

Introduction

Isla Vista has a lot of people who speak Spanish. And many can only speak Spanish.

So, as an organization that does all of its work in IV, it behooves us to, at the very least, try our best to speak Spanish so we can communicate better with everyone.

To that end, we highly recommend that all members of IVCRC start with at least a basic level of understanding in Spanish, and to get better at that level throughout the year.

Not only will you be able to understand and speak with IV residents and Spanish speakers in general, you'll also be able to put it on your résumé if you're good enough.

Duolingo

We recommend the service Duolingo as a first step in learning Spanish. Yes, we are actually using the green meme bird to learn a language.

Now, I know, Duolingo is by no means nearly enough. To really become fluent in a new tongue, you've got to interact with actual fluent speakers and immerse yourself in a culture. Watching shows and playing games in a particular language, as well as traveling to new countries, all help greatly with language acquisition.

But we're not looking for Spanish mastery. That's way too much to ask for in a year, much less a month, and we're all full-time students with our own things to deal with. Again, a basic understanding is enough, as long as you gradually build on that understanding throughout your time in IVCRC.

[Demonstrate with screen recording.]

So here you can see I have Duolingo pulled up on my computer. They also have apps for iOS and Android, as you might expect, so it's up to you as to which device you prefer.

Click on "get started," select Spanish as the language you want to learn, and answer the questions that follow.

[Answer questions.]

Once you get to here, you can register an account with Facebook or Google to save your progress. You can use any account you prefer for this.

I already have an account, so for demonstration purposes, I'll just skip. Now the site gives you two options: Start learning Spanish from scratch, or—if you already have prior knowledge in Spanish—take a short placement test to jump ahead to your appropriate level.

Once you're done with all of that, you should get to a screen that looks something like this. This is the "Learn" screen, where you, well, learn Spanish, and you might be eager to jump right in.

But before you do, we'd like you to join the IVCRC "classroom." Joining will let you learn alongside the rest of IVCRC—you'll be able to see how everyone else is doing, and it'll be helpful to get a bit of a friendly competition going. To join the IVCRC classroom, go to the link that's currently on the screen (duolingo.com/classroom/egmcgm), or just copy and paste it from the email that you're watching this video from. Once you get access, you should see something like this.

And, well, now you're ready to practice to your heart's content.



Other efforts

Now, as I mentioned at the beginning of this video, joining Duolingo and practicing Spanish is... not required. Just... highly recommended.

And we as a committee will pursue other efforts to bridge the gap between Spanish and non-Spanish speakers. These efforts include

- creating an "about us" flyer in Spanish that we can bring to all of our events and that people can read,
- creating a cheat sheet with common Spanish words, phrases, and sentences that IVCRC members can read off of,
- making sure at least one fluent Spanish speaker attends all of our events, so that they can help translate for us, and
- asking a fluent Spanish speaker to translate all of our publicity materials into Spanish.

Closing thoughts

But we hope that Spanish education will not only improve your experience in IVCRC, but improve your life as well. It's common knowledge that learning a new language generally makes you just... better at thinking. And you'll be able to understand and talk with millions, or tens of millions, or hundreds of millions of new people around the world—lives that were previously off limits to you completely.

So, if you've always been meaning to learn a new language, but have just been putting it off, there's no better time to get started.

Okay, that'll do it for this video. In the next video, we'll talk about getting access to your very own IVCRC Google account and email address that you can go and brag about to your friends. But until then, thank you for your attention, have a nice day, and we'll see you around. Bye-bye.