

# PART IV:

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## *Special Topics*

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# 23

## The Numbers

### ¿Cuánto sabe usted?

#### How Much Do You Know Already?



1. How do you say the number 156,001 in Spanish?
2. What does **noveno piso** mean in English?
3. How much is **un cuarto más una mitad**?
4. Change the cardinal number **diez** to an ordinal number.
5. How many **libras** are there in one **kilo**?

### Cardinal Numbers

#### Números cardinales

The cardinal numbers are generally used for counting or expressing quantity. From one to twenty, only the number **dieciséis** has a written accent:

|          |               |
|----------|---------------|
| 0 cero   | 11 once       |
| 1 uno    | 12 doce       |
| 2 dos    | 13 trece      |
| 3 tres   | 14 catorce    |
| 4 cuatro | 15 quince     |
| 5 cinco  | 16 dieciséis  |
| 6 seis   | 17 diecisiete |
| 7 siete  | 18 dieciocho  |
| 8 ocho   | 19 diecinueve |
| 9 nueve  | 20 veinte     |
| 10 diez  |               |



Twenty-one to twenty-nine are usually written as one word:

|                |                 |
|----------------|-----------------|
| 21 veintiuno   | 22 veintidós    |
| 23 veintitrés  | 24 veinticuatro |
| 25 veinticinco | 26 veintiséis   |
| 27 veintisiete | 28 veintiocho   |
| 29 veintinueve |                 |

The numbers 30 to 90 end in **-nta** whereas 200 to 900 end in **-ientos**:

|                     |                   |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| 30 treinta          | 200 doscientos    |
| 40 cuarenta         | 300 trescientos   |
| 50 cincuenta        | 400 cuatrocientos |
| 60 sesenta          | 500 quinientos    |
| 70 setenta          | 600 seiscientos   |
| 80 ochenta          | 700 setecientos   |
| 90 noventa          | 800 ochocientos   |
| 100 cien            | 900 novecientos   |
| 1.000 mil           |                   |
| 1.000.000 un millón |                   |

Note that **cien** becomes **ciento** before another number:

101 **ciento uno**, 102 **ciento dos** ... etc.

127 **ciento veintisiete**

145 **ciento cuarenta y cinco**

1,108 **mil novecientos ciento ocho**

2,000,103 **dos millones ciento tres**

Numbers from 21 to 29, as well as those from 16 to 19, can also be written as three separate words:

**veinte y uno, veinte y dos, veinte y tres**, etc.

**diez y seis, diez y siete, diez y ocho**, etc.

Numbers ending in **uno** are used in counting, and must agree in gender with the nouns they modify.

**No hay ochenta papeles sino ochenta y uno.**

*There aren't eighty papers, but eighty-one.*

**Compré dos plátanos y una pera.**

*I bought two bananas and one pear.*

**Necesitamos veintiuna sillas.**

*We need twenty-one chairs.*



**Uno** shortens to **un** before masculine nouns, and **una** shortens to **un** before nouns beginning with a stressed **a**:

**Un dólar**

*One dollar*

**Treinta y un libros**

*Thirty-one books*

**Un hada madrina**

*One fairy godmother*

Notice the accent mark on the word **veintiún**:

**Tiene veintiún años.**

*She's twenty-one.*

The hundreds must also agree in gender with the nouns they modify, even if they are separated by other numbers. Numbers agree in Spanish across the word **mil** as well:

542 women

**quinientas cuarenta y dos mujeres**

398 men

**trescientos noventa y ocho hombres**

760,000 people

**setecientas sesenta mil personas**

A period is used to separate numbers when writing thousands, millions, and so on. In Spanish, a comma is used as a decimal point:

300.000

**trescientos mil**

1.000.000

**un millón**

5.854.201

**cinco millones ochocientos cincuenta y cuatro mil  
doscientos uno**

\$6,25

**seis dólares veinticinco centavos**

**Un billón** is actually a trillion in English. **Mil millones** is a billion.

**Millón** is followed by **de** before a noun unless another number appears between **millón** and the following noun:

**Cinco millones de estrellas.**

*Five million stars.*

**Un millón de flores.**

*A million flowers.*

**Dos millones quinientos mil habitantes.**

*2,500,000 inhabitants.*

Don't forget that **un** and **una** are also indefinite articles in Spanish:

