



2º de Bachillerato

Inglés

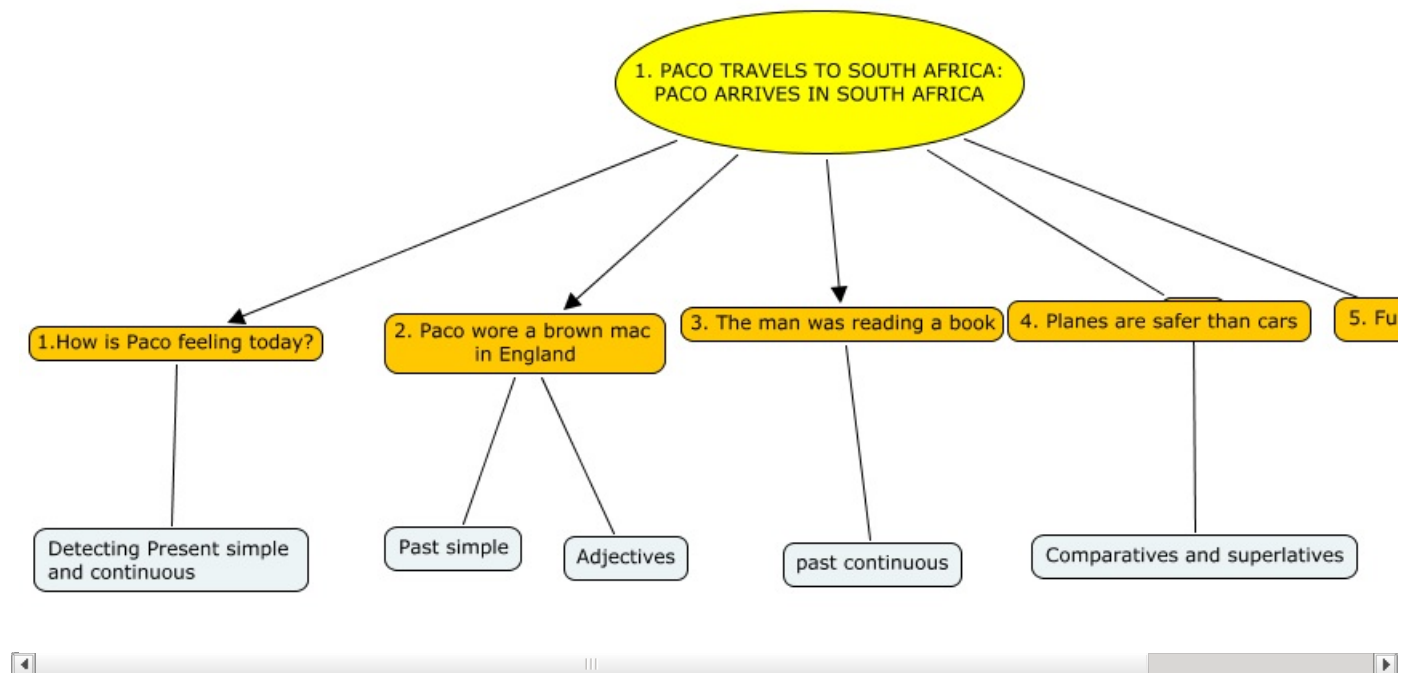
Contenidos

**Paco travels to South Africa:
Paco arrives in South Africa**



Pantsula Dancing, Gauteng, South Africa

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Descargar [CMAP](#).

Introduction

In this unit we will review some English verb tenses: the Present Simple, the Present Continuous, the Past Simple and the Past Continuous. We will also learn to compare people or things and we will see how the order of words in English sentences is more fixed than in Spanish sentences. To do so, we will see, for example, how when the adjectives are placed in front of a noun (attributive position), they frequently follow a unchangeable order. Finally, we will learn some vocabulary related to descriptions, feelings, clothes and parts of the body, too.

Although it may seem easy for you, read all the texts very carefully, pay as much attention as possible to the examples and have a good time doing the exercises and activities provided in order to learn English not only in an effective but also in an enjoyable way.

Actividad de lectura

As you know, Paco has already left the United States and his next stop is Africa. He wanted to visit all the continents, not only to meet new people but also to get to know new cultures and customs. As he has improved his English a lot in the United Kingdom and the United States, he has chosen a country where English is one of the eleven **official languages**, South Africa, to begin his visit in this interesting huge continent.

At the moment he is flying to OR Tambo International Airport in Johannesburg. The plane took off a long time ago and in a couple of hours he will be arriving at the airport. He gets really nervous whenever he has to travel by plane. He prefers to travel by train, car or coach. However, he knows that the plane is safer and faster than any other means of transport. Unfortunately, if he wants to visit all the places he is thinking of in Africa, he will have to take the plane more than once during his stay. The first time Paco flew was when he went from Madrid to London, and he didn't like the experience very much. Although it was a safe big British plane, he felt really nervous from the beginning to the very end of the flight. And he is as nervous now as he was then.



He is sitting next to a smart middle-aged American business man, who has realized Paco is a nervous wreck. The man is wearing a grey suit and a **flamboyant** blue and green tie. He has got short dark hair, thick eyebrows, and a hooked nose. When Paco sat down, the man was reading a book and Paco noticed he was clean-shaven.

Man: Is this your first flight?

Paco: Oh, no, it isn't. But I can't help getting nervous when I fly.

Man: Don't you worry! It's really safe to fly nowadays. In fact, it's said that flying is the safest way of travelling. It's better than trains or coaches, and faster, of course, although it's also much more expensive, isn't it?

Paco: Yes, it is. However I feel less nervous when I use the train or the coach. Fortunately, I don't mind how expensive it is, but it's the quickest way of travelling from the States to Johannesburg. In a couple of hours, I'll be on solid ground, at last.

Man: Look! The more worried and nervous you are, the worse for you. If I were you, I'd try to have a nap before landing. You'll feel far better when you wake up.

Paco: Thanks a lot. I'll try!

Read the text carefully paying attention to the tenses used, and the word order in sentences. If you need any help, have a look at [Click here](#).

In this topic, your main aim is to identify and recognize verb tenses (Present Simple, Present Continuous, Past Simple and Past Continuous), comparative adjectives and adverbs, as well as comparative sentences. Pay attention to the adjectives in front of nouns, that is, adjectives in attributive position, too.

to be a nervous wreck: ser un manojito de nervios.

clean-shaven: bien afeitado.

to have a nap: echar una cabezada.

