

LESSON NOTES

Absolute Beginner S3 #4 Meeting New Friends in Mexico

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INFORMAL SPANISH

1. JORGE: ¿Cómo te llamas?
2. ASHLEY: Me llamo Ashley, ¿y tú?
3. JORGE: Yo me llamo Jorge.
4. ASHLEY: Encantada.
5. JORGE: Encantado.

ENGLISH

1. JORGE: What is your name?
2. ASHLEY: My name is Ashley, and you?
3. JORGE: My name is Jorge.
4. ASHLEY: I'm delighted to meet you.
5. JORGE: I'm delighted to meet you, too.

VOCABULARY

Spanish	English	Class	Gender
me llamo	I am called, my name is		
encantado	enchanted, delighted	adjective	masculine
yo	I	personal pronoun	

llamarse	to be called	verb
cómo	how	interrogative adverb, exclamation, masc. noun
te llamas	you are called	reflexive verb

SAMPLE SENTENCES

Me llamo Maria López. "My name is Maria López."	Encantado de conocerte. "Nice to meet you."
Estoy encantado de ir a la playa. "I'm delighted to go to the beach."	Yo hablo español. "I speak Spanish."
¿Cómo te llamas? "What's your name?"	¿Cómo se dice? "How do you say it?"
Tú te llamas María. "You are called María."	

VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

¿Cómo?

When said alone *¿Cómo?* means "How?" and you can use it to ask for additional details or to express surprise about something.

llamarse

The verb *llamar* ("to call") is transformed into "to be called" when you add the ending *-se*, which makes it a reflexive verb. It works the same way as *peinarse* ("to brush one's hair") or *bañarse* ("to take a shower"), which are other activities performed onto oneself as an object.

¿Y tú?

We use *¿Y tú?* ("And you?") in many cases to inquire about something about the other person, much like in English. For example, you may say, *estoy bien, y tu?* which means "I am OK, and you?" If using formal Spanish, one must say *¿Y usted?* to convey respect.

Encantado(a)

Encantado(a) literally means "delighted" or "enchanted." In Mexico, we only use it when we truly like someone, and we can say it to either a man or a woman. We use it most often in formal situations. If the speaker is a man, he says *encantado*, and if the speaker is a woman, she says *encantada*, regardless of the gender of the person he or she is speaking to. This expression is slightly more feminine than *mucho gusto*, but it is more formal. In very casual situations, we can say *un gusto* or *chido* ("cool").

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson Is Learning the Correct Usage of *¿Cómo Te Llamas?*

Me llamo Ashley. ¿Y tú? Yo me llamo Jorge.

"My name is Ashley, and you? My name is Jorge."

¿Cómo te llamas? which literally means "How are you called?" is a standard expression that we use to open a conversation with someone new whom we wish to relate to. We use it in the same way whether we're addressing men or women, but we must change it when we use it in the plural to *¿cómo se llaman?* ("What are your names?") Alternatively, one can say *¿cuál es tu nombre?*, which literally means "What is your name?"

We can use *Me llamo* ("I am called") alternatively with *soy* ("I am"), but we use it more specifically to say one's name, whereas we can use *soy* to express a profession, as in *soy arquitecto* ("I'm an architect"). It is not necessary to say *yo me llamo* since the article *yo* ("I") is already implied in the conjugation of the reflexive verb *me llamo*, but you can use it to emphasize *me*.

The correct use of reflexive verbs in Spanish is not easy, as it has no exact parallel in English. *Llamarse* ("to be called") becomes *te llamas* ("you are called") or *me llamo* ("I am called"). As you can see, the termination of the verb (*llamar*) changes in relation to its object. In English, this doesn't happen: in all cases ("I am called," "you are called," "he is called," etc.), the verb remains the same. See the following table:

Article (Optional)	Reflexive Pronoun	Verb	Predicate
yo (first person, singular)	<i>me</i>	<i>llamo</i>	<i>Juan</i>
tú (second person, singular)	<i>te</i>	<i>llamas</i>	<i>Teresa</i>
él/ella (third person, singular)	<i>se</i>	<i>llama</i>	<i>Jose</i>

To make it into a question, all you need to do is add *cómo* at the beginning: *¿cómo te llamas?* Or, if you suddenly lost your memory in a car crash, you might ask: *¿cómo me llamo?* ("What is my name?")

Now, let's review the use of *encantado* and *encantada*. We may remember from our first lesson that there are **gender-sensitive words**. For masculine nouns, the standard ending of adjectives is *-o*, and for feminine, it is *-a*. See the list below:

Masculine	Feminine
<i>encantado</i> ("delighted")	<i>encantada</i> ("delighted")
<i>contento</i> ("happy")	<i>contenta</i> ("happy")
<i>guapo</i> ("handsome")	<i>guapa</i> ("pretty")

Answering the Question

Sometimes when we are asked a question, it is really the entry point for a conversation. If we respond to the question with just a literal answer, we may end the conversation abruptly. But sometimes it's not easy to come up with another topic. For those cases, a common question back is "How about you?" (*¿tú qué tal?*) or simply "And you?" (*y tú?*)

For Example:

1. *Soy Ashley, ¿y tú?*
"I'm Ashley, and you?"
2. *Tengo hambre, ¿y tú?*
"I'm hungry, and you?"

In a formal situation *¿y tú?* changes to *¿y usted?* And when addressing two or more people, say *¿y ustedes?*

For Example:

1. *Soy Ashley, ¿y usted?*
"I am Ashley, and you?" (formal)
2. *Tengo hambre, ¿y ustedes?*
"I'm hungry, and you?" (plural)

CULTURAL INSIGHT

***¿Cómo te llamas?* Means More Than You Might Think**

¿Cómo te llamas? is a standard expression many people use when opening a conversation with someone new, although some people prefer not to use it because they consider it too direct. Those people believe it's often better to start a dialogue by jumping right into the subject matter and then determining whether you really have a common interest with the other person; this is better than assuming you have a common interest from the beginning. In Mexico, once you decide to start a relationship, it is often hard to pull back; people tend to be very open and friendly from the beginning and often show little reservation even about private affairs. Yes, Mexico tends to be a more community-oriented culture than the United States, for example, but not everyone is equally received in every circle. Status has become an increasingly important concern in recent years, and some people will mingle only with those they see as equals. Such preferences are not readily accepted in Mexico, and people will try to pretend that they are nice to everybody; deep down, though, you'll know that you won't be getting any *¿cómo te llamas?* unless they truly want to invite you into their group.