

LESSON NOTES

Absolute Beginner S3

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INFORMAL SPANISH

1. MARÍA: Ashley, ¿qué horas son?
2. ASHLEY: Son las ocho y media.
3. MARÍA: ¿Y a qué hora cierran la tienda?
4. ASHLEY: A las nueve.

ENGLISH

1. MARÍA: Ashley, what time is it?
2. ASHLEY: It's half past eight.
3. MARÍA: And what time does the store close?
4. ASHLEY: At nine o'clock.

VOCABULARY

Spanish	English	Class	Gender
media	half	adjective	
cerrar	to close	verb	
ocho	eight	numeral	masculine
hora	hour, time	noun	feminine
qué	what	interrogative adverb, adjective	
a	to, at	preposition	

ser	to be (permanent characteristics)	verb	
tienda	store	noun	feminine
nueve	nine	numeral	masculine

SAMPLE SENTENCES

<p>Me como media naranja. "I eat half an orange."</p>	<p>¡La tienda cierra a las 8 de la noche todos los días, así que mejor vamos ahora mismo! "The store closes at 8 PM every day, so we'd better go right now!"</p>
<p>La tienda cierra a las seis de la tarde. "The store closes at six in the afternoon."</p>	<p>Dormimos ocho horas anoche. "We slept for eight hours last night."</p>
<p>¿Me puedes recoger a las ocho? "Can you pick me up at eight?"</p>	<p>¿A qué hora hemos quedado? "What time have we agreed to meet?"</p>
<p>Hemos llegado en buena hora. "We've arrived at a good time."</p>	<p>¿Qué es esto? "What is this?"</p>
<p>¡Vamos a la playa! "Let's go to the beach!"</p>	<p>¿Eres de los Estados Unidos? "Are you from the United States?"</p>

El turista compró una camiseta en la tienda. "The tourist bought a shirt at the store."	Trabajo desde las nueve hasta las cinco. "I work from nine to five."
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¿Tienes nueve hermanos? ¡Qué pasada!

"You have nine siblings? Holy cow!"

VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

horas ("hours")

In Spanish, *horas* refers to "time," as in *es hora de dormir* ("it's time to sleep"), *es hora de comer* ("it's time to eat"), etc. It also means literally "hours," such as *¿cuántas horas tarda?* ("How many hours does it take?") The most common phrase is "What time is it?": *¿qué horas son?* or *¿qué hora es?* (use interchangeably).

tienda

Tienda is a "shop" or an "establishment where goods are sold." It may be a department store or a brand shop. We do not use this word for "supermarkets" (*supermercado*) or "restaurants" (*restaurante*), but we use it for stores where food staples and consumer goods are sold, also often called *tiendita* ("small shop").

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson Is to Learn How to Ask and Say the Time Using *a qué hora(s)* and *son las...*

¿Qué horas son? Son las ocho y media.

"What time is it? It's half past eight."

The correct use of articles in Spanish denotes mastery of the language. If one learns words

from the beginning knowing what gender they belong to, then it's easy. Here are some examples: *¿A qué hora...? + verb*

Asking the Time

Question	Verb	Direct Object	"English"
<i>¿Qué horas</i>	<i>son?</i>		"What time is it?"
<i>¿Qué hora</i>	<i>es?</i>		"What time is it?"
<i>¿A qué hora</i>	<i>vas</i>	<i>al parque?</i>	"At what time do you go to the park?"
<i>¿A qué hora</i>	<i>cierran</i>	<i>la tienda?</i>	"At what time do they close the store?"
<i>¿A qué hora</i>	<i>comes?</i>		"At what time do you have lunch?"

Saying the Time

Verb	Time	Complement	"English"
<i>Es</i>	<i>la una.</i>		"It's one o'clock."
<i>Es</i>	<i>la una</i>	<i>de la tarde.</i>	"It's one in the afternoon."
<i>Es</i>	<i>la una</i>	<i>p.m. [pe eme]</i>	"It's one p.m."
<i>Son</i>	<i>las trece</i>	<i>horas</i>	"It's thirteen hundred hours."
<i>Es</i>	<i>la una</i>	<i>de la mañana.</i>	"It's one in the morning."
<i>Es</i>	<i>la una</i>	<i>a.m. [a eme]</i>	"It's one a.m."
<i>Son</i>	<i>las ocho.</i>		"It's eight o'clock."

