



Spanish A Level Summer Preparation and top tips for the next two years

Congratulations on choosing to study a language at A Level at Beaumont School. The best way to prepare yourself is to ensure that you have a firm grasp of the language and skills which you have already used at GCSE. Thorough revision of these over the summer will make you more confident when you start the course in September and prepare you for a more independent approach to learning.

Summer Preparation Task Booklet

How to prepare for Spanish at AS Level

You have a few weeks in which to really prepare for your A Level in Spanish. The leap from GCSE to A Level is significant. This booklet contains links to a huge range of media, most of which is available for free online as well as compulsory and extension tasks to complete before September. In order to keep pace, it is vital that you work through the tasks. Little and often is better than cramming this all into the last two weeks of August! Try to build some of them into your daily routine...

TOP TIP: Join St Albans City Library

Don't forget that you can go online for free at any library in the city and it is easy to sign up for a Library Card. You can also order foreign language films and books to borrow.

Watch...

Television

Watch the latest news in Spanish <http://www.rtve.es/>, or even just the weather forecast <http://www.rtve.es/eltiempo/>. Take in some culinary delights with Spanish Master Chef <http://www.rtve.es/television/masterchef/> or some football <http://www.rtve.es/deportes/champions-league/>. Or watch some cartoons in Spanish with your baby brother or sister; you can both learn some Spanish <http://www.rtve.es/infantil/>. You will recognise some of the programmes – any guesses what *Sam el bombero* is <http://www.rtve.es/infantil/videos-juegos/#/videos/sam-bombero/todos/> or *La oveja Shaun* <http://www.rtve.es/infantil/videos-juegos/#/videos/oveja-shaun/todos/> ?

You can also access the TV using:

- Your own TV. If you get Euronews, you can put it into Spanish by pressing the red button
- Look at <http://broadcast-live.com/television/spanish.html>. This website gives you access to the TV stations that are streaming TV including <http://www.canalsur.es/portada-2808.html>
- Another TV station is <http://www.antena3.com/>. This gives you access to loads of soaps and dramas etc as well as Downton Abbey in Spanish!
- BBC Website <http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/subjects/z4dqxnb>. If you have trouble bringing the website up, type in www.bbc.co.uk/education. Then select England GCSE and scroll down until you find Modern Foreign Languages. Behind both the Speaking and Listening tabs there are loads of great videos to watch that only last a few minutes and they are a great way to practice your listening skills.

DVDs

We also have a range of DVDs in Spanish – let us know if you would like to borrow a DVD. We have a variety of films in our Spanish library, from *Nacido y Criado* ('Born and Bred'), an Argentinian film by Pablo Trapero in 2007 to *El Laberinto del Fauno* by Guillermo del Toro and dubbed versions of the some popular films as well as several films by Pedro Almodóvar, the director that you may study at A level.

Listen to the radio

The great thing about listening to the radio is that you can get on with something else at the same time (tidying your room???). Listen live using the *Eschuchar Ahora* or the *En directo* button. It sometimes takes a while to buffer so be patient.

- Radio Nacional de España (RNE) (www.rtve.es)

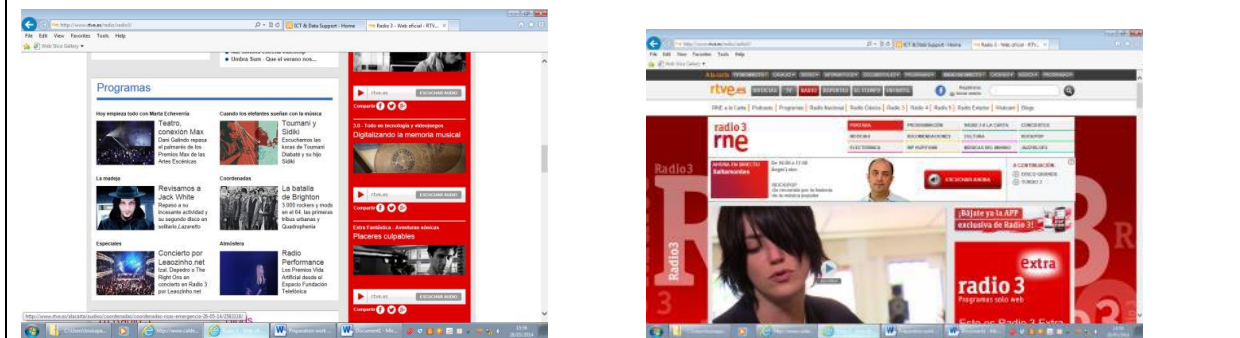
- *Radio 1 (Radio Nacional)* es la radio generalista de RNE. Sus programas llegan a todos los públicos. Noticias, entretenimiento, cultura, deportes...

TOP TIP: Listen to Radio 3

Radio 3 is the radio station that the young listen to. It is set up just like Radio 1 or Capital FM and so has music videos and interviews to watch too. Also, if you like 80s music, try M80 Radio <http://www.m80radio.com/>.

