

PART ONE

Preliminaries

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Excerpt

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Introduction

Tell me and I'll forget.

Show me and I might remember.

Involve me and I'll understand.

(Chinese proverb)

Camino al español (first edition)

Camino al español was conceived originally as a language course that would take students with no previous knowledge to approximately the level required for university entrance in the UK. We also saw it as suitable for 'fast track' learning, for example, for university students or their equivalents who needed to establish the linguistic basis for advanced study of the language. In terms of the levels proposed in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), we felt confident that students who completed the course could achieve levels B1/B2. The carefully structured units provide opportunities to master the Spanish language by developing listening, speaking, reading and writing skills, and to gain an awareness of the varieties of Spanish across the world.

Camino al español (second edition)

The updated and expanded second edition of *Camino al español* reflects the increasing importance of Latin American countries, changes in technology and the availability of online materials. In our view, its expanded grammar, cultural awareness and authentic material content, along with additional advanced linguistic exercises, enable students to build a solid base to progress to higher CEFR levels and further their knowledge and experience of the language. The course is planned with the classroom in mind and its design reflects the need to make the learning process as stimulating and enjoyable as possible, but it can also be a useful teach-yourself course for highly motivated students who are unable to join a class.

As a team of past and present university teachers who have been working together for some time, we draw on practices associated with communicative approaches to language learning. Students are encouraged to use the language and participate actively in class from the outset. At the same time, due attention is given to academic rigour to provide the students with the ability to read and write with high levels of competency and accuracy. In short, balanced attention is paid to all four language skills (speaking, listening, reading and writing) because we see them as supportive of each other.

Our team comprises two native English speakers, one native Peninsular Spanish speaker and a native speaker of Latin American Spanish. The authentic materials we offer acknowledge the

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diversity of the Spanish-speaking world, while the inclusion of cultural notes introduces the students to some of its important people and places. We give specific guidance on the main differences in pronunciation and usage between Peninsular (Sp) and Latin American (LAm) Spanish, and the recordings which are an integral part of the course reflect this diversity.

The Structure of the Course

The course is divided into twenty-one units and a standard presentation has been used throughout. Typically, each unit focuses on one or more topics or functions, indicated in the unit's title and the specified learning aims. The activities have been devised to serve and support those topics and functions, and all features are intended to make the course student-friendly. There is a grammar section at the end of each unit, containing relevant grammar explanations in English, with cross-references within and between units. Moreover, the book has a student guide to grammatical terms, vocabulary lists, transcripts of listening comprehension passages and a key to self-corrected exercises. The instructions are in both English and Spanish for the first five units – thereafter in Spanish only, to promote the study of the language in context. Students should quickly become familiar with expressions and structures that appear regularly. Unlike other course books, *Camino al español* is a completely self-contained teaching resource, which does not depend on the students or teacher having to buy additional material.

Each unit comprises four sections:

Presentación y prácticas

Comprensión auditiva

Consolidación

Gramática.

The course may be used in a number of ways. Some teachers may prefer to begin each unit by working through the *Presentación y prácticas*, which introduce new structures and vocabulary in context, whilst others may prefer to start with the *Gramática*, which contains relevant grammar explanations for the functions presented in that unit. This flexibility allows teachers to adapt to the particular requirements of their group of students. **A sample exploitation of Unit 4 in the Teacher Guide (p. 18) shows how this can be achieved.** All activities have an introduction that explains the purpose of the exercise and provides a meaningful context to engage the students' interest in and motivation to complete each task. The activities are also a good source of authentic Spanish.

Presentación y prácticas

This section focuses on the functions outlined in the learning aims for each unit. It also serves to introduce new structures and vocabulary. The language elements have been carefully selected to be representative of the language used by native speakers in everyday situations. The careful grading and sequencing of the activities mean that students can use the target

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language from the outset. The use of inductive techniques involves the learner in the discovery of the way in which the language works from the very beginning. Many exercises are supported by audio material, and the emphasis is on communication.

Comprensión auditiva

This section provides more sustained audio activities that build on the new structures and vocabulary already learned. The students can work on the exercises individually and at their own pace; alternatively, the audio materials can be used in the classroom. All of the audio transcripts are provided as an aid to listening, to check the answers to the exercises and to practise pronunciation and intonation. A section featuring exercises and recordings to help pronunciation and intonation amongst the Reference Tools is a new feature in this second edition. The listening activities have been selected to represent the wider Spanish-speaking world in order to expose the students to a variety of accents and additional vocabulary.

Consolidación

This section contains mainly written activities to help the students to reinforce and expand structures and vocabulary encountered in the *Presentación y prácticas* section and to provide an opportunity to reflect on the progress made. The keys to many of the exercises are provided. There are also longer reading passages and writing activities, including some translation passages to foster advanced language learning skills.

Gramática

Grammatical explanations of the key grammar points covered in each unit are provided in English.