<i>Son</i>	<i>las ocho</i>	<i>de la mañana.</i>	"It's eight in the morning."
<i>Son</i>	<i>las ocho</i>	<i>a.m. [a eme]</i>	"It's eight a.m."
<i>Son</i>	<i>las ocho</i>	<i>horas.</i>	"It's eight hundred hours."
<i>Son</i>	<i>las veinte</i>	<i>horas.</i>	"It's twenty hundred hours."
<i>Son</i>	<i>las ocho</i>	<i>de la noche.</i>	"It's eight in the evening."
<i>Son</i>	<i>las ocho</i>	<i>p.m. [pe eme]</i>	"It's eight p.m."

There are many ways to say the time in Spanish: *la una* ("one o'clock"), *la una de la tarde* ("one in the afternoon"), *la una p.m.* ("one p.m."), *las trece horas* ("thirteen hundred hours"). You will need to learn the numbers, so let's study them now. Remember that the word *horas* ("hours") is feminine, and except for one o'clock, it's always plural (*las horas*), so the article and number that precedes it should be also feminine and plural. For example, "one" is *la una*, "eight" is *las ocho*, etc.

Number	Spanish
1	<i>una</i>
2	<i>dos</i>
3	<i>tres</i>
4	<i>cuatro</i>
5	<i>cinco</i>
6	<i>seis</i>
7	<i>siete</i>
8	<i>ocho</i>
9	<i>nueve</i>

10	<i>diez</i>
11	<i>once</i>
12	<i>doce</i>
13	<i>trece</i>
14	<i>catorce</i>
15	<i>quince</i>
16	<i>dieciseis</i>
17	<i>diecisiete</i>
18	<i>dieciocho</i>
19	<i>diecinueve</i>
20	<i>veinte</i>
21	<i>veintiuna</i>
22	<i>veintidos</i>
23	<i>veintitres</i>
24	<i>veinticuatro</i>

Spanish	"English"
<i>...de la mañana</i>	"...in the morning"
<i>...de la tarde</i>	"...in the afternoon"
<i>...de la noche</i>	"...in the evening"

In this dialogue, María was worried that they may be closing the store soon, so she asked Ashley what time it is. Ashley responded that it was half past eight, so María realized she had limited time to finish her shopping. In this case, Ashley could have used other expressions.

For Example:

1. *Son las ocho treinta.*
"It's eight-thirty."
2. *Son las ocho y media de la noche.*
"It's half past eight in the evening."
3. *Son las ocho y media p.m.*
"It's half past eight p.m."
4. *Son las veinte horas treinta minutos.*
"It's twenty hundred hours thirty minutes."

For Example:

1. *¿A qué hora empieza?*
"What time does it start?"
2. *Son las cinco treinta.*
"It's five-thirty."

Example From This Dialogue

1. *¿A qué hora cierran la tienda? A las nueve.*
"And what time does the store close? At nine o'clock."

Language Tip: A Common Mistake

In Mexico, people are quite judgmental about the way others speak, sometimes leading to jokes about lack of education/social position. As a foreigner, you will not be judged in the same way, but it's better to avoid mistakes that may show that you've been hanging out with the wrong crowd. One of them is to ask the time by saying *¿A qué horas son?* You will hear this a lot, but don't be misguided.

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Timing Your Arrival in Latin America

There is a lot of talk about Latin American people being loose with time. But this is changing as the region has become more globalized. Everyone in Latin America knows that business cannot be done without special attention to time and deadlines. Having said that, it does not mean people will always arrive twenty minutes early. People often do stretch time too much for personal activities. But you can be rightfully upset if your business counterpart doesn't show up at the agreed time. In social gatherings, however, the rules are a bit different. If invited to someone's home, make sure you arrive fifteen to thirty minutes later to give the host extra time for preparations. In this case, Maria and Ashley are making sure they finish shopping at the right time, because shops will surely not be late for closing.