A Underline the direct object. Then, tell whether it refers to a person or thing.

1. You wrote too many letters to him.  
2. I took your brother to the game.  
3. They took the trash out.  
4. She picked me up at 8 PM.  
5. I met that actress at a party.  
6. We bought lots of presents for Mark.  
7. He’s known that teacher since he was a kid.  
8. Robert is athletic, and plays many sports.

In Spanish The direct object also receives the action of the verb. When the recipient of the action is a person, the word a comes before it. This a is called personal a, meaning that it refers to a person as a direct object. It has no translation in English. To ask a question about a direct object person, use a quién:

—¿A quién viste en la tienda?  
—Vi a Tere y a Jaime. ¿Los conoces?  
—Conozco a Tere, y quiero conocer a Jaime.

When the recipient of the action is a thing, no a is needed. Notice that both people and things are substituted by the same direct object pronouns: lo, la, los, las.

¿Ves esos restaurantes? Los conozco muy bien.  
—¿Conoces a mis amigos?  
—No, no los conozco.

In English Nouns The direct object is the noun that receives the action of the verb. It answers the questions whom? or what? Thus, the recipient of the action can be a person or a thing.

I saw Lucy and Jack at the store. Who(m) did you see?  
I know Lucy, I’d like to meet Jack. Who(m) do you know?  
Who(m) would you like to meet?  
They were buying a book. What were they buying?  
That store sells many things. What does that store sell?
B Underline the direct object. Then tell whether it refers to a person or thing.

1. Llevé a tu hermano al partido.  
   Direct Object: [underline]hermano  
   Person or Thing: Person

2. Escribiste muchas cartas.  
   Direct Object: [underline]cartas  
   Person or Thing: Thing

3. Sacaron la basura.  
   Direct Object: [underline]basura  
   Person or Thing: Thing

4. Me llevó a casa a las ocho.  
   Direct Object: [underline]casa  
   Person or Thing: Thing

5. Conocí al abogado en la fiesta.  
   Direct Object: [underline]abogado  
   Person or Thing: Person

6. Compramos muchos regalos para Mark.  
   Direct Object: [underline]regalos  
   Person or Thing: Thing

7. Conoce bien a ese profesor.  
   Direct Object: [underline]profesor  
   Person or Thing: Person

8. Roberto es atlético y practica muchos deportes.  
   Direct Object: [underline]deportes  
   Person or Thing: Thing

C A friend wants to know what you did and saw at the party on Friday. Answer using the following as direct objects. Use personal a to refer to a person.

1. ¿Qué viste en la fiesta? ¿A quién viste? (decoraciones/gente)  
   Direct Object: [underline]decoraciones  
   A quién viste: [underline]person

2. ¿Qué llevaste? (una chaqueta negra)  
   Direct Object: [underline]chaqueta  
   A quién llevaste: [underline]person

3. ¿A quién llevaste contigo? (mi hermana)  
   Direct Object: [underline]hermana  
   A quién llevaste: [underline]person

4. ¿Qué enseñaste? (fotos de mi graduación)  
   Direct Object: [underline]fotos  
   A quién enseñaste: [underline]person

5. ¿A quién conociste? (unos muchachos de la universidad)  
   Direct Object: [underline]muchachos  
   A quién conociste: [underline]person

6. ¿A quién te presentaron? (un actor famoso)  
   Direct Object: [underline]actor  
   A quién te presentaron: [underline]person

D Compare the following sentences.

a. ¿Quién conoce a tu hermano?  
   Who knows your brother?

b. ¿A quién conoce tu hermano?  
   Who(m) does your brother know?

Without the personal a, how could you tell who was the subject and who was the object? How can you tell in the English questions?
### Present progressive

**In English Nouns** The present progressive is the verb tense used to talk about what is happening right now. It is formed by combining the verb to be in the present tense with the -ing form, or present participle, of the main verb.

- We are reading this novel. It is snowing.

It can also be used to talk about future events.

- Tomorrow I’m leaving for Perú. John is going next summer.

**A** Change the tense in the following sentences from present to present progressive.

1. I write letters. I am writing letters.
2. You watch the birds. You are watching the birds.
4. The sun shines. The sun is shining.
5. She plays guitar. She is playing guitar.
6. We sing along. We are singing along.

**In Spanish** The present progressive also tells what is happening right now. It is formed by combining a present form of estar with the present participle. The present participle is formed by replacing –ar with –ando and –er or –ir with –iendo. For –er and –ir verbs whose stem ends in a vowel, –iendo changes to –yendo.

- hablar  ➔ hablado
- correr  ➔ corriendo
- interrumpir ➔ interrumpiendo
- leer  ➔ leyendo

—¿Qué estás tomando? —Estoy bebiendo un vaso de leche.

The present participles of stem-changing –ir verbs change o ➔ u and e ➔ i.

- dormir ➔ durmiendo
- pedir ➔ pidiendo

Pronouns can go before the conjugated form of estar or be attached to the end of the –ndo form. In the latter case, an accent mark must go over the stressed vowel.


**B** Change the tense in the following sentences from present to present progressive.

1. Pepita habla por teléfono. Pepita está hablando por teléfono.
2. Se lavan las manos. They are washing their hands.
3. Yo me peino. I am brushing my hair.
4. ¿Vendes todos tus CDs? Are you selling all your CDs?
5. Claudia los compra. Claudia is buying them.
C Your best friend’s sick and can’t come to your birthday party, but is keeping on top of it by instant messaging. Tell him or her what’s happening as it happens, using the present progressive. Use direct object pronouns in your responses.

1. ¿Cuándo van ustedes a hacer los preparativos?
   
   Los estamos haciendo ahora. / Estamos haciéndolos ahora.

2. ¿Tu mamá va a preparar empanadas para la fiesta?
   
3. ¿Todos están celebrando tu cumpleaños ahora?
   
4. ¿Los invitados piden muchos pasteles en hoja?
   
5. ¿Tu hermana y tú van a servir galletas?
   
6. ¿No vas a leer las tarjetas de cumpleaños?
   
7. ¿No vas a enseñar las fotos de la última fiesta?

D Compare the following Spanish and English sentences.

a. No puedo hablar contigo, estoy hablando por teléfono.
   I can’t talk to you, I’m talking on the phone.

b. Mi madre viene esta noche. OR Mi madre va a venir esta noche.
   My mother is coming this evening.

Why do you think Spanish doesn’t use the present progressive in sentence b?
What time does each set of sentences refer to: right now or a later time?