This summary of attitudes and actions will help you to be successful on the exam; it is printed in Spanish because you should be thinking in Spanish; read it often and evaluate yourself. Am I following these guidelines about my attitude and actions toward preparing for the AP Spanish Language Exam?

### Acciones imprescindibles

- Comunicarse diariamente en español. Buscar oportunidades para usar la lengua dentro y fuera de la escuela.
- Acostumbrarse a leer una variedad de textos para adquirir un vocabulario más rico y diverso.
- Leer y escuchar una variedad de textos auténticos/originales en español para interpretar la lengua natural y común.
- Comparar y contrastar elementos de fuentes escritas y auditivas.
- Sintetizar e integrar las fuentes escritas y auditivas en vez de resumirlas para desarrollar presentaciones orales y escritas.
- Establecer la costumbre de referir frecuentemente a esta publicación y otros recursos para estar bien preparado/a para el examen en mayo.
- Prestar más atención al desarrollo de composiciones con tesis, dos o tres párrafos de desarrollo y una conclusión con ideas/opiniones personales.
- Aprovecharse de los recursos útiles ofrecidos por la red.
- Escuchar y leer regularmente las noticias en español.
- Aprender a interpretar y aplicar las rúbricas del College Board.
- Evitar usar los anglicismos y errores comunes entre los angloparlantes.

### Actitudes imprescindibles

- La dedicación necesaria para perfeccionar su gramática, aprender de los errores pasados y evitarlos.
- El deseo de mejorar siempre aunque lo hagan muy bien. Siempre existe la posibilidad de aprender.
- Una actitud positiva hacia la participación oral… Si, yo puedo hacerlo.
- La fe en sus habilidades para comunicarse en español: escuchar, hablar, leer y escribir.
- La dedicación de pronunciar como un hispanohablante requiere mucha práctica y perseverancia.
- Una mente abierta y dispuesta para comprender las culturas hispanohablantes del mundo: sus costumbres, sus historias, sus habitantes, sus inquietudes, sus problemas, sus gobiernos, etc.
- La decisión de seguir estas sugerencias y recomendaciones.
- La actitud de “tocar el cielo” y de “soñar a lo grande”.

### Section I – Multiple Choice

#### Part A: Listening – Short Dialogues & Narratives
Short dialogues and narratives are spoken on a recording, followed by multiple-choice questions; the questions are spoken on the recording but not printed in the test booklet; the answer choices are printed in the booklet.

**Strategies**
- Since you have only the answer choices in front of you, not the questions, always read over the options before you listen to know what information you will need.
- The questions can be tricky – words used in the recording may lead you to the wrong choice; do not select an answer choice just because you heard a particular word; use reasoning and logic.
- Do your best to follow along; do not fall behind when answering the questions after the dialogues.
- Don’t worry about taking notes; just listen and try to remember the context of the dialogues.
- Use process of elimination to rule out wrong answers.

#### Part B: Writing

**Background noise and natural atmosphere (in some listening sections)**

**Variety of contexts and vocabularies**

**Long dialogues and narratives (in simulated conversations)**

**5-6 response prompts; 20 seconds to respond to each topic**

**1 prompt; 10 minutes**

**1 prompt; 55 minutes**

**1 prompt; 2 minutes to respond**

**Special Note for Free-Response Sections**

The grading rubrics are designed to weigh three elements: task completion, topic development, and language use (although interpersonal writing combines task completion and topic development); pay special attention to strategies in this guide to help you understand what is expected.

**Task Completion**
- Have you responded to the prompt fully and included all that is requested?
- Have you addressed each bullet in the interpersonal tasks?
- Have you referred to and integrated all sources in the presentational sections?

**Topic Development**
- Have you responded fully and with relevance?
- Is your communication organized, and does it flow smoothly (effective transitions)?
- In the presentational tasks: Is the information accurate? Have you understood the source? Have you synthesized the information rather than simply summarizing?

**Language Use**
- Have you shown excellent control of elementary structures (knowing that elementary errors weigh more heavily)?
- Have you used a variety of tenses, moods, and structures (as appropriate to the task)?
- Is your vocabulary rich, precise, and varied, showing ease of expression?
- Have you displayed a command of language conventions: correct paragraphing, sentence structure, spelling, and punctuation?
- Is the register (formal vs. informal) highly appropriate?
- In speaking: Have you used excellent pronunciation and a high level of fluency without gaps?

