

Ser and Estar: Part III

In the previous two lessons you learned the fundamental difference between ser and estar - essence or condition, as well as some common uses for the verb ser. This lesson examines the other Spanish verb for "to be": estar.

Estar is used to express geographic or physical locations.

¿Dónde estás? Where are you?
Estoy en el laboratorio..... I'm in the laboratory.
¿Dónde está Chile? Where's Chile?
Chile está en América del Sur..... Chile is in South America.

NOTE: *The one exception to this rule is that ser is used to tell where an event is taking place. (La fiesta es en mi casa.)*

Estar is used with adjectives to express a state or condition.

¿Cómo está la sopa? How's the soup?
La sopa está fría The soup is cold.
¿Cómo estás tú? How are you?
Estoy muy bien, gracias I am very well, thanks.

Estar is used with many idiomatic expressions. These are just a few.

estar de acuerdo to be in agreement
estar de pie to be standing
estar en camino to be on the way
estar en las nubes to daydream

Estar is used with the progressive tenses. You will learn more about this usage later. We present it now simply because it is an important use of the verb estar.

¿Qué estás comiendo? What are you eating?
Estoy comiendo arroz y frijoles I am eating rice and beans.

Let's review. Estar is used to express:

geographic or physical location
state or condition
many idiomatic expressions
progressive tenses

Let's add another flashcard:

Verb Flashcards

9. Uses of estar

geographic or physical location
state or condition
many idiomatic expressions
progressive tenses