Comprueba lo aprendido

After reading the text, say if the following sentences are true or false. Identify a sentence in the text that justifies why they are true or false.

1. Paco decided to go to South Africa because the official language is English.

☐ Verdadero ☐ Falso

Falso

He has chosen a country where English is one of the eleven official languages.

2. Paco is keen on flying.

☐ Verdadero ☐ Falso

Falso

He gets really nervous whenever he has to travel by plane.

3. Paco is more nervous now than when he travelled to London.

☐ Verdadero ☐ Falso

Falso

He is as nervous now as he was then.

4. Paco is worried about the cost of the flight.

☐ Verdadero ☐ Falso

Verdadero

I don't mind how expensive it is.

Let's go on to the next section to remember and recognize two important tenses in English, the Present Simple and the Present Continuous. But before clicking to go there, please make an effort and try to remember how these tenses are formed.

Reflexiona

Do you remember how the present simple and the present continuous tenses are formed?



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Present Simple	3rd person singular	Present Continuous	3rd person singular
Bare infinitive (<i>infinitive without "to"</i>)	Bare infinitive + -(e)s	Verb to be + -ing	is + -ing
I wear sunglasses in summer.	Paco wears sunglasses in summer	I am having a good time	He is having a good time

Read the passage in Section one and make two lists of all the phrases and sentences in the Present Simple and the Present Continuous tenses.

Present Simple:

As you **know**... / His next stop **is** Africa / English **is** one of the eleven official languages / He **gets** really excited whenever he **has** to travel by plane / He **prefers** to travel by train, car or coach / He **knows** that the plane **is** safer and faster / If he **wants** to visit all the places... / He **is** as nervous now... / He **has got** short dark hair... / **Is** this your first flight? / No, it **isn't** / I **can't help** getting highly strung when I fly / It's really safe to fly nowadays / It **is** said that flying **is** the safest way of travelling / It **is** better than trains or coaches... / It **is** also much more expensive, **isn't** it? / Yes, it **is** / I **feel** less nervous when I **use** the train or the coach / I **don't mind** how expensive it **is** / It **is** the quickest way of travelling / The more worried and nervous you **are**... / ... when you **wake up**

Present Continuous:

At the moment he **is flying** to OR Tambo International Airport / ... the places he **is thinking** of in Australia / He **is sitting** next to a smart medium-aged American... / The man **is wearing** a grey suit...

Comprueba lo aprendido

Remember that to form questions and negative sentences in the present simple the verb "do" (3rd person singular: does) is frequently used as an auxiliary. However, it is not needed neither with the present continuous nor with any other tense apart from the past simple.

The following sentences have been taken from the text in Section 1. Mark the INCORRECT positive, negative and interrogative forms.

1. He gets really nervous whenever he has to travel by plane.

☐ a. Do he gets really nervous whenever he has to travel by plane?

☐ b. Does he get really nervous whenever he has to travel by plane?

☐ c. Is he get really nervous whenever he has to travel by plane?

Solución

1. Correcto
2. Incorrecto
3. Correcto

2. He is as nervous now as he was then.

☐ a. He isn't as nervous now as he was then.

☐ b. He not is as nervous now as he was then.

☐ c. He doesn't is as nervous now as he was then.

Solución

1. Incorrecto
2. Correcto
3. Correcto

3. He prefers to travel by train, car or coach.

☐ a. He don't prefers to travel by train, car or coach.

☐ b. He doesn't prefers to travel by train, car or coach.

☐ c. He doesn't prefer to travel by train, car or coach.

Solución

1. Correcto
2. Correcto
3. Incorrecto



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4. The man is wearing a grey suit.

☐ a. Does the man wearing a grey suit?

☐ b. Is the man wearing a grey suit?

☐ c. Does the man be wearing a grey suit?

Solución

1. Correcto
2. Incorrecto
3. Correcto

Importante

As we have seen, Paco gets very nervous when he has to fly. So, at this very moment he is feeling very nervous. At the same time, however, he is very happy because he is on the point of landing at OR Tambo International Airport in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Feelings are frequently expressed by means of adjectives. Apart from the ones used in the text, there are plenty of adjectives in English to express how you feel. [Clicking here](#) you'll find a list of adjectives to begin working on how people can express emotions.

Comprueba lo aprendido

EXCITED and NERVOUS

We use *excited* to talk about something good: *I'm going on holiday next week. I'm really excited.*

We use *nervous* to talk about something (normally in the future) that worries us: *I've got an exam tomorrow. I'm really nervous.*

When someone irritates you, they *get on your nerves*: *My brother is always jumping in front of the TV. He's really getting on my nerves.*

Choose the correct word in each sentence.

1. Next week I'm meeting my girlfriend's parents. I'm feeling really . She says they're really strict.
2. "I've got butterflies in my stomach. " "Have you? What are you so about?"
3. Joe's got an Erasmus scholarship. He's going to spend a year in Berlin. He's really about it.
4. Will you please stop singing that Bisbal song. It's .
5. John has been ordered to the boss' office. He doesn't know what it's about so he 's quite .
6. Yippee! We're going to Disneyland tomorrow. I'm so I won't be able to sleep.

Comprobar

1. Next week I'm meeting my girlfriend's parents. I'm feeling really nervous. She says they're really strict.
2. "I've got butterflies in my stomach. " "Have you? What are you so nervous about?"
3. Joe's got an Erasmus scholarship. He's going to spend a year in Berlin. He's really excited about it.
4. Will you please stop singing that Bisbal song. It's getting on my nerves.
5. John has been ordered to the boss' office. He doesn't know what it's about so he 's quite nervous.
6. Yippee! We're going to Disneyland tomorrow. I'm so excited I won't be able to sleep.

Curiosidad

OR Tambo International Airport

This airport in Johannesburg, South Africa, is also known as Johannesburg International Airport. It was founded in 1952 as Jan Smuts International Airport. It is considered to be the most important airport in South Africa, [catering for](#) more than 17 million passengers each year. It became known as Johannesburg International Airport after the reformed national government implemented a national policy of not naming airports after politicians in 1994. Nevertheless, that policy was reversed later and the airport was renamed again in 2006 after the first president of the African National Congress, [Oliver Reginald Tambo](#).

