



# Making Your Spanish Habits Stick: How to Avoid Burnout, Boredom, and Distraction

## Episode 17

How do you get yourself to follow through with learning **and speaking Spanish** on a regular basis?

If you haven't already, go back and listen to [episode 16](#) about how to establish the habit of using Spanish in your daily life and complete the 3 action steps before listening to this episode.

In this episode, we'll talk about how to stick with your habits...even when we don't feel 100% motivated. I'll give you some practical tips on how to avoid boredom and distraction. These are personalized based on your specific tendency as it relates to habit formation. Listen now to figure out how to apply these strategies to YOUR tendency.

Speaker	Transcript
Host	Hola, buen dia. Welcome to episode 17 of the Learn Spanish Con Salsa podcast and this episode we're going to talk about how to make your Spanish habits stick, so how do you get yourself to follow through once you've established your new Spanish habits? This is part two of our discussion on how to form a Spanish language learning habit, so if you didn't catch part one of this conversation on how to create habits that will really work for you, go back and listen to episode 16, which is the previous episode, and listen to how you can really establish some smart habits that incorporate Spanish into your day to day life and complete the three action steps at the end of that episode. That really feeds into this. It does build on what we're going to talk about today, so definitely make sure you go back and listen to part one and then come right back here and pick up with part two.
Host	Now in this episode we're going to talk about some specific strategies that you can apply to make sure you follow through and stick with your habits for the long term. Now, many of us have had the experience of being very motivated when we start something new, but then as time goes on, our motivation starts to wane. We're not as excited as we were when we first started out, and the thing with habits, since we're doing them on a regular basis, it's very easy to get bored or to get distracted or feel like you're in a rut with your routine. So give you some advice on what you can do to prevent that. Since we already know it's coming, there's some things that we can do to make sure that we stick with our Spanish learning habit. Now last year I

	actually took a course about habit formation and it was by Gretchen Rubin in the course.
Host	She talks about the four different tendencies that we all have when it comes to forming new habits. Now she focused on establishing all sorts of habits. But I'm going to break down the four tendencies and give you some things to watch out for as well as some tactics that work best for your particular tendency so that you can make sure that you stay on track with your Spanish habit. Now those four tendencies are the obliger, the questioner, the upholder, and the rebel. Now I'm going to explain a little bit about what each one of those tendencies mean, but I'll also include a link in the show notes if you'd like to take the quiz so you can find out what your tendency is. But for now, just listen to the explanations and see if you can identify yourself in one of these tendencies. The first one is the obliger and the obliger's motto is, "I'll do it if you expect me to."
Host	Obligers are driven by external expectations and they form habits best when they have external accountability. So for example, an obliger is much more likely to stick with the habit if they know that someone is counting on them. And by the same token, they have to watch out for overcommitting. So the obliger is the person who will block off time in their calendar from 4:00pm - 4:30pm every Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and Sunday to learn Spanish. And then a family member will call them on Sunday at 3:30 and say, Hey, I really need your help with something. Can you come over right now and help me paint my room or clean up my house or run an errand for me? And the obliger because they're driven by the expectations of others, is more likely to not keep the commitment to themselves, but keep a commitment to a family member.
Host	So while they're helping a loved one, they're neglecting to meet their own needs and commitments to themselves by sticking to their habit. So it's harder for an obliger to follow through on a commitment they make to themselves. Now, if that resonates with you in some way, it's probably because a pretty large size of the population fits into this category. And these don't relate to age or gender or culture, these are just hidden sees that you have as a part of your personality. So don't think of these tendencies as feminine or masculine. They really just describe how we respond to expectations, whether they're internal, which our expectations we place on ourselves or external, which are the expectations of others. So for an obliger, because external accountability is very important, here's some things that are more likely to make habits stick for obligers. The first thing is to set firm boundaries.
Host	So in the example I gave earlier, if you're an obliger at, make sure that you put your study time on your calendar so that others will know that your time is blocked off and you are committed to yourself during that timeframe. The second strategy is to make a promise to your future self. So sometimes it helps obligers if they visualize themselves in the future and almost make that like another person that they're committing to. That sometimes helps because it can feel like it's someone outside of

