

LA HORA (TELL THE TIME)

When we want to ask the time in Spanish there are three ways of asking:

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| 1. Por favor, ¿Qué hora es? | What time is it, please? |
| 2. Perdón, ¿Tiene hora? | Excuse me, have you got the time? |
| 3. Por favor, ¿Me puede decir la hora? | Can you tell me the time, please? |

The first one is the most common and simple but also maybe the most colloquial. The last one would be considered the most polite but it might (in certain cases) be the one used the least.

The answer will always use the verb SER in the plural form "son" together with the article "las" for the hour with the exception for 1:00am/pm which uses the singular form "es" and the article "la".

Example:	- ¿Qué hora es?	- Son <u>las</u> 3.
		- Es <u>la</u> 1.
		-

The minutes are expressed by using "y" for the period from o'clock to half past and "menos" for the other period. In that first period we tell the time by saying the current hour plus the minutes.

Example:	Son las tres <u>y</u> diez (it's ten past three)
	Son las ocho <u>y</u> veinte (it's twenty past eight)

In the second period we say the next hour minus the number of minutes left to reach it.

Example:	Son las doce menos cinco (It's five to twelve)
	Es la una menos cuarto (It's quarter to one)

quarter past --> y cuarto

half past --> y media

quarter to --> menos cuarto

midday/noon --> mediodía

midnight --> medianoche

When we tell the time we can specify whether it is morning, afternoon, evening or early morning by using the following expressions:

las diez de la mañana --> ten in the morning
las diez de la noche --> ten at night
las tres de la madrugada --> three in the morning
las tres de la tarde --> three in the afternoon

When they tell the time in public services such as TV programs, railway announcements, flight departures and arrivals, etc. the numerical form is used to avoid any kind of confusion between am and pm.

las veintidós horas (22:00 hours)
las catorce treinta (14:30 hours)
las veinte cuarenta y cinco (20:45 hours)

When we want to enquire about the time at which something happens we use the question beginning with " A qué hora" and the answer always begins with "a las".

Example: - ¿A qué hora empieza la película? - A las siete.
 - ¿A qué hora abre el banco? - A las nueve.

To talk about work timetables or opening and closing times of establishments we use the prepositions "de.....a" or "desde.....hasta".

Example: - ¿Qué horario tiene la tienda? - De nueve a siete.
 - ¿Cuál es tu horario de trabajo? - Desde las 9 hasta las 5.

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