CONJUGATION OF THE SPANISH VERB DESPERTARSE

Think about one of the first things you learn when studying Spanish. Perhaps you will first go over the numbers from one to ten, or learn the greetings used by all Spanish speakers. Yet chances are, you will soon find yourself trying to describe your daily routine. And the first action on everyone's list will always be waking up. That's where ***"despertarse"*** comes into play.

It's important to note that ***despertarse*** is not but the reflective form of the verb ***"despertar"***. Reflective verbs have a direct object, and this object always refers to the same person or thing. In Spanish, reflective verbs refer to a pronoun, as the ones demonstrated above.

me	myself
te	yourself
se	himself/herself/itself/yourselves
nos	ourselves
os (informal)	yourselves
se	themselves

These types of verbs are often used to describe things that are done every day or that involve a routine. Contrary to the English language, Spanish requires much more of the usage of reflective verbs, as you will soon learn.

Despertar vs. Despertarse: When to use each?

"Despertar" is an irregular, prenominal verb that needs a direct or indirect compliment. We often use despertar when we...

Talk about an object waking up the other:

- "Él **despertó** a todo el vecindario" – "He woke up the entire neighborhood".
- "Yo **despierto** a mis hermanos todas las mañanas" – "I wake up my siblings every morning".

Narrate events:

- "Yo **despierto**, cepillo mis dientes y salgo a trabajar" – "I wake up, brush my teeth, and go out to work".

Or to talk about the stimulation of a feeling or thing:

- "El olor a canela **despertó** su apetito" – "The smell of cinnamon awakened his appetite".
- "La música **despertó** recuerdos de su juventud" – "The music awakened memories of her youth".

"Despertarse" is the reflective form of despertar, and as mentioned above, it refers to a pronoun. We often use despertarse when we...

Talk about the act of waking up:

- "Yo me **desperté** y el dinosaurio seguía ahí" – "I woke up and the dinasaur was still there".
- "Nosotros nos **despertamos** temprano" – "We woke up early".

Talk about an object waking up the other:

- "Pedro me **despertó** para ir al aeropuerto" – "Pedro woke me up to go to the airport".
- "Ustedes nos **despertaron** con sus gritos" – "You woke us up with your yelling".

Can you notice the differences? Try coming up with a few sentences of your own and figure out whether "despertar" o "despertarse" would be more appropriate. In the majority of the cases, you will find despertarse to be the correct answer.

Despertarse is an Irregular Verb

As you learn Spanish, irregular verbs will often appear and make you question everything. That is because irregular verbs can change the conjugation rules to their liking, making it hard for students to figure out how to phrase their sentences properly. But our goal is not to make you memorize a couple of tables without understanding anything else. Hopefully, by the end of this article, you will be one step closer to mastering irregular verbs.

Verbals

In Spanish, verbals are those verbs that don't need to be conjugated. Sure, they are considered verbs, but they will always require a second, conjugated verb in order to be used.

	Verbal	Usage	Example	English
Infinitive	Despertarse (to wake up)	Noun	¡Hora de despertarse!	Time to wake up!
Gerund	Despertandose (waking up)	Adverb	Ella está despertándose.	She is waking up.
Participle	Despertado (awakened)	Adjective	Él se ha despertado.	He has awakened.

Despertarse: Present Tense of the Indicative Mood

Yo me despierto.	I wake up.
Tú te despiertas.	You wake up (Informal).
Él/Ella/Ello/Uno se despierta.	He/She/It/One wakes up.
Usted se despierta.	You wake up (Formal).
Nosotros nos despertamos.	We wake up.

Yo me despierto.	I wake up.
Vosotros os despertáis.	You all wake up (informal).
Ellos/Ellas se despiertan.	They wake up.
Ustedes se despiertan.	You all wake up.

Now let's go over a few examples. Try to understand the sentence first before looking at the translation:

- "Ella **se despierta** temprano para pasear a su perro" – "She wakes up early to walk her dog".
- "Yo **me despierto** siempre a la misma hora" – "I always wake up at the same hour".

Despertarse in other Tenses

Now that we know how to use despertarse in the present tense, it's time we move on to other tenses. As we mentioned before, "despertarse" is more commonly used in Spanish than in "despertar". In fact, it made the top five most used reflective irregular verbs. It's fair to say that knowing how to conjugate despertarse is vital for speaking Spanish as a true Native speaker. So let's do just that!

Subject	Preterite Tense	Imperfect Tense	Conditional Tense	Future Tense
	(woke up)	(used to wake up)	(would wake up)	(will wake up)
Yo	Me desperté	Me despertaba	Me despertaría	Me despertaré
Tú	Te despertaste	Te despertabas	Te despertarías	Te despertarás
Él/Ella/Ello/Uno	Se despertó	Se despertaba	Se despertaría	Se despertará
Usted	Se despertó	Se despertaba	Se despertaría	Se despertará
Nosotros	Nos despertamos	Nos despertabamos	Nos despertaríamos	Nos despertaremos
Vosotros	Os despertasteis	Os despertabais	Os despertaríais	Os despertaréis

Subject	Preterite Tense	Imperfect Tense	Conditional Tense	Future Tense
Ellos/Ellas	Se despertaron	Se despertaban	Se despertarían	Se despertarán
Ustedes	Se despertaron	Se despertaban	Se despertarían	Se despertarán

Now let's do some examples. Try to decipher what the sentence means before looking at the translation, and if you're looking to advance your capabilities further, try to come up with some sentences of your own.

