

LESSON TRANSCRIPT

Absolute Beginner S3 #17

What's the Time in Mexico?

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17

INTRODUCTION

Alisha: Hi everybody, this is Alisha.

Fernando: Hola amigos, yo soy Fernando.

Alisha: Welcome to SpanishPod101.com. This is Absolute Beginner Season 3, Lesson 17 – What's the Time in Mexico?

Fernando: In this lesson, you will learn how to ask the time, and find out what time things are happening.

Alisha: In this conversation, Ashley and María are shopping in a store when suddenly one of them becomes concerned about the time.

Fernando: Since they know each other and are friends, they will be using casual Spanish.

Alisha: Let's listen to the conversation.

LESSON CONVERSATION

María: Ashley, ¿qué horas son?

Ashley Son las ocho y media.

María: ¿Y a qué hora cierran la tienda?

Ashley A las nueve.

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

María: Ashley, ¿qué horas son?

Ashley Son las ocho y media.

María: ¿Y a qué hora cierran la tienda?

Ashley A las nueve.

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

María: Ashley, ¿qué horas son?

Ashley, what time is it?

Ashley Son las ocho y media.

It's half past eight.

María: ¿Y a qué hora cierran la tienda?

And what time does the store close?

Ashley A las nueve.

At nine o'clock.

POST CONVERSATION BANTER

Alisha: So Fernando, speaking of time, could you tell us about attitudes towards time in Mexico and Latin America?

Fernando: Do you mean punctuality, for example?

Alisha: Yes, exactly.

Fernando: Hmm, this is a good question. It's safe to say that in Mexico and Latin America, people are very... relaxed about time in general.

Alisha: So they're not rushing around, trying to be places on time?

Fernando: Right. If someone is holding a party, or some kind of event, it is normal, or even expected, to arrive late. Usually a half hour or so.

Alisha: Really? And that's not a problem, you wouldn't have to apologize or anything?

Fernando: No, not at all. It's just something that's accepted. So don't be surprised if you're hanging out with friends in Mexico, and they never seem to be on time.

Alisha: What about business situations?

Fernando: Well, business works a bit differently! There, you have to be on time.

Alisha: (laughs) I would hope so...

Fernando: So just be sure to keep that in mind.

Alisha: Okay, and with that, onto the vocab.

VOCAB LIST

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

The first word we shall see is:

Fernando: qué [natural native speed]

what

Fernando: qué [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Fernando: qué [natural native speed]

Next:

Alisha: hora [natural native speed]

hour, time

Alisha: hora [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Alisha: hora [natural native speed]

Next:

Fernando: ser [natural native speed]

to be (permanent characteristics)

Fernando: ser [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Fernando: ser [natural native

speed]

Next:

Alisha: ocho [natural native speed]

eight

Alisha: ocho [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Alisha: ocho [natural native speed]

Next:

Fernando: media [natural native speed]

half

Fernando: media [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Fernando: media [natural native speed]

Next:

Alisha: cerrar [natural native speed]

to close

Alisha: cerrar [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Alisha: cerrar [natural native speed]

Next:

Fernando: tienda [natural native speed]

store

Fernando: tienda [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Fernando: tienda [natural native speed]

Next:

Alisha: a [natural native speed]

to, at

Alisha: a [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Alisha: a [natural native speed]

Next:

Fernando: nueve [natural native speed]

nine

Fernando: nueve [slowly - broken down by syllable]

Fernando: nueve [natural native speed]

KEY VOCABULARY AND PHRASES

Alisha: Let's take a closer look at the usage of some of the words and phrases from this lesson. The first word

is...

Fernando: Hora

Alisha: It sounds like the word “hour”!

Fernando: Yes, that’s what it means! ‘Hora’ means “hour.” And it also means “time”

Alisha: So it means both?

Fernando: Yes. Maybe some examples will help. So when talking about numbers of hours, it’s ‘una hora’, ‘dos horas’, ‘tres horas...’ and so on.

Alisha: So that’s “one hour”, “two hours”, “three hours”, and so on. And notice that the word becomes plural from the number two on.

Fernando: Right, ‘hora’ becomes ‘horas’. ‘Dos horas’.

Alisha: Okay, and it also has the meaning of “time”, you said?

