

3

Es impresionante

It's impressive

In this unit you will learn to:

- ✔ Use adjectives and place them in the correct position.
- ✔ Use proper gender and number agreement between noun/pronoun and adjective.
- ✔ Use the short form of some adjectives.
- ✔ Describe a town or a city that you know.

CEFR: Adjectives (A1); Can get an idea of the content of simple descriptions (A1); Describe aspects of your environment (A1).

Adjectives: position and gender and number agreement

	Masculine		Feminine	
<i>Singular</i>	un vestido blanco	<i>a white dress</i>	una camisa blanca	<i>a white shirt</i>
	un traje azul	<i>a blue suit</i>	una falda azul	<i>a blue skirt</i>
	un chico español	<i>a Spanish boy</i>	una chica española	<i>a Spanish girl</i>
	un hombre feliz	<i>a happy man</i>	una mujer feliz	<i>a happy woman</i>
<i>Plural</i>	unos vestidos blancos	<i>some white dresses</i>	unas camisas blancas	<i>some white shirts</i>
	unos trajes azules	<i>some blue suits</i>	unas faldas azules	<i>some blue skirts</i>
	unos chicos españoles	<i>some Spanish boys</i>	unas chicas españolas	<i>some Spanish girls</i>
	unos hombres felices	<i>some happy men</i>	unas mujeres felices	<i>some happy women</i>



A Answer the questions about adjectives.

- 1 How do Spanish and English adjectives differ in terms of their position with respect to the noun they qualify?
- 2 Explain the different endings for *pequeño* (*small*) in *una casa pequeña*, *unos chicos pequeños*, *unas habitaciones pequeñas*.

Meaning and usage

- 1 adjectives are words like **caro** (*expensive*), **bonito** (*pretty*), which provide more information about a noun or a pronoun and, as in English, they are generally used next to the noun or as a complement of the verb:

Es un hotel caro. (*It is an expensive hotel.*)

Ella es muy bonita. (*She is very pretty.*)

- 2 in Spanish, adjectives agree in gender (masculine or feminine) and number (singular or plural) with the noun they qualify: **un libro bueno** (*a good book*), **una novela buena** (*a good novel*), **unos poemas muy buenos** (*some very good poems*).
- 3 if the adjective refers to more than one noun or pronoun, one masculine and the other feminine, use the masculine plural form of the adjective:

En el pueblo había un monasterio y una iglesia muy antiguos. (*In the village there was a very old monastery and a very old church.*)

Juan y María eran muy simpáticos. (*Juan and María were very nice.*)

Position of adjectives

- 1 generally in Spanish, adjectives are placed after the noun they qualify:

Es una ciudad grande. (*It is a large city.*)

Fue una fiesta divertida. (*The party was fun.*)

- 2 word order is quite flexible in Spanish and sometimes adjectives are placed before the noun for emphasis or to lend this greater force: **un enorme avión/un avión enorme** (*a huge plane*), **una pequeña casa/una casa pequeña** (*a small house*).

- 3 adjectives denoting nationality, religion, shape or colour are nearly always placed after the noun: **un artista español** (*a Spanish artist*); **la Iglesia católica** (*the Catholic Church*); **una caja cuadrada** (*a square box*); **un hermoso vestido blanco** (*a beautiful white dress*).



Note the two adjectives in **un hermoso vestido blanco**, with **hermoso** placed before the noun for emphasis. Normally, though, with descriptions which do not involve a subjective judgement both adjectives are placed after the noun: **un hombre bajo y gordo** (*a small, fat man*), **casas grandes y modernas** (*big, modern houses*).

- 4 the following categories of adjectives are normally placed before the noun:

- ▶ cardinal and ordinal numbers: **dos euros** (*two euros*), **el cuarto piso** (*the fourth floor*)
- ▶ possessives and demonstratives: **mis hijos** (*my children*), **esta semana** (*this week*)

- ▶ a few adjectives expressing quantity: **ambas personas** (both people), **mucho dinero** (a lot of money), **poco tiempo** (little time), **otro día** (another day), **tanta comida** (so much food).