**Access AP Spanish Language Scoring guidelines, print them, and refer to them often as you prepare for each free-response section**

**Notes**

- This guide contains effective strategies for each section of the exam, helpful vocabulary, checklists, and diagrams to prepare you for success.
- As you prepare, think about how the structure of the exam builds – you will go from listening to authentic Spanish speakers for approximately 35 minutes, to reading the language for approximately 45 minutes, to finally both speaking and writing in formal and informal modes.
- Actively thinking and functioning exclusively in Spanish for 80 minutes or so will help you to prepare for the second part of the exam.

**Interpretive Challenges throughout the Exam**

- Variety of contexts and vocabularies
- Variety of regional accents and registers (in listening sections)
- Background noise and natural atmosphere (in some listening sections)
Part B: Reading Comprehension

Journalistic and/or literary passages followed by multiple-choice questions; usually 4–6 passages.

Strategies for Reading Comprehension

- If a literary passage, the text is an excerpt; focus on the segment provided and do not worry about the rest.
- You may need to "insert" an additional sentence where it could be placed in the text; this is a statement that you will place at position A, B, C, or D (letters are placed in various spots in the text and you decide if the statement makes sense at position A, B, C, or D; the challenge is having time to go back and reread the text for correct placement).
- Place yourself so that you can get through all the selections.
- Note any visual components provided (e.g., maps, graphics, charts).
- Underline or circle what seems most important to help focus on what you may need later; there is not enough time to completely reread every selection; read for topic and structure.
- Concentrate on main points; identify who, what, where, when, why.

TIP: There is no longer a penalty for guessing, so do your best to complete all questions.

TIP: For vocabulary building and general comprehension practice, regularly listen to and read a variety of authentic news resources; vary the themes to include government and politics, science, medicine, healthy living, economy, business, education, sports, shopping, entertainment, and so on; use a graphic organizer, similar to the one shown here, to help you keep a record that is diverse in themes and vocabulary.

Fuentes Auténticas/Originales de Lectura y Comprensión Auditiva

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fecha</th>
<th>Publicación/fuente</th>
<th>Audio/Escrito?</th>
<th>El título</th>
<th>Lo que aprendí del tema</th>
<th>Vocabulario nuevo</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

TIP: Use word root and word family strategies to determine the meaning of unknown words; EX: el crecimiento (growth) is related to (to grow, increase) [see Word-Building Table, p. 6, for examples to help you make these associations].

Recommended Authentic Listening & Reading Sources

- Univisión – http://noticias.univision.com/
- BBC Mundo (Spanish news) – http://www.bbc.co.uk/mundo/
- Informativos Telecinco from Spain; castellano Spanish pronunciation and vocabulary – http://www.telecinco.es/informativos/
- La Sexta Noticias (news about Spain and the world; castellano Spanish pronunciation and vocabulary) – http://www.lasextanoticias.com/miocio
- Clarin.com (news from Argentina; the audio here will give you practice hearing the Argentine word and the pronunciation as well) – http://www.clarin.com/
- Radio Cervantes (from Spain) – http://radioocervantes.es/
- TV broadcasts from Mexico – http://www.mexicoradio.tv/live.htm

Section II – Free Response

Part A1: Interpersonal Writing

One prompt with a clearly stated task; context may be a friendly email message, letter, postcard, etc.; you will have 10 minutes to read the question and write your response (60 words or more).

EX: Escribe un correo electrónico. Imagina que eres al (a la) estudiante de intercambio que va a llegar en una semana para vivir en tu casa y asistir a las clases contigo. Quieres que esta persona se sienta cómodo(a) antes de llegar. Saludalo(la) y:
- Explica el propósito del correo y cómo te sientes por su llegada.
- Describes los preparativos que tu familia ha hecho para recibirlo(la).
- Dale información con respecto a su llegada al aeropuerto y dónde lo(la) buscarás.
- Despedite.

Strategies for Interpersonal Writing

- Carefully read the prompt and address each part of the question (each bullet).
- Include date, although not necessary if writing an email.
- Always include an appropriate greeting and closing according to register.
- Use correct punctuation throughout.
- Use bullet points in the question for direction.

Part A2: Presentational Writing

One prompt focusing on integrated skills (listening, reading, and writing) 55 minutes – 7 minutes to read the documents, 3 minutes to listen to audio sources, 5 minutes to plan your response, 40 minutes to write your formal essay (200 words or more).

