

Una mano en español

*RECOMENDACIONES, RECURSOS Y TRUCOS PARA PRACTICAR ESPAÑOL
RECOMMANDATIONS, TUYAUX ET RESSOURCES POUR PRATIQUER L'ESPAGNOL
SUGGESTIONS, TIPS AND RESOURCES TO PRACTICE SPANISH*

How can I practice my Spanish online? Where can I find free exercises and free materials to learn? How can I get to know more about Spain and Latin American countries? How can I practice listening and reading?

Here's a list with lots of ideas to learn, practice and improve your Spanish, whatever your level in...Including lots of **tips and ideas**, audio practice, free materials, **free online exercises, recommended movies, music, books, Spanish blogs, podcasts, TV shows** and radio stations.

There are four sections:

A).GENERAL TIPS:

Recommended websites and blogs, exercise sites, general tips, slang, resources and suggestions for all levels

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B).BEGINNER AND ELEMENTARY:

Tips, recommendations and resources for those who are beginning to learn

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C).INTERMEDIATE AND ADVANCED:

Tips, recommendations and resources for those who already know a bit and want to practice and improve.

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D).SOME ADVICES FOR SPANISH STUDENTS

Some piece of advice that I give as a language student

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E).THE SPANISH WORLD:

Everything about Spanish and Latin American culture, including literature, recommended movies, recipes, documentaries, music, TV and radio shows and tips on history, society, travelling, cooking...

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a). General tips

ideas to learn

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★ Websites and blogs to help you learn Spanish:

- Of course, first of all, I recommend my **own blog**, marianogueira.net, and **my own online language school**, elinqua.com, where you will find lots of recommendations, podcasts, free exercises, interesting links, free materials, downloadable PDFs to help you learn, infographics, videos and many others.
- [Aprende español](#), a great website with news, music, listening exercises, and recommendations... Everything you need to practice your skills in Spanish.
- [Profe de ELE](#), a great blog, both for students and for teachers.
- [Red Molinos](#), a great website with lots of useful links, reading texts and vocabulary tips to learn Spanish.
- [Mi vida loca](#): a website from the BBC, with exercises and audios, ideal for beginners.

★ Free online exercises (with answers and explanations):

- [Ver-Taal](#), a very complete site where you will find grammar, spelling and vocabulary exercises, as well as listening activities, to learn French, Dutch, English and, of course, Spanish.
- [Espagnol facile](#), pour les francophones.

★ Free online dictionaries:

- [Wordreference](#), the best online dictionary.
- [Linguee](#), a different dictionary. It let you find any word but inserted in a context. It might be very useful of you are translating.
- [DRAE](#), the best monolingual dictionary in Spanish. Tiene la garantía y el rigor de la Real Academia Española, la mayor institución lingüística en el mundo hispano. Eso sí, no recoge palabras muy coloquiales o de reciente creación.
- Diccionario Panhispánico de Dudas, para dudas de la lengua.
- [Forvo](#), a pronunciation dictionary that works also as social network, where everybody can participate. It may be interesting not only to learn how to pronounce words in Spanish, but also to compare pronunciations within the Spanish speaking world.

★ El español coloquial:

- [Coloquial.es](#), an online project that intends to make an approach to colloquial Spanish. It includes a [slang dictionary](#), a [dictionary of gestures](#), and a very complete explanation of what the syntax of colloquial Spanish is like.
- [Diccionario de partículas discursivas del español](#) (DPDE), un diccionario de marcadores discursivos (o conectores), para registros coloquiales y formales., que incluye ejemplos, traducción a otros idiomas, reglas de uso, etc.
- **Algunas ideas para conocer el español coloquial son:**
 - Ver *webseries*, que podemos encontrar en blip.tv, series.ly o en portales

- o como Vimeo o Youtube.
- Series españolas o telenovelas (soap operas), como *Siete Vidas*, *Aquí no hay quien viva*...
- Series dobladas al español, sobre todo, comedias como *Friends*, *Frasier*...
- Hablar con españoles
- Programas de humor

★ Libraries and bookstores:

If you are looking for books to learn Spanish, you can go to your neighbor's library, or, if you live in a big city (Munich, Varsaw, Paris, Toulouse, Rome), you can go to the Instituto Cervantes' library. It's free! If this doesn't work, there's always [Amazon](#). If you have a kindle, it's cheap to get a book in Amazon.