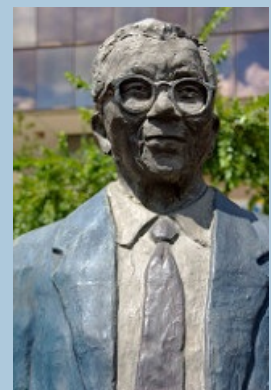


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Now we have briefly revised the form of the Present Simple and the Present Continuous it's time to go to the next section. In Topic 2 we will work harder on those tenses, paying attention to the main uses. Now, let's remind ourselves of the main differences between the Present Simple and the Past Simple tenses and have a look at something interesting about adjectives. Come on, to the next section!

Ejercicio resuelto



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Remember that, in contrast with the Present Simple, the Past Simple is used to express the idea that the action started and finished at a specific time in the past. Although that specific time is not mentioned, the speaker has it in mind.

Let's see an example: **Paco wore a brown mac in England.**

We know that Paco left England some weeks ago, so the action must be expressed in the Past Simple tense.

Go back to the passage in Section 1 and make a list of all the phrases and sentences in the Past Simple tense.

He **wanted** to visit all the continents.

The plane **took off** a long time ago.

The first time Paco **flew was** when he **went** from Madrid to London.

He **didn't like** the experience very much.

It **was** a safe big British plane.

He **felt** really nervous from the beginning to the very end of the flight.

...as nervous as he **was** then.

When Paco **sat down**, he **could** see he **was** clean-shaven.

If I **were**...

As you can see in the examples above, in English there are verbs which

- add suffix -ed to form the past simple (**Regular verbs**)
- have their own past simple (**Irregular verbs**)

Unfortunately, there is just one way to distinguish them, and it is by learning irregular verbs [by heart](#).

Do you know which of the verbs in the picture are irregular?

In the hand, there are four irregular verbs: dream, teach, learn and sing, whose past simples are **dreamt** (in British English also **dreamed**), **taught**, **learnt** (in British English also **learned**) and **sang**, respectively.



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Importante

[Click here](#) to get a first list of irregular verbs in English. You must know most of them because they are very frequently used in English. Later in the unit, you'll be provided with another list and exercises to improve your learning.

Comprueba lo aprendido

To form the interrogative and negative forms of both regular and irregular verbs we use the past simple of the auxiliary verb **do** (**did**), (except for BE and the modal verbs)? **Say which of the following options are INCORRECT.**

1. He wanted to visit all the continents.

- ☐ a. He didn't wanted to visit all the continents.
- ☐ b. He didn't want to visit all the continents.
- ☐ c. Did he want to visit all the continents?
- ☐ d. Did he wanted to visit all the continents?

Solución

1. [Correcto](#)
2. [Incorrecto](#)
3. [Incorrecto](#)
4. [Correcto](#)



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2. He didn't like the experience very much.

- ☐ a. Did he liked the experience very much?
- ☐ b. He liked the experience very much.
- ☐ c. Did he like the experience very much?
- ☐ d. He like the experience very much.

Solución

1. [Correcto](#)
2. [Incorrecto](#)
3. [Incorrecto](#)
4. [Correcto](#)

3. The plane took off a long time ago.

- ☐ a. Did the plane take off a long time ago?
- ☐ b. Took the plane off a long time ago?
- ☐ c. The plane didn't take off a long time ago.
- ☐ d. The plane didn't took off a long time ago.

Solución

1. [Incorrecto](#)
2. [Correcto](#)
3. [Incorrecto](#)
4. [Correcto](#)

4. He could see he was clean-shaven.

- ☐ a. Did he can see he was clean-shaven?
- ☐ b. Could he see he was clean-shaven?
- ☐ c. He not could see he was clean-shaven.
- ☐ d. He couldn't see he was clean-shaven.

Solución

1. [Correcto](#)
2. [Incorrecto](#)
3. [Correcto](#)

Curiosidad

First airplanes

Apart from the hot air balloon, the first airplane which was flown successfully was a [glider](#). Early gliders were launched from high places such as cliffs. [Sir George Cayel](#) is considered to be the first man who made a glider which actually flew in mid-nineteenth century. It was too small and it flew with no pilot or passenger in it.

In 1890 [Orville and Wilbur Wright](#), who worked in a bicycle shop, discovered that bicycles that were closer to the ground were faster and became really interested in flying. After reading all the books about airplanes they could find, they began making gliders in North Carolina. The Wright brothers, as they became known, improved the glider and designed one where the pilot controlled both the direction and height of the airplane in the air by means of a [rudder](#) (in the tail of the plane) and [flaps](#) (in the wings). So, in December 1903, the Wright Brothers became the first people to successfully fly a plane with a person in it. It flew for 12 seconds!

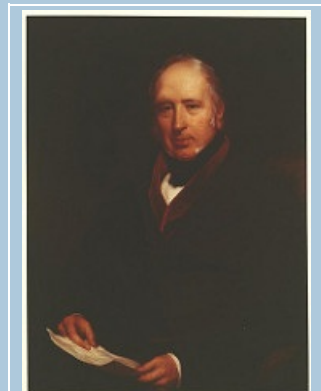


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In the introductory passage about Paco's flight to Africa, there are lots of adjectives. Adjectives are really important to modify nouns. So, this is what we are going to do next: recognize the adjectives in the text and their position in phrases and sentences. Come on, go on to the next section!

Importante

USED TO

Paco **didn't use** to be rich and he **used to** speak English quite badly. Now he is rich and speaks English well

We use **used to** + infinitive to talk about past habits or state. Usually it suggests something that doesn't happen now. It is like a normal past tense verb in the past, so its negative is *didn't* + infinitive and interrogative is *did* + subject + *use to* + infinitive.

Where did you use to live when you were younger?

I didn't use to have long hair.

BUT: it is a defective verb. We only use it in the past. In the present we don't use present simple of the verb, we use a frequency adverb.

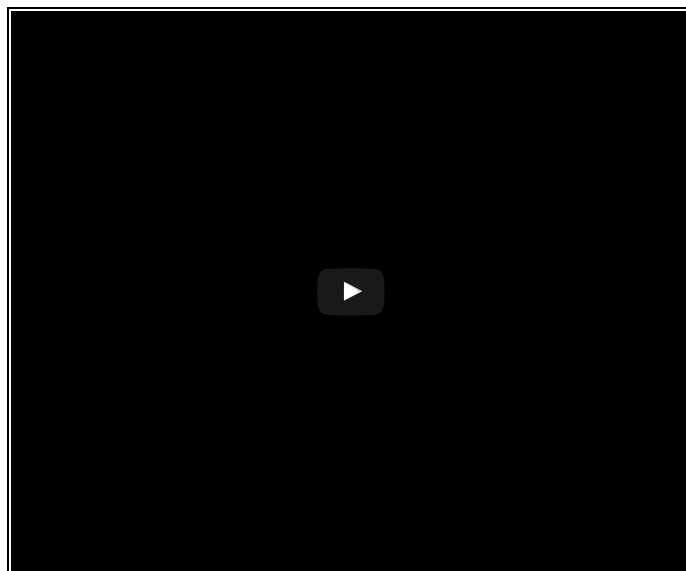
~~I use to go swimming.~~ *I usually go swimming.*

I used to live in Madrid. Now I live in Seville.