Fernando: Yes, like when you’re talking about the specific time something happens.

For example... ‘Es hora de dormir.’

Alisha: It’s time to sleep.

Fernando: Right! Or, for example, “it’s time to eat.” which is ‘es hora de comer’.

Alisha: Okay, great! We’ll be using this word a lot in the next section. And now, our next vocabulary word.

Fernando: It is ‘tienda. ‘Tienda’ means “shop” or “place where goods are sold.”

Alisha: Can it be a department store?

Fernando: Yes, it can.

Alisha: Can it be a tiny shop also?

Fernando: Yes, it can be small. In that case we can use the diminutive and say ‘tiendita’

Alisha: Listeners, let’s repeat-

Fernando: Tienda... [pause]

Tiendita [pause]

Alisha: Can it be a restaurant?

Fernando: No, we don’t use it for restaurants.

Alisha: What about supermarkets?

Fernando: No, for “supermarkets” we say ‘supermercado’ or ‘súper’.

Alisha: So it’s only for stores where consumer goods are sold.

Fernando: That’s right.

Alisha: Okay, now onto the grammar!

LESSON FOCUS

Alisha: The focus of this lesson is asking what time it is, and telling the time.

Fernando, can you start by telling us the phrase to use for asking the time?

Fernando: Sure. It is... '¿Qué horas son?'

Alisha: What time is it?

Fernando: Please repeat - '¿Qué horas son?'[pause]

Alisha: Let's break it down.

Fernando: 'Que,' as you know, means "what". 'Horas' means "hours," and 'son' means "there are."

Alisha: So, it doesn't translate directly, but it's kind of similar to saying "what hour is it?"

Fernando: Right. '¿Qué horas son?' Now, just so you know, you might also hear 'Qué hora es?'

Alisha: And this also means "what time is it?"

Fernando: Yes, it's just that 'hora' is in the singular. But either one is fine.

Alisha: Okay listeners, please repeat again -

Fernando: ¿Qué horas son? (pause)

Alisha: Okay, now let's move on to the task of saying the time. Let's start with, "it's one o'clock."

Fernando: 'Es la una.' We have 'es', plus the feminine particle 'la', and then the number 'una'.

Alisha: "It's one o'clock". How about, "it's two o'clock?"

Fernando: Son las dos.

Alisha: So this one uses 'son', instead of 'es'?

Fernando: Good catch! Yes, for all of the numbers after one, we say 'son las...' and then the number.

Alisha: Okay, since they're plural... that makes sense! Let's hear some more. How about, "It's three o'clock."

Fernando: Son las tres

Alisha: Four o'clock

Fernando: Son las cuatro.

Alisha: Eight o'clock

Fernando: Son las ocho.

Alisha: That sounds simple enough. So... "one o'clock" is the only one that uses 'es' instead of 'son'?

Fernando: Yes, all others must be 'son las...'

Alisha: One other thing we should cover here - in the dialogue, Ashley says it's half

past eight, or eight thirty. How do we add that detail in Spanish?

Fernando: If you want to say “half past”, you add ‘y media’ to the number. For example, ‘son las dos y media’

Alisha: It’s 2.30.

Fernando: Son las diez y media

Alisha: It’s 10.30.

Alisha: One other thing we should cover here - Maria asks what time the store closes. So she’s asking what time something happens.

Fernando: Ah, right. For this, simply add ‘a’ before the phrase ‘que hora...’ and then the action you’re asking about.

Alisha: Let’s take the example from the dialogue. “What time does the store close?”

Fernando: ‘a qué hora cierran la tienda?’ This is a little advanced, but here’s how it goes - ‘a que hora’, plus the verb, and then object if needed.

Alisha: Can we hear another example?

Fernando: Sure. To ask what time a museum opens, for example, you would say ‘a qué hora abren el museo?’

Alisha: So literally, “at what time, they open the museum.”

Fernando: Right. Just remember to add the ‘a’ when you’re asking what time something happens. If you’re just asking the time, just remember ‘Que horas son’.

Alisha: Okay, I think we’ve got it! And that will do it for this lesson. Listeners, be sure to let us know if you have any questions.

Fernando: Yes, we’re here to help!

Alisha: Take care, everyone, and see you next time!

Fernando: Adiós.