

Use of “Gustar”

Gustar is the verb commonly associated with “to like.” However, a more correct translation would be “to please.” (Me gusta el coche: “the car pleases me.”) This verb is only used in the third person, because actions and objects actually “please” the people with whom they are associated. Thus the only two conjugations of the verb are gusta (for actions and single objects) and gustan (for plural objects). To indicate the people involved, Spanish uses the indirect object pronouns (me, te, le, nos, les) in the following manner:

When dealing with actions (verbs), one needs to merely conjugate gustar as indicated in the chart and follow it with the infinitive form of the action:

Me gusta correr (I like to run; Running is pleasing to me.)
Nos gusta trabajar. (We like to work; Work is pleasing to us.)

When dealing with objects (nouns), the same procedure is followed, but the singular (gusta) form is used when there is only one object and the plural (gustan) form when there is more than one:

¿Te gusta la manzana? (Do you like the apple?)
Les gustan las canciones de amor. (They like love songs.)
Me gustan los libros. (I like books.)

To show “who” is pleased when using gustar, the preposition “a” should be used before the names (it is pleasing to that person). There are two changes in this construction: yo becomes “mí” and tú becomes “ti.”

A Pablo y María les gustan las revistas populares. (Paul and Mary like popular magazines.)
A mí me gusta comer. (I like to eat.)
A ti te gustan las manzanas verdes. (You like green apples.)

Other verbs which are similar to gustar in their usage include encantar (to enchant), doler (o:ue) (to cause pain), faltar (to lack), sobrar (to have too much of), importar (to matter), interesar (to interest) aburrir (to bore) and parecer (to seem).

gustar (to please)

me gusta(n)	nos gusta(n)
te gusta(n)	os gusta(n)
le gusta(n)	les gusta(n)

For more practice on this topic, please visit:

<http://www.colby.edu/~bknelson/exercises/gustar1.html>
<http://www.studyspanish.com/lessons/gustar.htm>