

Breakthrough Language Series

FURTHER SPANISH

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Contents

What this course is all about	4
How to work through a unit	5
1 Hoy por mí, mañana por tí	7
Planning and enjoying your leisure activities	
2 Coser y cantar	23
Talking about your daily routine	
3 Acá y allá	39
Travelling around Spain and Latin America	
4 Las fiestas donde quisieras	55
Festivals and holidays	
5 Beberás y vivirás	71
Eating and drinking – at home and in restaurants	
6 Una vez al año no hace daño	87
Health topics – how to keep fit at home and on holiday	
7 El día de la raza	103
Spanish language, proverbs and gestures	
8 Día de mucho, víspera de poco	119
Holidays: summer fun and winter sports	
9 Trabajar para la vejez discreción es	135
The world of work: finding and describing your job	
10 Poderoso caballero es don dinero	151
The consumer boom and new technology	
11 Más ruido que nueces	167
The media: newspapers and the radio	
12 El mundo da muchas vueltas	183
Current affairs	
Answers to exercises	199
Transcripts of radio programmes	214
Grammar list	221
Verb tables	222
Vocabulary Spanish–English/English–Spanish	228
Index	252

What this course is all about

Take your time to read through the next couple of pages, which explain the course to you. Understanding what is expected of you and how the course is built up will make learning easier.

Breakthrough Further Spanish is the result of listening to hundreds of people telling us what they want and how they learn. It's not a beginner's course – the emphasis is on 'further'. You should already be beyond the 'para mí un café solo' stage if you want to make the most of this course. It helps you to keep up your existing Spanish and puts you in situations where you can use your language for making real and useful contacts, getting to know the Spanish and their country better.

There is no specific progression, though we do advise you to start with Unit 1. The earlier units are generally easier, and vocabulary is built up gradually. Each unit has a carefully selected balance of the following:

- Interviews/eavesdropped conversations with ordinary Spanish people which carry key vocabulary/idioms and structures. They are recorded on location in Spain so you practise understanding the real language right from the start. To help you, there is a transcript in the book of each dialogue you'll hear on the cassette, plus essential vocabulary, explanatory notes and exercises directly associated with the text. Please note that you are not expected to switch on and understand immediately. Learning comes from a combination of listening – using pause and rewind buttons as many times as necessary – and studying the text.
- A list of key words and phrases follows the introductory dialogues and exercises. You can use this to check that you have mastered the most important elements before proceeding.
- Grammar is the cement of the language. It helps you to understand how Spanish works and in each unit we've included a short analysis of the items we think you'll find useful. But *Breakthrough Further Spanish* is not a grammar course. Understanding when you hear or read something and making yourself understood are more important than knowing all the troublesome intricacies, which Spaniards themselves often get wrong. Don't get bogged down here. If you find some of the points too fiddly, just move on.
- A short reading section comes next. It consists of two or more exercises based on authentic examples you might see in the streets of a Spanish town or read in Spanish brochures, papers and magazines.
- Radio comprehensions unique to this course then give you some extended listening practice. In co-operation with **Radio Nacional**, **Radiocadena** and **Cadena SER**, we have selected and edited parts of real radio programmes to give you some more genuine listening practice and to help you to extend your vocabulary further *if you wish*. You can approach these in different ways. More advanced learners might be able to listen in and complete the various listening exercises. On the other hand, you might need to go through them bit by bit, helped by the transcripts at the back of the book. It's up to you to select the approach which most suits your experience and your needs.
- A speaking section in which you can practise relating information to your own life concludes each unit. The tasks here are open-ended. That means there is no right or wrong answer, though we do give you some ideas on what to say, and on the cassette you'll find a model version spoken by our two actors, Pepe Rivarola and Eloísa Fernández.

At the end of the book is a comprehensive vocabulary (both Spanish–English and English–Spanish). This contains all the words in the course apart from the most basic ones, like **él**, **ella**, **uno**, **dos** etc. or obvious ones such as **posible**, **probable** etc. where the spelling and meaning are much the same as in English.

How to work through a unit

1 Study guide

At the beginning of each unit is a grid which shows you on what page the individual sections appear. Use this as a check-list to cross off the tasks you have completed.

