

# How to Get Fluent Fast!



Ben and Marina, founders of Notes in Spanish

## Our 8 Greatest Secrets for Fast Spanish Fluency!

***“I had to do something...”***

## **Ben’s fluency story...**

When I (Ben) came to Spain in 1998, about 9 months before I met Marina, **I only knew a handful of basic phrases in Spanish**, enough to get a room for the night, a drink, and a ham and cheese sandwich.

***Things had to change! I had to do something!***

**9 months later I was pretty much fluent**, and although I still had a LOT of grammar and vocabulary left to learn, I could chat away with Spanish people on anything from food to music, travel and more.

**I began to feel I was fitting in with the locals!**

The fact that I was living in Spain and super-motivated really helped a lot, but the steps outlined below, **the exact same steps I took to get fluent fast, will work for you too**, no matter *where* you are learning Spanish, and whatever your current level is.

We’ve split the list below into two sections, **Collecting Spanish**, and **Speaking Spanish**, both **crucial for fluency**:

## 1 to 4: **Collecting** Spanish

**1. I became a human sponge, absorbing everything in Spanish that I possibly could**, from TV shows, newspapers, billboards, and films. (On my first day in Spain, I accidentally saw Saving Private Ryan dubbed into Spanish at the cinema. I only understood about one word but I know it helped!)

***What you can do:*** Fill your life with Spanish like this too - from Spanish websites and social media (e.g. Instagramers) that focus on your interests, Spanish TV and movies online, music - get as much Spanish into your life as you can!

**2. I kept my ears wide open**, eavesdropping on conversations I heard in bars, on the Metro, out in the street... I was always listening out for interesting phrases and words I'd never heard before.

***What you can do:*** This is where [our Spanish courses](#), YouTube videos and podcasts come in - We *fill* our courses with real, wonderful Spanish phrases, and list them all, helping you sound **authentically good at Spanish**.

(Find out [more about our courses here](#))

**3. I wrote down just about all the vocabulary and phrases I wanted to keep hold of** in a special notebook, and tested myself regularly to make sure I learned it all.

***What you can do:*** Get yourself a notebook just for Spanish words and phrases. It's a technique that's been around forever, but it still works a treat!

**4. BUT, I skipped learning words I felt were too advanced for whatever stage I was at.** I knew I'd come across them again later anyway, so I could drop one or two along the way for now.

***What you can do:*** Do, however, make sure you keep the words and phrases **you just love**, no matter how hard or useless they are. Loving these words leads to enjoyment, which leads to faster learning and fluency all round.

**At the same time as you are *Collecting*, you need to be...**

## **5 to 8: Speaking Spanish**

**5. I put fluency above accuracy.** Of course I wanted to be accurate and speak as well as possible, but during that first year, more than anything I just wanted to speak!

***This was probably the biggest key to my progress.***

***What you can do:*** Don't be a perfectionist, ***just speak!***

**6. I never worried about making mistakes. Neither should you!** You learn lots more from making mistakes and having people point them out.



***What you can do:*** Again, just speak! The person listening to you doesn't mind if you make mistakes at all, and will probably correct you if you ask them to at the start of the conversation.

**7. I got myself *intercambios*, and lots of them.** This meant meeting a Spanish person for a couple of hours in a bar, speaking for half the time in English (for them to practice) and half the time in Spanish (for me!) There are plenty of *intercambio* sites online nowadays if you aren't in a Spanish-speaking country.

***What you can do:*** Getting an *intercambio* makes a huge difference to your progress, we *really* recommend it. (Ben and Marina started out as *intercambios* - and ended up bilingual in each other's languages... and married!)

***And finally...***

**8. I used all the new things I was learning whenever I could (I still do!)**

***What you can do:*** You're making a big effort to learn all these wonderful words and phrases, so make sure you use them whenever and with whoever you can! **Don't hold back!**

Be proud of the effort your making, don't worry for a minute about getting things wrong and, above all, **enjoy using your new Spanish skills – have fun!** *Fun leads to fluency!*

**Our final, big top-tip...**





Marina, having lunch in Chinchón, 30 km from Madrid

**You're finally on your way to fitting in with the locals!** We already see you sitting in a warm plaza, chatting to the waiter or Spanish-speakers at the next table...

The best thing you can do to **accelerate your own journey to fluency** is to jump into the wealth of real Spanish material in our [\*\*Spanish-Learning Courses\*\*](https://www.notesinspanish.com/courses) - full of t'he real Spanish you'll never find in a textbook or app!

**"I have gone from Inspired Beginner to practically fluent with the help of this program."** Kristi

**"This is the single best investment I've made in my self-education approach to learning Spanish."** James