



## Non-Reflexive Verbs

Before we can understand reflexive verbs, we have to understand the elements they use and the roles they serve. Check the following incomplete sentences:

Nora **quita**...  
Nora **removes**.....

Yo **visto**...  
I **dress**...

**Take Note:** Many Spanish verbs need an **object** to complete their meaning.

Yo **visto** a la bebé.  
I **dress** the baby.

Nora **quita** los zapatos de la mesa.  
Nora **removes** the shoes from the table.

**Take Note:** Non-reflexive verbs indicate that the subject performs the action to **something or someone else**. They involve two different entities.

## What Are Reflexive Verbs

Reflexive verbs also **need an object**, but they indicate that the subject and the object are the same person. In other words, these are actions we do to ourselves.

Yo visto a **la bebé**.  
I dress **the baby**.

Yo me visto.  
I get dressed.

Yo acuesto a **Luis**.  
I put **Luis** to bed.

Yo me acuesto.  
I go to bed/I lie down.

Reflexive pronouns are **crucial** for indicating that an action is reflexive. Unlike subject pronouns, they must **not be omitted**.



## Reflexive Pronouns

Subject Pronoun	Reflexive Pronoun	Subject Pronoun	Reflexive Pronoun
Yo	Me	Nosotros	Nos
Tú	Te	Vosotros	Os
Él / Ella / Ud	Se	Ellos / Ellas / Uds	Se

Yo **me** baño.  
I shower.

Tú **te** pintas el cabello.  
**You** dye your hair.

¿A qué hora **se** despiertan?  
What time do **you** wake up?

**Take Note:** Spanish reflexives are used more extensively than in English.



## How to Conjugate Reflexive Verbs

Subject Pronoun	Reflexive Pronoun	Levantarse	Ponerse	Vestirse
Yo	Me	Me levanto	Me pongo	Me visto
Tú	Te	Te levantas	Te pones	Te vistes
Él / Ella / Ud	Se	Se levanta	Se pone	Se viste
Nosotros	Nos	Nos levantamos	Nos ponemos	Nos vestimos
Vosotros	Os	Os levantáis	Os ponéis	Os vestís
Ellos / Ellas / Uds	Se	Se levantan	Se ponen	Se visten

**Take Note:** Reflexive verbs use the same conjugation patterns as their non-reflexive counterparts.

## Reflexive Verbs in Context

### Example Paragraph

Juan, Claudia y yo vivimos juntos. Los tres **nos levantamos** a las 5 porque entramos a trabajar temprano. Mientras Juan **se viste** para ir al gimnasio, yo **me cepillo** los dientes. Claudia siempre **se baña** primero porque tarda mucho en **arreglarse**. Después de **bañarme**, **me maquillo**, **me visto** y bajo a preparar el desayuno. Juan llega corriendo del gimnasio, **se afeita** y **se cambia**. Los tres **nos vamos** a las 7 y regresamos hasta la noche.



## Reflexive Pronouns & Infinitive Verbs

When using reflexive verbs in infinitive form to talk or refer to someone, you must use the appropriate reflexive pronoun.

Claudia tarda mucho en **arreglarse**.

Después de **bañarme**, (yo) me maquillo.

**Take Note:** Reflexive verbs often relate to personal care and hygiene activities.

## Reflexive Pronoun Placement

The placement of the pronoun depends on the **number** of verbs and the **tense** used. Misplacing the pronoun can affect your fluency and the sentence's meaning or structure.

Before → [reflexive pronoun] + [verb]

**1 conjugated verb**

¿**Te lavaste** las manos?  
Did you wash your  
hands?

**Negative commands**

¡No **se duerman**!  
Don't fall asleep!

**Perfect tenses**

¡No **nos hemos  
cambiado**!  
We haven't changed!

Attached → [verb+pronoun]

**Infinitives**

Antes de **irme**...  
Before I leave...

**Gerunds**

¿Estás **bañándote**?  
Are you showering?

**Affirmative  
commands**

¡**Quítate** los zapatos!  
Take your shoes off!