- **Nos despertamos** seis horas antes para llegar con tiempo al aeropuerto. – (We woke up six hours earlier to get on time to the airport).
- Antes de las vacaciones de verano, ellas **se despertaban** a las ocho de la mañana para ir al colegio. – (Before the summer holidays, they used to wake up at eight a.m to go to school).
- Él **se despertaría** más tarde, si no tuviera que tomar el autobus al trabajo. – (He would wake up later, if he didn't have to ride the bus to work).
- El día de mi cumpleaños me despetaré más tarde de lo normal. – (On my birthday, I will wake up later than usual).

The Compound Tenses of the Indicative Mood

Subject	Present Perfect (have/has woken up)	Preterite Perfect (had woken up)	Past Perfect - Pluperfect (had woken up)	Conditional Perfect (would have woken up)	Future perfect (will have woken up)
Yo	Me he despertado	Me hube despertado	Me había despertado	Me habría despertado	Me habré despertado
Tú	Te has despertado	Te hubiste despertado	Te habías despertado	Te habrías despertado	Te habrás despertado
Él/Ella/Ello/Uno	Se ha despertado	Se hubo despertado	Se había despertado	Se habría despertado	Se habrá despertado
Usted	Se ha despertado	Se hubo despertado	Se había despertado	Se habría despertado	Se habrá despertado
Nosotros	Nos hemos despertado	Nos hubimos despertado	Nos habíamos despertado	Nos habríamos despertado	Nos habremos despertado
Vosotros	Os habéis despertado	Os hubisteis despertado	Os habíais despertado	Os habríais despertado	Os habréis despertado

CONJUGATION OF THE SPANISH VERB DESPERTARSE

Subject	Present Perfect (have/has woken up)	Preterite Perfect (had woken up)	Past Perfect - Pluperfect (had woken up)	Conditional Perfect (would have woken up)	Future perfect (will have woken up)
Ellos/Ellas	Se han despertado	Se hubieron despertado	Se habían despertado	Se habrían despertado	Se habrán despertado
Ustedes	Se han despertado	Se hubieron despertado	Se habían despertado	Se habrían despertado	Se habrán despertado

Read the following examples. Unlike the prior examples, these do not follow the same order of the table above. Try to see if you can tell the tense of the sentence before checking out the translation.

- Ellos **se hubieron despertado** sintiéndose mal. – (They had woken up feeling ill).
- **Nos habríamos despertado** más temprano, si solo nos hubieran avisado del evento que se iba a realizar. – (We would have woken up earlier, if only they had notified us of the event that was to take place).
- Estas últimas semanas, **me he despertado** sintiéndome cansado y mareado. – (These past weeks, I have woken up feeling tired and dizzy).
- Aquel día, **me había despertado** a la cinco de la mañana para observar el amanecer. – (That day, I had woken up at five a.m to watch the sunset).
- ¿No puedo programar la entrada para después de las ocho? Supongo que ya **te habrás despertado** a esa hora.- (Can't I schedule the delivery for after eight a.m? I guess you will have woken up already by then).

Important note: While we taught you the preterite perfect of despertarse, this particular tense is extremely rare in Spanish. If you ever come across the preterite perfect tense, it will most likely be in a piece of classic literature from at least half a century back. Native Spanish speakers tend to use past perfect instead. Let's go over the other example:

- Ellos **se hubieron despertado** sintiéndose mal.

In Modern Spanish, the sentence:

- Ellos **se habían despertado** sintiéndose mal.

Carries the same meaning, and won't earn you weird looks from Native Spanish speakers.

The Subjunctive Mood

Contrary to the indicative, the subjunctive mood is used to express action or ideas that are completely hypothetical. We could be talking about personal opinions, but also desires, wishes, and hopes.

Subject	Present	Imperfect	Imperfect 2	Future
Yo	Me despierte	Me despertara	Me despertase	Me despertare
Tú	Te despiertes	Te despertaras	Te despertases	Te despertares
Él/Ella/Ello/Uno	Se despierte	Se despertara	Se despertase	Se despertare
Usted	Se despierte	Se despertara	Se despertase	Se despertare
Nosotros	Nos despertamos	Nos despertáramos	Nos despértasemos	Nos despertáremos
Vosotros	Os despertéis	Os despertarais	Os despertaseis	Os despertareis
Ellos/Ellas	Se despierten	Se despertaran	Se despertasen	Se despertaren
Ustedes	Se despierte	Se despertaran	Se despertasen	Se despertaren

Let's go over the next examples. Can you guess again which tense they belong to?

