

LESSON NOTES

Absolute Beginner S3 #10 Talking About Yourself in Mexico

CONTENTS

- 2 Informal Spanish
- 2 English
- 2 Vocabulary
- 3 Sample Sentences
- 4 Vocabulary Phrase Usage
- 5 Grammar
- 7 Cultural Insight

10

INFORMAL SPANISH

1. ASHLEY: ¿En dónde vives?
2. JORGE: Vivo en la Colonia Roma.
3. ASHLEY: ¿Y en qué trabajas?
4. JORGE: Trabajo en una empresa, ¿y tú?
5. ASHLEY: Yo soy estudiante.

ENGLISH

1. ASHLEY: Where do you live?
2. JORGE: I live in Colonia Roma.
3. ASHLEY: And what do you do for living?
4. JORGE: I work in a company, what about you?
5. ASHLEY: I'm a student.

VOCABULARY

Spanish	English	Class	Gender
trabajar	to work	verb	
qué	what	adjective, pronoun, adverb	

estudiante	student	noun	masculine+feminine (common)
colonia	neighborhood, ward	noun	feminine
dónde	where	adverb, interrogative adverb	
en	in	preposition	
y	and	coordinating conjunction	
vives	you live	verb	n/a
empresa	company, firm	noun	feminine
ser	to be	verb	

SAMPLE SENTENCES

Ella trabaja en una cafetería. "She works in a coffee shop."	¿Qué tienes? "What do you have?"
Mi hermana es una estudiante de secundaria. "My sister is a high-school student."	Él es un estudiante de medicina, pero él no presume mucho sobre eso. "He is a medical student, but he doesn't make a big deal out of it."
Esta es mi colonia. "This is my neighborhood."	¿A dónde irás mañana en la noche? "Where are you going tomorrow night?"

<p>¿De dónde es ella?</p> <p>"Where is she from?"</p>	<p>Las fotos están escondidas en el escritorio.</p> <p>"The pictures are hidden in the desk."</p>
<p>Tú y yo somos amigos.</p> <p>"You and I are friends."</p>	<p>¿Dónde vives?</p> <p>"Where do you live?"</p>
<p>Acabo de alargar mi contrato porque me gusta esta empresa y me gustaría seguir trabajando aquí.</p> <p>"I've just lengthened my contract because I like this company; I would like to keep working here."</p>	<p>La empresa quiere expandirse a otros países del continente.</p> <p>"The company wants to expand to other countries."</p>
<p>Soy de los Estados Unidos.</p> <p>"I am from the United States."</p>	

VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

trabajar

Trabajar is an *ar-* verb meaning "to work." It normally means that you earn a living by doing something, either at a work place or independently. Among young people, a common question is *¿estudias o trabajas?* ("Do you work or do you study?") Among more mature people, the question becomes *¿A qué te dedicas?* ("What do you do for a living?")

Soy estudiante

In *soy estudiante*, *ser* ("to be") is conjugated in the first person to mean "I am." *Estudiante* ("student") is someone who has matriculated in an institution full time, normally a university student. *Los estudiantes* ("the students") as a group is a category that enjoys high esteem in Mexico, as those who carry the future in their arms, even though they are also

politically restless.

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson Is to Teach You the Use of the Interrogative Adverb *¿Dónde?* ("Where?")

¿En dónde vives? Vivo en la Colonia Roma.

"Where do you live? I live in Colonia Roma."

Asking where someone lives differs from asking where something is. Here you must use the verb in question to get the reaction to what you are seeking. For instance, *¿en dónde vives?* ("Where do you live?") is a question that follows the preposition + interrogative adverb + verb structure. In the same way, other verbs and other prepositions may be introduced.

For Example:

1. *¿en qué trabajas?*
"Where do you work?"
2. *¿en dónde estás?*
"Where are you?"

Preposition	Interrogative Adverb	Verb	Direct Object
<i>en</i> ("in")	<i>dónde</i> ("where")	<i>vives*</i> ("lives")	<i>(tú)</i> ("you")
<i>en</i> ("in")	<i>dónde</i> ("where")	<i>trabaja*</i> ("works")	<i>ella</i> ("she")
<i>por</i> ("around")	<i>dónde</i> ("where")	<i>vive*</i> ("lives")	<i>él</i> ("he")
<i>por</i> ("around")	<i>dónde</i> ("where")	<i>trabajo*</i> ("work")	<i>(yo)</i> ("I")

* The prepositions *en* and *por* are interchangeable, regardless of the verb you are using (*vivir*, *trabajar*, etc.) When answering these questions, you must begin with the verb or the direct object, following the structure subject + verb + preposition + direct object. It is important to note that in all sentences, the verb conjugation must match the person in reference. Also, you may omit the subject when it is obvious.

For Example:

Subject	Verb	Preposition	Direct Object
(yo)	<i>vivo</i>	<i>en</i>	<i>México</i>
(tú)	<i>vives</i>	<i>en</i>	<i>la Colonia Roma</i>
(él/ella)	<i>vive</i>	<i>en</i>	<i>Estados Unidos</i>
<i>usted</i> (formal)	<i>vive</i>	<i>en</i>	<i>la Condesa</i>

Subject	Verb	Preposition	Direct Object
(yo)	<i>trabajo</i>	<i>en</i>	<i>una empresa</i> ("a firm")
(tú)	<i>trabajas</i>	<i>en</i>	<i>una tienda</i> ("a store")
(él/ella)	<i>trabaja</i>	<i>en</i>	<i>la central</i> ("the bus terminal")
<i>usted</i> (formal)	<i>trabaja</i>	<i>en</i>	<i>el Centro</i> ("downtown")

En and *por* are prepositions meaning "in" and "around," which you can use alternatively depending on the degree of accuracy required in the question. It is also worthwhile noting that *una tienda* ("a store") or *una empresa* ("a firm") are direct objects that include the indefinite article *un/una*, meaning that it is not any specific store or firm. You can use this form whenever you want to keep the conversation general, without giving any specifics.

For Example:

1. *¿En dónde trabajas?*
"Where do you work?"

2. *¿Por dónde vives?*
"Whereabouts do you live?"

Examples from This Dialogue

1. *¿En dónde vives?*
"Where do you live?"

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Thinking on Your Feet in Mexico

If you want to reject someone politely, it's better to do it right off from the start, because Mexican people are good at squeezing themselves into conversation without you knowing, and once you open up a little, it is really difficult to shut the door back again. So, make up your mind quickly. Mexicans also tend to be quite sensitive, and if they feel judged at the beginning, there is a chance they won't open up as much again later on. A good rule of thumb is to be emotionally flat with strangers until you are sure you can trust them, and then begin to open little by little (not all of a sudden).