**Both** → [pronoun] + [verb] or [verb+pronoun]

Example	Before	Attached
No <b>puedo peinar</b> . I can't comb my hair.	No <b>me puedo</b> peinar. I can't comb my hair.	No puedo <b>peinarme</b> . I can't comb my hair.

**Take Note:** With compound sentences, the pronoun can be placed **before** the conjugated verb or **attached** to the infinitive/gerund.

## Verbs with Change in Meaning

There are certain verbs that can perfectly work in reflexive or non-reflexive form. However, using one form over the other can change the meaning.

**Despedir** (to fire) vs **Despedirse** (to say goodbye)

¿Ya **te despediste** de Luis? Julio lo **despidió**.  
Did you already say goodbye to Luis? Julio fired him.

**Ir** (to go) vs **Irse** (to leave)

Mañana **me voy** a las 10 porque **voy** a **ir** al dentista.  
Tomorrow I'm leaving at 10 because I'm going to go to the dentist.

**Llevar** (to take) vs **Llevarse** (get along)

¿Le **llevas** sus cosas a mi ex? Es que ya no **me llevo** bien con él.  
Can you take his stuff to my ex? It's just that I don't get along with him anymore.

**Quitar** (take out) vs **Quitarse** (take off)

¡**Quita** tus cosas de la mesa y **quítate** los zapatos!  
Take your things out of the table and take your shoes off!



## **Volver** (to come back) vs **Volverse** (to become)

Sí, mañana **vuelvo**. ¿Desde cuando **me volví** tan buena para mentir?  
Yes, I'll be back tomorrow. Since when did I become so good at lying?

## **Quejarse** (to complain) & **Negarse** (to refuse)

Juan **se quejó** con Laura porque **te negaste** a ayudarlo.  
Juan complained to Laura because you refused to help him.

**Take Note:** Pronominal verbs use reflexive pronouns, but they don't necessarily refer to reflexive actions (*comerse*).

## Most Common Reflexive Verbs

1. **Acostarse** - To go to bed/Lie down
2. **Afeitarse** - To shave
3. **Arreglarse** - To get ready
4. **Bañarse** - To shower/To bath
5. **Cambiarse** - To change
6. **Cepillarse** - To brush
7. **Despertarse** - To wake up
8. **Dormirse** - To go to sleep / To fall sleep
9. **Irse** - To leave\*
10. **Lavarse** - To wash
11. **Levantarse** - To get up
12. **Llevarse** - To get along\*
13. **Maquillarse** - To put on makeup
14. **Pintarse / Teñirse** - To dye
15. **Ponerse** - To put on
16. **Prepararse** - To get ready
17. **Secarse** - To dry up
18. **Quejarse** - To complain\*
19. **Quitarse** - To take off
20. **Vestirse** - To get dressed



## When to Use Reflexive Verbs: The 1 Rule

**Rule:** If you can do an action to someone else, you're able to do it on yourself too.

Carla peina a **Laura** primero y después se peina.  
Carla combs **Laura's** hair first and then combs **her own**.

Marta baña **al bebé** y ella se baña con agua fría.  
Marta bathes **the baby** and she bathes **herself** with cold water.

## Challenge

Conjugate the verb in parentheses & choose whether to use its reflexive form by including or omitting the reflexive pronoun.

1. Por la noche, yo \_\_\_\_ (ver) televisión un rato antes de dormirme.
2. Cada mañana, tú y yo \_\_\_\_ (levantar) temprano para hacer ejercicio.
3. Cuando \_\_\_\_ al trabajo, Juan \_\_\_\_ a las 8. (ir)
4. En vacaciones, tú \_\_\_\_ (despertar) tarde.
5. Antes de \_\_\_\_, Lucía \_\_\_\_ a su perro (bañar).

## Resources

- YouTube Video Lessons
  - [Spanish Reflexive Verbs](#)
  - [Verbos Reflexivos En español \(Immersion\)](#)
- [Guide to Reflexive Verbs](#)

