

Pronouncing Esperanto

Letters are the same as in English, except...

c is pronounced ts (e.g. **cent** is pronounced tsent)

ĉ is pronounced (t)ch (e.g. **eĉ** is pronounced etch)

g is always 'hard', like go (e.g. **ega** is like eh-gah)

ĝ is a 'soft' g, like gent (e.g. **aĝo** is like ah-joe)

ĥ (a rare sound) is like ch in loch (e.g. **ĥoro**)

j is pronounced y (e.g. **jes** is pronounced yes)

ĵ is like the s in treasure (e.g. **aĵo** is like ah-zhoh)

r is always pronounced, preferably trilled (e.g. **karto** is like carr-toe)

s is always 'soft' like so (e.g. **emis** is like em-iss)

ŝ is pronounced sh (e.g. **ŝi** is like she)

a is always like the a in father (e.g. **kate** is like kah-teh)

e is always like the e in bet

i is always like the i in bit (e.g. **filo** is like fee-loh – except the ee is short)

o is always like the o in forty (e.g. **po** is like poor –with no r sound)

u is like the oo in moon (e.g. **guto** is like goo-toh)

In words with more than one syllable, the **stress** is always on the *second*-last syllable (e.g. **rapide** is like rah-PEE-deh)

Using Esperanto

1. Choose a Subject:

mi (I); **vi** (you); **li** (he); **ŝi** (she);

kato (a cat); **la kato** (the cat); **floro** (a flower);

la floro (the flower); **la viro** (the man); **la virino** (the woman)

2. Choose a Verb:

estas (am / is / are); **estis** (was / were);

ŝatas (like / likes); **ŝatis** (liked); **vidas** (see / sees);

kuras (run / runs / am running / is running); **kuris** (ran);

havas (have / has)

3. Choose an Object (for **ŝatas**, **ŝatis**, **vidas** or **vidis**):

(Same as subject, but add '-n'. E.g. '**la virino**' becomes '**la virinon**'.)

Or, choose an Adjective (for **estas** or **estis**):

bela (beautiful); **malbela** (ugly); **granda** (big); **malgranda** (small); **rapida** (fast)

4. Now, make a sentence (1 + 2 + 3):

Mi ŝatas vin. (I like you.)

Vi ŝatas min. (You like me.)

La floro estas bela. (The flower is beautiful.)

Kato kuris. (A cat ran.)

Mi ŝatas la malgrandan katon. (I like the small cat.) –

Notice how the adjective '**malgranda**' takes on the '-n', too.

Or make a question (just start the sentence with '**Ĉu**):

Ĉu vi ŝatas min? (Do you like me?)

Ĉu la floro estas bela? (Is the flower beautiful?)

Ĉu kato kuris? (Did a cat run?)

5. Use the negative ('ne', before the verb):

Vi ne ŝatas min. (You don't like me.)

La kato ne kuris. (The cat didn't run.)

La virino ne estas malbela. (The woman isn't ugly.)

6. To make a noun plural, add '-j' – after the 'o' (but before the 'n')

Katoj (cats)

Floroj (flowers)

Mi ŝatas florojn. (I like flowers.)

In a sentence, if a noun is plural, so is any adjective associated with it:

Malgrandaj katoj kuras. (Small cats run.)

La floroj estas belaj. (The flowers are beautiful.)

Ŝi havas belajn florojn. (She has beautiful flowers.) –

Notice how the adjective '**bela**' takes on both the '-j' and the '-n'.

Did you notice some patterns in the word lists? E.g.:

If '**Mi havas katon**' means 'I have a cat', how would you say 'I *had* a cat'?

If '**malgranda**' means 'small', what does '**malrapida**' mean?

Unlike English, and most other languages, these patterns – and many more like them – are completely consistent.

Verbs always end in '**-as**' for the present and '**-is**' for the past. If an adjective has an opposite, you can make it just by putting '**mal-**' before that adjective.