Cultural Awareness

The course aims to develop in the students a broad awareness of the cultural contexts in which Spanish is spoken and written, both in Spain and in the Spanish-speaking countries of Latin America, hence the numerous references to well-known personalities, cultural landmarks and relevant topics. The use of authentic and easily accessible reading and listening materials also helps students to appreciate the differences and similarities between their own culture and those found in the different countries of the Spanish-speaking world. In addition, students are urged to consult as much original Spanish material as possible from the outset – in newspapers, magazines and so on. Similarly, we recommend that students take advantage, wherever possible, of Spanish-language films, TV and radio programmes, and so on, to supplement their listening skills. News bulletins are a good starting point, particularly when supported by authentic newspaper material. Many such resources can be accessed online, and additional reliable web pages have been added for consultation through the course.

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Web Companion

A new feature of the second edition is the addition of a Web Companion, the aim of which is to facilitate online access to the audio files and to relevant expansion and consolidation activities and learning tools to complement the units.

The Role of the Teacher

The course has been designed for classroom use, promoting interaction between teacher and learner, and between learners, in pair and group work, with the teacher acting as facilitator and guide. The **Teacher Guide: Sample Unit** makes suggestions for the exploitation of the teaching materials, although the course has been structured to give teachers the flexibility to adapt the different sections to their own teaching styles and to the needs of their students. The units have been arranged sequentially, with each new unit introducing a new topic and building on the structures, tenses and vocabulary already learned; thus it is advisable to adhere to the specified order of the units.

The acquisition of a language is a cumulative process and it is the role of the teacher to ensure that new material is only introduced when students are confident with what they have already learned. It is, therefore, important that teachers carefully monitor the progress of the learners and give frequent feedback on their performance. It is also important to encourage students from the start to ask about meaning, pronunciation, spelling and so on in Spanish. Teachers should not expect perfect pronunciation from the start, but should use frequent words of encouragement to reassure students that they are being understood. It is important that learners feel confident in their pronunciation in order to remove any chance of embarrassment which may jeopardize their motivation and sense of achievement. Although *Camino al español* is ideal for fast-paced courses, the individual teacher can adapt the time spent on different units and sections to suit the particular requirements of the course and the students.

Because of the limitations and constrictions of the language classroom, an important role for the teacher is to provide a learning environment that encourages students to take an active part and be independent. *Camino al español* has been devised with this in mind, and along with the guidance provided in the **Teacher Guide: Sample Unit**, the **Learner Guide** offers students advice on how to develop their own language-learning skills, and Part Three: Reference Tools and Study Aids helps them in this.

Learner Guide

Welcome to *Camino al español*. You have chosen to learn a language that millions of people throughout the world use to communicate on a daily basis. Spoken in Spain, Latin America and countries as far apart and diverse as the Philippines, Morocco and the United States of America, Spanish is an official language in over twenty countries.

According to the Instituto Cervantes 2019 report (*El español: Una lengua viva*), 7.6 per cent of the world's population (580 million people) speak Spanish. Of these, 483 million are native speakers, which makes Spanish, after Mandarin Chinese, the world's second mother tongue and the third most used language on the internet, where it has great growth potential.

The diversity of the native speakers of Spanish means that there is not one 'Spanish', but many varieties. The unifying factors of the language, however, make it possible for Spanish speakers from all over the world to understand each other without difficulty. Spanish is the vehicle that connects them all. In *Camino al español* we present a variety of Spanish that is widely understood, while drawing attention to the principal differences between the main forms, broadly termed as Peninsular Spanish (*español*) and Latin American Spanish (*castellano*).

Spanish belongs to the Romance languages family, meaning it derives from Latin and shares similarities with related languages such as French, Italian and Portuguese. Arabic also had an important influence on the development of Spanish and provides a third of its vocabulary. Through the centuries, Celtic, Iberian, Visigoth, Greek and several indigenous languages of the Americas have contributed in various degrees to enrich the vocabulary base and the linguistic richness of the Spanish language as we know it today.

The sociopolitical importance of the Spanish language in today's world is marked by factors such as the fast-growing Spanish-speaking population in the USA (some 41 million), Spain's full participation in European democratic institutions after its emergence from a despotic dictatorship, and the huge economic potential of Latin America. All these factors make Spanish a particularly attractive prospect for students who wish to improve their employability.

Camino al español aims to provide beginners with a sound knowledge of the Spanish language and to lead them to more advanced levels of study if they wish. The course has been devised to enable students to communicate effectively with native speakers and to interact confidently in real-life situations.

We feel confident that from the very start this Learner Guide will help you in your studies because it is packed with information and practical tips. Make sure you come back to it for the extra help it can give as you progress through the course and your language skills become sharper.

LEARNER GUIDE

The Book as a Tool

If you have not done so already, please glance through the Introduction (p. 3), which will help to familiarise you with the format of each of the twenty-one units which make up Part Two of the book. The table below gives you a summary of the different sections for each unit.