He used to have long hair. Now he has got short hair

Actividad de lectura

Listen to the video below which talks about adjectives. It is a brief summary of everything we are going to study in this unit so pay close attention to it.



Video de Katrina Kahler en [Youtube](#)

According to the video, what are adjectives used for?

The video says **adjectives are words you use to describe nouns or naming words** and that they make our writing or speaking much more descriptive and interesting. This is the first thing you must take into account when dealing with adjectives.

Importante

Most adjectives in English can be used in an attributive (**in front of a noun**) or predicative (**after verbs such as *be*, *seem*, *look*, etc.**) position. In any case, remember that in English they **never** take the plural **-s**.

Attributive position	Predicative position
Paco took a big plane	Flying is becoming more and more expensive
It was an exciting flight	It is really hot in Africa



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Reflexiona



Now, it's time for you to recognize adjectives. Go back to the text in Section 1 and find at least ten attributive adjectives and ten predicative ones.



Attributive adjectives: new people / new cultures and customs / eleven official languages / interesting huge continent / a long time ago / first time / safe big British / a smart middle-aged American business man / grey suit / flamboyant blue and green tie / short dark hair / thick eyebrows / hooked nose / first flight / safest way of travelling / quickest way of travelling / solid ground

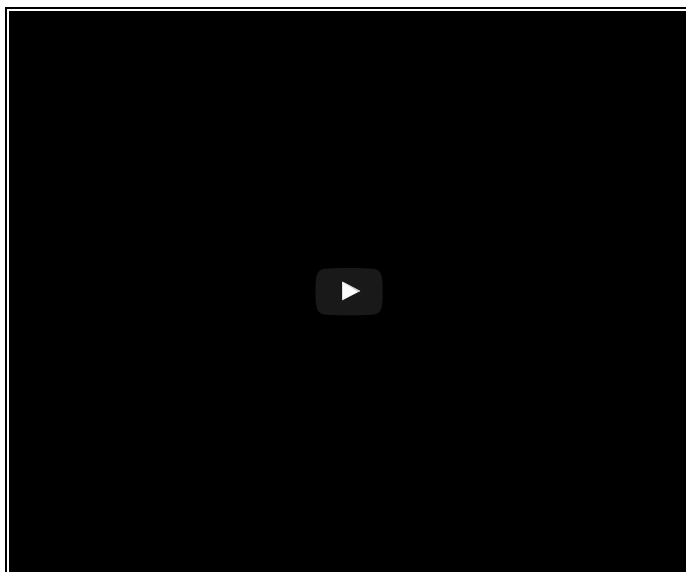
Predicative adjectives: gets really excited / the plane is safer and faster / felt really nervous / is as nervous / is a nervous wreck / was clean-shaven / getting nervous / is really safe / is better than / and faster / much more expensive / feel less nervous / how expensive it is / the more worried and nervous you are / the worse for you / will feel far better.

Para saber más

[Click here](#) to read more information about adjectives. The information provided will be really useful to you as a way of introduction to the topic in which we will work on them.

Ejercicio resuelto

In English it is very common to use more than one adjective before a noun (attributive position), for example, **Paco flew to the States on a safe big British plane**. When this happens, **we must place the adjectives in the right order according to type**. We will study it in depth later in the unit. Now watch this video in which we are told the natural order of adjectives before a noun. It will help you with the activity below.



Video de [LearnenglishHere](#) en Youtube

Notice the nominal phrases in the text in Section 1 whose nouns are modified by more than one adjective and pay attention to what those adjectives refer to.

- this **interesting huge** continent: **interesting** (opinion), **huge** (size)
- a **safe big British** plane: **safe** (opinion), **big** (size), **British** (origin)
- a **smart medium-aged American** business man: **smart** (opinion), **medium-aged** (age), **American** (origin)
- a **flamboyant blue and green** tie: **flamboyant** (opinion), **blue and green** (colour)
- **short dark** hair: **short** (size), **dark** (colour)

Comprueba lo aprendido

Can you recognize what types of adjective modify the nouns in the following nominal phrases?

1. a fantastic grey Italian suit

- ☐ a. size, colour and origin
- ☐ b. opinion, colour and origin

Incorrect.

Correct.

Solución

1. **Incorrecto** (Retroalimentación)
2. **Opción correcta** (Retroalimentación)



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2. an interesting thick black book

- ☐ a. opinion, shape and colour
- ☐ b. opinion, size and colour

Incorrect.

Correct.

Solución

1. **Incorrecto** (Retroalimentación)
2. **Opción correcta** (Retroalimentación)

3. a terrible long South African hunting rifle

- ☐ a. opinion, size, origin and purpose
- ☐ b. opinion, shape, origin and kind

Correct.

Incorrect.

Solución

1. **Opción correcta** (Retroalimentación)
2. **Incorrecto** (Retroalimentación)

Reflexiona

It's important to do a final revision and think about what we have learnt: *definition of an adjective, its position, its order in the noun phrase...*

IMPORTANT:

For adjective order, memorise this phrase: **OpSShACOMP**. It sounds very strange but it's useful to remember the order.

Op= opinion (good, bad, ridiculous, beautiful, etc.)

S= size (big, small, enormous, etc.)

Sh= shape (round, square, triangular, etc.)

A= Age (old, young, new, old-fashioned)

C= colour

O= origin (Chinese, German, Spanish)

M= material (steel, metal, wooden, cotton)

P= purpose -this can be a noun or another adjective, often ending in _ing. A horse race is a race for horses while a race horse is a horse for races (swimming, boxing, oil, etc)

Of course you don't normally see more than three or four adjectives together, but you need to know where they go.

Don't panic if there is something you still don't understand; here you have a video summarizing all the contents in Spanish.



Now that we have had a quick look at the adjectives in the text, let's go deeper and study how to describe people using adjectives.