- **Si tú te despertaras** más temprano, no llegarías tan tarde a la universidad todos los días. – (If you woke up earlier, you wouldn't be so late to college every day).
- Espero que si descanso hoy, mañana **me despertare** sintiéndome mejor. – (I hope that by resting today, tomorrow I will wake up feeling better).
- Si todos ellos **se despertasen** al mismo tiempo, su rutina no funcionaría. – (If all of them woke up at the same time, their routine wouldn't work).
- Ojalá que para cuando vosotros **os despertéis**, haya dejado de llover. – (Hopefully by the time you wake up, the rain will have stopped).

Compound Tenses of the Subjunctive Mood

Subject	Present Perfect	Past Perfect (Pluperfect)	Past Perfect 2	Future Perfect

CONJUGATION OF THE SPANISH VERB DESPERTARSE

Subject	Present Perfect	Past Perfect (Pluperfect)	Past Perfect 2	Future Perfect
Yo	Haya despertado	Hubiera despertado	Hubiese despertado	Hubiere despertado
Tú	Hayas despertado	Hubieras despertado	Hubieses despertado	Hubieres despertado
Él/Ella/Ello/Uno	Haya despertado	Hubiera despertado	Hubiese despertado	Hubiere despertado
Usted	Haya despertado	Hubiera despertado	Hubiese despertado	Hubiere despertado
Nosotros	Hayamos despertado	Hubiéramos despertado	Hubiésemos despertado	Hubiéremos despertado
Vosotros	Hayáis despertado	Hubierais despertado	Hubieseis despertado	Hubiereis despertado
Ellos/Ellas	Hayan despertado	Hubieran despertado	Hubiesen despertado	Hubieren despertado
Ustedes	Hayan despertado	Hubieran despertado	Hubiesen despertado	Hubieren despertado

Examples:

- Cuando ya nos **hayamos despertado**, les haremos saber para encontrarnos todos en el parque. – (Once we have woken up, we will let you know, so we can all meet at the park).
- Si ustedes se **hubieran despertado** un poco más tarde, no tendrían tanto sueño ahora. – (If you had woken up a little later, you wouldn't be so tired right now).
- Sintió como si un amor profundo se **hubiese despertado** dentro de él. – (He felt as if a profound love had awoken inside of him).
- Saldré hacía la oficina une vez me **hubiere despertado.** – (I will go to the office once I have wake up).

Important note: Just as with the preterite perfect in the indicative mood, the future perfect in its subjunctive mood is extremely rare in Spanish. You will most likely never hear someone use it in any way, and nowadays, its only appearance can be found in pieces of centuries-old, classic literature.

The "Bossy" Imperative Mood

Subject	Affirmative	Negative
Tú	Despiértate	No te despiertes
Usted	Despiértese	No se despierte
Nosotros	Desperteémonos	No nos despertemos
Vosotros	Despertaos	No os despertéis
Ustedes	Despiértesen	No se despierten

Examples:

- ¡Félix, **despiértate!** ¡Está nevando! – (Felix, wake up! It's snowing!).
- No se **despierten** hasta que hayan dormido sus ocho horas. – (Do not wake up until you have had your eight hours of sleep).

Despertar – Quiz/Worksheet

Now that we have gone through all the conjugation you will ever need when it comes to the verb despertarse, let's put that knowledge to use. Once you are done with these exercises, you will feel most confident when using your newfound vocabulary. Remember, the key to learning a language is practicing.

1. ¿A qué hora tú _____?

E: At what hour do you wake up?

2. Si tuvieramos clases online, _____ más tarde.

E: If we had online classes, we would wake up later.

3. Ya puedes hablar conmigo. Me he _____.

E: You can talk to me now. I am awakened.

4. En su juventud, usted _____ mucho más temprano que los jóvenes hoy en día.

E: In your youth, you used to wake up way earlier than young people these days.

5. Ella _____ a las nueve en punto.

E: She will wake up at nine o'clock.

6. Tal vez es posible que ellas _____ antes que el resto.

E: Maybe it's possible that they woke up before the others.

7. Si el domingo amanece lloviendo, ¡No _____! No voy a salir con ese clima.

E: If it starts raining on Sunday, don't wake me up! I'm not going out in that weather

8. Ahora que _____ ¿A qué hora sirven el desayuno?

E: Now that we have woken up, at what time do they serve breakfast?

9. ¿_____ si hubieras sabido que no habían clases ese día?

E: Would you have woken up if you had known there were no classes that day?

10. No te preocupes. Si me quedo dormido, mi mamá_____ de igual formas.

E: Don't worry. If I fall asleep, my mom will wake me up anyway.

Answers

1. Te despiertas

2. Nos despertaríamos

3. Despertarse

4. Se despertaba

5. Se despertará

6. Se despertasen

7. Me despiertes

8. Nos hemos despertado

9. Te hubieras despertado

10. Me despertará