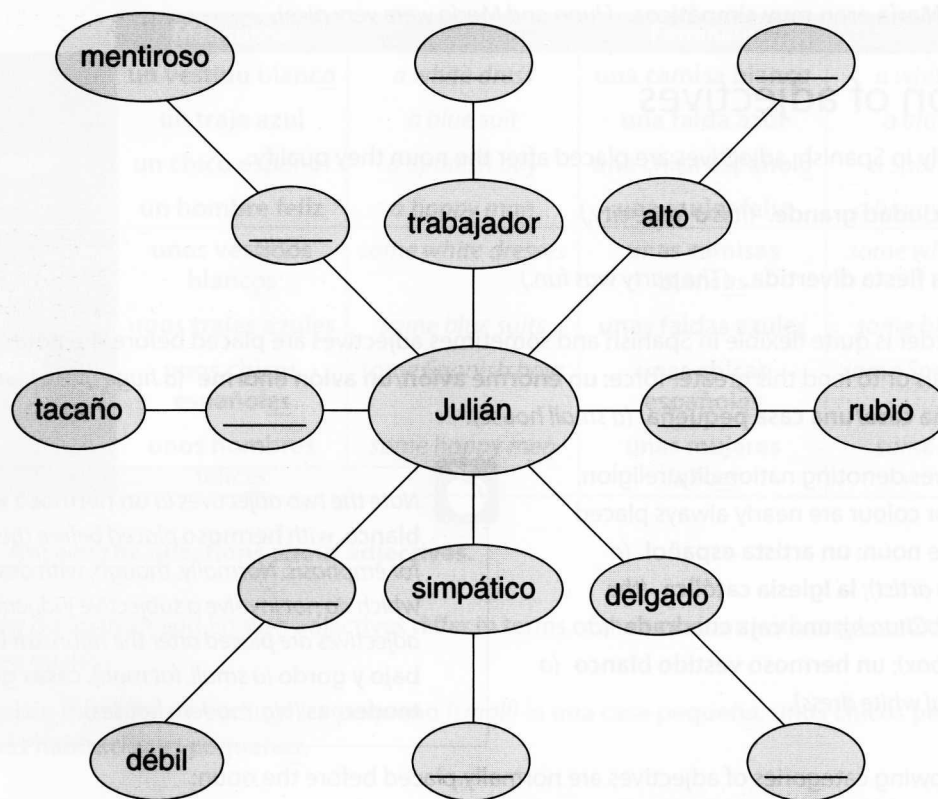
B What are the different meanings of único in these phrases?

- 1 una oportunidad única
 - 2 una única oportunidad
 - 3 hijo único
- 5 a few adjectives change their meaning depending on their position: **un coche* nuevo** (a brand new car) – **un nuevo coche** (a new/another car); **un país grande** (a large country) – **un gran país** (a great country); **un hombre pobre** (a poor man) – ¡**Pobre hombre!** (Poor man!); **una amiga vieja** (an elderly friend) – **una vieja amiga** (an old friend).

*coche = carro/auto in Latin America



C Complete the spidergram with adjectives. The inner adjectives describe Julián; the outer ones give the opposites.



What adjectives would you use to describe yourself? What adjectives would you use to describe a friend of the opposite sex?

D Put the adjectives in the order given in the appropriate places to complete the sentences.

- 1 Inés es una chica (alta, guapa).
- 2 Señores y señoras quieren visitar el palacio (tres, dos, alemanes, real).
- 3 Mi amigo es una persona (español, bondadosa, generosa).
- 4 Las niñas quieren unos helados (tres, pequeñas, grandes).
- 5 Gente compra estos recuerdos de la región (mucha, típicos).
- 6 En esta ciudad hay edificios (muchos, modernos, feos).
- 7 Acabo de comprarme un vestido (bonito, rojo).
- 8 Rafael nunca compra coches; ahora su coche es un Seat Ibiza (nuevos, nuevo).

Forms of adjectives

Short forms

- 6 the following adjectives lose their final -o before a singular masculine noun:

alguno (some, any), **ninguno** (no, not any): **¿Algún problema?** (Any problem?), **Ningún problema** (No problem).

bueno (good), **malo** (bad): **un buen chico** (a good boy), **un mal día** (a bad day).

uno (one), **primero** (first), **tercero** (third): **un autobús** (a/one bus), **primer año** (first year), **tercer piso** (third floor).

grande (big, large, great) becomes **gran** before a singular noun: **un gran amigo** (a great friend), **una gran persona** (a great person).



In the plural all the above adjectives recover their original form: **Buenos días** (good morning; literally, good days), **Somos grandes amigos** (We are great friends). See also **Plural forms** below.



E Complete the sentence with the adjective given in brackets.

- 1 (primero) El _____ año el trabajo fue muy difícil.
- 2 (alguno) ¿Tiene _____ libro escrito por Arturo Pérez-Reverte?
- 3 (bueno) Hoy hace muy _____ día; hace un día muy _____.
- 4 (tercero) Ahora los González viven en el _____ piso.
- 5 (ninguno) Aquí no hay _____ problema. Todo va bien.
- 6 (grande) – Usted conoce a Pepe ¿verdad?, un hombre _____ que también es un _____ hombre.
– Sí, es _____, es enorme pero es una persona fantástica.