★ Listening and podcast:

Podcasts are one of the biggest revolutions of today's language learning. Thanks to the Internet, we can access podcasts from all the radios in the world. We can easily find podcasts from Spain or any other country.

First, what's a podcast?

A podcast is a sort of an online audio, or, in other words, a **radio program or radio broadcast**. For example, BBC has different channels; every channel has many broadcasts or "chapters". Of course, you can listen to them directly by turning your radio on. But for example, if you miss *BBC New* today, no problem! Just go to the program's site on the Internet and you will find a complete list with the latest chapters. Look for the one you missed and you can listen to it on streaming or download it for later. That's a podcast, and the great thing of all is **that you can listen to any podcast of any radio on the world, at any moment, and totally free!**

Moreover, many people, companies and so on have created their own "audios" that they share on the Internet as a podcast. Many of them have an excellent quality, so **it is not just public radio**, like BBC or Radio France; it's much more than that.

Down below you will find some podcast suggestions in Spanish!

How can we get podcasts?

There are many options, so let's take a look at them:

o **On streaming:**

We can listen to them **directly on streaming**. To do so, we just need to **look for the podcast site** (for example, let's say *TED Talks*), **choose a chapter and listen to it then and there**. Of course, you can also save your favorite sites thanks to **Mozilla, Chrome**.... Then we would just need to go to the site and **hear to the audio online**. of course!

o **Downloading:**

Just go to the podcast site, **choose the chapters you like and download them to your desktop**, and for free! Then you can listen to them later.

o **Mobile apps:**

There are **different apps that we can install for free on our smart phone, iPhone, tablet or iPad**. In my opinion, the best of all is **Podcast Addict** (although **iTunes** is

also a good option). It's easy to download and install and it lets you search for podcasts in any language by setting a **language filter**. It lets you **subscribe to any podcast** and it gets automatically updated to show you the latest emissions of your favorite podcasts, which you can **download really easily and fast** at any moment.

○ **On our PC or Mac:**

You can also subscribe to any podcast by using a **free application that you can download** from the Internet at any moment. There are **two platforms** that you can use for this purpose: **Juice** (a good free software platform, although it's has an ugly interface), and of course, **iTunes** (free to download and use, with a nice interface and the advantage that is can also be used as a music player and store). **You can download Juice from [here](#); to download iTunes, click [here](#).**

○ **More options: to read and to listen:**

If you are tired of having so many accounts and platforms, maybe you should take a look at **Netvibes**. Netvibes is an **online platform** (with a free version and a premium version), that works as an **"aggregator"**. This means it lets you subscribe to any blog on the Internet by using the blog's feed URL. It is similar to Google Reader, but much better. **No need to download anything; just sign up** and get a password. And, of course, you can use it **for blogs, newspapers, video platforms and podcasts!**

★ **Blogs to read:**

Reading blogs of any subject can help you improve substantially your reading skills and vocabulary, and, at the same time, it's a very interesting occupation! Down below you will find a list of the best blogs to read in Spanish. A great way to read all the **new posts** that are published on a blog is by **subscribing to the blog**. To do so, there are different applications and platforms that work as **"aggregators"**, that is, is a place that holds and updates all the new contents automatically, according to your priorities.

Here are a few suggestion of applications that you can use:

- **Netvibes** (an online free application), probably the best of all.
- **Google Reader**
- **Feed Reader** (an excellent platform; it is totally; you have to download it to your computer; it has an ugly interface, but it's excellent).

Down below you will find some podcast suggestions in Spanish!

★ **Some musts:**

- **Instituto Cervantes**, the official website, available both in Spanish and English
- **DELE**, an IC section where you will find all about the DELE exams (how to register, what it is about, examination centers and more). Available in Spanish and English.
- **TODOELE**, a site for ELE teachers, but good for students too.
- Others...

(b).Beginner and elementary

some tips

★ Free online exercises (with answers and explanations):

- [Ver-Taal](#), a very complete site where you will find grammar, spelling and vocabulary exercises, as well as listening activities, to learn French, Dutch, English and, of course, Spanish.
- [Espagnol facile](#), un site web avec des exercices gratuits, spécialement faits pour les francophones.

