**TIME EXPRESSIONS YOU OUGHT TO KNOW**

***¿Qué hora es?*** *What time is it?*

The answers to this question are:

***Es la una.*** *It’s one o’clock.* ***Son las siete.*** *It’s seven o’clock.*

***Son las dos.*** *It’s two o’clock.* ***Son las ocho.*** *It’s eight o’clock.*

***Son las tres.*** *It’s three o’clock.* ***Son las nueve.*** *It’s nine o’clock.*

***Son las cuatro.*** *It’s four o’clock.* ***Son las diez.*** *It’s ten o’clock.*

***Son las cinco.*** *It’s five o’clock.* ***Son las once.*** *It’s eleven o’clock.*

***Son las seis.*** *It’s six o’clock.* ***Son las doce.*** *It’s twelve o’clock.*

The definite articles ***la*** and ***las*** are in front of the numbers because they reflect the word ***la hora*** *[the hour]*, which is feminine. Since one o’clock is singular, you need to use a singular verb ***[es]*** and the singular feminine article ***[la]***. Since all times after one o’clock are plural, you need to use a plural verb ***[son]*** and the plural feminine article ***[las]***.

***¿A qué hora...?*** *At what time...?*

The answers to this question are:

***A la una...*** *At one o’clock...* ***A las siete...*** *At seven o’clock...*

***A las dos...*** *At two o’clock...* ***A las ocho...*** *At eight o’clock...*

***A las tres...*** *At three o’clock...* ***A las nueve...*** *At nine o’clock...*

***A las cuarto...*** *At four o’clock...* ***A las diez...*** *At ten o’clock...*

***A las cinco...*** *At five o’clock...* ***A las once...*** *At eleven o’clock...*

***A las seis...*** *At six o’clock...* ***A las doce...*** *At twelve o’clock...*

**EXPRESSING MINUTES WITH THE HOUR**

When the time is a certain number of minutes after the hour, **the hour is stated first + *y* + the number of minutes**:

*Es la una* ***y diez****. It’s* ***ten minutes after*** *one.*

*Son las dos* ***y veinte****. It’s* ***twenty minutes after*** *two.*

*A las tres* ***y cinco****... At* ***five minutes after*** *three...*

**When the hour is a quarter after**, you can express it by either ***y cuarto*** or ***y quince*** :

*Es la una* ***y cuarto****. It’s* ***quarter after*** *one.*

*Son las dos* ***y quince****. It’s* ***fifteen minutes after*** *two.*

*A las tres* ***y cuarto****... At* ***quarter after*** *three...*

**When it is half past the hour**, you can express it by using either ***y media*** or ***y treinta***:

*Es la una* ***y media****. It’s* ***half past*** *one.*

*Son las dos* ***y treinta****. It’s two* ***thirty****.*

*A las tres* ***y media****... At* ***half past*** *three...*

*[The word* ***media*** *is used much more frequently than* ***treinta*** *to express half past the hour.]*

When the time is a certain number of minutes of (to, toward, before) the hour, **state the hour that it will be + *menos* + the number of minutes**. If it is 15 minutes before the hour, use *menos cuarto* (a quarter of):

*Son las cinco* ***menos*** *veinte. It’s twenty minutes to five./It’s 4:40.*

*Son las cuarto* ***menos*** *cuarto. It’s a quarter of (to) four./It’s 3:45.*

**DESIGNATING A.M. AND P.M.**

When you state what time it is or at what time you are going to do something, sometimes you have to make it clear whether it is in the morning (a.m.), in the afternoon (p.m.), or in the evening (p.m.).

***de la madrugada*** *in the morning (a.m.) [12:00-5:00]*

***de la mañana*** *in the morning (a.m.) [6:00-12:00]*

***de la tarde*** *in the afternoon (p.m.) [12:00-7:00]*

***de la noche*** *in the evening/at night (p.m.) [8:00-12:00]*

***el mediodía*** *noon* ***la medianoche*** *midnight*

*Son las tres* ***de la madrugada****. It’s three o’clock in the morning.*

*Son las ocho y media* ***de la mañana****. It’s eight thirty in the morning.*

*Son las seis y cuarto* ***de la tarde****. It’s quarter after six in the afternoon.*

*Son las once menos cuarto* ***de la noche****. It’s quarter to eleven in the evening/at night.*

**MORE ABOUT TELLING TIME**

When **telling time in the past**, use the **imperfect indicative** tense of the verb ser:

***Era la una.*** *It was one o’clock.* ***Eran las dos.*** *It was two o’clock.*

The **future** tense is used when **telling time in the future** or **when you wonder what time it is at present** or **when you want to state what time it probably is**:

***¿Qué hora será?*** *I wonder what time it is.* ***Serán las seis.*** *It is probably six o’clock.*