SOFTWARE & TECH

How To Write The Date In Spanish

Published: November 20, 2026 | Index ID: #-

Introduction: Why Getting the Date Right Matters in Spanish

When learning Spanish, one of the most practical skills you need is knowing **how to write the date in Spanish**. Whether you are scheduling a meeting, filling out a form, writing a letter, or simply planning a trip to a Spanish-speaking country, using the correct date format is essential for clear communication. Unlike English, which often places the month before the day, Spanish follows a different logic. Moreover, the use of articles, prepositions, and numbers varies depending on context and region. In this comprehensive guide, we will break down every aspect of writing dates in Spanish, from basic formats to common mistakes, so you can confidently and accurately express any date. By the end, you will understand not only the rules but also the cultural nuances that make Spanish dates unique.

The Basic Structure: Day, Month, Year

The most fundamental rule in **how to write the date in Spanish** is that the day always comes before the month. For example, March 15 in English becomes *15 de marzo* in Spanish. The year is added at the end, usually after the month: *15 de marzo de 2025*. This order is consistent across both spoken and written Spanish. The month and day are typically written in lowercase, except when they appear at the beginning of a sentence.

Here is the basic formula:

- Day + de + Month + de + Year

Examples:

- 1 de enero de 2025
- 28 de febrero de 2023
- 31 de octubre de 1999

Notice the preposition *de* (meaning "of") is used between the day and month, and again between the month and year. This is non-negotiable in standard Spanish.

Days of the Week and Months: Capitalization Rules

In English, we capitalize the names of days and months. In Spanish, however, **days of the week and months are not capitalized** unless they are the first word of a sentence. This is a common trap for learners. For instance:

- Hoy es lunes. (Today is Monday.)
- El mes de abril es lluvioso. (The month of April is rainy.)

When writing a full date including the day of the week, you place the day of the week first, followed by a comma, and then the date. For example:

- Miércoles, 15 de marzo de 2025.
- Sábado, 1 de mayo de 2021.

Note that the day of the week is also not capitalized (unless starting the sentence). The comma after the day of the week is standard but not always used in informal contexts.

Numeric Format: A Shortcut with Caution

Just as in English, Spanish also uses a numeric format for dates, especially in forms, databases, or quick notes. However, the order remains day-month-year. So, March 15, 2025 becomes **15/03/2025** or **15-03-2025**. Be aware that in some Latin American countries influenced by English, you might occasionally see month-day-year, but this is non-standard and can cause confusion. The international standard (ISO 8601) also follows year-month-day (2025-03-15), but in everyday Spanish writing, the day-month-year numeric format is the accepted norm.

Here are examples of numeric dates:

- 01/01/2025 (January 1, 2025)
- 25/12/2024 (December 25, 2024)
- 07/04/1990 (April 7, 1990)

When writing numerically, you can separate the numbers with slashes, hyphens, or dots. However, slashes are the most common in Spanish-speaking countries.

The Use of Articles: "El" and "de"

A distinctive feature of Spanish dates is the frequent use of the definite article **el**. When stating the date in a full sentence, you usually begin with "El" followed by the number and month. For example:

- El 15 de marzo es el Día de San Patricio.
- Nací el 3 de julio de 1992.

If you include the day of the week, you often start with "El" before the day of the week, but not always. For example:

- El miércoles, 15 de marzo de 2025, tendremos una reunión.

In informal speech, people sometimes drop the article, but in writing it is safer to include it. The preposition *de* is used between day and month and between month and year, as mentioned. However, when writing the year alone after the month, some speakers use **del** (a contraction of *de* and *el*), especially when the year is preceded by the article "el". For example:

- Nací el 3 de julio del 92. (Informal)
- El 15 de marzo del 2025 será mi cumpleaños.

Using **de** or **del**is often a matter of style. "Del" is more common when the year stands alone after a month, but both are acceptable. In formal writing, "de" is safer.