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★ Free online flashcards:

- [Quizlet](#), a fantastic place where you can revise and learn new vocabulary (in Spanish and in other languages). You can download flashcards that other people have made, or make your own flashcards. There are plenty vocabulary exercises and you can download and print all the flashcards at any time.

★ Listening, podcast, radio and audioblogs:

There are lots of free podcasts that you can listen to in order to practice your Spanish, even if you just started learning. Here are some ideas:

- [Mi vida loca](#): a website from the BBC, with exercises and audios, ideal for beginners.
- [Spanish Podcast](#): a blog with lots of podcast for Spanish students.
- [Notes in Spanish for beginners](#): an audio blog with lots of easy-to-listen podcasts and listening exercises for beginners.
- [Coffee Break Spanish](#): a blog with free and not free lessons and podcasts.
- [News in slow Spanish](#). A website that offers different resources for Spanish students, but particularly audio exercises and podcasts. These podcasts are focused on the world's news, but the people there talk in a slow clear Spanish, that even beginners can properly understand. To access some of the content you will be required to have a premium account, but still, there are plenty of them that you can use (especially audio and transcriptions). It has also an app that you can download to your smartphone or tablet.

★ Mobile apps:

Mobile apps are nowadays a great tool to practice language in an easy funny way. Check out these. Most of them offer a free version and a premium version with extra features:

- [Duolingo](#)
- [Conjugation nation](#)
- [Babbel](#)
- [Spanish Verbs](#)
- [Qué onda](#)
- Podcast Addict or iTunes (for podcasts)

★ Grammar books:

- *Gramática básica del español (niveles A1 – B1)*, Ed.Difusión. This is the best grammar book to learn about Spanish grammar, either with a teacher or on your own. Get it on [Amazon](#) or at the library.

c). Intermediate/advanced

some tips

★ Places to find podcast y audios:

Here are some places or portals to look for podcasts:

- [IVOOX](#), portal de Internet que incluye MUCHÍSIMOS podcasts y audiolibros en español, sobre todos los temas e intereses. También incluye audiolibros y películas para ciegos. Mis emisiones recomendadas: *Documentales sonoros*, *Retronautas*, *La rosa de los vientos*, *SER historia*, *Afectos*, *Oh TV* y *PodCinema*.
- [Notes in Spanish](#), excellent blog with podcasts in Spanish, ordered by levels.
- [Spanish Podcast](#): a blog with lots of podcast for Spanish students.
- [Revista Trabalenguas](#): audioblog y revista online, realizada por profesores de español (donde yo participo también), con audios cortos y artículos variados.
- [Podcasts from Radio Nacional de España \(RNE\)](#),

★ Recommended podcasts:

- Los hermanos podcast (humor).
- [Ohhh! TV](#) (series de TV)
- [Esta peli ya la he visto](#) (cine)
- [Podcinema](#) (cine)
- [Hello Friki](#) (cultura geek, series, videojuegos, libros...)
- [El octavo pasajero](#) (cine)
- La biblioteca de Alejandría (historia).
- [La linterna de Diógenes](#) (filosofía, historia, sociología...)
- [La milana bonita](#) (literatura)
- [Filosofía aquí y ahora](#) (filosofía y pensamiento)
- [Biografías](#) (historia y biografías)
- [Biografías y documentales](#) (historia y biografías)
- [Monólogos](#) (humor)
- [Hello Friki](#) (geek, videojuegos, libros...).
- [Los retronautas](#) (literatura de ciencia ficción)
- [Memoria de España](#) (historia de España)
- [El Gabinete del Doctor Zagal](#) (curiosidades, humor y variedades)
- [Redes](#) (ciencia)
- [El abrazo del oso](#) (un poco de todo)
- [Cuestión de gustos](#) (LGBT)

★ Free online exercises (with answers and explanations):

- [Ver-Taal](#), a very complete site where you will find grammar, spelling and vocabulary exercises, as well as listening activities, to learn French, Dutch, English and, of course, Spanish.
- [Espagnol facile](#), un site web avec des exercices gratuits, spécialement faits pour les francophones

