

## LESSON NOTES

# Basic Bootcamp #1

## A Pleasure to Meet You

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#1



## **Hola ("Hello")**

*Hola* is the standard greeting in the Spanish language. This greeting is universal throughout the Spanish-speaking world. We can use *hola* in either formal or informal situations. When greeting people throughout the day, we often pair it with either *buenos días* ("good morning"), *buenas tardes* ("good afternoon"), or *buenas noches* ("good evening").

## **Soy ("I am")**

*Soy* means "I am": it's the verb *ser* in the first person. *Ser*, of course, is the verb that means "to be." We use *ser* to describe identity. Both Jesús and Monserrat use *soy* to tell the other person what his name is.

## **Mucho gusto ("a pleasure to meet you")**

*Mucho gusto* is what people say immediately after an introduction. In English, we would say "a pleasure to meet you." A common response to *mucho gusto* is *el gusto es mío* (literally, "the pleasure is mine").

# GRAMMAR

## **The Focus of This Lesson Is *Ser* ("to Be").**

***Yo soy Monserrat, mucho gusto.***

**"I'm Monserrat; it's a pleasure to meet you."**

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*Ser* is one of the Spanish verbs that means "to be," and it's the one we use to describe identity. We heard two forms of *ser* in the dialogue today. One was in the first person: *soy Jesús, soy Monserrat*. That word *soy* is the first person form of *ser*, so it means "I am."

We also heard the third-person form of *ser* later in this dialogue when we heard *el gusto es mío* ("the pleasure is mine"). The word *es* means "it is."

You'll notice that the forms of *ser* are irregular; that is, it's hard to predict that *soy* and *es* are forms of *ser*. You'll have to memorize these irregular forms.

We mentioned earlier that two Spanish verbs correspond to the English verb "to be." *Ser*, as we said, deals with describing identity. There's another verb, *estar*, that also means "to be."

## **Names in Spanish**

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Although many people in the Spanish-speaking world have first names and middle names, it's also common to have double first names; for example, Juan Carlos, José Luis, or for women María Luisa, Ana María, and so forth. In informal situations, Spanish speakers will abbreviate with the second name (rather than the first). For example, my first name in Spanish is Juan Patricio; someone trying to be informal with me might call me Patricio but not Juan.

Spanish speakers may also present themselves with double last names as well. In this case, the first family name you hear will be the paternal last name and the second will be the maternal name. In less formal situations, we just use the paternal name.

As an example, my name in Spanish would be Juan Patricio Villanueva Mari. Juan Patricio is my double first name, my last name is Villanueva, and the Mari you hear at the end is my maternal family name. I wouldn't use this extended version of my name unless I were in a formal or official situation.

Finally, Spanish speakers in general love to use *apodos*. These nicknames may or may not be based on your name. They can shorten your name (e.g., Juan Patricio becomes Patricio, Santiago becomes Santi). They may lengthen your name by adding cute suffixes like *-ito*, *-ico*, or *-ita*, so Miguel becomes Miguelito, David becomes Davidico, Teresa becomes Teresita, and Ana becomes Anita. They may also give you descriptive *apodos*, such as *el alto*, *la turca*, *el silvador*, *el sinistro*, *hamburguesa*, and so forth.

In most cases, these *apodos* will indicate affection.

## CULTURAL INSIGHT

### To Kiss or Not to Kiss...

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Spanish speakers as a rule greet each other with physical contact. We greet women with a kiss to the cheek (more often than not, this "kiss" is actually touching cheeks and kissing the air). The number of kisses is specified by region, and anywhere from one to four kisses is customary. Men greet each other with handshakes rather than kisses.