

NATIONAL

SPANISH EXAM



NSE Specifications Booklet 2023-24

Format & Length

Updated for the 2023-2024 exam cycle.

Specifications by Level

Includes Grammar and Vocabulary specifications by level.





National Spanish Examinations

Who We Are

The **National Spanish Examinations** (NSE) office is a branch of the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese (AATSP).

Our mission is to recognize student achievement and to promote language proficiency in the studies of Spanish & Portuguese. To this end, the National Spanish Examinations office is committed to providing Teachers with assessment tools and offering Students opportunities to know their language skill ratings in vocabulary, grammar, reading comprehension, and listening comprehension.



The **National Spanish Exam** (NSE) is a motivational competition to recognize student achievement and proficiency in the study of Spanish. In addition to the competition, this exam is an online, standardized assessment tool for Grades 6–12 that measures content standards (vocabulary and grammar) and performance standards (reading and listening comprehension).

At the National level, students are able to receive medal placement (gold, silver, bronze, honorable mention) based on their percentile scores and are eligible to apply for several types of scholarships (Global Citizen Scholarship, Junior Study Abroad Program, Senior Scholarship).

About This Booklet

In this booklet, you will find the updated Exam Format & Length chart, and the updated Specifications for Grammar* and Vocabulary for the 2023–24 National Spanish Exam cycle.

Registration for the next National Spanish Exam cycle begins on November 1st, 2023.



Format and Length

Updated for 2024

Each level has two sections of tests: (1) Achievement is 40 minutes total and includes two subsections: Vocabulary and Grammar. (2) Proficiency is 40 minutes total and includes two subsections of reading and listening.

	Test 1 Achievement (40% of Total)				Test 2 Proficiency (60% of Total)					
	Time: 40 minutes Questions: 38 Points: 40				Time: 40 minutes Questions: 28 Points: 60					
	Vocabulary		Grammar		Reading		Listening		Total	
Proficiency Level	Questions	Points	Questions	Points	Questions	Points	Questions	Points	Questions	Points
Level 01 Novice Low	20	20	18	20	14	35	14	25	68	100
Level 1 Novice Mid	20	20	18	20	14	35	14	25	68	100
Level 2 Novice High	20	20	18	20	14	35	14	25	68	100
Level 3 Intermediate Low*	20	20	18	20	14	35	14	25	68	100
Level 4 Intermediate Mid*	20	20	18	20	14	35	14	25	68	100
Level 5 Intermediate High*	20	20	18	20	14	35	14	25	68	100
Level 6 Advanced Low/Mid*	20	20	18	20	14	35	14	25	68	100

*Note: May include missing fragments/logical responses

Last updated: 6/6/2023



National Spanish Exam

Specifications for *Grammar*

For Exam Years 2023 And After

Specifications for *Grammar*

For Exam Years 2023 And After

Level 01

Nouns and Articles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender of nouns ending in -o, -a • Plural of nouns • Possession of nouns (use of <i>de</i> + noun to express 's) • Definite articles (<i>el, la, de, los</i>) • Contractions with "al" and "del" • Indefinite articles (<i>un, una, unos, unas</i>)
Verbs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject-verb agreement • Present tense of regular -ar, -er, and -ir verbs • Basic irregular verbs (<i>ser, estar, ir, tener</i>) • Simple idiomatic uses of <i>tener</i> = to be (<i>calor, hambre, años</i>)
Adjectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreement • Cardinal numbers 1 - 100
Pronouns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject • Indirect object (used with <i>gustar</i>)
Conjunctions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simple conjunctions (<i>y, o</i>)
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simple question words (<i>dónde, cómo, qué, por qué, cuándo</i>) • Word order of yes/no questions

Specifications for *Grammar*

For Exam Years 2023 And After

Level 1

Includes everything from Level 01 plus the following:

Nouns and Articles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender of nouns ending in -o, -a • Plural of nouns • Possession of nouns (use of de + noun to express 's) • Definite articles (el, la, de, los) • Use of definite article with a title • Indefinite articles (un, una, unos, unas)
Verbs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject-verb agreement • Present tense - formation and basic uses • Negation • Ser vs. Estar • Simple idiomatic uses of tener = to be (calor, hambre, años) • Helping verbs: tener que, poder, querer, necesitar • Hacer used in weather expressions • Present progressive (with regular present participles) • Immediate future ("ir + a + infinitive") • Vosotros • Present tense - stem changers
Adjectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreement and position • Short form possessive • Ordinal numbers 1st - 10th • Cardinal numbers 1 - 100
Pronouns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject • Indirect object (used with gustar)
Prepositions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simple prepositions (de, a, en, con, para, sin, según, entre) • Personal a (plus "al" and "del")
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question words • Word order of questions • Adverbs • Conjunctions

Specifications for *Grammar*

For Exam Years 2023 And After

Level 2

Includes everything from Level 01 – 1 plus the following:

<p>Nouns and Articles</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender of nouns ending in -dad, -ción, -ma, -pa • Use of the definite article • Use of <i>ningún</i> and <i>algún</i>, and their forms
<p>Verbs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preterit – formation and basic uses • Imperfect – formation and basic uses • Future – formation (regular verbs) • Commands • Helping verbs: <i>acabar de</i>, <i>pensar</i>, <i>deber</i>, <i>aprender a</i>, <i>tratar de</i> • <i>Conocer</i> vs. <i>Saber</i> • Reflexive verbs • Common irregular verbs – present tense • Stem changing verbs – present tense
<p>Adjectives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adverbs of time (<i>ayer</i>, <i>pasado mañana</i>, etc.) • Adverbs of order (<i>después</i>, <i>próximo</i>, etc.) • Adverbs of quantity (<i>bastante</i>, <i>apenas</i>, etc.) • Adverbs of manner (<i>desprecio</i>, <i>apenas</i>, etc.) • The suffix -mente • Position of negative words (<i>nada</i>, <i>nunca</i>, <i>jamás</i>, etc.)
<p>Pronouns</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indirect object • Reflexive • Prepositional
<p>Prepositions and Conjunctions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simple prepositions (<i>contra</i>, <i>desde</i>, <i>durante</i>, <i>entre</i>, <i>menos</i>) • Compound prepositions (<i>antes de</i>, <i>cerca de</i>, <i>debajo de</i>, etc.) • Conjunctions – use of <i>e</i> instead of <i>y</i> • Use of <i>u</i> instead of <i>o</i> • <i>Pero</i> vs. <i>Sino</i>

Specifications for *Grammar*

For Exam Years 2023 And After

Level 3

Includes everything from Level 01 – 2 plus the following:

Nouns and Articles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Everything from Levels 01 – 2
Adjectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adjectives used as nouns Past participle used as an adjective
Verbs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Verbs with a special meaning in the preterit (<i>saber, querer, etc...</i>) Imperfect vs. preterit Future – formation (irregular verbs) Conditional – formation and basic uses Past perfect – formation and uses Use of subjunctive Use of infinitive after prepositions Indirect commands Verbs that use indirect object pronouns (<i>faltar, quedar, etc...</i>) Passive voice
Adverbs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adverbs of degree (<i>bastante, demasiado, etc.</i>) Comparison
Pronouns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indirect and direct object pronouns used together Possessive Impersonal <i>se</i>
Prepositions and Conjunctions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Para</i> vs. <i>Por</i> Correlative conjunctions (<i>o...o..., ni...ni..., etc.</i>)

Specifications for *Grammar*

For Exam Years 2023 And After

Level 4

Includes everything from Levels 01 – 3 plus the following:

<p>Nouns and Articles</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of the definite article with proper nouns modified by adjectives • Use of the neuter article lo to normalize adjectives and past participles
<p>Verbs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present tense verbs with spelling changes (-cer/cir, -ger/gir, -guir) • Present tense verbs requiring accent changes (reír enviar, actuar) • Future to express probability in the present • Conditional to express probability in the past • Formation and uses of the conditional perfect • Formation of the present subjunctive • Use of the present subjunctive • Formation of the imperfect subjunctive • Use of the imperfect subjunctive in noun clauses • Use of quisiera as the conditional use of desire • If clauses: Imperfect subjunctive, conditional • If clauses: Present indicative, future • Formation of the present perfect subjunctive • Short forms of adjectives
<p>Adjectives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Normalization of adjectives (el verde, las rojas)
<p>Pronouns</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relative pronouns - introduction and basic uses • Reciprocal reflexives
<p>Prepositions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbs (not) requiring prepositions before a noun

Specifications for *Grammar*

For Exam Years 2023 And After

Level 5

Includes everything from Levels 01 – 4 plus the following:

Nouns and Articles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nouns whose meaning is determined by gender (<i>el/la capital</i>) • Use of infinitive as a noun
Verbs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of the past perfect subjunctive in if clauses • Sequence of tenses • Formation of future perfect • Sequence of tenses • Passive voice
Adjectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes of adjective position which influence meaning
Pronouns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relative pronouns (introduction)
Prepositions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbs requiring preposition before an infinitive (<i>empezar a, cesar de, pensar en</i>)

Specifications for *Grammar*

For Exam Years 2023 And After

Level 6

Includes everything from Levels 01 – 5 plus the following:

Nouns and Articles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nouns whose meaning is determined by gender (<i>el/la capital</i>)
Verbs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of the imperfect subjunctive: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> in adverbial clauses after a negative antecedent after an indefinite antecedent Use of the past perfect subjunctive
Adjectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes of adjective position which influence meaning Forms of special ordinal numbers above 10th (<i>undécimo, vigésimo</i>)
Pronouns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relative pronouns (mastery and advanced uses)
Prepositions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Verbs requiring preposition before an infinitive (<i>empezar a, cesar de, pensar en</i>)
Conjunctions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subordinating conjunctions (<i>mientras, como, etc.</i>)



National Spanish Exam

Specifications for *Vocabulary*

For Exam Years 2023 And After

NATIONAL SPANISH EXAM

Specifications for *Vocabulary*

For Exam Years 2023 And After

Level 01

<p>Leisure Time</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Days of the week • Months of the year • Dates • Basic weather expressions • Telling time • Simple pastimes • Basic sports
<p>Family and Home</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simple description of people • Simple physical characteristics • Basic personality traits • Simple description of things • Basic colors • Immediate family
<p>School and Education</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic items found in the classroom
<p>Meeting Personal Needs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common greetings and farewells • Basic expressions of courtesy • Basic introductions • Expressing likes and dislikes with gustar • Basic food expressions

Specifications for *Vocabulary*

For Exam Years 2023 And After

Level 1

Includes everything from Level 01 plus the following:

World	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simple geographical terms • Names of 21 Spanish-speaking countries and their capitals • Nature and the environment (basic words for plants and animals)
Leisure Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Days of the week, months of the year and dates • Basic weather expressions • Telling time and basic time divisions • Simple past times and basic sports
Family and Home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simple description of things and people • Immediate family • Basic parts of the house
School and Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic educational words • Basic items found in a classroom • Basic words associated with language • Basic mathematical operations
Travel and Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simple places in a city • The airport • Modes of transport
Meeting Personal Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common greetings and farewells • Basic introductions and expressions • Basic food and expressions • Basic clothing • Basic parts of the body
World of Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professions (expanded) • Computer hardware and basic computer operating terms
Art and Fine Arts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colors • Basic fine arts

Specifications for *Vocabulary*

For Exam Years 2023 And After

Level 2

Includes everything from Levels 01 - 1 plus the following:

World	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geographic terms (expanded) • The seven continents • Nature and the environment (plant and animal kingdoms)
Leisure Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weather (expanded) • Pastimes (expanded) • Sports (expanded)
Family and Home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Description (expanded) • Temporary states (expanded) • Physical characteristics and personality traits (expanded) • Description of things (expanded) • Nationalities of major Spanish-speaking countries • Extended family • Parts of a home, basic furniture • Simple daily chores
School and Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Items found in a classroom (expanded) • Names of school subjects • Words associated with language (expanded) • Basic words associated with mathematics and measurements
Travel and Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buildings in a city (expanded) and modes of transportation • Directions (expanded) • Basic travel expressions • The hotel
Meeting Personal Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food groups: vegetables, fruit, meat • Buying food and preparing food • Clothing (expanded) • The body and the five senses • Items for personal use
World of Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professions (expanded) • Computer hardware and basic computer operating terms

Specifications for *Vocabulary*

For Exam Years 2023 And After

Level 3

Includes everything from Levels 01 – 2 plus the following:

World	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geographical words • The universe (basic astronomy terms)
Leisure Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sports (intermediate)
Family and Home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic terms associated with religions • Human life cycle and its ceremonies • Holidays and holy days
School and Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic expressions for fractions • Basic expressions for algebra • Basic expressions for geometry
Travel and Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The airport (intermediate)
Meeting Personal Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doctor visit • Parts of clothing and types of fabric • Parts of the body (intermediate)
World of Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professions (intermediate) • Communication media • Work expressions (intermediate)
Arts and Fine Arts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art (intermediate)

NATIONAL SPANISH EXAM

Specifications for *Vocabulary*

For Exam Years 2023 And After

Level 4

Includes everything from Levels 01 - 3 plus the following:

World	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nature and the environment (animals, plants) • Universe (astronomy terms, planets, and basic constellations)
Meeting Personal Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food (advanced descriptions) • Types of doctors
World of Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Banking • Computer terms • Economics
History, Politics, and Social Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • History and historical terms (expanded) • Government and politics • Global issues
Fine Arts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Architecture • Periods of art history • Musical instruments (advanced) • Elements of literature

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Specifications for *Vocabulary*

For Exam Years 2023 And After

Level 5

Includes everything from Levels 01 - 4 plus the following:

World	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ecosystem • Basic biology terms
Leisure Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Camping • Theatre (advanced)
Meeting Personal Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The body (advanced) • Hospital • Pharmacy (basic expressions)
World of Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The economy
History, Politics and Social Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elections • Government and politics

NATIONAL SPANISH EXAM

Specifications for *Vocabulary*

For Exam Years 2023 And After

Level 6

Includes everything from Levels 01 - 5 plus the following:

World	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic chemistry terms • Basic physics terms
World of Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication media (expanded) • Employment vs. Unemployment
History, Politics and Social Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Law and justice • War and peace

TIMELINE

HAVE A LOOK BELOW TO STAY UPDATED ON NATIONAL SPANISH EXAM KEY DATES AND DEADLINES.

AUGUST

The **National Spanish Assessment (NSA)** is open from August 15, 2023 - June 28, 2024. Many teachers use the NSA to evaluate and prepare their students for the National Spanish Exam (NSE).

NOVEMBER

Registration for the **National Spanish Exam (NSE)** **OPENS** on November 1st, 2023.

DECEMBER

The deadline to request **Individualized Testing Plans** ends on December 15th, 2023.

FEBRUARY

Regular Registration for the National Spanish Exam (NSE) **ENDS** on February 9th, 2024. Late Registration and Last-Minute Registration fees rise after this date.

MARCH

NSE examination time opens on **March 4th, 2024 - April 15th, 2024**. Students must sit for the exam during this exam window. The NSE does not allow extensions.

MAY

NSE **Results** are available on teachers' Lingco Language Labs accounts on May 3rd, 2024. **Medals** are sent directly to schools after this date and may take 4-6 weeks to arrive. We do not ship internationally.

JUNE

The NSA closes on June 28th, 2024. All NSE medals have already been delivered by this date.