2.2. That girl is pretty and has blue eyes (Adjectives)



In this section we are going to see how to describe a person; both his/her physical appearance and his/her personality. In order to do that, we are going to use the contents we have already studied in the previous sections; that is, **the adjectives**.

When you describe a person, you should do it in such a way that, by the time people finish listening to you, they seem to know the person.

When describing a person, it's important to choose the most suitable verb:

- To describe a person's general physical appearance, we use the verb **"BE"**:

*She **is** tall*
*They **are** very thin*
*I **am** overweight*

- To describe a person's specific physical characteristics, we use the verb **"HAVE"**:

*He **has** short brown hair*
*We **have** blue eyes*
*I **have** a big nose*

- To describe a person's personality, we use the verb **"BE"**:

*You **are** kind*
*She **is** bad-tempered*
*They **are** friendly*

Important:

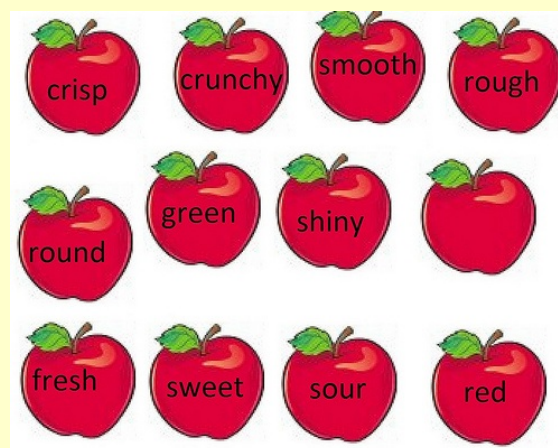
To ask for a **physical description** we use What + the verb **look like**:

What does he/she look like? He's tall and thin
What do they look like?

We only use it in the question. In the answer we use have and be

To ask about someone's personality, we use What + BE LIKE

What is Mary like? She's really friendly
What are the Germans like? They are very hard-working



Apple words

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Ejercicio resuelto

Now we are going to learn some vocabulary to describe a person. But first, watch this video and try to write down all the descriptive adjectives you are able to find.



Now, would you be able to classify them into physical appearance or personality adjectives?

PHYSICAL APPEARANCE	PERSONALITY
	energetic (<i>energético</i>)
	fun (<i>divertido</i>): <i>OJO: fun is actually a noun so we can't use it in the same way as funny. We can say He's very funny but not He is very fun. We have to say He is a lot of fun</i>
	funny (<i>gracioso</i>)
	intelligent (<i>inteligente</i>)
	easy-going (<i>fácil de tratar</i>)
	sexy (<i>sexy, atractivo</i>)
	ravishing (<i>encantador, arrebatador</i>)
	lovely (<i>bonito, agradable</i>)
	practical (<i>práctico</i>)
	kind (<i>amable</i>)
	considerate (<i>considerado</i>)
	embarrassing (<i>embarazoso, que provoca vergüenza</i>)
	annoying (<i>irritante, molesto</i>)
beautiful (<i>hermoso-para mujeres</i>)	calm (<i>calmado, tranquilo</i>)
handsome (<i>guapo</i>) (<i>siempre para masculino</i>)	arty (<i>artístico</i>)
	smart (<i>inteligente</i>)
tall (<i>alto</i>)	clever (<i>listo</i>)
dark (<i>de piel o pelo oscura</i>)	poetic (<i>poético</i>)
	hard-working (<i>trabajador</i>)
cute (<i>mono/guapo</i>)	generous (<i>generoso</i>)
	determined (<i>decidido, resuelto</i>)
	cool (<i>guay, genial</i>)
	hyper (<i>hiperactivo</i>)
	crazy (<i>loco</i>)
	interesting (<i>interesante</i>)
	gorgeous (<i>maravilloso</i>)
	sweet (<i>dulce</i>)
	nice (<i>agradable</i>)
	caring (<i>cariñoso</i>)
	charming (<i>encantador</i>)
	loving (<i>amoroso, cariñoso</i>)
	fantastic (<i>fantástico</i>)

Importante

Here you have a lot of adjectives classified in different categories (weight, hair, mood, etc.)

They are all translated into Spanish and they will be very useful when describing a person.

ADJECTIVES



People

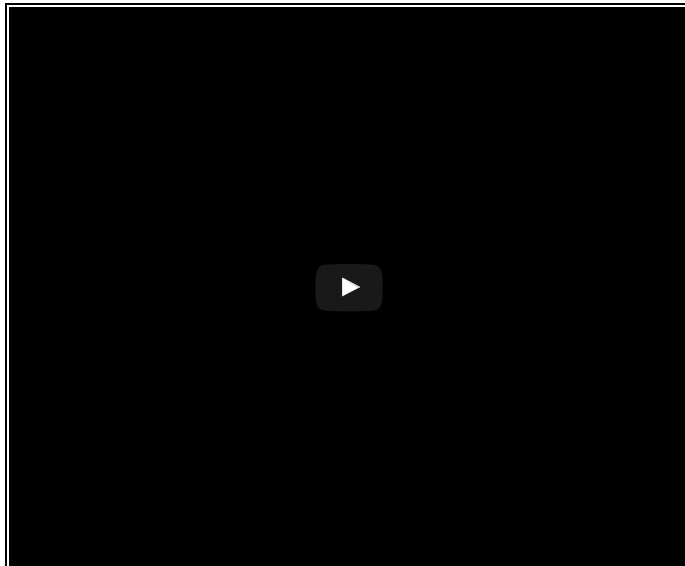
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Ejercicio resuelto

Let's work with descriptions to check if you have understood the contents.

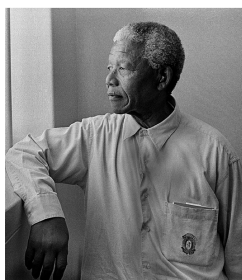
Listen to the conversations in the video and say who is who. There are more pictures than people described in the video.



1.

Imagen de JOPHIELsmiles

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2.

Imagen de BK en

[Flickr](#) bajo [CC](#)



3.

Imagen de Ogiyoshisan

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4.

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5.



6.

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7.

Imagen de Kheel Center en

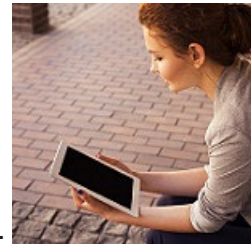
[FlickrR](#) bajo [CC](#)



8.

Imagen de Ryan Li

en [FlickrR](#) bajo [CC](#)



9.

