

# Ser and Estar: Part IV

In the previous three lessons you learned the fundamental difference between *ser* and *estar*—essence or condition, as well as some common uses for each verb. This lesson presents the two verbs side by side, with the emphasis on contrasting their uses. In the process, much—but not all—of the previous three lessons will be reviewed. The practice exercises and the test cover material from all four lessons (*Ser and Estar Parts I–IV*).

When the verb “to be” is followed by a noun, the verb *ser* is always used. In this instance, it might be helpful to think of the verb as equivalent to an “equal” sign, such as  $a = b$ . This type of sentence is always referring to essential characteristics, since the verb is “linking” what comes before the verb to what comes after the verb.

John is a doctor.  
John = doctor.  
Juan **es** médico.

When the verb “to be” is followed by an adjective, the verb used depends upon the meaning. When referring to an essential characteristic, use *ser*. When referring to a state or condition, use *estar*.

La sopa está fría ..... The soup is cold.  
Los elefantes son grandes ..... The elephants are big.

When the verb “to be” is followed by an adjective, the verb can actually change the meaning of the adjective.

El profesor está aburrido ..... The professor is bored.  
El profesor es aburrido ..... The professor is boring.

Distinguishing between origin, location, and “to take place.” To describe origin, or where something is from, use *ser*. To describe location, or where something is located right now, use *estar*. To tell where an event is taking place, use *ser*.

Mónica **es** de España. (origin)  
Mónica **está** en Venezuela. (location)  
La fiesta **es** en la casa de Mónica. (taking place)

## Let's review.

When a noun follows the verb, use *ser*  
When an adjective follows the verb, decide between “essence” and “condition”  
To tell where something is from, use *ser*  
To tell where something is located right now, use *estar*  
To tell where an event is taking place, use *ser*

Let's add another flashcard:

### Verb Flashcards

#### 10. Ser and estar (contrasting uses)

When a noun follows the verb, use ser

When an adjective follows the verb, decide between "essence" and "condition"

To tell where something is from, use ser

To tell where something is located right now, use estar

To tell where an event is taking place, use ser