

LESSON TRANSCRIPT

Absolute Beginner S3 #6

Asking Where Something Is in Mexico

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INTRODUCTION

Alisha: Hi everybody, this is Alisha.

Fernando: Hola amigos, soy Fernando. Hi everyone! I'm Fernando.

Alisha: Welcome to Absolute Beginner Season 3, Lesson 6 – Asking Where Something Is in Mexico. In this lesson, you'll learn how to ask for directions using polite Spanish. In other words, what to say when you want to find, for example, a restroom or the exit.

Fernando: This conversation takes place at an airport.

Alisha: And it is between newly arrived Spanish student, Ashley, and the attendant at the airport, a young man.

Fernando: Lets listen to the conversation.

LESSON CONVERSATION

Ashley: Disculpe joven, ¿dónde está el baño?

Attendant: El baño está a la derecha.

Ashley: Gracias. ¿Y dónde está la salida?

Attendant: La salida está a la izquierda.

Ashley: Gracias.

Alisha: Let's hear the conversation one time slowly.

Ashley: Disculpe joven, ¿dónde está el baño?

Attendant: El baño está a la derecha.

Ashley: Gracias. ¿Y dónde está la salida?

Attendant: La salida está a la izquierda.

Ashley: Gracias.

Alisha: Now let's hear it with the English translation.

Ashley: Disculpe joven, ¿dónde está el baño?

Alisha: Excuse me, young man, where is the restroom?

Attendant: El baño está a la derecha.

Alisha: The restroom is on your right.

Ashley: Gracias. ¿Y dónde está la salida?

Alisha: Thank you. And where is the exit?

Attendant: La salida está a la izquierda.

Alisha: The exit is on the left.

Ashley: Gracias.

Alisha: Thank you.

POST CONVERSATION BANTER

Alisha: Okay Fernando, so in the dialogue, Ashley used a certain word to address the attendant which is kind of interesting.

Fernando: Oh, right. She called him joven.

Alisha: Tell us more about that word.

Fernando: Well, in Mexico, no matter who you're speaking to, it's important to be polite. So the terms "joven" or "señorita" are used when addressing those who are working, like clerks or attendants. Literally, they mean "young man" and "young lady", but the person does not necessarily have to be young.

Alisha: Say them one more time?

Fernando: Joven, which is "young man", and señorita, which is "young lady".

Alisha: But Fernando... what if the attendant is older than you?

Fernando: In some cases, you can still use "joven" or señorita.

Alisha: Hmm, well that makes it easy!

Fernando: Right?

Alisha: Okay, so now let's get started with our vocabulary review.

VOCAB LIST

Alisha: Let's take a look at the vocabulary for this lesson.

The first word we'll see is:

Fernando: Disculpe. [natural native speed]

Alisha: Excuse me.

Fernando: Disculpe. [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Fernando: Disculpe. [natural native speed]

Next:

Fernando: joven [natural native speed]

Alisha: young man

Fernando: joven [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Fernando: joven [natural native speed]

Next:

Fernando: dónde [natural native speed]

Alisha: where

Fernando: dónde [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Fernando: dónde [natural native speed]

Next:

Fernando: baño [natural native

speed]

Alisha: restroom, toilet

Fernando: baño [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Fernando: baño [natural native speed]

Next:

Fernando: derecha [natural native speed]

Alisha: right

Fernando: derecha [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Fernando: derecha [natural native speed]

Next:

Fernando: salida [natural native speed]

Alisha: exit

Fernando: salida [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Fernando: salida [natural native speed]

Next:

Fernando: izquierda [natural native speed]

Alisha: left

Fernando: izquierda [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Fernando: izquierda [natural native speed]

KEY VOCABULARY AND PHRASES

Alisha: Let's have a closer look at the usage for some of the words and phrases from this lesson.

Fernando: The first word/phrase we'll look at is.... disculpe

Alisha: This is a common opener when asking something to someone we don't know, or when we have accidentally done something wrong. It essentially means "Excuse me." Can you give us an example?

Fernando: Sure. If you're in the subway and accidentally step on someone's foot, you say "disculpe" or "disculpe usted" for extra formality.

Alisha: And when you don't need to be formal?

Fernando: Then you say disculpa, or discúlpame. It could be to a friend, or to someone you don't need to use formal Spanish with.

Alisha: Okay, Fernando, let's look at the phrases for "to the left" and "to the right".

Fernando: Sounds good. They are – a la izquierda

Alisha: to the

left

Fernando: and a la derecha

Alisha: to the right

Fernando: These are basically word for word. a means “to”, and la means “the”. And then we have izquierda which means “left”, or derecha which means “right”. These are both feminine words, so they take la.

Alisha: We saw both words in the dialogue, right?

Fernando: Right, when the attendant was asked about the restroom, he said “a la derecha”. “To the right”. When asked about the exit, he said “a la izquierda”. “To the left”.

Alisha: Great! And with that, let’s move onto the grammar point.

LESSON FOCUS

Alisha: In this lesson, you’ll learn how to ask where something is.

Fernando: Yes, you’ll learn how to use *Dónde*, which means “where”.

Alisha: You can use this word in a variety of ways - asking where this is, where that is, where are you going, and so on.

Fernando: But here in this lesson we will focus only on how to ask where something is

Alisha: Fernando, what’s the sentence pattern for asking where something is?

Fernando: It’s very easy - ¿Dónde está, and then what you’re looking for

Alisha: So in the dialogue, Ashley asked the attendant where the restroom was, and she said...

Fernando: ¿“dónde está el baño”?

Alisha: A very crucial question! Can you break it down?

Fernando: Sure. “dónde está” means “where is”, *el* is the direct article “the”, and *baño* is “restroom”, or “toilet”.

Alisha: Can we hear it one more time?

Fernando: ¿“dónde está el baño”?

Alisha: Okay everyone, please repeat after Fernando.

Fernando: ¿“dónde está el baño”? [pause]

Alisha: All right, in a second question, Ashley asks about the exit and she says....

Fernando: ¿dónde está la salida?

Alisha: Again, the same thing, except substituting the word for “restroom” with the word for “exit”.

Fernando: Yes, and also *salida*, or “exit”, is a feminine noun, so we have “la” instead of

“el”.

Alisha: Can we hear it one more time?

Fernando: ¿“dónde está la salida”?

Alisha: Okay everyone, please repeat after Fernando.

Fernando: ¿“dónde está la salida”? [pause]

Alisha: Sounds good! Now you're ready to ask where things are!

For practice, let's look at one more example.

Fernando: Sure. The movie theater - ¿Dónde está el cine?

Alisha: Please repeat.

Fernando: ¿Dónde está el cine? [pause]

Alisha: Great. So now let's review the answers to these questions. When Ashley asks about the restroom, what does she hear?

Fernando: The attendant says El baño está a la derecha.

Alisha: And when Ashley asks about the exit, what does she hear?

Fernando: La salida esta a la izquierda.

Alisha: If you notice, he answers using the same verb used by Ashley.

Fernando: Right, the verb “estar”. It is conjugated as “está” in these sentences.

So, “place”, followed by “está”, and then “to the left”, or “to the right”.

Alisha: Okay, well, I think that's going to do it for this lesson. Don't forget, listeners, that you can always go back and review the lesson notes for extra information.

Fernando: Yes, please be sure to check those out.

Alisha: Until next time!

Fernando: Hasta pronto!