

Direct Object Pronouns: Part III

Remember, a direct object receives the action of the verb.

Bill hit the ball.

"Ball" receives the action of the verb "hit."

Sherry reads the book.

"Book" receives the action of the verb "reads."

And, the direct object can also be a person.

Sherry hit Bill. (DO=Bill)

Also, remember that the direct object answers the question "what?" or "whom?" with regard to what the subject of the sentence is doing.

Bill hit the ball.

Bill hit what? The ball.

Sherry hit Bill.

Sherry hit whom? Bill.

Often, it is desirable to replace the name of the direct object with a pronoun.

Example 1:

Paul bought the flowers. He took the flowers home and gave the flowers to his wife.

Example 2:

Paul bought the flowers. He took them home and gave them to his wife.

When the pronoun replaces the name of the direct object, use the following pronouns:

me (me)

te (you-familiar)

lo, la (him, her, it, you-formal)

nos (us)

os (you-all-familiar)

los, las (them, you-all-formal)

When a sentence has two verbs, the first verb is conjugated and the second verb remains in the infinitive form.

poder to be able

pagar to pay

Puedo pagar diez pesos..... I am able to pay 10 pesos.

preferir to prefer

hablar to speak

Elena prefiere hablar español..... Elena prefers to speak Spanish.

In sentences with two verbs, there are two options regarding the placement of the direct object pronoun.

1. Place it immediately before the conjugated verb
2. Attach it directly to the infinitive

Here are examples of the direct object pronoun placed before the conjugated verb:

Lo quiero ver I want to see it.
Lo debemos comprar We should buy it.
María nos debe visitar Mary should visit us.
Juan lo necesita lavar John needs to wash it.

Here are examples of the direct object pronoun attached directly to the infinitive:

Quiero verlo I want to see it.
Debemos comprarlo We should buy it.
María debe visitarnos Mary should visit us.
Juan necesita lavarlo John needs to wash it.

Here are the two methods side by side. Neither method is “better” than the other.

Lo quiero ver.

Quiero verlo.

I want to see it.

Lo debemos comprar.

Debemos comprarlo.

We should buy it.

María nos debe visitar.

María debe visitarnos.

Mary should visit us.

Juan lo necesita lavar.

Juan necesita lavarlo.

John needs to wash it.

These same rules apply for questions and negative statements.

¿Lo debemos comprar?

¿Debemos comprarlo?

Should we buy it?

Juan no lo necesita lavar.

Juan no necesita lavarlo.

John doesn't need to wash it.