★ Blogs:

If you are a curious person and you like **reading about different topics** here are some blogs that will help you practice your **reading skills in Spanish**. **Blogs por temas / Ordered by subject:**

- **Cinema, series and TV:**
[Domingo de cine](#)
[Vaya tele](#)
- **Cooking:**
[Directo al paladar](#)
[L'Exquisit](#)
[Hogar Util](#)
[Gastronomía & Cía](#)
Los fogones de Chus
- Humor:
[El Hematocrítico](#)
- **Technology:**
[Gen Beta](#)
- **LGTB blogs:**
[Ambiente G](#)
[Hay una lesbiana en mi sopa](#) (HULEMS)
- **Travelling:**
[Trotamundeando](#)
[Viajando por ahí](#)
[Diario del viajero](#)
- **Geek, libros, series, comics, videojuegos, and sci-fi:**
[Hello Friki](#)
- **Science:**
[Xataka Ciencia:](#)
- **Business:**
[El blog salmón](#)
[Pymes y autónomos](#)
- **Literature:**
[Papel en blanco](#)
[S de libros](#)
- **Hobbies:**
- **Blogs and SEO:**
[Ciudadano 2.0](#)
- **Gossiping and celebrities:**
[Pop Rosa:](#)
- **Miscellaneous:**
[Sin dinero](#)
[Culturamas](#)
[Una docena de](#)

Moreover, **personal blogs** (that is, blogs where someone writes about his/her experience in life), can help you learn vocabulary and expressions about daily life. Some of them are written with a lot of irony and humour.

Personal blogs:

- [Como no ser una drama mamá](#), where a Spanish girl tells stories about her mom.
- [Viajando por ahí](#), un blog de relatos de viaje de la mano de una chica argentina.

★ Radio:

Spanish public radio is called [Radio Nacional de España \(RNE\)](#) and has **five channels**:

1. RNE, Radio Nacional or Radio 1. A general channel, that includes all kinds of programs... Everything except music). I highly recommend it. It's great quality.
2. Radio Clásica or Radio 2. A channel focused mainly on classical music, including broadcasting of concerts and music from films.
3. Radio 3. A great channel that is focused mostly on music of different types, which are classified in different programs or sections: rock, pop, jazz, blues, flamenco, fado, hip hop, world music, Brazilian music... You can find anything except greatest hits and commercial music. También tiene algunos programas que no son de música esencialmente.
4. Radio 4. A channel from Catalunya and broadcasted entirely in Catalan.
5. Radio 5. News and reportajes.

Of course, you can easily [find and download all the podcasts on the RNE website](#).

Here are **some radio recommendations** to listen to

If you like quick things (from 5 minutes up to 25 minutes), take a look at:

- . [Tendencias](#) (innovation and ideas)
- . [Reportajes de Radio 5](#) (reports on different subjects)
- . [Ciencia al cubo](#) (easy science)
- . Las noticias (news)
- . [Programas de Radio 5](#) (news on every subject)
- . [A su salud](#) (health)

If you prefer something a bit longer, check out:

- . [No es un día cualquiera](#) (a bit of everything)
- . [Esto me suena](#) (a bit of everything)
- . [Futuro abierto](#) (social stuff, current problems, environment...):
- . [La lanzadera](#) (start-ups, innovation and entrepreneurship)
- . [A hombros de gigantes](#) (science)

★ Television:

I am not a big fan of TV, but it admit it may be a great way to practice.

Check out the official website of [RTVE](#) (Spanish public radio), where you can watch many different programs on demand. I recommend:

- . [Redes](#) (science)
- . [Telediario](#) (the news)
- . [Cámara Abierta 2.0](#) (about the media and the Internet)
- . *La noche temática* (good documentaries),
- ...and the [documentary section](#), overall.

★ Recommended grammar/vocab books to learn and to practice:

- *Gramática didáctica del español*, de Gómez Torrego (Ed.SM), for advanced students who want to get deeper into the language. Check it out on [Scribd](#)
- **DELE**: los mejores son los de DELE, de la editorial Edelsa, en los diferentes niveles: B1, B2, A2, C1, etc. There's also *Las claves del DELE*, that I also recommend. If you are thinking about doing the DELE exams, these are your books.
- Moreno García, Concha (et al.), 2007, *Gramática B1*, Madrid, Anaya.
- Moreno García, Concha (et al.), 2007, *Gramática B2*, Madrid, Anaya.

