

3

Es impresionante

It's impressive

In this unit you will learn to:

- ✓ Use adjectives and place them in the correct position.
- ✓ Use proper gender and number agreement between noun/pronoun and adjective.
- ✓ Use the short form of some adjectives.
- ✓ Describe a town or a city that you know.

CEFR: Adjectives (A1); Can get an idea of the content of simple descriptions (A1); Describe aspects of your environment (A1).

Adjectives: position and gender and number agreement

	Masculine		Feminine	
<i>Singular</i>	un vestido blanco	<i>a white dress</i>	una camisa blanca	<i>a white shirt</i>
	un traje azul	<i>a blue suit</i>	una falda azul	<i>a blue skirt</i>
	un chico español	<i>a Spanish boy</i>	una chica española	<i>a Spanish girl</i>
	un hombre feliz	<i>a happy man</i>	una mujer feliz	<i>a happy woman</i>
<i>Plural</i>	unos vestidos blancos	<i>some white dresses</i>	unas camisas blancas	<i>some white shirts</i>
	unos trajes azules	<i>some blue suits</i>	unas faldas azules	<i>some blue skirts</i>
	unos chicos españoles	<i>some Spanish boys</i>	unas chicas españolas	<i>some Spanish girls</i>
	unos hombres felices	<i>some happy men</i>	unas mujeres felices	<i>some happy women</i>



A Answer the questions about adjectives.

- 1 How do Spanish and English adjectives differ in terms of their position with respect to the noun they qualify?
- 2 Explain the different endings for *pequeño* (*small*) in *una casa pequeña*, *unos chicos pequeños*, *unas habitaciones pequeñas*.

Meaning and usage

1 adjectives are words like **caro** (*expensive*), **bonito** (*pretty*), which provide more information about a noun or a pronoun and, as in English, they are generally used next to the noun or as a complement of the verb:

Es un hotel caro. (*It is an expensive hotel.*)

Ella es muy bonita. (*She is very pretty.*)

2 in Spanish, adjectives agree in gender (masculine or feminine) and number (singular or plural) with the noun they qualify: **un libro bueno** (*a good book*), **una novela buena** (*a good novel*), **unos poemas muy buenos** (*some very good poems*).

3 if the adjective refers to more than one noun or pronoun, one masculine and the other feminine, use the masculine plural form of the adjective:

En el pueblo había un monasterio y una iglesia muy antiguos. (*In the village there was a very old monastery and a very old church.*)

Juan y María eran muy simpáticos. (*Juan and María were very nice.*)

Position of adjectives

1 generally in Spanish, adjectives are placed after the noun they qualify:

Es una ciudad grande. (*It is a large city.*)

Fue una fiesta divertida. (*The party was fun.*)

2 word order is quite flexible in Spanish and sometimes adjectives are placed before the noun for emphasis or to lend this greater force: **un enorme avión/un avión enorme** (*a huge plane*), **una pequeña casa/una casa pequeña** (*a small house*).

3 adjectives denoting nationality, religion, shape or colour are nearly always placed after the noun: **un artista español** (*a Spanish artist*); **la Iglesia católica** (*the Catholic Church*); **una caja cuadrada** (*a square box*); **un hermoso vestido blanco** (*a beautiful white dress*).



Note the two adjectives in **un hermoso vestido blanco**, with **hermoso** placed before the noun for emphasis. Normally, though, with descriptions which do not involve a subjective judgement both adjectives are placed after the noun: **un hombre bajo y gordo** (*a small, fat man*), **casas grandes y modernas** (*big, modern houses*).

4 the following categories of adjectives are normally placed before the noun:

- ▶ cardinal and ordinal numbers: **dos euros** (*two euros*), **el cuarto piso** (*the fourth floor*)
- ▶ possessives and demonstratives: **mis hijos** (*my children*), **esta semana** (*this week*)

- a few adjectives expressing quantity: **ambas personas** (*both people*), **mucho dinero** (*a lot of money*), **poco tiempo** (*little time*), **otro día** (*another day*), **tanta comida** (*so much food*).



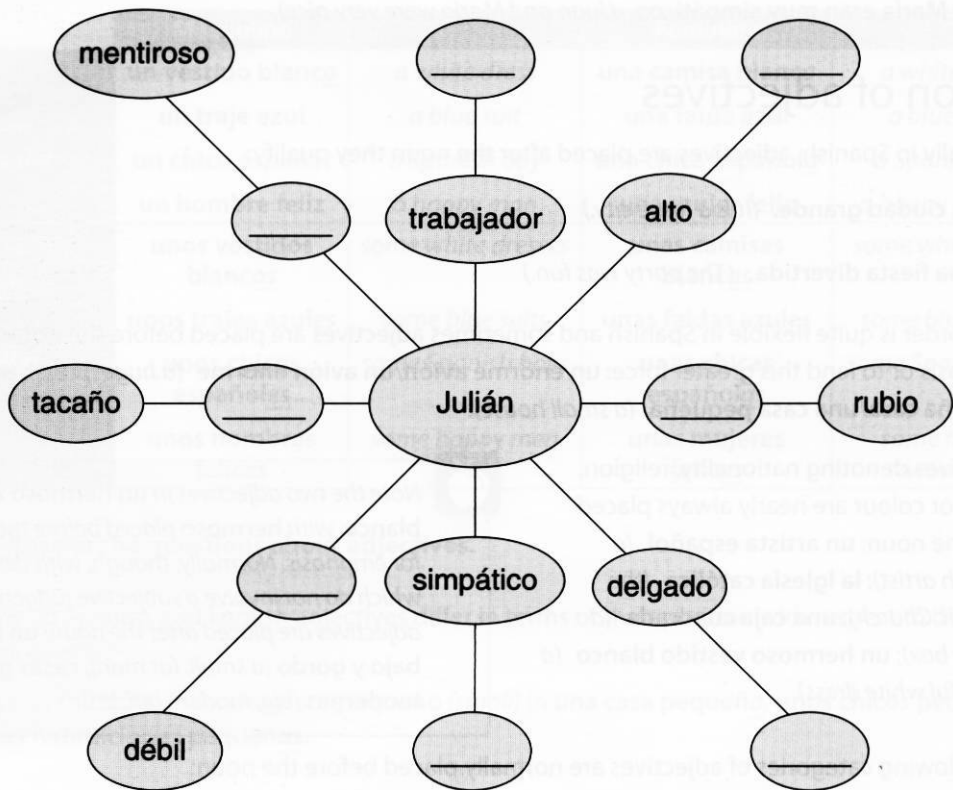
B What are the different meanings of único in these phrases?

- 1 una oportunidad única
 - 2 una única oportunidad
 - 3 hijo único
- 5 a few adjectives change their meaning depending on their position: **un coche* nuevo** (*a brand new car*) – **un nuevo coche** (*a new/another car*); **un país grande** (*a large country*) – **un gran país** (*a great country*); **un hombre pobre** (*a poor man*) – **¡Pobre hombre!** (*Poor man!*); **una amiga vieja** (*an elderly friend*) – **una vieja amiga** (*an old friend*).

*coche = carro/auto in Latin America



C Complete the spidergram with adjectives. The inner adjectives describe Julián; the outer ones give the opposites.



What adjectives would you use to describe yourself? What adjectives would you use to describe a friend of the opposite sex?