
3. *Extingue* el fuego. _____
4. *Recoge* los periódicos. _____
5. *Vence* los obstáculos. _____
6. *Protege* sus derechos (*rights*). _____
7. *Convence* a sus amigos. _____
8. No *finje*. _____

ejercicio

1-18

Traduce. Patricia habla de los quehaceres domésticos. Usa el vocabulario útil.

Every day I leave my house at seven. I drive my car to the office, and there I work hard. When I come home, I do the household chores. Thank heavens for electrical appliances! I convince my children and my husband to help, and we all share the work. My husband vacuums the floor. I put the clothes in the washing machine and later my daughter Mati dries them in the dryer and puts the clothes in the closets. I assign the household chores. Then I propose a plan for dinner.