

False Spanish English Cognates

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The convertible words between Spanish and English are called "[cognates](#)". These Spanish English cognates usually have the same roots. The [Spanish English cognates](#) are a hidden gem for English speakers who are learning Spanish (or for Spanish speakers who are learning English).

However, there are also many "**false Spanish English cognates**". These pairs of words look similar in Spanish and English but their actual meanings can be very different. It is not uncommon for English speakers to use these false cognate words incorrectly without knowing it. To avoid making such mistakes in Spanish, it is to the student's advantage to learn and master these Spanish English false cognates.

Following is a list of 56 common false Spanish English cognates. You can download a PDF of this [false Spanish English cognates](#) list at the end of this page.

Word	Explanation (if any)
advertencia	n. warning, piece of advice, reminder, or preface
advertisement	n. un anuncio
aguardar	to wait for
guard	guardar; defender; proteger
argumento	n. reasoning (as in a courtroom)
argument	n. 1) argumento (in the sense of reasoning); 2) discusión, pelea, disputa, or polémica (in the sense of disagreement)
asesor	n. advisor
assessor	n. evaluador

asunto n. subject, topic

assumption n. suposición

atender (Latin America) to attend; (Spain) to pay attention to, to heed, or to care for

attend *asistir*

billete n. item of paper money

bill *Besides money, bill has several other meanings in English: cuenta; proyecto de legislación.*

bizarro adj. 1) valient, gallant, brave, or 2) generous

bizarre *adj. extraño or raro*

cámara n. 1) a camera, 2) a camera operator, 3) a chamber.

camera *n. a still camera: una cámara*

carrera n. running, race; row, line; beam, girder, joist; route, ride, journey, course; avenue; career; university studies

career *n. una carrera profesional, una profesión (Note that career does not have the many meanings that 'carrera' has.)*

cartera n. wallet

card *n. tarjeta; naipe*

colorado adj. red or reddish

colored *adj. de color*

comodidad n. comfort

commodity *n. producto agrícola, especialmente mercancía*

conexión n. a physical or logical connection, not human connection

connection n.1) conexión, 2) (when referring to human connection) relación

conformar to be in agreement, but also to adapt

conform adaptar, pero no significa estar de acuerdo

conveniente adj. suitable, fitting, proper, useful, or advantageous

convenient adj. cómodo, práctico, útil, or accesible

convenir to be in one's interest; to be suitable

convene convocar

crudo adj. raw, cruel

crude adj. bruto, sin pulido

decente adj.1) honest, 2) decent

decent adj. decente; gentil; amable

decepción n. disappointment (verb form: decepcionar = to disappoint)

deception n. un engaño, un fraude

desgracia n. misfortune, mishap, accident, setback, bad luck

disgrace n. deshonra, ignominia

digno adj. worthy

dignified adj. distinguido

disco n. 1) disco, 2) disk, discus, traffic-light, or (audio) record

disco n. disco, discoteca, sala de baile

divisar to discern

devise *idear, inventar, hacer con imaginación*

editor adj. publishing;
n. publisher, editor

editor *n. editor, director, redactor*

elaborar to make, to manufacture

elaborate *entrar en más detalle*

excitar to excite sexually

excite *entusiasmar or provocar*

excusar to exempt; to excuse (rarely used)

excuse

firma n. 1) (commonly) a signature, 2) a firm

firm *adj. firme, sólido, duro, seguro;*
n. una firma or una empresa

forzoso adj. necessary, obligatory

forced *adj. involuntario, forzado*

fundir to melt, to smelt

found *establecer, fundar*

fútbol n. soccer

football *n. el fútbol americano*

grosería n. (only refers to) rudeness, crudeness, or vulgarity

grocery store *n. tienda de abarrotes/comestibles*

ignorar v. to not know, to be unaware of

ignore v. *no hacer caso de, desatender, or dejar a un lado*

informal adj. unreliable (person)

informal adj. *sin etiqueta o ceremonia*

joven adj. young (person)

juvenile adj. *inmaduro*

librería n. bookstore

library n. *biblioteca*

librero n. a bookseller or bookcase

library n. *una biblioteca*

macro n. picture, door or window frame

mark n. *mancha; señal or símbolo escrito; una característica sobresaliente*

minorista n. (Caribbean and South American) retail or retail seller

minority n. *la minoría;*
adj. *minoritario*

negocio n. a business, deal, or transaction

negotiation n. *una negociación*

oculto adj. 1) hidden, concealed, or secret, 2) occult

occult adj. *oculto or misterioso*

ordinario adj. 1) ordinary, common, coarse (in reference to a person);
2) fine or ok, as in answer to ¿Cómo estás?

ordinary *adj. normal or corriente*

pareja n. couple

pair *n. par*

patrón n. 1) a boss or owner; 2) a pattern or standard

patron *n. patrocinador or cliente*

pie n. foot.

pie *n. pastel*

pila n. small battery; basin

pile

plata n. silver; money

plate *n. lámina; plato*

presente n. current, present. There is no 'gift' meaning

present *n. presente. 'Gift' in Spanish is 'regalo'.*

procurar to try and to manage to do something (rarely means to procure)

procure *obtener, conseguir*

propio adj. one's own; also proper

proper *adj. apropiado*

red n. network

red n. the color rojo;
adj. rojo

ropa n. clothing

rope n. una cuerda or una sogá

suceder to happen or to follow, come next

succeed 1) tener éxito, triunfar; 2) suceder

trato n. treaty, contract, but also social treatment

treatment n. tratamiento

vaso n. a glass or tumbler

vase n. un florero or jarrón

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