

# Ser or Estar?

Ser and Estar are the same verb in English - “to be”, but not in Spanish!

SER	to be	to be	ESTAR
Soy	I am	I am	Estoy
Eres	You are (familiar)	You are (familiar)	Estás
Es	He is, She is, You (for.) are	He is, She is, You (for.) are	Está
Somos	We are	We are	Estamos
Sois	You are (fam. pl.)	You are (fam. pl.)	Estáis
Son	They are, You (for. pl.) are	They are, You (for. pl.) are	Están

Even though Ser and Estar both translate the same way in English they each have different shades of meaning in Spanish. You can say something completely different from what you intended to say if you use the wrong one. Here’s an easy way to remember which to use.

Use **Estar** when discussing;

1. **Location** – where something is “at” even if vague, or a question, or absent (not “at”). Excludes events like concerts, parties, etc...
2. **Condition** – physical or emotional, temporary in nature. Describes “how” something is.
3. **Verb addition** – in other words, when added as a helping verb as in “is running”.

Use **Ser** in all other circumstances.

Examples:

**ESTAR** -

1. She’s at the beach. They’re not in school. Where is he?
2. I’m sad. The coffee is hot. My dog is sick. We’re tired. He’s wet.
3. She is walking. I’m running out of time. It is finished.

**SER** - Anything not covered by Estar such as;

It is 12:45. The car is blue. They are nice people. That’s mine.  
I’m from Argentina. She’s a doctor. It’s impossible! Etc, etc.