Imagen de A WP Life en

[FlickrR](#) bajo [CC](#)

Ms. Davis is picture number 3.

Joshua is picture number 1.

Nelson Mandela is picture number 2.

Obama is picture number 4.

Sean Culver is picture number 10.

Actividad de lectura

Past simple vs. Past continuous

While Paco was flying from the United Kingdom to the USA other people were doing other things. **Listen to the following video to see what all those people were doing at that moment.** Pay special attention to pronunciation and vocabulary.

Try to name at least 20 out of the 55 actions in the video.

1. He was protesting.
2. He was counting.
3. She was complaining.
4. She was holding some books.
5. She was modelling.
6. She was cutting a ribbon.
7. She was campaigning.
8. He was **gloating**.
9. She was reading a book.
10. She was teaching.
11. She was bleeding.
12. He was ordering a pizza.
13. He was delivering a pizza.
14. They were taking photos.
15. She was ordering a glass of wine.
16. He was crying.
17. They were stripping.
18. She was giving her son a Christmas present.
19. He was writing on the wall.
20. He was making toast.
21. They were weightlifting.
22. They were throwing up (=vomiting).
23. They were watching TV.
24. They were eating pasta.
25. He was screaming.
26. He was digging.
27. They were riding bikes.
28. He was riding a bike.
29. She was telling someone off.
30. He was explaining something.
31. She was tramping.
32. She was falling.
33. He was singing and playing the guitar.
34. He was celebrating.
35. He was delivering some documents.
36. She was picking mushrooms.
37. He was filling up his tank.
38. He was riding in a hot air balloon.
39. He was shooting.
40. She was pushing her baby.
41. He was threatening someone.
42. She was giving him a cup of tea.
43. She was giving him some money.
44. He was refusing to get up.
45. She was kicking something.
46. He was running.
47. She was giving him a hat.
48. She was reading the paper.
49. They were dancing.
50. She was giving them some cocoa.
51. They were swimming.
52. She was drawing.

- 53. She was apologising.
- 54. She was throwing something in the bin.
- 55. She was flying.

Importante

Remember that the main difference between the Past Simple and the Past Continuous tenses, apart from that of how they are formed, is that the past simple refers to actions that started and finished in the past. The past continuous, however, is used to refer to actions that were in progress in the past. Those actions are frequently interrupted by other actions in the past simple tense or by a specific time. Have a look at the examples below to understand it.

Past Simple	Past Continuous
When she phoned,	I was having dinner.
	At 19.00 p.m. yesterday, Paco was flying to Johannesburg.
Paco flew from the UK to the US a fortnight ago.	

Reflexiona

In the text in Section 1 there is just one verb in the past continuous tense. **Find it . What is the relationship between this verb and the other verb in the subordinate clause (when...)?**

The sentence is :When Paco sat down,the man **was reading a book**.

The man started reading the book before Paco sat down, and when Paco sat down, the action was still in progress (it was continuing)

Para saber más

Although we will study it in depth later in the unit, [click here](#) to remind yourself of the form and main uses of the past continuous tense. You can also improve your knowledge on the use of the past simple and the past continuous tenses by doing [this exercise](#). Come on! Don't **hesitate**, both websites are very useful to improve your English!

Comprueba lo aprendido

In all languages it is common to combine verb tenses when talking about the past, mainly in narration. That is one of the reasons why you must master the use and forms of past tenses. As you have seen, Paco has maintained an interesting conversation with a foreign man on the plane. Let's see if you have improved your English as much as Paco has.

Decide which of the following sentences answers the explanation provided.

1. When Paco arrived at the airport, Sonia was making dinner.

- ☐ a. Sonia started cooking then Paco arrived.
- ☐ b. First Paco arrived, then Sonia made dinner.

Correct! The past continuous shows that Sonia had started making dinner before Paco arrived and she was still making it when Paco arrived at the airport.

Incorrect! The past continuous shows that Sonia had started making dinner before Paco arrived and she was still making it when Paco arrived at the airport.

Solución

1. [Opción correcta \(Retroalimentación\)](#)
2. [Incorrecto \(Retroalimentación\)](#)

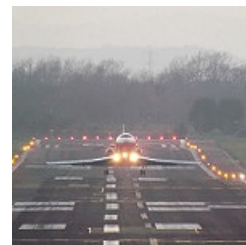


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2. When Paco arrived at the airport, Sonia made dinner.

- ☐ a. First Sonia made dinner, then Paco arrived at the airport.
- ☐ b. First Paco arrived, then Sonia made dinner.

Incorrect! Both actions are in the past simple tense; the use of the conjunction *when* here indicates that Sonia didn't start making dinner until Paco arrived.

Correct! Both actions are in the past simple tense; the use of the conjunction *when* here indicates that Sonia didn't start making dinner until Paco arrived.

Solución

1. [Incorrecto \(Retroalimentación\)](#)
2. [Opción correcta \(Retroalimentación\)](#)

3. Paco was flying to Johannesburg while Sonia was making dinner.

- ☐ a. Both actions were taking place at the same time for a period of time.
- ☐ b. When the first action finished happening, the second one started.

Correct! The use of the conjunction *while* plus past continuous indicates that both actions were in progress at the same time in the past.

Incorrect! The use of the conjunction *while* + past continuous indicates that both actions were in progress at the same time in the past.

Solución

1. [Opción correcta \(Retroalimentación\)](#)
2. [Incorrecto \(Retroalimentación\)](#)

Actividad de lectura



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As we know past tenses are very frequently used whenever we have to narrate events. This is due to the fact that narration centers mainly on past events. Now it's time for you to write a short narrative.

Here you have some links that can help you: [Writing Center](#) and [Writing Checklist](#).

Write a paragraph of no less than 80 words beginning with:

When I arrived home, Sarah was waiting for me at my door.

When you finish, check your essay.

That's all folks! Can you remember who said those words? ([Click here](#) to find out). And what do they mean? That's all about this section of the topic. In the last section we will work a bit on adjectives and comparisons. Don't be afraid of adjectives, they are very easy!!! Come on! Let's go on to the last section!

4. Planes are safer than cars (comparatives and superlatives)



As we now know, adjectives are used not only to describe things, people and places, but also to compare them. Remember that we make comparisons by adding suffix **-er** to short adjectives and using the adverb **more** in front of longer ones (and there are 3 irregulars). We will study it in depth later in the unit. Now, just have a look at the following chart to make sure you recognize the comparative sentences that appear in the text in Section 1.