Feminine forms

- 1 the dictionary form of the adjective is the masculine singular form. But an adjective must agree with the noun it qualifies, so if the noun is feminine use the feminine form of the adjective. Here are some simple rules for their use:
- 2 if the adjective ends in **-o** change this into **-a**: **barato** – **barata** (*cheap*); **largo** – **larga** (*long*).
- 3 adjectives ending in **-a, -e, -í, -ú** have the same forms for masculine and feminine: **un/una estudiante belga, un/una costarricense y un/una iraquí** (*a Belgian, a Costa Rican and an Iraqi student*); **un templo hindú** (*a Hindu temple*) – **la religión hindú** (*the Hindu religion*).
- 4 most adjectives ending in a consonant do not change for feminine: **un hombre/una mujer joven** (*a young man/woman*), **un niño/una niña feliz** (*a happy boy/girl*). This rule does not apply to adjectives of nationality that end in a consonant, for which you add an **-a** for the feminine: **Es inglés/inglesa** (*He/She is English*).



F Answer the questions.

- 1 What happens to the accent when **inglés** is used in the feminine form?
- 2 If **francesa** (*French*) is feminine, what is the masculine form?
- 5 adjectives ending in **-án, -ón, -ín, -or** add **-a** in the feminine: **holgazán** – **holgazana** (*lazy*); **glotón** – **glotona** (*greedy*); **parlanchín** – **parlanchina** (*talkative*); **encantador** – **encantadora** (*charming*). Note that the accent in **-án, -ón, -ín** is dropped when you add a syllable to form the feminine.



You may have noticed that the accent on **inglés** (*English*) is dropped when you add a syllable to form the feminine. Note also that words for nationality are not written with capital letters in Spanish.



G Change the gender in each sentence.

- 1 La mujer es muy mandona.
- 2 Mi amiga es belga.
- 3 El niño es encantador.
- 4 Mi marido es musulmán.
- 5 Mi padre es nicaragüense y mi madre es panameña.
- 6 El chico andaluz es muy trabajador.

Plural forms

- 1 adjectives that describe plural nouns normally take the plural form. The following simple rules will show you how to make an adjective plural:
- 2 adjectives that end in an unstressed vowel in the singular form the plural with **-s**: **un parque bonito** (*a nice park*) – **unos parques bonitos** (*some nice parks*).
- 3 if the final vowel of the adjective in the singular is stressed the plural takes **-es**: **un amigo iraní** (*an Iranian friend*) – **unos amigos iraníes** (*some Iranian friends*).

- 4 most adjectives that end in a consonant form the plural with **-es**: **un coche azul** (*a blue car*) – **unos coches azules** (*some blue cars*). Those ending in **-z** change this into **-c** and add **-es**: **un plato andaluz** (*an Andalusian dish*) – **unos platos andaluces** (*some Andalusian dishes*).
- 5 adjectives ending in **-án, -ón, -ín, -or** add **-es** for masculine and **-as** for feminine: **encantador** (*charming*) > **Ellos son encantadores** (m) – **Ellas son encantadoras** (f) (*They are charming.*)



Adjectives indicating nationality or place of origin which end in a consonant form the plural as above: **escocés** (*Scottish*) > **los whiskies escoceses** (*Scottish whiskies*) – **las montañas escocesas** (*Scottish mountains*).



H Give the Spanish for the words in brackets.

En mi clase de español hay estudiantes (*English*), (*German*) y (*French*).



I Put the English adjective in brackets into Spanish.

- 1 Los quesos (*blue*) pueden ser (*strong*).
- 2 Estas montañas no son (*high*) pero son (*dangerous*).
- 3 El fin de semana suelo ir al mercadillo* a buscar alguna cosa (*old*).
- 4 Las camas en este hotel son (*comfortable*) pero el hotel no es (*cheap*).
- 5 Julio y Laura dicen que están muy (*tired*) pero (*contented*).
- 6 No voy a comprarme esos pantalones (*black*); me son un poco (*long*).
- 7 A pesar de ser muy (*hard-working*), a mis (*poor*) tías siempre les pasa algo (*bad*).
- 8 Eduardo tiene el pelo muy (*short*), los ojos (*brown*) y una boca (*big*).

*el mercadillo = la feria in some parts of Latin America, el tianguis in Mexico



Reading

J Read the first part of this text to answer this question in Spanish:

De las ciudades que menciona el narrador, ¿cuál es su favorita y por qué?

Patrimonio de la Humanidad	World Heritage Site
pasear	to stroll
el casco viejo	the old part (of a city)