

## LESSON NOTES

# Absolute Beginner S3 #21

## How Do You Say This in Spanish?

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# # 21

## FORMAL SPANISH

1. ASHLEY: Maestro, ¿cómo se dice "apple" en español?
2. MR. GOMEZ: Se dice "manzana".
3. ASHLEY: ¿Y cómo se dice "book"?
4. MR. GOMEZ: Se dice "libro".
5. ASHLEY: Gracias.

## ENGLISH

1. ASHLEY: Teacher, how do you say "apple" in Spanish?
2. MR. GOMEZ: You say "manzana."
3. ASHLEY: And how do you say "book?"
4. MR. GOMEZ: You say "libro."
5. ASHLEY: Thank you.

## VOCABULARY

Spanish	English	Class	Gender
en	in	preposition	
español	Spanish	adjective	masculine
manzana	apple	noun	feminine

cómo	how	adverb	
maestro	teacher	noun	masculine
gracias	thanks, thank you	noun	feminine
decir	to say, to tell	verb	
libro	book	noun	masculine

## SAMPLE SENTENCES

<p>Las fotos están escondidas en el escritorio.</p> <p>"The pictures are hidden in the desk."</p>	<p>¿Hablas español?</p> <p>"Do you speak Spanish?"</p>
<p>Las manzanas están buenas.</p> <p>"The apples are good."</p>	<p>¿Cómo se dice?</p> <p>"How do you say it?"</p>
<p>Dime cómo usar el control remoto.</p> <p>"Tell me how to use the remote control."</p>	<p>¿Cómo se llama usted?</p> <p>"What's your name?" (formal)</p>
<p>El maestro encontró un error.</p> <p>"The teacher found a mistake."</p>	<p>Gracias por venir.</p> <p>"Thank you for coming."</p>
<p>Deberías decir la verdad.</p> <p>"You should say the truth."</p>	<p>Puedo decir lo que estaba pasando, por tu sonrisa.</p> <p>"I could tell what was happening from your grin."</p>

<p>Él dijo que esperaría por nosotros.</p> <p>"He said that he would wait for us."</p>	<p>El profesor dirá la respuesta.</p> <p>"The professor will say the answer."</p>
<p>Este libro es bastante divertido.</p> <p>"This book is pretty funny."</p>	<p>Mi padre lee muchos libros.</p> <p>"My father reads many books."</p>

## VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

### ***maestro* ("teacher")**

Generally speaking, *maestro* means "teacher." However, the word *maestro* smacks somewhat of a lesser rank than *profesor* and is therefore not often used in higher education or college. As an exception, when referring to someone with a masters degree, you may say *maestro* and it has a completely different meaning, but it's not widely used in Mexico yet. Musicians are also called *maestro* and, incidentally, senior bricklayers and carpenters as well, all with different connotations. Derogatory form: *maistro*.

### ***se dice* ("it is said")**

*Se dice* comes from the root verb *decir* ("to say"). As a reflexive verb, it is conjugated in third person: *decirse* ("to be said"). We commonly use this to tell someone how something is said in a certain language or to ask how something is said in a certain language. If someone makes a language mistake, we correct the person by saying: *no se dice A, se dice B*. We also use it to convey popular knowledge: *Se dice que hay fantasmas* ("They say there are ghosts.").

## GRAMMAR

**The Focus of This Lesson Is to Teach You the Question *¿Cómo Se Dice...?* and the Answer *Se Dice...* (Plus an English Word).**

***¿Cómo se dice "apple" en español?***

**"How do you say 'apple' in Spanish?"**

Often times we want to say something in Spanish, but we're missing a word. If the other person speaks at least a bit of English, we can say the word in English and ask for its translation. In this case, we would ask *¿Cómo se dice...?*

Look at the following examples:

Question	Unknown Word	Language	"English"
<i>¿Cómo se dice</i>	"tree"	<i>en español?</i>	"How do you say tree in Spanish?"
<i>¿Cómo se dice</i>	"house"	<i>en español?</i>	"How do you say house in Spanish?"
<i>¿Cómo se dice</i>	"dog"	<i>en español?</i>	"How do you say dog in Spanish?"

Inversely, we may need to ask for the meaning of a word in Spanish. While this may require a higher level of English from our conversation partner, it will save us the hassle of looking it up in the dictionary.

Question	Unknown Word	"English"
<i>¿Qué significa</i>	<i>"mollete"?</i>	"What does 'mollete' mean?"
<i>¿Qué significa</i>	<i>"sope"?</i>	"What does 'sope' mean?"
<i>¿Qué significa</i>	<i>"nopal"?</i>	"What does 'nopal' mean?"

\* *Mollete* is a Mexican home made food made of freshly cut *bolillo* ("bread"), *frijoles* ("black beans"), and melted *Manchego* cheese, toasted and topped with *salsa pico de gallo*.

Finally, when we want to tell someone the way something is said in Spanish, we say *se dice...* ("it is said..."). First, say the word in English + *se dice* + the word in Spanish. For example: *Apple se dice "manzana"* ("Apple' is said 'manzana.'")

When Ashley asked professor Gómez *¿Cómo se dice "apple" en español?* she was not asking for the meaning of apple-just for the translation. But if she had wanted to know the meaning

of *manzana*, she could have asked professor Gómez: *¿Qué significa "manzana"?*

So make sure you know when to use *cómo se dice* and when *qué significa*. These cues are important for someone learning a new language. Use them as much as possible with your friends to increase your vocabulary!

### For Example:

1. *¿Qué significa "pelota"?*  
"What does 'pelota' mean?"
2. *¿Cómo se dice "ball"?*  
"How do you say 'ball'?"

### Examples From This Dialogue

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1. *¿Cómo se dice "apple" en español?*  
*Se dice "manzana."*  
"How do you say 'apple' in Spanish?"  
"It is said 'manzana.'"
2. *¿Y cómo se dice "book"?*  
*Se dice "libro."*  
"How do you say 'book' in Spanish?"  
"It is said 'libro.'"

### Language Tip: *¿Qué dice aquí? ¿Qué dice ahí?*

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Note that when we can't understand something *written* somewhere, we may want to ask: *¿Qué dice aquí?* ("What does it say here?") or *¿Qué dice ahí?* ("What does it say there?"), depending on how near the object is from us. For something further removed from us, we say *¿Qué dice allá?*

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Question	Unknown Word	"English"
<i>¿Qué dice</i>	<i>aquí?</i>	"What does it say here?"
<i>¿Qué dice</i>	<i>ahí?</i>	"What does it say there?"

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¿Qué dice

allá?

"What does it say over there?"

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## CULTURAL INSIGHT

### Do You Need to Follow the Rules in Mexico?

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It is important to respect notices in museums and public places with legends such as *no tocar* ("do not touch") or *prohibido el paso* ("no trespassing"). Although Mexico has a reputation for being quite relaxed in the application of rules in public places, the same does not hold true in private areas, such as museums, gardens, libraries, and the like, where rules are often obsessively enforced. So be careful! If you don't understand something, it's always better to ask.