



# Exploring the Market in Spanish

One of the most amazing sensory experiences you can have when visiting a country like Guatemala is visiting **mercados** (markets) to go shopping in Spanish! The market is an explosion of colors, sounds, and smells like no other! Not all of the smells are pleasant, but all of them are a part of the whole experience! And shopping in Spanish – or in any foreign language – is a very culturally enriching experience by itself!

## What is the **mercado**?

At the **mercado**, you will find colorful produce of all kinds – the known and the unknown. I don't even know the name of tons of produce they sell there, but the colors are all so pretty!!! You will hear animals in the distance, women yelling the names of the products they sell, birds chirping, men walking around holding so many things you wonder how they can even walk, trucks pulling over, kids laughing, the chatter of people.

You will get to smell all the fruits, vegetables, flowers, freshly prepared meals, and – also a part of it but least pleasant of them all – the freshly cut meat! Yes, this is all part of the shopping in Spanish adventure we'll embark on today!

The market is also the place where you can get pretty much anything you can think of: from baby clothes through crafting supplies, fabrics, coal, grains – all the way to cooking utensils, stationery, and baskets – I have a thing for baskets!

Now, in order to buy all the things that you may like or want to fill up that awesome shopping basket you will probably buy (I'm telling you, they are so cute!), you will need to know some vocabulary. So let's explore the **mercado** together and learn how to shop in Spanish!



## Knowing the Basics to Go Shopping in Spanish

Before we venture into the market, we need to learn some phrases that will be useful in order to know the **prices** of things. We will also need to know **how** to ask for a certain something.

Let's start with prices:

Useful Phrases	
English	Spanish
¿Tiene zanahorias?	Do you have carrots?
¿Dónde hay jalapeños?	Where are there jalapeños? Where can I find jalapeños?
Deme una libra de tomate, por favor.*	Give me a pound of tomatoes, please.
Podría darme una libra de tomate, por favor.*	Could you please give me a pound of tomatoes.
Quiero una libra de tomates, por favor.*	I want a pound of tomatoes, please.
Gracias.*	Thank you.
¿Qué es esto?	What is this?

Other useful sentences:

Useful Phrases	
English	Spanish
¿Cuánto <b>cuesta la</b> lechuga?	How much does the lettuce cost?
¿Cuánto <b>cuesta el</b> brócoli?	How much does the broccoli cost?
¿Cuánto <b>cuestan las</b> berenjenas?	How much do the eggplants cost?
¿Cuánto <b>cuestan los</b> tomates?	How much do the tomatoes cost?

As you can see, the *verb* and the *article* match the noun!  
*Cuánto* means how much.  
*Cuesta* and *cuestan* are forms of the verb *costar*, which means 'to cost.' Just as *does* changes to *do* with a plural object, *cuesta* changes to *cuestan* when there's more than one object.



There will be a lot of not knowing what things are because there are tons of produce that we're just not used to! It's nice to know the names of things – and to have a little notebook to write the names down. The ladies at the **mercado** are usually super nice, so they can help you write it down if you nicely ask for help!

### \* A little cultural sidenote:

**Por favor** and **Gracias**. Please and Thank You!

Politeness is very important in Guatemala. Wherever you go – but especially for the older women selling vegetables. Here, people will treat you very differently if you're impolite to them – and not in a nice way! You're visiting a different culture, so it's important to take this into account! You'd appreciate the same if someone visited your house!

If you noticed, the conjugation of **dar (deme)** is in **usted** instead of in **tú**. (**Deme** is an imperative form – a command. Why? In Guatemala, we use the **usted** form to show respect to older people or to create a respectful distance between the person we're speaking with and us.

## Let's visit the **mercado** and go shopping in Spanish

Okay. First of all, whenever you go to the market for the first time, you should always make sure you have at least a couple of hours to spare. Why? Well, for starters, it really is a one-of-a-kind experience that is amazing to wander through. Secondly, if you're like me, you'll get lost at least a couple of times. I've been going to the same market for about a year and I still get lost often – Guatemalan markets are like labyrinths and everything is so colorful. It's extremely easy to get distracted – and lost!

I live in Antigua Guatemala, where the headquarters of **Homeschool Spanish Academy** is! When I go to the market, I visit the biggest one in Antigua! My first stop is always the veggies stand! To get there, I go past the stands with clothing and shoes, burned DVDs, electronics, and beauty supplies. I always make sure I'm on the right path a couple of times because everything looks the same and I get easily lost. Then...yes! Here we are on my favorite veggie stand on the corner close to the meat section (the only way I remember where it is).



So, we're at the veggie stand now. I like the bigger ones because then I can buy everything at one place and also, the more things you buy, the better the price they will give you! This is not like a supermarket. Things are not tagged, so you need to ask how much everything is! Let's start. What I normally get at the veggies, I take out my veggies groceries list.