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Imagen de Vicente Alfonso
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Comparative	Conjunction
older	than
newer	
longer	
shorter	
more interesting more expensive	than

Have a look at the photos above. We could say, for example: *The photo on the left is **older than** the photo on the right* or *The picture on the right is **more recent** than the picture on the left.*

Importante

Remember that comparison is a property not only of adjectives but also of adverbs. It describes the **degree** to which the modifier (adjective or adverb) modifies its complement (nouns in the case of adjectives and nouns, other adjectives and even other adverbs in the case of adverbs).

We will study two degrees of adjectives and adverbs:

Comparative	Superlative
safer / more interesting	safest / most interesting
more friendly	most friendly

Reflexiona

Remember that there are several degrees of comparison. So, apart from comparisons of superiority, we can also find comparisons of equality and inferiority. In them, we use the positive adjective or adverb to make or draw the comparison (e.g.



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Coaches are as fast as cars, Paco speaks English less fluently than Sonia).

Find all the comparisons in the text in Section one. Pay attention to all kinds of comparisons.

- the plane is **safer and faster than** any other means of transport.
- he will have to take the plane **more than once**
- he is **as nervous** now **as** he was then
- flying is **the safest** way of travelling
- it's **better than** trains or coaches, and faster
- it's also **much more expensive**
- I feel **less nervous**
- it's **the quickest** way of travelling
- **the more worried and nervous** you are, **the worse** for you.
- you'll feel **far better** when you wake up



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Comprueba lo aprendido

Read the paragraph below and fill in the missing words using the comparatives of the words in the box.

rich - big - expensive - fast - great - safe



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There are lots of means* of transport. The car is probably the one that most people use. However it is not the safest way of travelling. In fact, road traffic accidents are one of the most common sources of personal injury. And everybody knows that the the car's engine, the the chance of car accidents. **That being so**, excessive speed is one of the most common contributory factors in fatal accidents. Undoubtedly, the plane is fewer



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accidents) and (compare the time it would take to drive from LA to New York with the equivalent in flying) , but it is also than any other mode of transport. When people travel long distances, they frequently take airplanes, and this is what Paco has done to travel from the United States to South Africa. He isn't worried about how expensive flying is. He has won the lottery! So, he is now than he had ever imagined!

NB: means of transport is invariable in singular and plural. *This is a means of transport. There are different means of transport.*

[Enviar](#)

Para saber más

There are far more means of transport than the ones mentioned up to now. [Click here](#) to get a good list of them. And [here](#) you'll be able to get another list and print exercises to improve your vocabulary on the subject. Finally more vocabulary and naturally speaking useful phrases may be learnt by [clicking here](#).

Curiosidad

Driving on the wrong side?

Surely you've wondered why in the United Kingdom and other countries such as Japan, Australia or New Zealand people drive on the left. Over the centuries, several explanations have been provided, the most frequent being that the British driving pattern derives from days of horses and horsemen. Taking into account that most people are right-handed, it seemed reasonable that a horseman who would meet another horseman would be in the most advantageous position if he would need to draw his sword quickly to defend himself against the on-coming horseman. It seems that Pope Benedict issued a Papal Edict in the year 1300 A.D. requiring all people to keep to the left on roadways.

Under King George III, the Government also issued a Highway Act (1773) which recommended people keep to the left on public roadways and streets.

Countries that became part of the British Empire adopted this keep-left rule.



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That's all about Topic 1 in this Unit, now go on to topic 2 where we will study all the points seen in this first topic in depth. Come on! Let's go on to topic 2!

Actividad de lectura

On the plane, Paco is sitting next to a middle-aged American business man. The plane is about to land at Johannesburg's airport and Paco starts to feel more and more nervous. He has tried to have a nap, but he can't sleep. He doesn't like flying and feels really excited whenever he has to fly, so he talks to the man:

Paco: Impossible! I can't get to sleep, I'm too nervous. When I flew from the United Kingdom to the USA, the flight lasted seven hours. I was exhausted and couldn't sleep at all.

Man: Well, try to keep your mind busy. Sometimes, it helps. Is this your first visit to South Africa?

Paco: Oh, yes, it is. I won the lottery and decided to travel around the world. I've already been to the United Kingdom and the USA. I am studying History at university and I'm really interested in learning about new cultures, customs and meeting new people. Anthropology is one of my favourite subjects.

Man: Is it? That's interesting... Was that your first flight?

Paco: Yes, it was. It was a big British plane, it seemed safe. However, when it was taking off, I wanted to get off. I suppose it was a panic attack. Some people managed to calm me down, but it was one of the worst and most traumatic experiences in my life. I am flying to South Africa because it is safer and faster than any other means of transport.

Man: Yes, it is. Look! I was afraid of flying some years ago, but, because of my job, I had to fly almost every week. Someone recommended this fantastic short book entitled *Wings of Discovery* by Captain Stacey L. Chance. It helped me quite a lot! And remember: There's nothing to fear, but fear itself!

Paco reads...

What if you could fly free like a bird - inherently understanding the wind, the sky, and your own feathered wings? Look into the eyes of an eagle, you will not see fear.

In the conversation, there are some of the main verb tenses you must master in English. Let's identify them paying attention to the form. Identify, first, the **Present Simple** and the **Present Continuous** tenses.

Present Simple	Present Continuous or Progressive
I can't get to sleep	I am studying History...
I'm too nervous	I am flying to South Africa because...
it helps	
Is this your first...?	
Yes, it is	
I'm really interested in...	
Anthropology is one of...	
Is it?	
That's interesting	
I suppose ...	
... it is safer...	
There's nothing to fear...	
Paco reads	



As you can see, most Present Simple tenses refer to habits, routines, interests or likes and dislikes and the two Present Continuous examples refer to actions that are happening at the moment of speaking. These are some of the main uses of these two tenses. Remember how they are formed!

IMPORTANT!!!

You should master the Present Simple tense since this will be the tense you will mainly have to use in the **opinion essay** in Selectividad exam

Now, let's have a look at the **Past Simple** tenses in contrast with the **Present Simple** ones

Present Simple	Past Simple

I can't get to sleep	When I flew ...
I'm too excited	the flight lasted ...
it helps	I was exhausted and couldn't sleep
Is this your first...?	I won the lottery and decided
Yes, it is	Was that your first flight?
I'm really interested in...	Yes, it was
Anthropology is one of...	It was a big British airplane
Is it?	it seemed safe
That's interesting	I wanted to get off
I supposeit was a panic attack
... it is safer...	Some people managed to calm me down
There's nothing to fear...	...it was one of...
Paco reads	I was afraid of flying...
	I had to fly...
	Someone recommended
	It helped me quite a lot

As we will see later in the unit the **Past Simple tense** is very frequently used to **narrate** events.

