

SER vs ESTAR

Information of SER vs ESTAR

Both **ser** and **estar** correspond to the English verb *to be*. They cannot be interchanged without producing a change in meaning or a grammatically incorrect sentence.

Ser is the basic verb *to be* in Spanish; **estar** is used only in special cases. It is therefore easier to list the special cases where **estar** is required – everything else is **ser**. The following illustrates the uses of **estar**.

ESTAR

1. *Location*

Estar is used to express where something or someone is.

Córdoba **está** en España
Silvia **está** en la universidad.

Córdoba is in Spain.
Silvia is at the university.

2. *Estar + ...ando*

Estar is used as the auxiliary verb in progressive constructions.

Estoy gastando una fortuna
Ellos **estaban** estudiando mucho.
Ella **estuvo** viajando por un año.

I am spending a fortune.
There were studying a lot.
She was traveling for a year.

3. *Incidental condition*

Estar is used to express how something or someone is at a particular time.

El gazpacho **está** muy rica.
Jorge **está** cansado.

The gazpacho is very good.
Jorge is tired.

Special Contrasts with SER and ESTAR

1. Some adjectives have one meaning when they are used with **ser** and a different meaning when they are used with **estar**. The following list illustrates some common examples. Notices that in every case **estar** + *adjective* refers to the state or condition someone or something happens to be in, while **ser** + *adjective* never does.

La bruja **es mala**.
The witch is wicked.

La bruja **está mala**.
The witch is sick.

La lección **es aburrida**.
The lesson is boring.

El estudiante **está aburrida**.
The student is bored.

Los aguacates **son verdes**.
Avacados are green.

Ese aguacate **está verde**.
That avocado is not ripe.

Lola **es lista**.
Lola is clever.

Tato **está listo**.
Tato is ready.

El camino **es seguro**.
The road is safe.

El chófer **está seguro**.
The driver is sure.

2. To express where an event happens, **ser** is used. **Estar** is used to express location.

El banquete **es** en el Hotel Imperial
The banquet is at the Imperial Hotel.

La comida **está** en la mesa.
Dinner is on the table.

El concierto **va a ser** aquí.
The concert is going to be here.

¿Dónde **está** la orquesta?
Where is the orchestra?

3. Both **ser** and **estar** can be used with adjectives that modify the subject, but the meaning is different depending on which verb is chosen. **Ser** is used to talk about characteristic qualities of the subject; **estar** is used to talk about incidental states or conditions.

El gazpacho **es bueno**.
Gazpacho is good.

Este gazpacho **está horrible**.
This gazpacho is horrible.

Las fiestas **son divertidas**.
Parties are fun.

Esta fiesta **está muy aburrida**.
This party is very boring.

AND NOW FOR THE PRACTICE

Traducción

*Traduce las siguientes oraciones usando el verbo **SER** o **ESTAR***

- 1. I am from the United States. _____
- 2. I am with Juan. _____
- 3. You are my friend. _____
- 4. He is handsome. _____
- 5. She is very interesting. _____
- 6. I am fine. I am not happy. _____
- 7. You all are American. _____
- 8. Today is Thursday. _____

- 9. Antonio is very smart. _____
- 10. The chairs are not in the kitchen. _____
- 11. Argentina is in South America. _____
- 12. Where are you all from? _____
- 13. Why are you all here? _____
- 14. We are in Mexico. _____
- 15. They are not my friends. _____
- 16. The tomatoes are green. _____
- 17. Jaime is mad. _____
- 18. Many boys are in the house. _____
- 19. Where are you? _____
- 20. I agree with my parents. _____

La Historia

Completa la historia usando el verbo **SER** o **ESTAR**

_____ las cinco de la tarde y Antonio y Fernando _____ conversando en un café de México. Antonio un muchacho inteligente y simpático _____ doctor y ahora _____ trabajando para el hospital de McFarland. Fernando _____ moreno, alto y muy guapo. Los chicos _____ muy buenos amigos. Antonio _____ de los Estados Unidos y Fernando _____ de México.

Palabras Problemáticas

Usa los verbos de **TIEMPO, VEZ, HORA, ESTAR DE ACUERDO, PONERSE DE ACUERDO** o **QUEDAR EN**

- 1. Por los regular voy a clases dos _____ al dia.
- 2. A _____ es muy difícil estudiar, cuando mi hermano está escuchando música con volumen alto (with high volumen)
- 3. Por lo visto ella no quiere estar aquí mucho _____.
- 4. ¿Qué _____ es?
- 5. Es _____ de cenar.
- 6. Los estudiantes _____ con las reglas de la maestra.
- 7. Enrique y Luis se _____ para hacer la tarea juntos.
- 8. Es _____ de ir a dormir.
- 9. Los dos hablan a la vez, y no podían _____.
- 10. _____ que esta vez vienes a las siete.