

Facts About the Spanish Language:

- Over 400 million people speak Spanish.
- Spanish is the 2nd most spoken language in the world, after Mandarin Chinese and before English.
- Spanish is the 3rd most used language on the Internet.
- The United States has the 2nd largest Spanish speaking population in the world after Mexico.
- There are 21 countries with Spanish as the official language.
- Spanish is one of the Romance languages, along with Catalan, Italian, French, Portuguese and Romanian.
- The Spanish language derives from a type of spoken Latin that developed in the central-northern region of the Iberian Peninsula following the 5th century demise of the Western Roman Empire.
- Spanish is known as castellano and español by its speakers.
- Spanish is a phonetic language, meaning the letters are pronounced consistently.
- Spanish is greatly influenced by Arabic.



South America Quick Facts:

- There are 9 Spanish-speaking countries in South America: Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela.
- The dominant religion is Roman Catholicism.
- Popular South American music includes the samba, the tango, and the cumbia.
- South American cuisine has European, American Indian, and African influences.
- South America has the second longest river in the world, the Amazon.
- Evidence of human life in South America dates back to 9000 BC.
- South America was colonized from the late 15th century by conquistadores mainly from Spain and Portugal.
- The Incas were the largest group of indigenous people in South America when the Europeans arrived. Their empire lasted from 1438 until 1533.
- Some of the most popular tourist attractions include Machu Picchu in Peru, the Patagonia in Argentina, and the Amazon in Ecuador.
- The Atacama desert is the driest place on earth.
- Angel Falls are the world's highest waterfalls.
- Amazon River Basin is the world's largest river basin.
- The Andes are the world's longest mountain range.



Central America and the Caribbean Quick Facts:

- There are 7 Spanish-speaking countries in Central America: Nicaragua, Honduras, Guatemala, Panama, Costa Rica, and El Salvador.
- There are 2 Spanish-speaking countries in the Caribbean: Cuba and the Dominican Republic. There is also 1 Spanish-speaking territory: Puerto Rico.
- $\frac{1}{2}$ of the Central American population is of mixed European and Mayan heritage, known as Mestizos.
- Other names for Central America include Mesoamerica and Middle America.
- Central America is a land bridge between North and South America, but is considered a part of North America.
- The dominant religion is Roman Catholicism.
- Central America is home to the Pan-American Highway, the world's longest motorable road.



Spain Quick Facts:

- Spain is located in southwestern Europe.
- Spain is the largest country in southern Europe.
- Spain's capital and largest city is Madrid. However, other famous and historical cities include Barcelona, Valencia, Sevilla, Málaga, and Bilbao.
- Mount Teide (Tenerife) is the highest mountain peak in Spain and is the third largest volcano in the world from its base.
- Spain is predominantly Roman Catholic.
- Holidays include New Year's Day, Epiphany, Easter, Holy Week, Labor Day, and Hispanic Day.
- Holy Week is a large event that often includes parades of people and floats, most famous in Seville Semana Santa.
- Spain is particularly famed for its paella, a recipe which is said to have its origins in Valencia which lies on the southeastern coast. The dish is rice based and includes a mixture of vegetable, meat and fish. It is seasoned with saffron and various spices.
- Other common cultural foods include Tapas, Tortilla Española, and Pincho.
- *Antoni Gaudi* (1852 – 1926) made his mark on Spain, particularly in and around Barcelona with his creative contribution to architecture. His style was distinctive and eclectic and included the famous basilica La Sagrada Familia.
- Spain has produced many famous artist— *Picasso, Dali, Goya, Velázquez, el Greco* – to name but a few.



Mexico Quick Facts:

- Mexico is located in North America, between the US and Central America.
- The Olmec people, Mexico's first complex society, emerged in the southeastern part of the country around 1200 B.C. They were later followed by the Maya, the Toltec, and the Aztec peoples.
- Mexico has a diverse landscape of beaches, mountains, jungles, and deserts.
- The highest mountain in Mexico is Pico de Orizaba, a dormant volcano that reaches 5,636 metres (18,491 ft) above sea level.
- Famous rivers include the Rio Grande and the Yaqui river.
- The national symbol of Mexico is the golden eagle which features prominently on the coat of arms.
- The capital of Mexico is Mexico City.
- The main language spoken in Mexico is Spanish.
- One of the most popular sports in Mexico is soccer.
- The currency of Mexico is the peso.
- The dominant religion is Roman Catholicism.
- Popular dishes include tacos, burritos, pozole, menudo, cemita, chilaquiles, and enchiladas.



Resources:

Study Help

www.conjuguemos.com (practice verb tenses)

www.studyspanish.com

<http://www.laits.utexas.edu/spe> (practice listening comprehension)

<http://apstudent.collegeboard.org/apcourse/ap-spanish-language> (College Board AP Course)

www.quizlet.com (practice vocabulary)

Spanish News

BBC Mundo <https://www.bbc.com/mundo>

El País https://elpais.com/elpais/portada_america.html

El Mundo <https://www.elmundo.es>

CNN en Español <https://cnnespanol.cnn.com>

Hoy Digital <http://hoy.com.do>