3 fuentes, or sources (2 written, 1 oral)

Strategies for Presentational Writing

- Read the prompt and underline key words.
- EX: How are world governments investing money and developing regulations for the proper disposal of chemical waste to preserve the environment for future generations?
- Include and properly cite all three sources; EX: La fuente escrita comenta…BBC mundo afirma…[see Higher-Order Thinking Verbs & Guide for Citing Sources, p. 3].
- Use the 5 minutes provided to plan your essay as follows:
  - Introductory paragraph with your thesis statement, based on information obtained from all three sources.
  - Three to four paragraphs, each with a main point to develop and support the thesis (use a graphic organizer, similar to the one below, to help: make sure to cite all three sources).
  - Concluding paragraph to reinforce the thesis and wrap up, but do not simply restate the thesis.

Sample Graphic Organizer for Presentational Writing

Thesis statement – introductory paragraph
(written based on information gathered from all three sources)

3–4 main points to support thesis
(each should be a separate paragraph, led in by appropriate transitions)

Main point or idea #1 supported by evidence
(correctly cited and paraphrased) from:
- a) Fuente/Source 1
- b) Fuente/Source 2
- c) Fuente/Source 3

Main point or idea #2 supported by evidence
(correctly cited and paraphrased) from:
- a) Fuente/Source 1
- b) Fuente/Source 2
- c) Fuente/Source 3

Main point or idea #3 supported by evidence
(correctly cited and paraphrased) from:
- a) Fuente/Source 1
- b) Fuente/Source 2
- c) Fuente/Source 3

Use a transition to introduce your concluding paragraph
(EX: A fin de cuentas, para concluir, etc.)

Conclusion – closing paragraph
(this is a good place to add personal conclusions, predictions, evaluations, etc.)

Register References Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appropriate Subject</th>
<th>Tú</th>
<th>Usted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>With close friends and family members</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More formal situations, business situations, interoffice correspondence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Greetings/Salutations

Hola amigo/a | Muy señor mío |
Querido/a | Muy Señora mía |
Queridísimo/a | Estimado Señor |
Mi querido/a | Estimada Señora |
Besos | | |
Un fuerte abrazo | Con todo mi cariño |
Abrazos | Con todo mi afecto |
Un abrazo | | |

Possessive Adjectives & Pronouns

Tu, tus | su, sus |
tuyo, tuyas | suyo, suyas |

Direct & Indirect Object Pronouns

te | lo, la |

Register References Chat
Editing Checklist

Leave time to edit, using the following checklist for avoiding common pitfalls and errors:

✔ Verbs: Have you conjugated correctly? Does each verb ending go with the subject used? Check endings on all verbs for each tense used

Subjunctive vs. Indicative: Check for the correct mood for all verbs

Preterite vs. Imperfect: Check all verbs for correct past tenses [see Preterite vs. Imperfect, p. 5]

Ser vs. estar [see p. 5]

Have you used the personal “a” where necessary? [see p. 6]

Por vs. para [see p. 4]

Agreement of all adjectives, both in gender and number, with the nouns they modify

Correct spelling and use of accent marks (Remember: Days of the week and months of the year are not capitalized in Spanish)

Check that you have used correct punctuation throughout

Correct punctuation and use of conjunctions

Place direct quotes in quotation marks

Add your own evaluation and conclusions through predictions, solutions, and suggestions; this is how you go from simple understanding to thorough evaluation; it is appropriate to draw your own conclusions

Higher-Order Thinking Verbs & Guide for Citing Sources

Higher-order thinking moves from the bottom (simple acquaintance with the subject) to the top (actual evaluation); the information is stated in Spanish because you should be thinking in Spanish; the escritor refers to the student writing on the exam

Muletillas

These expressions are called muletillas because they support you, like crutches, as you think of what to say in response to a prompt and avoid gaps in conversation; you can also use them to clarify or probe in a way as you are thinking; they add a natural lead-in to what you are going to say

Simulated Conversation Verb Guide & Sample Conversation

These are common verbs used in the prompts for simulated interpersonal conversations; you will have to be ready to respond as directed—as stated in the outline—within the context of the conversation, the topic about which one has no definite idea until it begins and develops

Accept (accept)

Aconseja (advise)

Cuenta (tell)

Da (give)

Describe (describe)

Despiade (say goodbye)

Dí (say, tell)

Explica (explain)

Expresa (express)

Finaliza (finalize)

Haz (make)

Incluye (include)

Insiste (insist)

Menciona (mention)

Ofrece (offer)

Pide (ask, request)

Pregunta (ask [a question])

Propón (propose)

Reacciona (react)

Recomienda (recommend)

Saluda (greet)

Sugiere (suggest)

Tira (try)

Sample simulated conversation:

Imagina que estás comiendo el almuerzo en la cafetería de la escuela y tu amigo Carlos llega y se sienta contigo. (You will hear a situation described on the recording that provides more information; once the conversation begins, the text in red is what you hear and the black text areas are your prompts; make sure to answer each part of the question and check off each part as you address it so that you do not get “lost” or confused as to where you are in the conversation)

Carlos: Te saluda y comienza la conversación.

