

October 18, 2006

In this edition:
Introduction to
Coffee Break
Spanish; basic
greetings;
asking how
people are
feeling; Spanish
spelling and
accents; saying
“goodbye”

Lesson 01 Notes

CoffeeBreakSpanish.com

Hola, ¿qué tal? Lesson 01

Programme Notes

Welcome to this first edition of Coffee Break Spanish, the new podcast aimed at learners of Spanish. In Coffee Break Spanish we'll be guiding you through the beginnings of the Spanish language and helping you learn the basics of Spanish.

With Coffee Break Spanish we provide materials which will help you to master the language we cover in each lesson in an interesting and relaxing way: in order to learn a language you need to be relaxed, and if you're relaxed then you'll learn more effectively.

¡Basta ya! Let's get straight into learning Spanish!

Introduction

The first word we're going to learn is probably one of the most important words in any language:

hola
hello

Hola means “hello”. It can be used at any time of the day, and although it's not very formal, it can

be used with people you know and people you don't know.

To ask someone how they are, use:

¿qué tal?
how are you?

Although you may want to concentrate on the spoken language, we feel it's important to consider how words and phrases are written too. In the phrase above there are two things we'd like to point out. Firstly, when you write a question in Spanish, you must begin the question part of the sentence with an upside-down question mark: ¿ The question then ends with a normal question mark. This is used throughout the Spanish-speaking world.

Secondly, like many languages other than English, Spanish uses accents. Unlike French the accents don't actually change the sound of the word. Instead they're used most of the time to differentiate between two words which are written the same but mean different things. It's also important to know that all Spanish question

words carry an accent, and we'll be seeing this in future lessons.

So, getting back to *¿qué tal?* - the phrase means "how are you". It's quite informal, and could also be translated as "how's it going?" or "how are things?"

Answering "¿qué tal?"

There are lots of possibilities for answering the question *¿qué tal?* Let's look at some of these now:

bien
well

The most straightforward answer to *¿qué tal?* is *bien*. It means "well", or "good". You can also add

gracias
thank you

and combine both of these words to give *bien, gracias*, meaning "well, thank you". Let's put these into a short conversation:

Mark: Hola, ¿qué tal?
Kara: Bien, gracias. ¿Qué tal?
Mark: Bien, gracias.

Here are some other possible answers:

muy bien
very well

fatal
awful

estupendo
great, brilliant

fenomenal
great, brilliant

Answering "¿qué tal?"

If you're asked *¿qué tal?* and you give your answer, you can ask the other person how they are feeling by repeating the question. Alternatively, you can say:

¿y tú?
and you?

In answer to *¿y tú?* you can start with:

yo
I, as far as I'm concerned

Look at this example to help you get to grips with this idea:

Mark: ¿Qué tal?
Kara: Bien, ¿y tú?
Mark: Yo, muy bien.

In this situation, Mark says "as far as I'm concerned, I'm very well", or "Me? I'm very well."

Putting it all together

Let's put everything we've learned together in a conversation. You should try practising this conversation and substituting the other words you've learned in today's lesson.

Mark: Hola, Kara.
Kara: Hola, Mark. ¿Qué tal?
Mark: Fenomenal. ¿Y tú?
Kara: Yo, muy bien.

Translation:

Mark: Hi, Kara.
Kara: Hello, Mark. How are you?
Mark: Great. What about you?
Kara: Me? I'm well.

Bonus vocabulary

In each edition of Coffee Break Spanish we cover the basic language you need to communicate. However we also provide some additional vocabulary for our listeners who download the extra materials. You can download the bonus vocabulary recording from our website. For the full list of vocabulary for this lesson, including the bonus words and phrases, see overleaf.

CoffeeBreakSpanish: Lesson 01 - Key Vocabulary

hola	hello
¿qué tal?	how are you?
bien	well
gracias	thank you
muy bien	very well
fatal	awful
estupendo	great, brilliant
fenomenal	great, brilliant
¿y tú?	and you?, what about you?
yo	I, as far as I'm concerned

CoffeeBreakSpanish: Lesson 01 - Bonus Vocabulary

¿qué hay?	how's it going?
genial	great
así así	so so
regular	not so great
¿qué pasa?	what's up?
sin novedades	nothing new
no me puedo quejar	I can't complain



CoffeeBreak**Spanish**.com