- *Radio 3* es la radio más joven, la preocupada por los temas de la juventud. Música, cine, teatro, libros, debates... <http://www.rtve.es/radio/radio3/>

Gain Access to a range of programmes relating to popular culture, music, festivals, cinema etc:



- *Radio 5* es la radio dedicada al mundo de la actualidad, con noticias durante las 24 horas del día, todos los días del año. <http://www.rtve.es/radio/radio5>



- *Radio Exterior de España (REE)* es la voz de RNE en el exterior, la que difunde la cultura y la que acerca a los pueblos.

Sign up to Twitter

Sign up to Twitter for authentic text that you can quickly flick through. We follow all of these and recommend you do the same! They will help you pick up the language even when lazily browsing twitter. Some ideas are:

@BeaumontSpanish obviously!

@Spain - The official Twitter for tourism in Spain

@LaFraseDelDia_ - Más que palabras. A Spanish site which tweets inspirational sayings for each day.

@spanishlanguage – Official Twitter account for Transparent Language Spanish. Learn the language with free resources, social media, and research-based software that works.

Tweets expressions, phrases, words and articles in Spanish.

@spanishaddicts – El español de la calle (typical spoken Spanish). Esto no son simples traducciones literales, es mucho más que eso. Spanish phrases, vocab, articles and more.

@muyinteresante – Revista de ciencia, historia, tecnología, salud, psicología, innovación y curiosidades. A Spanish news organisation that tweets in Spanish only. Great for practicing your reading skills. We often retweet the most useful articles anyway.

TOP TIP: Sign up to Twitter and register to a feed that tweets a word or so a day

A word a day is a fantastic way of building your vocabulary. Here are some to choose from:

@SpanishDict - Learn Spanish on the web. Tweets a random Spanish word frequently with the translation.

@VamosSpanish– A word a day goes a long way! Use this online resource to enhance your Spanish learning and ask questions. Tweets words and phrases and translates them. Also tweets other facts and grammar.

@EduLearnSpanish – Learn 3 new words a day on Twitter!

@SpanishWords4U – Spanish Word A Day and computer programs to learn Spanish.

Tweets a new Spanish word everyday with example sentences.

@LL_Spanish – Learn Spanish with words & phrases of the day from Living Language!

Tweets Spanish phrases, words, articles and more.

Read...

Keep your own vocabulary book for new expressions you come across – there is a sheet at the back of this booklet to start you off. Or you can ask your teacher for a small vocab booklet to fill in as you go. You could order it alphabetically, by topic area based on what we are going to study or just use it as a diary and scribble away your Spanish development in it.

Newspapers and Magazines

Read a foreign language newspaper – El Pais in Spanish is available in larger paper shops. El Pais has its own website <http://elpais.com/> so that you can read the paper online. You do not have to read the paper cover to cover, just scan the headlines and pick out ONE article that grabs your attention.

This website gives you access to newspapers all over the world. Here is the link to a range of Spanish papers. <http://www.mediatico.com/en/newspapers/europe/spain/national/>

This website is a more lighthearted newspaper which covers global stories as well as gossip. <http://www.20minutos.es/>. Also try <http://www.20minutos.tv/>. This is the TV Channel for this newspaper.

The website <http://www.diariosur.es/> is from a newspaper in the south of Spain. In addition to articles, it contains a number of clips from news stories and links through to sports etc. It also has links through to specific parts of Spain.

In Spain there is also a news website for young people: <http://primerasnoticias.com/>. It has sections on the Internet and Mobile Technology; Science and Wildlife; Education; Culture; Sport; Society and Health. A glance today contained articles about Facebook, video games and bullying to name but a few.

To catch up on the latest gossip and to see what the celebs are wearing, take a look at <http://www.hola.com/>. This is our equivalent of Hello! Magazine. Also look at <http://www.elmundo.es/>

Fiction

We have a number of Spanish dual language books and a wide range of Spanish literature – let us know if you would like to borrow a book. This can help you decide if you would like to study literature or a wider cultural course at university.

Websites

Switch to Spanish browsers such as <http://www.terra.es/> and <http://es.yahoo.com/> or www.yahoo.es as well as www.google.es. This way, you will read Spanish every time you log on and it will become part of your everyday activity. Look at the BBC website <http://www.bbc.co.uk/languages/spanish/tv/onlinenews.shtml> for links to Spanish programmes available on line. And <http://www.bbc.co.uk/mundo/> takes you through to news in Spanish.

Websites for research

Once you actually start your A Level in September, you will realise that you are almost completing a Sociology A Level in Spanish. It is fascinating and you will learn all about the history and culture of Spanish speakers. Here are some websites bursting with information about Spain. Always start your research with these websites as it is easy to get bogged down when looking for help on the internet.

If you are searching for information, try switching to the Spanish www.es.wikipedia. Remember that anyone can write on Wikipedia so you must validate your research elsewhere and never quote from it! It is a good place to start though.

A Spanish government run website: www.mec.es (Consejería de Educación)

A website in English with some great links to various topics: <http://spanish.about.com/>

British Council support available from <http://schoolsonline.britishcouncil.org/> Keep your eyes peeled as they often have **trips to Spain for free! You have to apply for them but they are an amazing opportunity to build your Spanish skills.** There is no better way to learn a language than by spending time in that country.

