

Artículo Determinado/Definite Article

A. USAGE OF THE DEFINITE ARTICLE - Four (4) forms: **el, la, los, las**

- **Before nouns** used in a general sense and **all abstract nouns**:

Los colombianos adoran las fiestas.	Mexicans love parties.
La gente piensa que el dinero es vital.	People think that money is vital.
La libertad es esencial en la vida.	Freedom is essential in life.
Me gusta el pescado.	I like fish.
Me interesa la política.	I am interested in politics.

- **Before languages**, illnesses, sports, sciences, and other fields of knowledge:

El inglés es fácil.	English is easy.
Lucha contra el cáncer.	Fight against cancer.
Me interesa el fútbol.	I am interested in soccer.
Así es la biología	Such is biology.

- **But**, the **article is often omitted after 'de' and 'en', and after hablar, estudiar, tener and saber**:

El libro está en español.	Hay una clase de tenis.	No hablo francés.
The book is in Spanish.	There is a tennis class.	I don't speak French.

- **And before most titles** when speaking about someone:

El escritor mejicano Octavio Paz ganó **el** premio Nobel en 1992.
El señor García habla con **el** coronel Páez sobre **la** reina Isabel.

But not when speaking to the person being addressed by their title.
"Buenos días, **señor** García".

- **Before common words** such as *cama, escuela, trabajo, guerra, cárcel, ciudad, iglesia, clase*

No piensan en **el** trabajo.

They do not think about work.

Están en **la** cárcel.

They are in jail.

Leen para **la** clase.

They're reading for class.

Vivo en **la** ciudad de Guadalajara.

I live in Mexico City.

(**Except** in stock phrases such as "at war" (*en guerra*), or "in class" (*en clase*)

- In the **names** of a **few countries and cities** such as - **la** República Dominicana, **Los** Ángeles, **La** Paz, **El** Salvador, and with **any country** or **region name** when it is **qualified by an adjective** - **La** España turística, **el** Perú moderno. **But...** Vivo en España.

B. CONTRACTIONS 'AL' AND 'DEL'

The prepositions **a** and **de** - contract with the masculine singular article, to form the only two written, mandatory contractions in Spanish, **al** - al norte (**a** + **el**) and **del** - del planeta (**de** + **el**).