

Masculine or Feminine Spanish Nouns

(Beginning Spanish)

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All nouns in Spanish are either masculine or feminine.

The definite article (*the*) is *el* before a masculine singular noun (or *los* before a masculine plural noun) and *la* before a feminine singular noun (or *las* before a feminine plural noun).

Following are some common rules:

1. Nouns referring to male beings are masculine; nouns referring to female beings are feminine.
2. Nouns ending in *-o* are generally masculine: *el libro* (the book).
3. Nouns ending in *-a* are generally feminine: *la pluma* (the feather).
4. The gender of a noun not ending in *-o* or *-a* must be learned and remembered individually:
el lápiz (pencil), *la clase* (class)

The following are more rules that might help you determine the gender of some nouns:

1. Nouns ending in *-d* and *-ión* are generally feminine:
La ciudad es grande. (The city is large.)
La pared es grande. (The wall is large.)
La nación es importante. (The nation is important.)
La construcción es importante. (The construction is important.)
2. A few nouns ending in *-ma*, *-pa* are masculine:
El programa es interesante. (The program is interesting.)
El mapa es grande. (The map is large.)
El problema es facil. (The problem is easy.)
3. Nouns ending in *-ista* may be masculine or feminine.
el turista, la turista (the tourist)
el artista, la artista (the artist)

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