Tú: Saludado.

Carlos: Reacciona a lo que te dije.

Tú: Te da más información.

Carlos: Expresa como te sientes.

Tú: Ofrece una sugerencia.

Carlos: Trata de convencerlo.

Tú: Reacciona a tu sugerencia y te hace una pregunta.

Carlos: Responde a su pregunta detalladamente.

Tú: Se despide y sale para su clase.
Part B2: Presentational Speaking

One prompt focusing on integrated skills (listening, reading, speaking)

5 minutes to read the printed source; then you will hear the audio source; 2 minutes to plan your answer, and 2 minutes to record your answer

la película está para comenzar.
Estamos para salir.

4

Section II – Free Response (continued)

Transitions

To Begin an Idea or Introduce a Point

a partir de beginning with
al considerar upon…considering
al principio at the beginning
cómo punto de partida as a point of departure
en primer lugar in the first place
para empezar to begin
primero first

To Continue Along the Same Thread or to Elaborate Further

a la (misma) vez at the same time
actualmente presently
demás besides, furthermore
ahora mismo right now
al mismo tiempo at the same time
asimismo likewise
con respecto a with respect to
de aquí (ahora), hoy en adelante from now on
en la actualidad presently
entonces then
específicamente specifically
hace poco a short while ago
hasta el momento, hasta la fecha until now
hoy día nowadays
igualmente equally
mientras while
mientras tanto meanwhile, in the meantime

Por vs. Para

POR is used in a much wider variety of contexts and to convey a great variety of meanings:

• FOR, as in an exchange, exchanging/giving something for something else, also for giving thanks

Té agradecido por tu ayuda.
Carlos pago 25 dólares por la camisa.

• FOR, as on behalf of or in place of

Marcos no pudo ir al mercado pues yo fui por él.

• FOR, as in favor of

Mis amigos votaron por ese candidato.

• FOR, as in making or confusing something or someone

Yo confundí a nuestro jugador por mi cantante.

• FOR, as in a duration or length of time

Nosotros fuimos al mercado por verduras frescas.

Por, however, is more limited in its uses and is used

BY, in passive-voice constructions as in by whom or by what something occurs or is done

El examen fue escrito por los profesores.

El CD fue grabado por mi cantante favorito.

• BY, as in a means of transportation or communication

Los futbolistas viajaron por avión pero no podían hablar por sus móviles en esa región.

• BY, THROUGH, AROUND, as in going by, through a place, or being located around

No es muy útil estar por mucho tiempo.

• FOR, IN ORDER TO, as in purpose or reason to do an action

Estudiamos para tener éxito en la clase.

• FOR, as in a due date or future date in time

Hace la cena para mis hijos.

Compré los regalos para la Navidad.

• FOR, when making a comparison

Para ser un joven americano, no mira mucha televisión.

Tómalo por lo que realmente es.

• FOR, IN ORDER TO, as in purpose or reason to do an action

Estudiamos para tener éxito en la clase.

Tienes que leer bien para entender el texto.

• FOR, BY, as in by a due date or future date in time

Hace la cena para mis hijos.

COMPRAS PARA LA NAVIDAD

Para ser un joven americano, no mira mucha televisión.

Tómalo por lo que realmente es.

Escribí la carta para el médico.

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Tienes que leer bien para entender el texto.
Past Tenses: Preterite vs. Imperfect

PRETERITE: This is the past tense used for actions definitely completed in the past tense; there is no doubt that the action both began and ended in the past; this is the “snapshot” past tense; once the picture is taken, it is over; situations include:
- Single, completed one-time actions of which we know both the beginning and the end
- A series of single, completed actions, each one finished before the next action happened
- A mental action that would normally be imperfect but occurred at one distinct point in time and “happened”: En ese momento me di cuenta de la importancia de mi decisión. (This is preterite because at that moment, I realized the importance of my decision; once I realized it, I knew it and the action of realizing is completed)
- A verb that states that something began or ended in the past: Él abrojo mirela la película cuando mi madre entró en la sala.

