

What are Demonstrative Pronouns in Spanish and English?

Demonstrative pronouns are pronouns used to demonstrate, show, or indicate something to the person you're speaking to.

In English, if I ask you, "Which book do you want?" and show you two, you'll probably answer "this one" and point towards the one you have just chosen. You don't have to repeat the word book, and I still get what you mean.

in English, we only have 4 demonstrative pronouns: this, that, refer to singular nouns, and "these" and "those" point to plural nouns.

Demonstrative pronouns in Spanish need to agree with the noun not only in number but also in gender.

I'll show you now 15 demonstrative pronouns. It looks like a big number, but because we can assign them all into three categories depending on the distance from the speaker, you'll find them easy to learn.

SPANISH

- **este, esta, esto, estos, estas**
- **ese, esa, eso, esos, esas**
- **aquel, aquella, aquello, aquellos, aquella**

ENGLISH

this (close)

that (far)

that (very far)

	THIS	THAT	THAT
masculin singular	→ éste	ése	aquél
feminine singular	→ ésta	ésa	aquélla
masculin plural	→ éstos	esos	aquellos
feminine plural	→ éstas	esas	aquellas
neuter	→ esto	eso	aquello

Por ejemplo ...

Estas naranjas cuestan menos que esas.

These oranges cost less than those.

¿Qué chica lo hizo, ésta o esa?

Which girl did it, this one or that one?

Quiero mirar esta película, no me gusta aquélla.

I want to see this movie; I don't like that one.

Todos los perros son lindos, pero prefiero éste.

All the dogs are cute, but I prefer this one.

-Mi Escuela de Español-

Neutral demonstrative pronouns: esto, eso, aquello

The neuter demonstratives replace something that has been or is going to be said. We also use them when we don't know the name of something or don't want to say it.

Necesito que sepas esto: te quiero.
I need you to know this: I love you.

No sé qué es eso.
I don't know what that is.

The demonstrative changes according to distance:

- **Near → Esto (This)**

—¿Qué es esto? —Es una carta de Betty.
-What's this? -It's a letter from Betty.

- **Medium distance → Eso (that)**

—¿Has visto ese gatito? —Eso no es un gato, es una rata.
-Have you seen that kitten? -That's not a cat, that's a rat.

- **Far away → Aquello (that...over there)**

—¿Qué es aquello que vuela? ¿Es un pájaro? ¿Es un avión?
—¡Es Superman!
-What's that flying up there? Is it a bird? Is it a plane? -It's Superman!