**Comió una hamburguesa y un perro caliente.**

*He ate a hamburger and a hot dog.*







## LA PRÁCTICA 1

Write these numbers and numerical phrases out in Spanish:

1. 671 girls seiscientos setenta y una niñas
2. 8 million children \_\_\_\_\_
3. \$8.50 \_\_\_\_\_
4. A trillion \_\_\_\_\_
5. 150 homes \_\_\_\_\_
6. 51 hats \_\_\_\_\_
7. One problem \_\_\_\_\_
8. 99, 100, and 101 \_\_\_\_\_
9. 11,110 \_\_\_\_\_
10. 21 eagles \_\_\_\_\_

## Ordinal Numbers

### Números ordinales

Ordinal numbers are used to indicate order or rank in a series. The most common ordinal numbers are *first* through *tenth*:

|      |         |
|------|---------|
| 1st  | primero |
| 2nd  | segundo |
| 3rd  | tercero |
| 4th  | cuarto  |
| 5th  | quinto  |
| 6th  | sexto   |
| 7th  | séptimo |
| 8th  | octavo  |
| 9th  | noveno  |
| 10th | décimo  |

As adjectives, ordinal numbers in Spanish generally appear before the noun, and must agree with the nouns they modify in gender and number. Notice how **primero** and **tercero** have shortened forms when they precede a noun in the masculine singular form:

**el primer asiento**  
**la primera semana**  
**los primeros niños**

*the first seat*  
*the first week*  
*the first children*



**el segundo piso**  
**la segunda calle**  
**el tercer día**  
**la tercera vez**

*the second floor*  
*the second street*  
*the third day*  
*the third time*

Ordinal numbers beyond 10th require memorization for 11th and 12th, but after that a pattern is established:

|      |                              |
|------|------------------------------|
| 11th | <b>undécimo</b>              |
| 12th | <b>duodécimo</b>             |
| 13th | <b>décimotercero</b>         |
| 14th | <b>décimocuarto</b> ... etc. |

Nevertheless, most Spanish speakers use cardinal numbers after the noun:

**Celebraron el año dieciséis de su aniversario.**  
*They celebrated their sixteenth anniversary.*

**Leeremos el capítulo veinte.**  
*We'll read the twentieth chapter.*

Two other ways to use ordinals in Spanish is after the names of kings and queens and when referring to a specific century. Be aware, however, that after **décimo**, the cardinal numbers are used instead:

**Enrique octavo**  
**el siglo séptimo**  
**Alfonso trece**  
**el siglo veinte**

*Henry the Eighth*  
*The seventh century*  
*Alfonso the Thirteenth*  
*The twentieth century*



## LA PRÁCTICA 2

Answer these questions in complete sentences using ordinal numbers:

1. ¿Cuál es el primer mes del año?

**El primer mes del año es enero.**

2. ¿Cuál es la sexta palabra en esta oración?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. ¿Qué capítulo esta leyendo Ud. ahora?

\_\_\_\_\_

4. ¿Cuál es el tercer día de la semana?

\_\_\_\_\_

5. ¿Quién era el rey de España antes de Alfonso XIII?

\_\_\_\_\_

### TIP

Both ordinal and cardinal numbers can be used as nouns in Spanish:

**Soy el séptimo.**

*I'm the seventh one.*

**Una es suficiente.**

*One is enough.*

**No vimos los primeros.**

*We didn't see the first ones.*

**Faltan cinco.**

*Five are missing.*



6. ¿En qué siglo estamos? \_\_\_\_\_
7. ¿Quién era el rey de Francia antes del Luis XIV? \_\_\_\_\_
8. ¿Cuál presidente de los E.E.U.U. fue George Washington? \_\_\_\_\_
9. ¿Cuál es el capítulo que sigue al primer capítulo? \_\_\_\_\_
10. ¿Qué fila precede a la novena fila? \_\_\_\_\_

## Mathematical Expressions

### Expresiones matemáticas

Fractions are given in Spanish as in English, using a cardinal number for the numerator and an ordinal number for the denominator. The only exceptions are  $\frac{1}{2}$  (**un medio**) and  $\frac{1}{3}$  (**un tercio**):

- $\frac{1}{4}$  **un cuarto**
- $\frac{3}{8}$  **tres octavos**
- $\frac{2}{3}$  **dos tercios**

