GREETINGS & FAREWELLS IN SPANISH: LEARN HOW TO SAY HI AND GOODBYE IN SPANISH!

Saludos y Adios in Spanish
Say Hello & Goodbye the Right Way!

Looks simple, doesn't it? This first line is basically the day-to-day life of the native Spanish speaker, and it can also become your day-to-day life. When you start learning a new language you will find many lessons that are essential for a more fluent vocabulary, such as everyday verbs, adjectives and nouns, but the most everyday thing you will find are **greetings and farewells**.

Just like that first line of this blog, greetings come first in a conversation, while farewells usually come last. They can be short words, long sentences, and even abbreviations with letters. Let's break this down for simplicity into formal and informal greetings and farewells.

Without further ado, bienvenido, I hope that in your next Spanish class you will surprise your teacher by greeting him or her in the most natural way .

According to Time of Day

The most common way to differentiate it is with the time; it is usually established that the one who is greeting first must know the time of the other person to know the correct words. If I am in Venezuela at 8:00pm and I am going to write to a friend in California, USA, it will be 5:00pm. For me, it is already nighttime, but I should say "good afternoon" because it is still daytime for him.

If you don't want to (or can) be aware of the time of day of your interlocutor, you can always say **"Buenas"** (it's like saying Hello) or **"Buen día"** (Good day), both of which apply at any time of the day.

In Spanish and English there are differences in the number of changes of greetings according to the time, let's see them.

Buenos días	Buenas tardes	Buenas noches
As soon as the sun rises Approx 6:00 am - 12:00 pm	When the sun begins to set Approx 12:00 pm - 6:00 pm	When the sun is not shining (includes early morning) Approx 6:00 pm - 6:00 am

Unlike English, which has four different words (morning, afternoon, evening and night), in Spanish we keep three expressions for both greetings and farewells, following these schedules. Let's see an example!

– Alejandro 9:00 am: **Buenos días**, Daniela, te dejo este mensaje por acá para cuando puedas responder, ¿cuál es el precio del café?

– Daniela 5:30 pm: ¡Alejandro! **Buenas tardes**, estuve ocupada, disculpa, el precio es de $7.

– Alejandro 8:35 pm: ¡Gracias! Mañana paso por la tienda, **buenas noches**.

Alejandro started the conversation in the morning with ***"buenos días"***, since Daniela was able to answer him in the afternoon, she said ***"buenas tardes"***. As a farewell, it is also possible to use any of these phrases, just as Alejandro did with his ***"buenas noches"***.

According to the Level of Formality

It is not the same to greet someone when entering a business meeting as it is to greet a friend you met at the baseball game. In Spanish, there are also changes for different occasions, for formal and informal moments.

Buenos días, buenas tardes and *buenas noches* are expressions with a standard level of formality, meaning that you can say it in any type of occasion, the same happens with "Hola" although it is more common in informal situations. Remember that some of these phrases you'll see are more common in written form (as in English), while others can be used on any occasion.

Formal Greetings

Expresión	English
Es un placer dirigirme a usted	It is a pleasure to address you.
¿Cómo se encuentra este día?	How are you feeling today?
¿Cómo está usted?	How are you?
Es un gusto saludarle	It's a pleasure to greet you
Estimado/a Sr./Sra.	Dear Sir/Madam
Es un placer conocerle	It's a pleasure to meet you

Formal Farewells

Expresión	English
Fue un placer dirigirme a usted	It is a pleasure to address you
Espero tenga buen día	I hope you have a good day
Se despide atentamente	Yours sincerely
Saludos cordiales	Kind Regards
Se despide cordialmente	Cordially yours sincerely
Hasta una próxima oportunidad	Until next time
Quedo atento/a	I remain attentive

Informal Greetings

Expresión	English
¡Chao!	Bye!
¡Adiós, amigo!	Goodbye, dude!
Cuídate	Take care!
Un abrazo fuerte	A warm hug
Besos	Kisses
Con cariño	Affectionately
Hasta pronto	See you soon
Hasta luego (or Hasta pronto's little brother)	See you later
Recuerdos / Saludos	Regards

You have to be very aware of the context so that you can use each greeting and farewell correctly. We know, understanding social cues can be difficult, especially when you are learning a new language and know little to nothing about the culture.

A good rule of thumb is to observe how the other person treats you and then, like a mime, imitate them. For example, if someone says, ***"Hasta pronto"*** or ***"Hasta luego"***, even if it is an informal greeting, it usually means that there is still some social distance separating you. On the other hand, if they say goodbye with ***"Chao"***, they are telling you that they feel confident towards you. And yes, with Latinos, going from formal to informal can be as quick as saying "See you later, alligator".

Other Forms of Greetings and Farewells

Greetings

Routine questions:

One thing you should know is that, in Spanish, it is polite for you to greet someone and then ask them a question about their status. In addition to ***"¿Cómo estás?"*** in informal situations, or ***"¿Cómo se encuentra?"***, in formal situations, you can also use one of these variations. To make them formal, just switch to the "Usted" form when possible!

– **¿Cómo te/le va?** – How are you doing?

– **¿Qué has/ha hecho** últimamente? – What have you been doing lately?

– **¿Qué me cuentas/cuenta?** – What can you tell me?

– **¿Qué hay de nuevo?** (only informal) – What's new?

Questions to ask if someone is ill:

– **Espero que mejores pronto** (informal) – I hope you get better soon

– **Recupérate pronto, besos** (informal) – Get well soon, kisses

– **Le deseo una pronta recuperación** (formal) – I wish you a speedy recovery

For the holiday season: (formal e informal)

– **¡Feliz año!** – Happy New Year!

– **La familia Suárez les desea una feliz navidad** – The Suarez family wishes you a Merry Christmas!

– **Feliz navidad ¿cómo la pasaron?** – Merry Christmas, how was it?

– **¡Felices fiestas!** – Happy Holidays!/ Season's Greetings!

Farewells

On a daily basis: informal

– **Nos vemos** – See you

– **Hasta nunca** (This may be a bit rude, it is used in case of being upset) – See you never

– **Nos vemos la semana que viene** – See you next week

– **Nos estamos viendo** – See you around

– **Chao!** – Bye!

– **Saludos a** (persona) – Greetings to (person)

– **Con amor...** – Love...

– **Te esperamos pronto por aquí** – We'll be waiting for you soon

Express Good Wishes:

If asking "How are you?" you will be saying a greeting, and to wish wellness to someone we would express it when saying goodbye! You can use it in both informal (tú form) and formal (usted form) environments.

– **¡Qué pases un buen día!** – Have a good day!

– **¡Qué te vaya bien!** – All the best!

– **Éxitos en la competencia** – Success in the competition

– **Hanna y yo te deseamos suerte** – Hanna and I wish you luck

– **Suerte!** – Good luck!

– **Espero saber pronto de ti** – Hope to hear from you soon

– **Felices vacaciones** – Happy Holidays

– **Qué duermas bien** (at nights, mostly informal) – Sleep well

There are many ways to say hello and goodbye, and we hope we have given you a hand. Please remember that you can always resort to that The Truman Show quote:

Hey there. Welcome.

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

Stuck on this topic? Hire me for just 1 hour to start mastering it. Pass a test, improve basic vocabulary or improve your conversational level in Spanish.

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"¡Buenos días, y en caso de que no los vea, buenas tardes y buenas noches!"

"In Case I Don't See Ya, Good Afternoon, Good Evening And Goodnight!"

P.S.: Did you know that the Spanish version of *"See you later, alligator"* also includes an aquatic animal and a rhyme? In some Latin American countries we say: *"Chao, pescao"*, literally "Goodbye, fish".