

Reference 3.2: “ser” vs. “estar”

“ser” vs. “estar”

The verbs “ser” and “estar” both mean “to be” in English. Since there are two ways to express this verb in the Spanish language, we have to think about which form to use before expressing what we need.

Since there are two ways to say “to be”, this means there are two ways to express each conjugation.

English	SER	ESTAR
• I am	1. Yo soy	1. Yo estoy
• You are	2. Tú eres	2. Tú estás
• You (formal) are	3. Usted es	3. Usted está
• He is	4. Él es	4. Él está
• She is	5. Ella es	5. Ella está
• We are	6. Nosotros somos	6. Nosotros estamos
• You all are	7. Vosotros sois	7. Vosotros estáis
• You all (formal) are	8. Ustedes son	8. Ustedes están
• They are	9. Ellos son	9. Ellos están

We use the verb “ser” for the following things:

1. When we are directly describing the noun itself.
2. Time
3. Date
4. Origin

We use the verb “estar” for the following things:

1. When we are describing the noun’s state of being, **not** the noun itself.
2. Condition
3. Location

los sentimientos- feelings

1. bien	1. well, fine	← adverb (does not agree in gender and number)
2. mal	2. badly	← adverb (does not agree in gender and number)
3. así-así	3. so-so	← adverb (does not agree in gender and number)
4. enfermo	4. sick	
5. triste	5. sad	
6. enojado, enfadado	6. mad	
7. seguro	7. sure	
8. listo	8. ready	
9. avergonzado	9. embarrassed	
10. contento, feliz	10. happy	
11. cansado	11. tired	