



38 Spanish Terms of Endearment

Spanish Terms of Endearment for Families

Families are tight-knit in Spanish-speaking countries, sparking a wide array of terms of endearment that they use between them. Here is a list of just some of the nicknames you may hear being thrown around within *la familia*.

Mijo/a

Mija is a fusion of *mi hija*, “my daughter,” and ***Mijo*** of *mi hijo*, “my son.” Older family members often use this endearing term when they are addressing younger ones, even if they are not actually their son or daughter. *Mijito* and *mijita* are common variations.

Conejito/a

Literally “little bunny,” this pet name singles out the cuteness of small children. Similarly, any kind of fuzzy animal works as a nickname. For example, *gatito/a* (kitty) and *cachorrito/a* (puppy).

Some other sweet names include:

Mi príncipe/princesa – my prince/princess

Chiquito/a – little one

Chulo/a – cutie

Nene/a – “baby boy” or “baby girl” (In some families, the nickname *nene* or *nene* sticks to a person for their entire life when among family members.)

Mi ángel – my angel

Changuito/a – little monkey

Cachetes – cheeks

Gordito/a – chubby (although it sounds like an insult, between lovers, friends, or family *gordito/a* is a word of endearment)



Gusanito/a – little worm

Pollito/a – chick

Burbujita – bubble

Muñeca – doll

Mi tesoro – my treasure

Mi cielo – my sky/heaven

Jefe/jefa – Literally meaning “boss,” this nickname refers to the matriarch or patriarch of the family.

A Note on Diminutives

You know how “doggie” is a cute and affectionate way of saying “dog”? In Spanish, you can make the same change to practically any noun by adding *-ito* or *-ita* to the end.

These suffixes literally mean “small,” so *casa* means “house” while *casita* means “small house.” They can also imply familiarity and affection. An affectionate way to address your *hermana* (sister), for example, would be *hermanita*. You can also add the same suffixes to someone’s name – so Juana becomes Juanita. It’s cute, endearing, and to say it’s common is an understatement. Most Latin Americans will add these suffixes to just about any word.

- **Tomamos un cafecito.** (*café = cafecito*) – Let’s have a coffee.
- **Dame un abracito** (*abrazo = abracito*) – Give me a hug.
- **Feliz cumpleaños. cariñito!** (*cariño = cariñito*) – Happy birthday darling!
- **Ven acá, hijita** (*hija = hijita*) – Come here, my daughter.
- **Mira como salta mi corazoncito.** (*corazón = corazoncito*) – Look at how my little sweetheart jumps.

Spanish Terms of Endearment for Partners

If you have a Spanish-speaking romantic partner, you’ve probably heard some of these pet names. Couples use them everywhere throughout Latin America and Spain.

Mi amor – my love



Mi corazón – my heart/sweetheart (similar to “my love” in English)

Cariño/a – darling/sweetheart/honey

Querido/a – dear

Mi vida – my life. A nice expression for showing your loved one how much they mean.

Precioso/a – precious

Mi rey/reina – my king/queen

Mami/papi – mommy/daddy.

These terms can refer to your parents, but more commonly refer to an attractive guy or girl in places like Colombia, Cuba, and other Caribbean countries. It's important to note that these words are not common in Spain, Chile, Argentina, and Bolivia. You may also hear the Spanish diminutives, *mamita* and *papito*.

Mi viejo/a – my old man/old lady.

Just like in English, this is an endearing way to refer to your spouse in middle age and beyond.

Media naranja – soul mate/better half

Spanish Terms of Endearment for Friends

Nicknames for *amigos* tend to vary by country and region. Here are some common ones you might hear.

Chico/a – boy/girl. It's similar to the playful way English speakers use “man/woman” when addressing a friend.

Primo/a – cousin. This nickname can also refer to a close friend.

Hermano/a – brother/sister. Pet name for a close male or female friend.

Cuñado/a – brother or sister-in-law. This also refers to a close friend.



Guapo/a – beautiful/handsome. When greeting friends, it's common to flatter them by addressing them as *guapo/a*.

Paisa – compatriot

Compa/coma – Derived from the words *compadre* and *comadre* (godfather/godmother).

Cuate/a and **Carnal/a** – With no direct translation into English, these nicknames mean “buddy” or “pal.”

Tío/Tía – uncle/aunt. In Spain (**not** in Latin America), it's extremely common to address your friends as “tío” or “tía.” It's analogous to calling someone “dude” or “mate” in English.

Spanish Terms of Endearment in Action

Check out these example phrases to better understand how to use these Spanish terms of endearment in real life.

Quando vas a visitarnos, mi jefa? – When will you visit us, my boss?

This is a question a son or daughter could ask their mother, affectionately referring to her as “the boss.”

Mi amor, ¿qué quieres hacer hoy? – My love, what do you want to do today?

This is something you could say to your partner on a free day when you have no plans.

Mi reina, ¿qué quieres tomar? – My queen, what do you want to drink?

A husband could just as easily say this to a wife as a waitress could to a patron.

Chula, ¿qué te doy? – Cutie, what do I give you?

Both a little girl and a grown woman could be the receivers of this phrase.

Mija, te quiero mucho. – Daughter, I love you very much.



Yo también te quiero, mamita. – I love you too, mommy.

¡Buen trabajo, nene! – Good job, baby boy!

Te amo, mi burbujita. – I love you, my little bubble.

¿Quieres café, mi vida? – Would you like coffee, my love?

Vamos a viajar, mi cielo. – We're going to travel, my heaven.

Chao, Papi/Mami. – Bye, love.

Te presento a mi media naranja. – I'd like to introduce you to my better half.

¡Muy Bien, Amigos!