	<p>you that you're being accountable oo because you're thinking about yourself in a future state. A third strategy might be to attend a class or to teach someone else what you're learning. So signing up for a Spanish class or a one-on-one session with a tutor is really good for an obliger because now someone else is depending on them.</p>
Host	<p>The same goes for a teaching. Someone else. What you learn, if you know that someone else is dependent upon you to help them with their Spanish, you're more likely to learn it because you'll be motivated by wanting to help that other person. And the last strategy that really works for obligers is working with a coach or an accountability partner. Now, this really works with obligers because someone else will be checking in to make sure they have met their commitment. So if you're an obliger, I highly recommend finding a language coach to work with or an accountability partner, someone who's learning Spanish along with you that you can check in with from time to time to make sure you stay on track. The next tendency is the questioner and their motto is, "I'll do it if it makes sense to me." Questioners tend to be pretty logical and they like to think that they're doing things the right way or the best way or the smartest way.</p>
Host	<p>Questioners depends a lot on their own research and they want all the details before they can move forward with a decision. So a questioner is much more likely to stick to a habit if it makes sense to them. They have to have some logic or reasoning behind why they're doing what they're doing. And the thing the questioner really needs to watch out for is analysis paralysis and overthinking. So the questioner is probably the person who has downloaded every single Spanish app, spends a lot of time reading about how to learn Spanish without actually getting started and taking action. So if that sounds familiar, you might be a questioner. So I have a few tips for you questioners out there. The first would be to rely on trusted expert opinions. Now questioners love to do their own research and in fact they may be convinced that they have found the best, most personalized, unique strategy for learning Spanish that there is. But if you find some experts on language learning or Spanish in general that you trust, try to rely on their expertise instead of spending a ton of time doing your own research and constantly questioning if you're following the right approach. So the key to this is trust. Instead of just reading a lot of articles about how to learn Spanish, commit to yourself that you'll actually test out one of the things that you learn before you go and read the next article.</p>
Host	<p>So treat expert opinions like a hypothesis that you have to test and decide what to continue doing or what to stop doing based on your actual results</p>
Host	<p>And a questioner also needs frequent reminders of their why. So why did I pick this particular way to learn Spanish and not one of the other 27 ways that there are to learn Spanish. As a questioner, you're going to need to remind yourself why you chose a specific learning activity or strategy so that you don't start to question it again and go back down the black hole, right? And start researching all over again and start back square one. So if you feel yourself getting off track or getting stuck</p>

	<p>because you can't remember why you're doing it this way in the first place, go back to the reasons why you decided on that approach. So for example, let's say you read an article that recommended that you learn the 1000 most commonly used words in Spanish in order to get better at conversation. So you start studying a little bit every day.</p>
Host	<p>Some of the words from that list, three days later, you read another article that says you should learn phrases instead of learning the individual words, because that's a much better way to learn Spanish. And Oh, by the way, here's another app that you can download that has automated the process for you. So you abandon the 1000 word list and you go straight to the new sexy app that has all the phrases that you now need to learn. The problem with that is you'll never be effective at anything if you don't give it a chance to work. So try to jot down a few of the notes from that article that you read about why you're learning the 1000 frequently used words and refer back to that anytime you start to get off track, And you might also want to commit to yourself that before you jump to a another strategy, you're going to give the one that you've already started a chance to work.</p>
Host	<p>So you might decide no new Spanish apps or courses or strategies for least two weeks so I have enough time to try out what I've already started. So hopefully those tips help if you feel like you are a questioner, most people fall into either the obliger or a questioner tendency, but there are some upholders and rebels out there. So the third tendency is the upholder. And their motto is, "I'll do it because I'm supposed to." Out of all of the tendencies, the upholder finds it the easiest to establish new habits and routines. They form habits best when there is a plan. So the upholder is the person who loves to have to-do list and planners and checklist. They're the ones that will follow a rule because that's what they're supposed to do. And the thing that upholders have to watch out for is rigidity.</p>
Host	<p>Sometimes upholders can lack creativity and flexibility because they're so focused on following the plan. So here's some suggestions for upholders to stick with the Spanish learning habit because upholders love to make plans. Make sure that you review your plan regularly if you're an upholder that will help you stay focused on meeting your goals. Upholders also really enjoy checking off their completed tasks, so, so if you have a calendar or a checklist where you're keeping track of your Spanish study time, it's good to give yourself an opportunity to check those things off once they're done. That really gives upholders a sense of accomplishment. And also be flexible. Be open to activities that are not on your original plan, especially if what you're doing is not getting you the expected results. So stay aware of what you're doing and realize that sometimes you may have to tweak your plan.</p>
Host	<p>Now the last tendency is the rebel and the rebel's motto is, "I'll do it if I feel like it." Rebels form habits best when they have flexibility. Now for this tendency, it can be very difficult to set habits because habits sound boring to a rebel. They sound like routine. They sound like doing the same thing every day. It's the grind that's no fun.</p>