★ Newspapers and magazines:

- Free newspapers, easy to get and to understand:
 - 20 MINUTOS
 - Metro
- Cheap dumb magazines, very useful to learn about slang and to practice reading. If you enjoy gossiping or pop culture, take a look at these:
 - *Hola*
 - *Semana*
 - *Pronto*
- **Specialized magazines, especially made for Spanish students, like:**
 - *Mary Glasgow's Magazines, like El Sol, Ahora...* I have written for them and they're rather good, and very easy and accesible.
 - Others
- **Revistas culturales, de alto nivel pero muy interesantes:**
 - **Muy Interesante**
 - [Yorokubu](#)
 - [Quo](#)
- **Periódicos de alto nivel, pero también excelentes para practicar:**
 - [El País](#) (el mejor periódico editado en España), con versión online.
 - [Expansión](#) (noticias económicas).
 - [El Mundo](#)
 - El Economista (noticias económicas).
 - [El Confidencial](#), publicado solo online.

★ Magazines:

Ordered by subject:

- **Prensa rosa, como *Hola, Semana, Pronto...***
- **Cultural magazines, like *Yorokubu, JotDown...***

d).More advice

some advice for students

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★ **Get a tandem or language exchange.** You can do just a conversation exchange or a lesson exchange. You can do it through sites like [Couchsurfing](#) or [BeWelcome](#), and even online, via Skype, at [iTalki](#). If you live in Spain, you can do it through [tusclasesparticulares.com](#) or [lingobongo](#). All you have to do is to register and publish a quick add asking for someone to join you.

★ **Haz consumo colaborativo:**
[Couchsurfing](#), [Hospitaly Club](#) and [BeWelcome](#)... ¡Por supuesto! You can travel around the world and stay with people and you can receive Spaniards and Latin American people at your place. You can even exchange recipes, talk and know about other cultures. Also, there are options like **covoituration**, **carsharing** or **Blabla Car**, which let you travel in a cheap way and meet people at the same time. Also, if you dare, hitchhiking might be a good option!

★ **Make us of the Internet!**

Make use of all the tools and resources that the Internet can offer you, from online tandems to free exercises, flashcards, blogs, podcasts and so on.

★ **Have a boyfriend, girlfriend, husband, wife...**From a Spanish speaking country. If not, friends can help also very much.

★ **Be passionate about learning.** Learning Spanish can open you a whole experience. Spanish is the second most spoken language in the world. Get to know new movies, books, music and many more in Spanish. You will be able to communicate with millions of people and to discover a beautiful language. Try to motivate yourself! It's the best way to learn!

★ **Eat with other people...** A great way to approach different dishes and cuisines and exchange recipes and also a fantastic way to meet new people and speak in Spanish. Check out [Eat With](#), or [Cookflat](#).

★ **Markets!**

If you are in Spain, for example (living or travelling), don't miss the chance to visit real markets. It's not just a wonderful experience (markets are beautiful, authentic and with great products); it is also a way "to force" yourself to speak, since you cannot just grab your stuff and pay, but instead you have to talk to the grocer and ask him/her tomatoes or cheese.

★ **Watch films, series or documentaries on Youtube!**

★ **Travel!**

★ **Listen to podcasts and radio programs!**

★ **Read books in Spanish.**

★ **Do cultural activities!**

Si vives en ciudades como Madrid o Barcelona, hay mil actividades para hacer, desde salir a cenar o de fiesta, hasta miles de actividades culturales. Merece la pena ver sitios como Caixa Forum, La Casa Encendida, La Tabacalera o, por supuesto, los museos importantes, como El Prado, Caixa Forum. .