My mercado shopping list

My Grocery List - <i>el mercado</i>	
Spanish	English
<input type="checkbox"/> seis aguacates	6 avocados
<input type="checkbox"/> tres libras de tomate	3 pounds of tomatoes
<input type="checkbox"/> una libra de espinaca	1 pound of spinach
<input type="checkbox"/> cuatro chiles pimientos	4 bell peppers
<input type="checkbox"/> siete limones	7 limes
<input type="checkbox"/> dos cebollas moradas	2 red onions
<input type="checkbox"/> dos cebollas blancas	2 white onions
<input type="checkbox"/> cinco pepinos	5 cucumbers
<input type="checkbox"/> dos berenjenas	2 eggplants
<input type="checkbox"/> un brócoli	1 broccoli
<input type="checkbox"/> una coliflor	1 cauliflower
<input type="checkbox"/> jengibre	ginger
<input type="checkbox"/> una piña	1 pineapple
<input type="checkbox"/> tres mangos	3 mangoes
<input type="checkbox"/> siete bananos	7 bananas
<input type="checkbox"/> dos libras de fresas	2 pounds of strawberries
<input type="checkbox"/> una papaya	1 papaya
<input type="checkbox"/> una sandía	1 watermelon
<input type="checkbox"/> cuatro manzanas	4 apples





## Shopping in Spanish at el supermercado

Although you can buy almost everything in the market, there are things I prefer to buy at the supermarket. Chicken is one of those things because I like to buy frozen chicken. Salmonella is a thing and sanitary conditions in Guatemala are usually not the best at the meat section of the **mercado**, so I'd rather not get sick. There are other products I also get at the grocery store because it's just easier to buy them there.

Also, the supermarket is a completely different thing to the **mercado**. You can find signs on the aisles and prices on things! I know this sounds obvious, but believe me. Once you've been to a **mercado**, nothing is ever the same again. We do take a lot for granted! The signs and price tags do make shopping a lot easier - but the experience less memorable! Also, you're less likely to get lost. So if you're the less adventurous type and traveling alone, the **supermercado** might be a better option!

### My supermercado shopping list

My Grocery List - <i>el supermercado</i>		
	Spanish	English
<input type="checkbox"/>	una libra de tocino	1 pound of bacon
<input type="checkbox"/>	cinco filetes de pechuga de pollo congelados	5 frozen chicken breast fillets
<input type="checkbox"/>	una libra de carne de res	1 pound of beef
<input type="checkbox"/>	queso mozzarella	mozzarella cheese
<input type="checkbox"/>	una libra de harina	1 pound of flour
<input type="checkbox"/>	una libra de arroz	1 pound of rice
<input type="checkbox"/>	una libra de café	1 pound of coffee
<input type="checkbox"/>	una lata de frijol	1 can of beans
<input type="checkbox"/>	una caja de cereal	1 box of cereal
<input type="checkbox"/>	pan	bread
<input type="checkbox"/>	mantequilla	butter
<input type="checkbox"/>	leche de almendra	almond milk
<input type="checkbox"/>	mantequilla de maní	peanut butter





## The other things

I like to buy my **miel** (honey) from a local honey farm because I've been to that place and I know those are happy bees, they produce high-quality honey and their honey has no added sugars (like many honeys do)! I also enjoy buying local and knowing exactly what I'm putting in my body!

And then there are also **huevos** (eggs). I'm famous for always squishing **aguacates** (avocados) on my way back home. Every time, at least one avocado suffers the consequences of having been in my bag. So two conclusions from my avocado squishing times: 1) I'm not trusted with avocados anymore and 2) I prefer to buy eggs near my house because I don't want eggs to suffer the same faith as avocados have multiples times. There's this place that sells eggs and honey (yes, Guatemala is weird like that) just a couple of blocks away from my house. The chances I kill a whole carton of eggs in two blocks are very low, so I hope for the best!

## Exercises

In the following exercises, you'll get to practice all the vocabulary we just learned! Grab some colored pens and have fun!



# Exploring the Market in Spanish

Make a line to connect the matching pairs!

español

mantequilla
fresa
limones
banano
frijol
leche
piña
sandía
miel
manzana
aguacate
pepino
tocino
berenjena
espinaca
pan
cebolla

inglés

milk
honey
cucumber
pineapple
bread
strawberry
avocado
eggplant
butter
onion
beans
limes
banana
apple
watermelon
spinach
bacon



# Exploring the Market in Spanish

Write the word in Spanish!

inglés

español

milk
honey
cucumber
pineapple
bread
strawberry
avocado
eggplant
butter
onion
beans
limes
banana
apple
watermelon
spinach
bacon




# Answer Key: Exploring the Market in Spanish

Make a line to connect the matching pairs!

español

inglés

mantequilla	milk
fresa	honey
limones	cucumber
banano	pineapple
frijol	bread
leche	strawberry
piña	avocado
sandía	eggplant
miel	butter
manzana	onion
aguacate	beans
pepino	limes
tocino	banana
berenjena	apple
espinaca	watermelon
pan	spinach
cebolla	bacon



## Answer Key: Exploring the Market in Spanish

Write the word in Spanish!

inglés

milk
honey
cucumber
pineapple
bread
strawberry
avocado
eggplant
butter
onion
beans
limes
banana
apple
watermelon
spinach
bacon

español

<i>leche</i>
<i>miel</i>
<i>pepino</i>
<i>piña</i>
<i>pan</i>
<i>fresa</i>
<i>aguacate</i>
<i>berenjena</i>
<i>mantequilla</i>
<i>cebolla</i>
<i>frijoles</i>
<i>limones</i>
<i>banano</i>
<i>manzana</i>
<i>sandía</i>
<i>espinaca</i>
<i>tocino</i>

