

Adjective Use (Describing things) in Spanish

An adjective is a word used to describe people, places or things. There are three main rules dealing with the use of adjectives in Spanish.

1. Number. Adjectives agree in number with the object they are modifying. Thus, if there is more than one object, the adjective must also be made plural:

singular: el libro rojo plural: los libros rojos

Adjectives are generally made plural in the same way that nouns are-by adding -s to the word if the word ends in a vowel, or -es to the word if it ends in a consonant.

2. Gender. Adjectives agree in gender (masculine/feminine) when possible. Generally, when an adjective ends in -o or -a, the adjective should be changed to match the gender of the noun that it modifies.

example:	el libro rojo	la silla roja
	los libros negros	las sillas negras
	el libro azul	la silla azul
	los libros verdes	las sillas verdes

Most adjectives that end in other letters are not changed to match gender. Some exceptions to this rule are adjectives that end in -in, -ón, or -an and adjectives dealing with nationality (inglés / inglesa, español, española, etc.)

example: el hombre español (los hombres españoles)
 la bandera española (las banderas españolas)

3. Placement. Adjectives in Spanish usually **follow** the noun they describe in Spanish. (*La casa blanca, El río grande*). In cases where the adjective sets the object apart from other similar objects such as el pan caliente or el coche rojo, the object goes first since it is the most important element in the sentence.

Non-restrictive adjectives (those that describe an object without comparing it to similar objects in the same class, such as una tremenda tragedia or las magníficas ruínas de Machu Picchu) can precede the noun they modify. **If you are not certain where to put the adjective, it is often safer to put it after the noun, for this is more common in general Spanish communication.**

For more practice on this topic, visit:

<http://www.studyspanish.com/lessons/adj1.htm>

<http://www.studyspanish.com/lessons/adj2.htm>

http://www.colby.edu/~bknelson/exercises/adj_noun.html