★ **Variedades del español:**

- A documentary on the Andalusia dialect:

★ **Poesía:**

- [A media voz](#): poesía de poetas famosos en español

★ **Libros recomendados:**

Fáciles o medio fáciles:

- Laura Esquivel, Como agua para chocolate
- Elvira Lindo, Manolito Gafotas
- Horacio Quiroga, Cuentos de la selva
- Felisberto Hernández, Cuentos.
- Lucía Baquedano, Los bonsáis gigantes.
- Unamuno, Niebla
- Ramón Gómez de la Serna, Greguerías.
- Carmen Martín Gaité, Caperucita en Manhattan
- Gloria Fuertes, Obras incompletas

Difíciles, pero MARAVILLOSOS:

- Benito Pérez Galdós, Fortunata y Jacinta (para conocer el Madrid del siglo XIX).
- Cervantes, Don Quijote (¡claro!)
- Gabriel García Márquez, Ojos de perro azul
- Cortázar, Rayuela
- Gabriel García Márquez, Cien años de soledad
- Jorge Luis Borges, Ficciones

★ **Otras cosas:**

- [Frases hechas](#) para Erasmus en apuros

★ **Cocina y gastronomía:**

- Recommended books: 1080 recetas de cocina, by Simone Ortega.
- Blogs, like: [Directo al paladar](#) , [L'Exquisit](#) , [Hogar Util](#) , [Gastronomía & Cía](#).
- If you like in Madrid, check out cooking courses at [Librería A punto](#).
- Of course, videotutorials on Youtube channel

★ **Documentales:**

- [Comprar, tirar, comprar](#), un documental sobre la obsolescencia programada
- Serie documental sobre el famoso restaurante *El Bulli* y el chef Ferrán Adrià
- Otros

★ **Cortometrajes:**

- [En Madrid no hay playa](#) (es del amigo de una amiga mía ;)
- [Dos tomates y un destino](#).
- [Éramos pocos](#).
- [Hablando en plata](#):
- [La concejala antropófaga](#)
- [Simiocracia](#)

★ **Películas:**

- *Piedras (España)*
- *Fresa y chocolate (Cuba)*
- *La comunidad (España)*

- *El hijo de la novia (Argentina)*
- *Tacones lejanos (España)*
- *Mujeres al borde de un ataque de nervios (España)*
- *El hombre de al lado (Argentina)*
- *Amores Perros (México)*
- *Como agua para chocolate (México)*
- *REC (España)*
- *Abre los ojos (España)*
- *Mar adentro (España)*
- *No habrá paz para los malvados (España)*
- *El Orfanato (España)*

★ **Música en español:**

- **Copla:** género tradicional asociado al flamenco y hoy olvidado, pero maravilloso...Las mejores intérpretes son Concha Piquer, Imperio Argentina, Lola Flores y la moderna Pasión Vega.
- **Pasodobles:** música tradicional asociada a los toros, pero muy bonita.
- Músicas y bailes regionales españoles: jotas, sevillanas, sardanas...
- Música sefardí
- Boleros: Los Panchos, Antonio Machín...
- Salsa
- Bachatas
- Vallenatos
- Música clásica española:
Joaquín Rodrigo, Albéniz, Enroque Granados, Manuel de Falla..
- Flamenco: para conocer el flamenco, puede oírse el podcast del programa [Duendeando](#) de Radio 3. Hay muchos festivales de flamenco en España, sobre todo en verano y en Andalucía. Como músicos, los imprescindibles son Paco de Lucía (guitarrista), Camarón (cantaor) y otros más clásicos (como Manolo Caracol, La Niña de los Peines, etc.) o más modernos (Diego El Cigala, Enrique Morente...).
- Pop/rock español:
 - Pop/rock indie: Sidonie, Lori Meyers, Ellos, Love Of Lesbian, Pastora, etc.
 - Rock más clásico (de los años 90), como Extremoduro, Héroes del Silencio, Bunbury, Loquillo y los Trogloditas, Mago de Oz, Fito y los Fitipaldis...
 - Punk: Lehendakaris Muertos.
 - Rock alternativo
 - Música de la movida y los años 80: Alaska y los Pegamoides, Los Zombies, Hombres G, etc.
 - Divas y música petarda/gay: Fangoria, La Prohibida, Mónica Naranjo, Marta Sánchez.
 - Muy underground: L-Kan, Chico y Chica, Putilatex.
- Hip Hop: La Mala Rodríguez, Violadores del Verso, Cuarto Poder, Shotta..

★ **Conocer Madrid:**

CONTINUARÁ / TO BE CONTINUED