IMPERFECT: This is the “ imperfectly completed” past tense that is used for everything else and includes:
- Setting the scene and providing description in the past that was ongoing with no clear “ snapshot” ending but rather an ongoing “painting in progress”; logical, since most descriptions are ongoing and lasting; descriptions include:
  - Vocal physical description
  - Time
  - Location
  - How someone was feeling, mental states, thoughts, and attitudes
- Was-ing and were-ing actions that leave us hanging; we know that the subject began the action in the past but never heard the end of the action.
- Repeated, habitual past actions or used to actions that were ongoing over a period of time and we do not know that they ended
- This tense is “set the scene” for a preterite action; therefore, both tenses can occur together in the same sentence: Mi abuelo archivando las cartas.

Common Errors to Avoid

1. Pluralization
- recomendación ➜ recomendaciones: the plural of words ending on a syllable with a written accent lose the accent when adding -s or to form the plural

2. Gender
- el problema, el tema, el programa: most -ma words are masculine
- la recomendación, la televisión, las vacaciones, etc.: all -ción and -sión words are always feminine
- la libertad, la juventud, la bondad, la pareja: words ending in -tad, -tud, -dad, -ed are feminine
- las casas son grandes y modernas. Jorge es guapo, Moreno y alto.

3. Vocabulary & False Cognate Issues
- Correct terms to express high school and college
  - el colegio = junior high school or high school; you cannot use this for higher education!
  - el instituto = used for high school in many countries
  - la universidad = college; you must use this for higher education, even when the name of the institution has the English word college in it
- a tiempo ➜ on time, not en tiempo
- asistir vs. atender: asistir a ➜ to attend; atender a ➜ to attend to, as in to take care of
- Mi amigo asiste a muchas clases universitarias. La enfermera atiende al paciente.
- conocer vs. saber: conocer ➜ to know, as in acquaintance – one can be acquainted with a person, place, or thing; saber ➜ to know, as in facts or information about a person, place, or thing – it can also mean to know how
- trabajar vs. funcionar: use trabajar for the subject performing work as in toil, earning money, tasks, etc.; use funcionar for to work, as in to function
- Mi padre trabaja en la oficina. La máquina no funciona hoy.

- pedir vs. preguntar: pedir is for requesting; preguntar is for questioning
- salir de vs. dejar: salir is used when the subject leaves a place; dejar takes a direct object and means to leave something behind; also make sure that you use de after salir to say from where a person is leaving: Mis amigos salen de Alaska.
- aplicar vs. solicitar: aplicar is to apply, as in applying for a theory; solicitar is for applying for admission, for a job, a scholarship, etc.
- la aplicación vs. la solicitud: same reasoning as previous item
- la confidencia vs. la beca: erudición is scholarship, as in wisdom, knowledge, learning; beca is scholarship, as in money for college, etc.
- decir, hablar, discutir: use decir for to say or tell; use hablar for to speak or talk; and use discutir for to discuss or to argue