IMPORTANT!!!

You should master the Past Simple tense since this will be the tense you will mainly have to use in the **narrative essay** in Selectividad exam

Remember

Most Present Simple tenses refer to habits, routines, interests or likes and dislikes.

The **Past Simple tense** in contrast with the **Present Simple** one is very frequently used to **narrate** events.



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Actividad de lectura

Remember that the Past Simple tense is used to refer to actions that started and finished in the past and the speaker is conscious of that. You must also remember that there are regular and irregular verbs. Can you distinguish them in the examples?

Regular verbs: lasted, seemed, wanted, tried, helped

Irregular verbs: flew, was, won, had

Finally, let's notice the **Present Continuous** tense in contrast with the **Past Continuous**.

Present Continuous	Past Continuous
I am studying History...	when it was taking off...
I am flying to South Africa because...	

Both tenses are formed with the verb BE plus the present participle (-ing) of the main verb. The past continuous is normally used when we want to refer to an action that **was** in progress at a specific time in the past (When it [the plane] was taking off, I wanted to get off). That is the reason why

the past continuous tense is very frequently used with the past simple tense.

Actividad de lectura

Apart from the verbs, in the text we can see lots of **adjectives**. Remember that adjectives are normally used to modify nouns and that in English their position is, on some occasions (attributive adjectives), different from the one in Spanish, since in English they are placed **before the noun**.

Distinguish which adjectives are attributive (before the noun) and which are predicative (after the verb).

Attributive adjectives: middle-aged American business man / seven hours / first visit / new people / favourite subjects / first flight / a big British airplane / some people / one of the worst and most traumatic experiences / some years / every week / fantastic short book / feathered wings

Predicative Adjectives: Paco starts to feel more and more nervous / feels really excited / I'm too excited / I was exhausted / I'm really interested / That's interesting / it seemed safe / it's safer and faster / it helped me quite a lot / if you could fly free



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Actividad de lectura

In English, when we use more than one adjective in attributive position not only do they go before the noun but they also follow a concrete order according to type. **Have a look at these noun phrases:**



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a middle-aged American business man

a big British airplane

a fantastic short book

Decide what type the attributive adjectives are. Choose from: age, size, opinion and origin.

opinion	size	age	origin	noun
		middle-aged	American	business man
	big		British	airplane
fantastic	short			book

Actividad de lectura

Finally, adjectives are also used to compare people, things and places.

If you want to know how the comparative and the superlative grades of adjectives are formed, you must take into account the number of syllables the adjective has, but this will be studied later in the unit.

Find the comparative and superlative sentences in the text.

In the passage there are three comparative or superlative sentences:

- Paco starts to feel **more and more** nervous.
- It was one of **the worst** and **most** traumatic experiences in my life
- It is **safer** and **faster** than any other means of transport





Paco travels to South Africa: Paco arrives in South Africa



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Paco arrives in South Africa



Present Simple vs. Present Continuous

Present Simple: habits, routines, present interests, likes and dislikes

Subject + verb + (Indirect Ob.) + (Direct Ob.) + (Complements)

E.g.: Paco's family miss him a lot

E.g.: Paco likes Anthropology (3rd. person singular)

Present Continuous: actions occurring at the moment of speaking

Subject + verb (to be + -ing) + (Indirect Ob.) + (Direct Ob.) + (Complements)

E.g.: "I am studying History at University"

E.g.: Paco is flying to South Africa (3rd. person singular)

Paco arrives in South Africa

Present Simple vs. Past Simple

Present Simple: present habits, routines, interests, likes and dislikes

Subject + verb + (Indirect Ob.) + (Direct Ob.) + (Complements)

E.g.: Paco's family miss him a lot

E.g.: Paco likes Anthropology (3rd. person singular)

Past Simple: actions that started and finished in the past, past habits, routines, interests, likes and dislikes

Subject + verb + (Indirect Ob.) + (Direct Ob.) + (Complements)

E.g.: Paco and Andrés used to play tennis

E.g.: Paco flew in a safe big British plane to the United States (3rd. person singular)

Paco arrives in South Africa

Attributive vs. Predicative Adjectives

Attributive adjectives: before the noun

E.g.: an American business man

Attention

Specific order according to type

E.g.: a safe (*opinion*) big (*size*) British (*origin*) plane

Predicative adjectives: after the verb

E.g.: Paco feels excited

Paco arrives in South Africa



Adjectives

When you describe a person, you should do it in such a way that, by the time people finish listening to you, they seem to know the person.

- When describing a person, it's important to choose the most suitable verb:
-
- To describe a person's general physical appearance, we use the verb **"BE"**:
- *She **is** tall*
- *They **are** very thin*
- *I **am** overweight*
-
- To describe a person's specific physical characteristics, we use the verb **"HAVE"**:
- *He **has** short brown hair*
- *We **have** blue eyes*
- *I **have** a big nose*
-
- To describe a person's personality, we use the verb **"BE"**:
- *You **are** kind*
- *She **is** bad-tempered*
- *They **are** friendly*

Paco arrives in South Africa



Past Simple vs. Past Continuous

Past Simple: actions that started and finished in the past, past habits, routines, interests, likes and dislikes

Subject + verb + (Indirect Ob.) + (Direct Ob.) + (Complements)

E.g.: Paco and Andrés used to play tennis

E.g.: Paco flew in a safe big British plane to the United States (3rd. person singular)

Past Continuous: actions that were in progress at a specific time in the past

Subject + verb + (Indirect Ob.) + (Direct Ob.) + (Complements)

E.g.: The American business man was reading a book when Paco sat down

E.g.: Paco was landing when he felt sick (3rd. person singular)

Paco arrives in South Africa



Comparative and Superlative Adjectives

Comparative:

1. Short adjectives: Adjective + -er than...

E.g.: Planes are safer than cars or coaches

2. Long adjectives: more + adjective than...

E.g.: Travelling by plane is more expensive than travelling by car

Superlative:

1. Short adjectives: Adjective + -est (in/of...)

E.g.: The car is not the safest way of travelling

2. Long adjectives: most + adjective (in/of...)

E.g.: The plane is the most expensive means of transport in the world

Paco arrives in South Africa

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