Beyond one-tenth, the cardinal number adds the suffix **-avo(s)** to form the smaller fractions. Exceptions include one-hundredth (**un centésimo**) and one-thousandth (**un milésimo**):

- |                  |                              |
|------------------|------------------------------|
| one-thirteenth   | <b>un treceavo</b>           |
| four-nineteenths | <b>cuatro diecinueveavos</b> |
| three-twentieths | <b>tres veinteavos</b>       |
| two-hundredths   | <b>dos centésimos</b>        |

Mixed numbers have **y** between the whole number and the fraction. When nouns are added, they usually follow the cardinal number:

- |                       |                                 |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------|
| $5\frac{2}{3}$        | <b>cinco y dos tercios</b>      |
| $7\frac{1}{4}$ pounds | <b>siete libras y un cuarto</b> |
| $3\frac{1}{2}$ apples | <b>tres manzanas y media</b>    |

When referring to percentages in Spanish, a singular masculine article is generally placed before the number. *Percent* is **por ciento**:

**El veinticinco por ciento de la ciudad no tenía electricidad.**

*Twenty-five percent of the city did not have electrical power.*

**Recibimos el diez por ciento de descuento.**

*We received the twenty percent discount.*



Mathematical expressions include several groups of vocabulary:

• **Measurements**

|                |                       |
|----------------|-----------------------|
| el centímetro  | centimeter (0.39 in.) |
| el metro       | meter (3.38 ft.)      |
| el kilómetro   | kilometer (0.621 mi.) |
| el litro       | liter (1.75 pints)    |
| el gramo       | gram (0.0352 oz.)     |
| el kilo(gramo) | kilogram (2.20 lbs.)  |
| la tonelada    | ton                   |
| la libra       | pound                 |
| el grado       | degree                |
| la milla       | mile                  |
| la onza        | ounce                 |
| la pulgada     | inch                  |
| el pie         | foot                  |
| la yarda       | yard                  |
| la docena      | dozen                 |

• **Mathematical operations**

|                |             |
|----------------|-------------|
| sumar          | to add      |
| restar         | to subtract |
| multiplicar    | to multiply |
| dividir        | to divide   |
| porcentaje     | percentage  |
| la fracción    | fraction    |
| más            | plus        |
| menos          | minus       |
| por            | times       |
| dividido entre | divided by  |
| es igual a     | equals      |

**TIP**

Many mathematical words in Spanish are spelled the same in English:

**diagonal, horizontal, vertical, perpendicular, rectangular**

• **Geometry**

|                |          |
|----------------|----------|
| el alto        | height   |
| el largo       | length   |
| la distancia   | distance |
| el ancho       | width    |
| la altura      | height   |
| la profundidad | depth    |
| el peso        | weight   |
| el volumen     | volume   |
| la línea       | line     |
| el cuadrado    | square   |
| el triángulo   | triangle |



**el círculo**  
**el punto**

*circle*  
*point*

• **Numerical words and phrases**

|                  |                 |
|------------------|-----------------|
| <b>un par</b>    | <i>a pair</i>   |
| <b>doble</b>     | <i>double</i>   |
| <b>una vez</b>   | <i>once</i>     |
| <b>dos veces</b> | <i>twice</i>    |
| <b>sólo uno</b>  | <i>only one</i> |
| <b>ambos</b>     | <i>both</i>     |
| <b>varios</b>    | <i>several</i>  |
| <b>ninguno</b>   | <i>none</i>     |



**LA PRÁCTICA 3**

*Write these mathematical expressions in complete Spanish sentences:*

1.  $13 + 12 = 25$
2.  $\frac{1}{2} - \frac{1}{4} = \frac{1}{4}$
3. Three and a third pounds
4. 10 percent of the population
5.  $500 \div 25 = 20$
6. One fifteenth of everything
7.  $12 \times 10 = 120$
8. The length, width, and height
9. I have to add the percentages
10.  $6 \times 5 \div 3 + 6 - 10 \div 6 = 1$

**Trece más doce son veinticinco.**

*Now answer these mathematical questions in Spanish:*

11. ¿Cuántas onzas hay en dos libras?
12. ¿Cuántos gramos hay en un kilo?
13. ¿Cuánto es cien por diez?
14. ¿Cuántos huevos hay en dos docenas?
15. ¿Cuánto es mil dividido entre mil?

**Hay treinta y dos onzas.**