- involucrado, tomar parte en ➜ involucrarse: use these expressions instead of trying to state as in English: I am in Spanish Club. Yo estoy involucrado en el Club de español. Yo tomo parte en el Club de español. NOT: Estoy en
- amar, querer vs. encantar: only use amar and querer for loving people, pets; use Me encanta, Me encantó, Te encanta, Te encantó, etc., to state that you love something.
- ¿Me encanta el esquí? Me encanta el esquí ➜ I love skiing.
- este vs. ese: “This and these have the ‘s’”; so, este, esta, estos, estas ➜ this, these; ése, esa, esos, esas ➜ that, those
- el tiempo vs. la vez: tiempo is for in time in general, e.g., “Cuánto tiempo tenemos?” (How much time do we have)?; use the vez for time, as in instances: tres veces, muchas veces, varias veces, la primera vez, la última vez
- volver vs. devolver: use volver when the subject him/herself returns; use devolver with a direct object
- Los profesores vuelven a la escuela. Los profesores les devuelven los papeles a los estudiantes.
- bien vs. buena: just like in English – buenos días = adjective; bien ➜ adverb
- MORE FALSE COGNATES:
  - la carpeta vs. la alfombra: carpeta = folder; alfombra = carpet/floor covering
  - la cuestión vs. la pregunta: cuestión refers to a matter/issue/question to be answered; pregunta = question to be answered
  - larga vs. grande: largo = long; grande = big
  - sensible vs. razonable: sensible = sensitive; razonable = reasonable
  - el éxito vs. la salida: éxito = success; salida = the exit
  - los padres vs. los parientes: padres = parents; parientes = relatives
  - recordar vs. grabar: recordar (ue) ➜ to remember or remind; grabar ➜ to record something
  - efectivo vs. eficaz: efectivo = real, actual, cash (money); eficaz = effective
  - la fábrica vs. la tela: fábrica = factory; tela = fabric or cloth
  - envisuotado vs. excitado: excusadom = excited, as in enthusiastic; excitado = excited sexually
  - educado vs. enseñado, formado: educado = brought up, cultivated, polite, or reared; enseñado, instruido, formado = educated
  - la facultad vs. el profesorado: facultad = mental faculty, power, ability, but it can mean a university department; profesorado = faculty of a school
  - la falta vs. la culpa: falta = lack, need, absence, shortage; culpa = fault or blame
  - la letra vs. la carta: letra = letter of the alphabet; carta = letter (correspondence)
  - la lectura vs. la conferencia: lectura = reading or reading material; conferencia = lecture or conference
  - presentar vs. introducir: presentar = to introduce a person; introducir = to introduce a topic
  - suceder vs. tener éxito: suceder = happen, follow, come next; tener éxito = to succeed
  - el suceso vs. el éxito: suceso = event, happening; éxito = success
  - la desgracia vs. la vergüenza: desgracia = misfortune or mistake; vergüenzadshona = shame or disgrace
  - la ganga vs. la pandilla: ganga = bargain; pandilla = street gang (México and U.S.) or group of friends (Spain)
  - el delito vs. el deleite/ el placer: delito = minor crime or offense; deleite or placer = delight
Examples are provided, but create a similar table to apply vocabulary-building skills or to determine the meanings of new words.

### Tabla Para Construir Palabras (Word-Building Table)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noun</th>
<th>Adjective</th>
<th>Direct Object 1</th>
<th>Direct Object 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>el peso</td>
<td>pesado (heavy)</td>
<td>hacer feliz (make happy)</td>
<td>felicemente (happily)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la felicidad</td>
<td>feliz (happy)</td>
<td>hacer feliz (make happy)</td>
<td>felicitar (to congratulate)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Examples:**

- Ella tiene una nena. (She has a daughter.)
- Eleno se pone el abrigo antes de salir de su casa. (He puts on his coat before leaving his house.)
- Mi hija abrazó a su novio. (My daughter hugged her boyfriend.)
- Mi hermana conoce a los vecinos. (My sister knows the neighbors.)

**NOTE:** These lists briefly cover common themes in everyday news and world issues according to the AP World Language and Culture themes; these lists are certainly not exhaustive but provide examples of higher-level vocabulary with which you should familiarize yourself in preparation for the exam.

### Personal “a” Guide

Remember to use the personal “a” in the following situations:

1. Before any direct object noun that refers to a person:
   - Ella ve a su novio. [She sees her boyfriend; her boyfriend is what or who she sees – the direct object of ve]
   - Mi hermana conoce a los vecinos. [My sister knows the neighbors; neighbors are what or who my sister knows – the direct object of conoce]

2. Before the pronouns alguien (somebody), nadie (nobody), and quien (whom), and when referring to people:
   - No escuchas a nadie. [You don’t hear anyone.]
   - Alguien conoce a alguien. [Someone knows someone.]
   - ¿A quién viste? [Whom did you see?]

3. Before animals that are pets and members of the family:
   - Cuidamos nuestro perro. [We take care of our dog.]
   - ¿Y es tu gato Zorro? [Do you see your cat Zorro?]

4. In situations of personification: a country or object can be personified or treated as if it were a person, meaning that there is some sort of a personal relationship, such as an emotional attachment, with the noun personified:
   - Yo respeto mucho los Estados Unidos. [I respect the United States a lot.]
   - Mi hija abrazó a su muñeca, su compañera. [My daughter hugged the doll, her friend.]

5. The personal “a” is not used:
   - Aftener
     - Tengo un amigo. [I have a friend.]
     - No tengo secretaria. [I don’t have a secretary.]
   - Before unspecified nouns
     - Ella ve un estudiante. [She sees a student.]