

Pronouns: With objects and following prepositions

DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUNS:

During Spanish 1-3, you learned how to substitute object nouns and object pronouns. Which is to say, we learned how to say:

“Paco eats the cookies” (Paco come las galletas), and then how to change that into just, “Paco eats them (Paco las come).

In that case, the verb is transitive¹, the action of eating (“comer”) is conveyed DIRECTLY to the cookies: The cookies get eaten. Therefore, the cookies receive the action directly, and are considered DIRECT OBJECTS. Verbs that convey their action directly to an object in that way are known as “transitive verbs.” How can we tell if a verb is transitive? Easy...ask yourself, “Can I ____something?” For example: “Can I see something?” Yep, so “ver” is transitive. Can I eat something?” Yep, so comer is transitive.

Direct Object Pronouns are the words that replace the direct object noun, when both the speaker and listener know who or what is receiving the action. In other words, when I say, “Jalepeños are too spicy. I don’t use them”, you wouldn’t say, “Jalepeños are too spicy. I don’t use jalepeños.” That’s because we already know that jalepeños are the topic. So in English, we replace jalepeños with “them.” (Other English Direct Object pronouns are me, you, he/she/it, us and them.)

Here is a list of Spanish DIRECT OBJECT PRONOUNS and their translation:

¹ Can I eat something...? Yes, so it’s a transitive verb, and what gets eaten is the direct object.

Me (me)	Nos (us)
Te (you; familiar)	Los/las(os) (you, as in you guys)
Lo/la (him/her/it)	Los/las (them)

Here's another example of a transitive verb (escribir), and a direct object (la carta):

Yo escribo la carta. <i>I write the letter.</i>	The verb escribir (to write) expresses an action that CAN be transferred directly (transitive) . That means that whatever receives that action is the direct object (<u>la carta</u> in this case) , and it can be replaced by a direct object pronoun .	Yo la escribo. I write it . The direct object is la carta . La carta is what “gets written” so it receives the action directly. Then it became a pronoun (“ la ”) and is placed directly in front of the verb.
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But... some verbs do **not** transfer their actions directly the way verbs like “comer”, “escribir” and other transitive verbs do. For example, “Can I swim something?” Nope, so it’s not transitive. “Can I run something?” No, also not transitive.

So, I can't swim something, but I can swim **IN** something. I can't run someone, but I can run **WITH** someone. "In" and "with" are prepositions. So for example, you can't swim a pool, but you can swim **in** a pool. So you couldn't say "I swim it, (Yo la nado.)" you would say "I swam **IN** it." Just like above, we replaced a noun (pool) with a pronoun (it). But, in Spanish, the pronouns that follow prepositions are not the same as those that receive actions directly (direct objects). In other words, the "it" in "I write it" and the "it" in "I swim **IN** it" are two different words in Spanish. Notice the chart of Spanish direct object pronouns above, and the differences between them and the "prepositional pronouns" in the chart below:

Mi: (Para mí= for me)	Nosotros: (Para nosotros = for us)
Ti (Para tí= for you)	Ustedes (Para ustedes = for you plural)
Él/Ella/Ello/Usted (Para él/ella= for her or it)	Ellos/Ellas (Para ellas= for them). (note: ellos/as can refer to things)

So, if you want to say "I run with her" I can't say "Yo corro con la,(!)" I have to say "Yo corro **con ella**."

Or if it is a feminine thing like a pool, and I want to say "I swim in it," I can't say "Yo nado en la," I say "Yo nado **en ella**."

In addition to "con" and "en," here are some other common Spanish prepositions that use pronouns **in this way:**

detrás de-	behind
a través (de)-	across from, through
en lugar de-	instead of
En-	in, at
Cerca de-	near
Con-	with
Para-	for
A lado de-	next to
encima de-	above, on top of
alrededor de-	around

enfrente de/delante de-	in front of
antes (de)-	before
entre-	between, among
fuera de-	outside of
contra-	against
dentro de-	inside of

There are a few exceptions to this rule. The most common are the way that one says “with me” or “with you” in Spanish. Instead of “con mi” or “con ti”, in Spanish you say “**conmigo**” or “**contigo**.” So for example, “She comes with me” would be “Ella viene conmigo.” And “We have a class with you” would be “Tenemos una clase contigo.”

Here’s a summary of the 2 types of pronouns we’ll be working with in this exercise:

Direct Object Pronouns: (Used with transitive verbs)

Me (me)	Nos (us)
Te (you; familiar)	Los/las(os) (you, as in you guys)
Lo/la (he/she/it)	Los/las (them)

Prepositional pronouns: (used when the noun follows a preposition)

Mi: (Para mí= for me)	Nosotros: (Para nosotros = for us)
Ti (Para tí= for you)	Ustedes (Para ustedes = for you plural, you guys)
Él/Ella/Ello/Usted (Para ella= for her, it, etc)	Ellos/Ellas (Para ellas= for them). (note: ellos/as can refer to things)

Complete the exercise below according to the examples:

English	Español	Transitive verb (direct object pronoun)	Verb with a preposition	Make the same statement as the “Español column”, <u>except</u> using a pronoun instead of a noun (using “it” instead of “house”; IE: “la” instead of “casa”, or using “ella” instead of “casa”, because it’s part of a prepositional phrase.
My mother cleans the house .	Mi madre limpia la casa.	X		Mi madre <u>la</u> limpia.
My brother is outside of the house.	Mi hermano está afuera de la casa.		X	Mi hermano está <u>afuera de ella</u> .
I help my brother .				
She eats the apples .				

We play near the park.				
Julio lives behind the library.				
We find our families.				
They are inside of the restaurant.				
They start the homework.				
Celia runs around the store.				

Martin comes with me .				
The kids play in front of the library .				
You guys read all the books .				
Marta is with you , right?				