

Negative and affirmative words

The most common Spanish negative is *no*. In order to make a sentence negative, *no* is regularly placed either before the verb that it negates or, in compound tenses and the progressive forms of tenses, before the auxiliary.

Ana Luisa no tiene televisor.

Ana Luisa does not have a TV set.

No ha visto el programa.

She has not seen the program.

Genaro y Sandra no están escuchando.

Genaro and Sandra are not listening.

When a verb is preceded by one or more object pronouns, the pronouns are placed between the *no* and the verb.

Jacinto no me lo compró.

Jacinto did not buy it for me.

Other affirmative and negative words are:

Affirmative	Negative
algo something, anything	nada nothing, not anything
alguien someone, somebody, anyone, anybody	nadie no one, nobody, not anyone, not anybody
alguno(a) some, someone, any	ninguno(a) no, no one, none, not any, not anybody
algunos(as) some, any, several	
siempre always	nunca never, not ever
	jamás never, not ever
también also, too	tampoco neither, not either
o or	ni neither, nor, not either
o... o... either... or...	ni... ni... neither... nor...

Here are some things to keep in mind when using these affirmative or negative words:

- The personal *a* is required when *alguien* or *nadie* is the direct object of the verb.

—¿Conociste a alguien? —No, no conocí a nadie.

—Did you meet anyone? —No, I did not meet anyone.

- *Ninguno(a)* is used only in the singular form.
 - ¿Viste algunas películas? —No, no vi ninguna.
 - Did you see any films? —No, I didn't see any.
- When used in front of a masculine singular noun, *alguno* and *ninguno* are shortened to *algún* and *ningún*.
 - ¿Tienes algún enemigo? —No, no tengo ninguno.
 - Do you have any enemy? —No, I do not have any.
- The personal *a* is required when any form of *alguno* or *ninguno* refers to a person and is the direct object of a verb.
 - ¿Conociste a alguno de los primos de Ana? —No, no conocí a ninguno de ellos.
 - Did you meet any of Ana's cousins? —No, I did not meet any of them.
- If *no* or another negative word precedes the verb, all following words that have affirmative and negative forms must be used in their negative form.
 - No he visto ninguna película.
I have not seen any film.
 - Nunca voy a ningún cine de la ciudad con nadie.
I never go to any theater in the city with anyone.
- Both *nunca* and *jamás* mean *never*, but *jamás* is more emphatic. When used in a question, both *jamás* and *nunca* mean *ever*, and their use implies that a negative answer is expected.
 - ¿Has visto jamás a un bebé más dulce? —No, nunca (jamás).
 - Have you ever seen a sweeter baby? —No, never. (not ever)
- In the same way that *también* is used to express agreement with an affirmative sentence, *tampoco* is used to express agreement with a negative sentence.
 - Elena practica el piano todos los días. Yo también (practico...).
 - Elena practices the piano every day. I do too.*
 - Alejandro nunca hace ejercicios. Yo tampoco (hago ejercicios).
 - Alejandro never exercises. I don't (exercise) either.*
- The negatives *nadie*, *nada*, *ninguno*, *nunca*, and *jamás* are used:
 - after *que* in comparisons.
 - Elena habla más que nadie.
 - Elena talks more than anyone.*
 - José y Marta bailaron mejor que nunca.
 - José and Marta danced better than ever.*
 - after the prepositions *sin* (without) and *antes de* (before).
 - Salí sin nada.
 - I left without anything.*
 - Antes de hacer nada, habla con tus amigos.
 - Before doing anything, talk to your friends.*