# ADJECTIVES IN SPANISH: 100+ LIST OF WORDS TO DESCRIBE AND GIVE ATTRIBUTES

## Golden as the Sun, Blue as the Sea

Let's start by having fun because there is no better way to learn than with a didactic and creative rhythm. Can you try to say this tongue twister in Spanish?

***"Tres tristes tigres comían trigo en un trigal, tragaban trigo tres tristes tigres".***

In English, it would be something like:

***Three sad tigers were eating wheat in a wheat field, three sad tigers were swallowing wheat.***

Don't worry if you found it difficult, even native Spanish speakers can't get it right the first time, and if you did, congratulations because you have a gift, or you have been practicing Spanish for a while. Now, do you know what this tongue twister has? **Adjectives**, and there are a lot more tongue twisters and word games where we can find adjectives that will help you associate their meaning and at the same time be fun. In a moment, we are going to go to the definition of the adjectives, for now, the first thing you have to identify is that the tigers were **tristes** (sad), and also apparently they were **hambrientos** (hungry) and **vegetarianos** (vegetarians).

## Somebody tell me what Adjectives are!

If I told you before that the first thing you had to identify was that they were sad, hungry and vegetarian tigers, you can see that we are talking about the characteristics of these tigers, and they are characteristics in different areas. That's what adjectives are all about, **they are words that describe, characterize or give attributes to the noun.**

There is a huge universe of adjectives, just try to guess the number of ways to describe that exist, there are so many, and to make it simpler these same characteristics can be divided. We have adjectives of **qualities** (like: **el carro es realmente enorme** – the car is really huge), there are also adjectives of **relationship** (like: **leyes estatales** – state laws, which apply only in one state), we find adjectives of **quantity** (like: **hay pocas franelas en esa tienda** – there are few t-shirts in that store), we have adjectives that refer to a

specific **time** period (as in: **vamos a tomarnos nuestro café matutino** – let's have our morning coffee), and lastly we have adjectives such as context of **place** (**él es estadounidense** – he is an American).

Finally, within the general rules, we have pure coincidences, and that is that the adjectives will coincide most of the time in number and gender with the noun, if you would like to mention that your TV is black, it will be:

**El televisor de mi casa es negro.**

The noun "televisor" is masculine and singular, therefore, the adjective that will describe it must be singular and masculine: **"negro"**. It is incorrect *"el televisor son negras"*, it does not make much sense, does it?

## Some Basic Rules

Writing adjectives is one of the easiest words for Spanish learners, we only relate a description to the noun. Now let's go to the more technical part of identifying them in a sentence.

Adjectives are placed right after nouns (this rule is rarely broken), example

- *En el comedor hay un cuadro que es muy **grande** y otro cuadro más **pequeño*** – In the dining room there is a painting that is very **large** and another, **smaller** painting.

First we have the noun **"cuadro"** and then we describe it with its shape **"grande"** or **"pequeño"**.

I don't know if you noticed, but in the example, we have the adjective "grande", and before it we find a copulative verb (ser or estar) between the noun and the adjective. This can be a common case, it is possible to use it or not, just like in English. For example:

El carro **es grande** (The car is big) / El **carrogrande** (The big car).

## Poetic Adjectives:

In literary and poetic uses, it is common to find that the position of the adjective is changed before the noun. This use is called hyperbaton, it is not recommended to use it too much because it is not so common, and its use is required in very specific situations.

**Example:**

- – "**Azul era la altura** y **era esmeralda el suelo**…" – Blue was the height and emerald was the ground. Sentence from the poem "Era mi corazón un ala viva y turbia…" by Neruda (In this example we can even find the adjective Azul before a copulative verb "era").

## Numerical Adjectives:

These are more flexible, they can be used both before and after. You want a more informal and common language, place the adjective that indicates the quantity before the noun, and if you want to express a much more formal idea, place the adjective after the noun.

**Example:**

- Informal: **Sexto Inciso** / Formal: **Inciso sexto** (Sixth clause)

Now let's go to the types of adjectives to know how to use them correctly!

## How Many Types of Adjectives Should I Learn?

The short answer is four, if you want to know the names are: qualifying, adverbial, noun and relational. The use of each is different, as is the position within the sentence.

**Qualifying Adjectives (Calificativos)**

These are the most commonly learned, they describe physical states and other more abstract ones such as mental aspects (attitudes, moods). These are the only adjectives that can be given degrees, such as **"más"** (more), **"menos"** (less) o **"muy"** (very).

**Example:**

- Mi vecino **está muy feliz** por el aumento que le dieron – My neighbor is very happy about the raise he got.
- Mi perro, Harry, **tiene los ojos marrones**. – My dog, Harry, has brown eyes.

**Adverbial Adjectives (Adverbiales)**

Rather than describing, they assign a temporal notion, which may or may not change. Unlike qualifiers, they cannot have degrees. We will always see this adjective before the noun, and before the noun it can become another type of adjective.

**Example:**

- **Un simple videojuego** lo tiene loco (A simple video game drives him crazy) – The adjective before the noun tells us that the video game is just a video game and that's it.
- Ese videojuego **es muy simple** (That video game is very simple) – The adjective after the noun can be graduated and tells us that the video game is easy, qualifying it.

**Noun Adjectives (Sustantivados)**

As its name implies, in this case the adjective represents at the same time the noun, they are directly identified by the characteristic and are accompanied by the article.

**Example:**

- **¿Cuál es tu casa?** (Which is your home?)
- **La azul** de la izquierda. (The blue one on the left)

**Relational Adjectives (Relacionales)**

These adjectives are capable of including the noun in a classification, giving it a characteristic that in turn groups it together.

**Example:**

- Mi portatil es **gamer** (My laptop is gamer)
- Mi perro es un **Bullterrier** (My dog is a **Bullterrier**)

## Adjectives – Quiz/Worksheet

In the following sentences, identify the adjective and what type of adjective it is:

1. La alfombra roja es de mi abuela – The red carpet belongs to my grandmother
2. El actual ministro tomó decisiones financieras – The current minister made financial

decisions
3. ¿De todas esas, ¿cuál es tu gata? La blanca – Of all those, which one is your cat? The white one
4. Tengo un vaso viñero – I have a vineyard glass
5. Mi suegro es muy gruñón – My father-in-law is very grumpy

## The answers:

**Hey there. Welcome.**

**I'm Kéllyta Quijada - and I wrote this article.**

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Of all the adjectives we can think of, feliz (happy) and sencillo (easy) are the only words we want to describe your Spanish learning. If you didn't get all the answers right, feel free to contact me for a couple of classes to take your Spanish to the next level!

1. roja / calificativo
2. actual / adverbial
3. La atigrada / sustantivado
4. viñero / relacional
5. gruñón / calificativo

## 100 Adjectives for Any Occasion

Now that we know everything (or almost everything) about adjectives, you may be wondering: Where are the adjectives? Say no more, here is a list of 100 of the most common adjectives in Spanish. They are divided into categories, so you know exactly when to use them, now that you know how.

**Click on the arrows icon to display the tables properly.**

- Colors
- Food
- Texture
- Shapes
- Sizes
- Quantity
- Body
- Personality
- Relational