The National Centre for Languages <http://www.cilt.org.uk/home.aspx> for information on how to set up blogs and also further links to grants for trips to Spain etc.

On-line dictionary

A good on-line dictionary is: <http://www.wordreference.com/>

TOP TIP: Don't look up every word you are not sure of when reading an article/ book

Yep... you read that right. When you are reading articles etc, try not to look up every word as it will take you forever. Skim and scan the text to get the gist. Remember to use the context or the article, cognates and common sense to figure out what the article is saying. Pick out a couple of words that you like the look of, that you feel may be real hurdles to getting the idea of the text, look them up carefully and add them to your vocab booklet. The aim at this stage is to get the gist of the article, not be able to translate it completely. Translation is a whole different ball game and you will learn it soon enough.

You will be surprised how much more enjoyable reading will be if you really pay attention to this tip.

Grammar Practice

What should I know by now?

This is a common question asked by students about to start their A level. You should be able to:

TOPIC	CONTENT
Recognise and use a range of tenses with regular verbs.	<u>Regular –AR, -ER, -IR verbs:</u> Tenses: Present Preterite Imperfect Near Future (ir + a + inf.) Future (eg. Sera) Conditional (eg. sería)
Recognise and use a range of tenses with irregular verbs.	Common irregular verbs: ser, estar, tener, hacer, ir Tenses: Present Preterite Imperfect Near Future (ir + a + inf.) Future (eg. Sera) Conditional (eg. sería)
Give opinions with reasons	A range of opinion expressions • Positive and negative reasons for opinions • To be able to agree and disagree

Links to Grammar Practice Exercises

The grammar areas in the box above are in Spanish GCSE Revision Guides which are available on Amazon for less than £5. Try CGP, Pearson or Letts which also has a CD with it. **Also look at your KS4 exercise Books.** The following websites are also very useful interactive sites for grammar and language based activities. Take a look at them. They wouldn't be on here if they weren't worth a look.

- Languages on line: The Grammar Revision resources on www.languagesonline.org.uk are great as you can then select what tense you want to revise, read the explanations and complete the exercises. You can do these as often as you like and it gives you a percentage. Another useful tactic is to translate the examples and exercises into English to ensure you understand the meaning of each tense.



You can look up AS resources or just do some Grammar

- Lightbulb languages at <http://www.lightbulblanguages.co.uk/resources-sp-al.htm>
- <http://www.studyspanish.com/tutorial.htm>

Summer Tasks

This is even more important this year as the new ALevel requires much more background and cultural knowledge of Hispanic speaking countries than in previous years. If you wish to study Spanish at university you will need to have evidence of the additional work and reading that you have done. So get into the habit now! (And even if you are not going to study Spanish later it is good practice.)

Compulsory Task

Choose a region of Spain (known as “comunidades autónomas”) Eg Cataluña, Galicia, Murcia, La Mancha, Castilla y Leon, El País Vasco, Andalucía etc.

You have to research and prepare a 3 minute presentation about that region including:

- ☺ Location, main cities, population, languages, religion, etc.
- ☺ History.
- ☺ Places of interest, tourism.
- ☺ Important people in different areas (sports, arts, politics, etc)
- ☺ Traditions (fiestas, food, sports, etc)

Importante: Research is not about copying and pasting, or printing loads of pages out of the internet. It is about **reading, finding the information** that you need and using your **own words**.

You should back up your presentation with some sort of visual aid, either a power point or a handout for the rest of the class.

Presentations will take place when you return in September.

The new A level exam requires very strong cultural knowledge so this is your chance to start to find out about the culture, traditions and history of the language that you are about to study.

Extension tasks

Complete a task log which most suits your style of working. Note the date, which site you visited and any comments you have, you will need to go through it with your Spanish Tutor in September so make sure that it is clear and useful to you. You may have one week in which you are extremely motivated and one when you are not. **Do not** leave it all until the end of August however as you will be behind and you want to start the year as you mean to go on. These are examples of the activities that you should start during the summer and maintain throughout the year.

1. When you look at a website/ link on here, highlight it and note the date and what you thought about it. You can then put a couple of notes in your task log.
2. Summarise, in Spanish, 2 articles (that were in Spanish!) that you have read from one of the websites/ papers above and say why they interested you. If you cannot print the article, make a note of the website. @BeaumontSpanish will help with this.
3. Watch at least one foreign language film and review it (c. 100 – 150 words) in Spanish. Watch as many Spanish films as you can.
4. Review your grammar - Go onto www.languagesonline.org.uk. Complete 2 exercises a week. Each exercise takes less than 5 minutes. Note down the exercise you did and your score.
5. Read through the course overview so that you have an idea of what we will be studying. This will also help you with task 4 above.
6. If you find any other websites/ links/ twitter feeds that you think are worth sharing, note them down too.
7. Start following @BeaumontSpanish for a mix of articles and language info.
8. And finally...Remember, you will take from the course what you put in. Students who put in plenty of independent work are always the most successful. Enjoy!

Gracias
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