Spanish Foundations
Module 1 – Core Verb "Ser"

Lesson: Anatomy of a Chunk / About Ser

Here's a quick review of what we learned last week and a simple optional activity to help you practice.

In Module One, we explored the "Anatomy of a Chunk" — how a small phrase can grow step-by-step to carry more meaning while keeping the same core idea. This approach helps us take in new language gradually — adding vocabulary, adding structure, and building memory through use rather than memorization.

Here's the evolution as a clear, step-by-step list:

1. Base idea **Yo soy abogado.** *I am a lawyer.*

2. Add life stage **Yo soy abogado jubilado.** *I am a retired lawyer.*

3. Add goal: learning Spanish **Yo soy abogado jubilado y quiero aprender español.** *I am a retired lawyer and I want to learn Spanish.*

4. Add reason: to talk with a friend **Yo soy abogado jubilado y quiero aprender español porque quiero hablar con mi amigo.** *I am a retired lawyer and I want to learn Spanish because I want to talk with my friend.*

5. Add location: in my class **Yo soy abogado jubilado y quiero aprender español porque quiero hablar con mi amigo en mi clase.** *…because I want to talk with my friend in my class.*

6. Add specific class: OLLI **Yo soy abogado jubilado y quiero aprender español porque quiero hablar con mi amigo en mi clase de OLLI.** *…in my OLLI class.*

So, we start with a tiny chunk and slowly grow it. The core idea stays the same, but we add more detail, more vocabulary, and more meaning each time.

Homework (tarea): This is completely optional and meant to support your learning — not to test you.

Prepare an introduction to present to the class. Your introduction can be spoken from memory, read from your notes, or posted in the Chat. Below is a template and some ideas. You are welcome to expand the introduction to any level that matches your fluency.

Start small, then add one idea at a time. Focus on the pattern — not memorizing every word. Choose the pieces that fit *you* and build your own introduction.

Step-by-Step Chunk Builder (With Plug-In Options).

This builder gives you pieces you can mix and match to create your own introduction. Keep it simple, keep it true to you, and enjoy building your Spanish one idea at a time.

1. Start with your profession or role

Yo soy…

- maestro / maestra
- ingeniero / ingeniera
- enfermero / enfermera
- artista
- voluntario / voluntaria
- estudiante
- jubilado / jubilada
- escritor / escritora

2. Add a detail about your life stage or background

Yo soy _____ y soy...

- jubilado / jubilada
- nuevo en Tucson
- padre / madre
- miembro de OLLI
- aficionado/a a la música
- viajero / viajera

3. Add your goal

...y quiero aprender español. or **...y estoy aprendiendo español.**

Examples: *Yo soy voluntaria y quiero aprender español. Yo soy escritor y estoy aprendiendo español.*

4. Add your reason

...porque quiero...

- viajar
- hablar con mi familia
- comunicarme mejor
- entender la cultura
- leer en español
- trabajar con mis clientes
- disfrutar mis viajes

5. Add who you want to talk to

...porque quiero hablar con...

- mi amigo

- mis nietos
- mis vecinos
- mi familia política
- mis compañeros de clase
- la gente en mis viajes

6. Add where

…en…

- mi clase
- mis viajes
- mi comunidad
- mi trabajo
- mi vecindario

7. Add a final detail

…en mi clase de OLLI. …cuando viajo a México. …cuando visito a mi familia.

Full Example (Model Sentence)

Yo soy abogado jubilado y quiero aprender español porque quiero hablar con mi amigo en mi clase de OLLI.

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Summary: What We Learned About *Ser*

1. What *ser* means

Ser is the verb we use for **identity-type information** — things that describe who or what someone or something *is* at its core.

2. How *ser* is conjugated (present tense)

Pronoun	Form of *ser*	Meaning
yo	**soy**	I am
tú	**eres**	you are (informal)
usted	**es**	you are (formal)
él / ella	**es**	he/she is
nosotros / nosotras	**somos**	we are
ustedes	**son**	you all are
ellos / ellas	**son**	they are

3. When we use *ser*

We use *ser* for information that feels **stable**, **defining**, or **core**:

- **Identity**: *Yo soy …*
- **Profession or role**: *Yo soy maestra.*
- **Origin**: *Somos de Arizona.*
- **Personality or traits**: *Ella es amable.*
- **What things are made of**: *La mesa es de madera.*
- **Telling time**: *Son las dos.*
- **Talking to a group**: *Ustedes son la clase.*

Ser helps you say **who you are**, **who someone else is**, and **what something is**. It's one of the most common verbs in Spanish, and it's the foundation for many of the chunks you'll use every day.

A note on pronunciation:

- **soy** = like "soy milk"

- **eres** = EH-res

- **es** = like "S"

- **somos** = SO-mos

- **son** = like "sewn"

In this lesson we focused only on *ser*, the verb for identity. Later we'll learn *estar*, which is used for temporary states and locations.

By the end of this lesson, you should feel comfortable with:

- Saying who you are using *yo soy…*
- Understanding who someone else is with *es*
- Talking about where you're from with *soy de… / somos de…*
- Addressing a group with *ustedes son…*
- Recognizing the core uses of *ser* (identity, profession, origin, traits, time)