

Reflexive Verbs

Verbos Reflexivos

- In Spanish, there is a unique class of verbs that uses reflexive pronouns called *reflexive verbs*.
- Reflexive verbs are easily recognizable due to the addition of **–se** at the end of the infinitive. The **–se** at the end of the infinitive represents the reflexive pronoun.
- With reflexive verbs, the action reflects back on the subject. The subject receives the action of the verb, and therefore, the subject and the object of the sentence are the same.
 - The reflexive pronoun demonstrates that the verb is a “self-action,” something that can be thought of as doing to oneself.

Reflexive Pronouns	
me – myself	nos – ourselves
te – yourself	os – yourselves
se – himself/herself/yourself (formal)/ itself	se – themselves (m. or f.)/yourselves

➤ **Steps to conjugate reflexive verbs:**

1. Determine the subject of the verb. *Who is performing/receiving the action of the verb?*
2. Pick the reflexive pronoun that corresponds to the subject.
3. Conjugate normally. (Drop the –AR, –ER, or –IR ending. Add appropriate ending.)
 - NOTE: The reflexive pronoun always goes before the conjugated verb!

Example:

Miguel _____ (*afeitarse*) y _____ (*bañarse*) *cada mañana*.

1. *Who is the subject?* Miguel is the subject.
2. *Which reflexive pronoun is necessary?* If Miguel is the subject, then the 3rd person singular reflexive pronoun “**se**” is necessary.
3. *What is the appropriate ending for the conjugated verb?* Since Miguel is the subject, the 3rd person singular form of the conjugated verb must be used. For –AR verbs, the 3rd person singular ending is **–a**.

Answer: Miguel se afeita y se baña cada mañana.

Common Reflexive Verbs
<input type="checkbox"/> despertarse (ie) – to wake up (oneself)
<input type="checkbox"/> afeitarse – to shave (oneself)
<input type="checkbox"/> cepillarse – to brush (oneself)
<input type="checkbox"/> ducharse – to shower (oneself)
<input type="checkbox"/> bañarse – to bathe (oneself)
<input type="checkbox"/> atreverse – to dare (oneself)
<input type="checkbox"/> quejarse – to complain
<input type="checkbox"/> arrepentirse – to repent
<input type="checkbox"/> acostarse (ue) – to go to bed
<input type="checkbox"/> divertirse (ie) – to enjoy (oneself)
<input type="checkbox"/> maquillarse – to put on makeup
<input type="checkbox"/> peinarse – to comb one’s hair

Examples of reflexive verbs:

- **Los estudiantes se despiertan a las seis y media de la mañana.**
The students wake up at six thirty in the morning.
- **Me maquillo antes de salir por la noche con mi novio.**
I put on makeup before going out at night with my boyfriend.
- **El dentista dice que es necesario cepillarse los dientes tres veces al día.**
The dentist says that it is necessary to brush your teeth three times a day.

➤ Many transitive verbs can easily and logically be made reflexive by adding the reflexive pronoun.

Examples of Verbs that can be Reflexive or Non-reflexive	
☐ lavar – to wash	➤ lavarse – to wash oneself
☐ poner – to put	➤ ponerse – to put on (oneself)
☐ llamar – to call	➤ llamarse – to call oneself/ to be named
☐ sentar (ie) – to seat	➤ sentarse (ie) – to sit down
☐ vestir (i) – to dress	➤ vestirse (i) – to get dressed
☐ quedar – to remain	➤ quedarse – to stay

Examples:

- **Llamo a mi madre todos los días.**
I call my mother every day.
 - **Después de cocinar, mi madre lava los platos.**
After cooking, my mother washes the dishes.
- Mi madre se llama María.**
My mother's name is Maria.

Me lavo la cara en la mañana.
I wash my face in the morning.

➤ Some verbs have a slightly different meaning when reflexive.

Examples of Verbs with Different Meaning when Reflexive	
☐ dormir (ue) – to sleep	➤ dormirse (ue) – to fall asleep
☐ ir – to go	➤ irse – to go away
☐ quitar – to take away	➤ quitarse – to take off
☐ levantar – to lift	➤ levantarse – to stand up/ get up
☐ llevar – to carry	➤ llevarse – to carry away

Examples:

- **Duelmo ocho horas cada noche.**
I sleep eight hours every night.
 - **Los atletas levantan pesas los fines de semana.**
The athletes lift weights on the weekends.
- Me duermo a las once todas las noches.**
I fall asleep at eleven every night.

Los atletas se levantan temprano.
The athletes get up early.

➤ Reflexive verbs are also used for reciprocal action and actions in which two or more subjects interact.

Examples of reciprocal action:

- **El muchacho y la muchacha se miran.**
The boy and the girl look at each other.
- **Los amigos se mandan cartas.**
The friends send each other letters.