2 Diálogos Dialogues

In each unit four dialogues recorded on location in Spain introduce the new language material, covering different aspects of the unit theme. You are not expected to understand each dialogue first time. Just listen, then rewind and, using your pause button, study line by line and read the vocabulary and the notes. Key phrases are marked ♣ and you should try to remember them, as you'll practise them in the exercises. When you think you've mastered a dialogue, rewind to the beginning and, without using your book, listen again right through, to see if you've really understood. Zero your tape counter at the beginning of each new cassette side and note the numbers for each dialogue in the as you go along.

3 Trabajos prácticos Exercises

There are three exercises linked to each dialogue. The first two practise listening comprehension and vocabulary reinforcement; the last one gives you an opportunity to speak. In most speaking exercises in this section, you're given a prompt in English by our presenter, Susan Comb. Stop the tape, say your part aloud in Spanish, then start the tape again and listen to the correct version which will be given by either Pepe or Eloísa. You will probably need to go over the speaking exercises a few times until you are familiar with the pattern. Before you start speaking, read the instruction to each exercise in your book.

4 Giros importantes Key phrases

This is a list of the most important words and phrases from all four dialogues which were marked ♣ in the notes. Try to learn this page by heart.

5 Gramática Grammar

As this is not a grammar course, the selections and explanations on these two pages are not exhaustive, we are just highlighting some of the key elements in the Spanish language. Skip this section if you really don't like grammar, but give it a try first. The grammar section is interspersed with short exercises, so that you can test yourself.

6 Lectura Reading

This section is based on passages taken from original Spanish brochures, newspapers or magazines. Some of it might appear quite difficult at first, but we have included some extra vocabulary to help you to understand the extracts. Make sure you've really understood the gist of each passage before doing the exercise linked with it.

7 Radio Radio

These authentic excerpts from Spanish radio are, of course, spoken at normal speed. The first time you hear them you may not understand very much at all. But this is a useful way of sharpening your listening skills. If you persevere you will find that, by the time you get to the later units, you will be able to tune in to real Spanish much more easily. Included as part of this section are a vocabulary and some listening tasks, often general questions to be answered. Working on these will help you to understand what is said.

There is also a transcript of the recordings (see p. 214). Depending on how difficult you find the excerpts, you can use the transcripts in different ways. If you do understand fairly easily, then it is probably best not to look at the transcripts until after you have done the exercises. To make it easier you could, however, read the transcripts through before listening, and/or listen and read at the same time. You will have to decide what suits you best.

8 Te toca a tí hablar Open-ended speaking exercises

The last section in each unit gives you the opportunity to speak again, but much more freely than in the exercises linked to the dialogues. You can adapt the exercise to your own situation. We'll only give you some guidelines or phrases to use with the instruction to each exercise in your book. On the cassette Pepe or Eloisa will speak a model version for you, but your version can be quite different without being wrong.

Making the most of this course

- There is a lot of material, so decide what you want most from the course and allocate your time between the sections accordingly.
- We've tried to make the course as interesting and enjoyable as possible, but language learning is not easy. So be patient, and above all don't get angry with yourself if you feel you're progressing too slowly.
- Have confidence. Real language is complex and you won't understand everything first time. Treat it as a challenge and build up your knowledge slowly, selecting what is important at each stage.
- Try to study regularly but in short periods. Thirty minutes a day is usually better than a block of three and a half hours per week.
- It helps to articulate, to speak the words out loud. This may seem strange at first, but actually using the words, to yourself or with a friend, is a good way of practising and remembering.
- Don't be afraid to write in the book and make your own notes. With most exercises which need writing or filling in, we've provided the necessary space, but if there isn't enough room, just use an extra bit of paper or, better still, have your own special course exercise book for these tasks and for extended notes.

Symbols and abbreviations

If your cassette recorder has a counter, set it to zero at the start of each unit and then write the number that marks the beginning of each dialogue in the box. This will help you to find the right place on the tape quickly when you want to rewind.

◆ This indicates a key word or phrase in the dialogues.



This marks the speaking exercises in the dialogue section and the open-ended speaking exercises at the end of each unit.

<i>m.</i> masculine	<i>pl.</i> plural
<i>f.</i> feminine	<i>lit.</i> literally
<i>sing.</i> singular	<i>coll.</i> colloquial