Ordinal vs. Cardinal Numbers: When to Use "Primero"

In English, we use ordinal numbers for the day (e.g., "first," "second"). In Spanish, we use **cardinal numbers** (1, 2, 3…) for all days except the first day of the month. For day 1, you can use either the cardinal number **uno** or, more traditionally, the ordinal **primero**. So:

- 1 de enero = primero de enero OR uno de enero.

However, in written formal contexts, "primero" is preferred, especially when writing the date in words. In numeric form, it is always "1 de enero" (not "1ro de enero," though some abbreviations exist). For all other days, you use the cardinal numbers: 2 (dos), 3 (tres), 15 (quince), 31 (treinta y uno), etc.

Important: When writing the complete date in a formal letter, you might see "el primero de marzo de 2025" instead

of "el uno de marzo". Both are understood, but "primero" sounds more natural to native speakers for the first day.

Writing the Year: Centuries and Decades

Years in Spanish are read as full numbers, not divided like in English. For example, 2025 is read as "dos mil veinticinco," not "twenty twenty-five." Historically, years between 1100 and 1999 could be read in two parts (e.g., 1492 as "mil cuatrocientos noventa y dos" or "catorce noventa y dos"), but the modern standard is the full number. For the 2000s, it is always "dos mil ..." For the 1900s, it is "mil novecientos ..."

When writing the year, you never use a comma (unlike English, which often writes "2,025"). The year is written as a continuous number without punctuation. Also, when abbreviating the year (e.g., '25 for 2025), be careful: in Spanish, the apostrophe is placed before the last two digits: *el 15 de marzo de '25*. However, this is very informal and best avoided in any formal writing.

Common Mistakes and How to Avoid Them

Here are frequent errors made by learners when trying to understand **how to write the date in Spanish**:

- Using English order: Writing "March 15, 2025" as "marzo 15 de 2025" is incorrect. Always start with the day.
- Capitalizing months and days: Remember to use lowercase unless the word starts a sentence.
- Forgetting the preposition "de": Writing "15 marzo 2025" (without "de") is incomplete. You need "15 de marzo de 2025".
- Overusing "del": While "del" is acceptable, many learners mistakenly use it everywhere. Stick to "de" until you are comfortable.
- Confusing cardinal and ordinal: Do not write "2do de marzo" (second of March) – that's an English calque. Use "2 de marzo".
- Using the wrong numeric separator: In some Spanish-speaking countries, a period is used as a thousands separator (e.g., 2.025) but never in dates. Always use slashes or hyphens.

Regional Variations: Spain vs. Latin America

While the core rules of writing dates are the same across the Spanish-speaking world, there are subtle regional preferences:

- Spain: The format "15 de marzo de 2025" is universal. In informal writing, you might also see "15/03/2025" or "15-03-2025." The use of "del" for the year is very common in Spain.
- Mexico: Very similar to Spain, but the use of "del" is slightly less frequent. In numeric format, "15/03/2025" is standard.
- Argentina: Also uses day-month-year. However, you might see the ordinal "1°" (1ro) for the first day in some calendars.
- United States Spanish influence: In areas with heavy English influence, such as parts of the southwestern US, you might encounter month-day-year in bilingual contexts, but this is not recommended for standard Spanish.

Regardless of region, the academic and formal standard remains the same. If you are writing for a global Spanish audience, stick to the universal format taught in language schools.

Writing the Date in Sentences: Practical Examples

To help you master **how to write the date in Spanish**, here are several sentences showing correct usage in different contexts:

- Hoy es 12 de abril de 2025. (Today is April 12, 2025.)
- Mañana será el 13 de abril. (Tomorrow will be the 13th of April.)
- La conferencia es el lunes, 10 de octubre de 2024. (The conference is on Monday, October 10, 2024.)
- Nací el primero de mayo de 1990. (I was born on May 1, 1990.)
- El documento está fechado el 3 de julio del 2005. (The document is dated July 3, 2005.)
- La fecha límite es el 31 de enero. (The deadline is January 31.)
- Hoy es viernes, 15 de noviembre. (Today is Friday, November 15.)

Notice how the article "el" appears before the date, and the preposition "de" connects the parts. When

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