Unit section	Purpose of section	Type of activities
<i>Presentación y prácticas</i>	Introduction of vocabulary and structures	Pair work; listening and reading comprehension
<i>Comprensión auditiva</i>	Exposure to more challenging listening material with a variety of accents	Listening comprehension; transcripts provided
<i>Consolidación</i>	Revision and consolidation	Writing, translating and grammar exercises; self-study exercises
<i>Gramática</i>	Clear explanations in English of language structures	Reflection and study

The gradual introduction of grammar has been carefully considered and structured to give students the best chance to progress steadily. To that effect, there are numerous cross-reference notes through the book, inviting students to further their understanding of specific grammar points if they so wish. The specific grammar points covered on any given unit are listed on the title page for each unit. Occasionally, a call to expand or revise a grammar point, if considered appropriate, can be found pointing to the *Gramática* section of that unit – for example, ‘See Unit 10’.

Other special features which you may find helpful are the solutions to selected exercises from the *Consolidación* section, the transcripts of the listening activities, a guide to grammatical terms, verb tables, Spanish–English and English–Spanish vocabulary lists, together with indexes of grammar, topics and functions. In the Web Companion you will gain access to the audio recordings, extra activities and much more. If you have access to the internet, find our online resources at www.cambridge.org/camino-al-espanol.

Key to Symbols Used in the Course to Identify the Different Types of Exercises and Notes



for listening activities. These are high-quality recordings selected to represent the wider Spanish-speaking world. You are advised to read the accompanying vocabulary boxes (see below) before listening to the audio passages. You can read and listen at the same time if the text is provided with the exercise; if not, it is recommended to listen a couple of times before reaching out for the transcripts at the end of Part Two.

KEY TO SYMBOLS USED IN THE COURSE



for speaking activities. These promote interaction between learners in pair or group work, to gain confidence speaking in Spanish. Check the How to Become an Active Learner section below.



for reading activities. These contain text passages that become longer and more complex towards the end of the course. There are often additional vocabulary boxes to facilitate comprehension. Likewise, the use of dictionaries is advisable, especially with authentic reading passages. Please refer to the Using a Dictionary section below.



for writing activities. To appeal to the learners' interest, these exercises are framed within meaningful contextual situations. These tasks can often be completed by modelling previous texts seen in the unit.



for the solutions. This identifies those self-corrected activities for which solutions are provided at the end of Part Two. Look for the unit and then the section and exercise number to check your own answers against the solutions.

NOTA CULTURAL*Español (*Spanish*) is

for Nota cultural. These boxes present brief but insightful notes, which aim to develop a broad awareness of the cultural contexts in which Spanish is spoken and written worldwide. They often contain references to relevant websites.

VOCABULARIO

mira

look

for Vocabulario. These boxes contain selected vocabulary that accompanies many of the activities, to aid students to complete them.

¡OJO! 

Género / Gender

for ¡Ojo! These boxes provide alerts to usage nuance, exceptions to the rules and other idiosyncrasies of the language.

EJEMPLO

Un hombre es abogado.

for Ejemplo. Most activities will include an example to aid with completion of the task.

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How to Become an Active Learner

In this Learner Guide you will find practical tips and strategies to help maximise your learning experience. As learners, we all absorb knowledge in different ways and at different paces, so pick and choose whichever tips you find useful to suit your own needs or preferences. While it is relatively easy to take full advantage of your strengths when learning a new language (for example, you may find it easier to remember things you have seen written down rather than things you have heard), it is important to build and reinforce the skills and practices that you find more challenging. *Camino al español* gives you the opportunity to practise all four language-learning skills, besides offering suggestions for additional materials to help you achieve a balanced competence in Spanish. The skills and knowledge underlying a good command of any language take time to acquire (an infant will need between two and three years to speak with a basic command of his or her native language), so be aware that progress will be gradual and maintain your motivation.

The more actively involved we become in our own learning, the more we get out of it. In the following sections you will find a series of suggestions to help you to set your own objectives and become an active and proficient learner.

Enliven your Motivation

Spanish is one of the best languages to learn for travel. Learning Spanish makes you more employable. It will keep your mind sharp. Think of the benefits that learning Spanish will bring you in the long term. You can travel the world and enhance your curriculum vitae, adding your language skills.

- Write them down. Be specific (e.g. I will be able to find my way around in a Spanish-speaking country; I will be able to answer phone calls from Spanish clients).
- Refer to the list for encouragement. You can add to it or alter it as appropriate.
- Keep handy an image of something or someone Spanish that you find inspiring and glance at it while you study or to encourage you to make time to study.

Manage your Time

- Identify a time in the week you can dedicate to revising your progress.
- Plan your routine and make it pleasant (e.g. play Spanish music, get a hot drink or snack, wear something related to the Spanish-speaking word).
- Record your progress in a log or diary and reflect every four or five weeks on how much you have learned. You could quiz or test yourself for fun with your vocabulary lists.

Build your Confidence

- Find someone to practise/revise with – another student would be ideal.
- Establish a language exchange with a native speaker who wants to learn your language, or perhaps a pen pal or friend over the Internet. Ask your teacher for help.