	<p>And rebels love to have that variety and flexibility. So the words, habit and routine can almost sound like fingernails on a chalkboard to a rebel. And I happen to know this very well because this is actually my tendency, but it's important to understand that if you are a rebel, you can still establish habits. And I'll give you a few tips that might help. So the first suggestion is to give yourself options. So if you're a rebel, you know that inevitably you're going to want some more variety in your schedule.</p>
Host	<p>So since you already know that, set yourself up for success. So for example, let's say my habit is to listen to a podcast in Spanish three times a week during my lunch break. Instead of only subscribing to one podcast and listening to that one every single day during my lunch break, I might want to subscribe to three different podcasts. So when lunchtime comes around, I know I'm going to listen to a podcast, but I feel like I have the freedom to pick the one that I will listen to for that session. The second thing, and this might sound obvious and it really applies to all tendencies, but it's really important for a rebel, is to choose activities that are enjoyable. So you'll want to look for interesting and engaging content that's on topics that you're actually interested in. And you'll also want to pick activities that you like to do.</p>
Host	<p>So for example, as a rebel myself, I don't really enjoy reading textbooks. It's something that actually puts me to sleep. So I just don't do it because I know I won't stick with it long enough to see any results, but I do enjoy listening to music, which you may have already guessed by now, since we talk a lot about learning Spanish with music on this podcast. So for me, what worked was having a playlist of different songs that I really enjoyed and coming up with an effective strategy so that I could use music to help me learn Spanish. The last suggestion that's really important for rebels is to connect your language learning habit with uniqueness or your personal identity. So let's say your habit is to listen to the news in Spanish every morning while you're getting ready for school or for work. But this particular morning you get up and you decide, I don't feel like it. I don't want to do that right now. Which is really common for rebels. Now to get yourself to stay on track. You can think about your identity and you could say, hmm, what would a bilingual person do right now? Would they watch the news in Spanish or would they blow it off and not do it at all? Or decide to listen to the news in English? What would a bilingual person do? Or You could think, what would someone who is fluent in Spanish do?</p>
Host	<p>And really connect with that identity to help keep you on track. And it might also help to remind yourself that you're resisting the status quo. You don't want to be monolingual like everybody else in the US you really want to learn Spanish to be able to have conversations with real people. So whatever it is that drives you, remind yourself of that in those moments where you don't feel like following through with your Spanish learning habit.</p>
Host	<p>So those are the four tendencies. I hope some of the tips that I gave you for how to tweak your Spanish learning habits based on your tendency really helps you make your Spanish learning habits stick. So if you already have your list of habits and</p>

	<p>activities, go back and take a look at them and think about it based on your tendency. If you feel like you need to make a few tweaks or adjustments based on your tendency, go ahead and make those changes now. That's a clear way to set yourself up for success. So whether you're an obliger, a questioner, an upholder or a rebel like me, you can make your habits stick for the long term. Now, if you're still not sure what your tendency is, make sure you check out the link in the show notes to the quiz by Gretchen Rubin, and she really helps you identify what is your main tendency.</p>
Host	<p>So to get the show notes, go to <a href="https://learnspanishconsalsa.com/habits2">learnspanishconsalsa.com/habits2</a>, because this is part two of our discussion on habits. So again, that's <a href="https://learnspanishconsalsa.com/habits2">learnspanishconsalsa.com/habits2</a> and you can take the four tendencies quiz. And as always, I would love to hear from you, how are you applying your tendency to your new Spanish habits? Leave a comment on the show notes page or reach us on Instagram at <a href="https://www.instagram.com/learnspanishconsalsa">@learnspanishconsalsa</a>. I hope you learned something today that will take you one step closer from being a Spanish beginner to bilingual. Bye for now.</p>

**Show Notes:** [learnspanishconsalsa.com/habits2](https://learnspanishconsalsa.com/habits2)

#### **Links and Resources**

- [QUIZ] [The Four Tendencies Quiz](#)
- [BOOK] [The 4 Tendencies](#) by Gretchin Rubin