AR, ER, IR Verbs in Spanish: Endings for Every Tense

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Quick answer: Every Spanish verb ends in **-ar**, **-er** or **-ir** in its infinitive form (*hablar, comer, vivir*). To conjugate a regular verb, drop the ending and add the ending for the person: *hablar* → *hablo, hablas, habla…* AR verbs use endings with **a**, while ER and IR verbs share almost the same endings with **e** and **i**.

Learn these three patterns and you can conjugate thousands of Spanish verbs. This guide has the AR, ER and IR verb charts for the present, preterite, imperfect and future tenses, lists of the most common regular verbs, and a quick quiz.

What are AR, ER and IR verbs?

Spanish verbs are grouped by the last two letters of the infinitive (the “to” form):

- **–AR verbs** (the largest group): *hablar* – to speak, *trabajar* – to work
- **–ER verbs:** *comer* – to eat, *aprender* – to learn
- **–IR verbs:** *vivir* – to live, *escribir* – to write

The part before the ending is the **stem** (habl-, com-, viv-). Regular verbs keep the stem and change only the ending.

Present tense: AR, ER, IR endings

Pronoun	–AR (hablar)	–ER (comer)	–IR (vivir)
yo	habl**o**	com**o**	viv**o**
tú	habl**as**	com**es**	viv**es**
él / ella / usted	habl**a**	com**e**	viv**e**
nosotros	habl**amos**	com**emos**	viv**imos**
vosotros	habl**áis**	com**éis**	viv**ís**
ellos / ustedes	habl**an**	com**en**	viv**en**

Tip: ER and IR verbs are identical in the present tense except for *nosotros* (-emos / -imos) and *vosotros* (-éis / -ís).

Preterite (simple past)

Pronoun	-AR (hablar)	-ER (comer)	-IR (vivir)
yo	habl**é**	com**í**	viv**í**
tú	habl**aste**	com**iste**	viv**iste**
él / ella / usted	habl**ó**	com**ió**	viv**ió**
nosotros	habl**amos**	com**imos**	viv**imos**
vosotros	habl**asteis**	com**isteis**	viv**isteis**
ellos / ustedes	habl**aron**	com**ieron**	viv**ieron**

In the preterite, ER and IR endings are exactly the same.

Imperfect (used to / was doing)

Pronoun	-AR (hablar)	-ER (comer)	-IR (vivir)
yo	habl**aba**	com**ía**	viv**ía**
tú	habl**abas**	com**ías**	viv**ías**
él / ella / usted	habl**aba**	com**ía**	viv**ía**
nosotros	habl**ábamos**	com**íamos**	viv**íamos**
vosotros	habl**abais**	com**íais**	viv**íais**
ellos / ustedes	habl**aban**	com**ían**	viv**ían**

Future tense

The future is the easiest: keep the **whole infinitive** and add the same endings for all three groups: **–é, –ás, –á, –emos, –éis, –án**.

hablaré, comerás, vivirá, hablaremos, comeréis, vivirán

Most common regular AR verbs

hablar(to speak), *trabajar*(to work), *estudiar*(to study), *tomar*(to take/drink), *llegar* (to arrive), *llevar*(to carry/take), *buscar*(to look for), *usar*(to use), *necesitar*(to need), *escuchar*(to listen), *mirar*(to look at), *esperar*(to wait/hope), *ayudar*(to help), *comprar*(to buy), *cocinar*(to cook), *caminar*(to walk), *bailar*(to dance), *viajar*(to travel), *terminar*(to finish), *preguntar*(to ask)

Most common regular ER verbs

comer(to eat), *beber*(to drink), *aprender*(to learn), *leer*(to read), *correr*(to run), *vender*(to sell), *comprender*(to understand), *creer*(to believe), *deber*(to owe/should), *responder*(to answer), *romper*(to break), *temer*(to fear), *meter*(to put in), *barrer*(to sweep), *prometer*(to promise)

Most common regular IR verbs

vivir(to live), *escribir*(to write), *abrir*(to open), *recibir*(to receive), *subir*(to go up), *decidir*(to decide), *compartir*(to share), *asistir*(to attend), *cubrir*(to cover), *describir* (to describe), *discutir*(to argue/discuss), *permitir*(to allow), *sufrir*(to suffer), *unir*(to unite), *existir*(to exist)

See the full list with examples in our top 50 regular verbs in Spanish and the 200 most common Spanish verbs.

Watch out: irregular and stem-changing verbs

Some very common verbs break the pattern. Learn these separately:

- **Fully irregular:** ser, ir, tener, hacer, decir, haber
- **Stem-changing (e → ie):** pensar, empezar, entender
- **Stem-changing (o → ue):** poder, volver, dormir, encontrar
- **Stem-changing (e → i):** pedir, repetir, servir

Quick quiz

Conjugate the verb in the present tense.

1. Nosotros _____ (vivir) en Texas.
2. Tú _____ (aprender) muy rápido.
3. Ellos _____ (trabajar) los sábados.
4. Yo _____ (escribir) un correo.
5. Usted _____ (beber) mucha agua.

▶ **Show answers**

Frequently asked questions

What are AR, ER and IR verbs in Spanish?

They're the three verb groups in Spanish, named after the infinitive ending: hablar (-ar), comer (-er), vivir (-ir). Each group has its own set of endings.

Which is the most common verb ending in Spanish?

-AR. Most Spanish verbs, and almost all new ones (like chatear or googlear), end in -ar.

What's the difference between ER and IR verbs?

Very little. They share the same endings in most tenses. In the present they differ only in the nosotros and vosotros forms (comemos / vivimos).

How many verbs should I learn first?

Start with the 50–100 most common verbs. They cover most everyday conversation.

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