

(Los Verbos Recíprocos)

Reciprocal reflexives describe actions that **two or more people do to each other** — like “each other” or “one another” in English.

They use the **same reflexive pronouns** (*nos, os, se*) but the meaning is **shared or mutual**, not individual.

1) What Are Reciprocal Reflexives?

A **reciprocal reflexive** shows that **the action is exchanged** between **two or more people**.

In English:

- We hug **each other**.
- They see **one another**.

In Spanish:

- **Nos abrazamos.** → We hug each other.
- **Se ven.** → They see each other.

2) Reflexive vs. Reciprocal: What's the Difference?

Type	Meaning	Example	English
Reflexive	The subject acts on itself	<i>Me lavo las manos.</i>	I wash myself (my hands).
Reciprocal	The subjects act on each other	<i>Nos ayudamos.</i>	We help each other.

Hint: You can only use reciprocal reflexives when there's **more than one subject** — *nosotros, vosotros, ellos, ellas, ustedes*.

3) Pronouns Used for Reciprocal Reflexives

Only **plural reflexive pronouns** are used:

Subject	Pronoun	English Equivalent
nosotros / nosotras	nos	each other / one another
vosotros / vosotras	os	each other (Spain)
ellos / ellas / ustedes	se	each other / one another

4) How to Form Reciprocal Reflexives

Formula:

Subject + reciprocal pronoun + verb (conjugated)

Examples:

- *Nos saludamos todos los días.* → We greet each other every day.
- *Ellos se escriben por correo electrónico.* → They write to each other by email.
- *Vosotros os conocéis muy bien.* → You all know each other very well.

5) Common Reciprocal Verbs

Verb	Meaning	Example
abrazarse	to hug each other	<i>Nos abrazamos al llegar.</i>
amarse / quererse	to love each other	<i>Se aman profundamente.</i>
ayudarse	to help each other	<i>Nos ayudamos con la tarea.</i>
besarse	to kiss each other	<i>Se besaron en la mejilla.</i>
conocerse	to know each other / meet each other	<i>Nos conocimos en la escuela.</i>
escribirse	to write to each other	<i>Se escriben cartas.</i>
hablarse	to talk to each other	<i>No se hablan ahora.</i>
llamarse	to call each other	<i>Nos llamamos todos los días.</i>
mirarse	to look at each other	<i>Se miran con amor.</i>
odiarse	to hate each other	<i>Se odian desde hace años.</i>

pelearse	to fight with each other	<i>Se pelean constantemente.</i>
respetarse	to respect each other	<i>Nos respetamos siempre.</i>
saludarse	to greet each other	<i>Nos saludamos con un abrazo.</i>
verse	to see each other	<i>Nos vemos mañana.</i>

6) Verb Tense Examples

Reciprocal reflexives can appear in **any tense** — just like regular verbs.

Tense	Example	Translation
Present	<i>Nos hablamos todos los días.</i>	We talk to each other every day.
Preterite	<i>Nos vimos ayer.</i>	We saw each other yesterday.
Imperfect	<i>Se ayudaban mucho.</i>	They used to help each other a lot.
Future	<i>Nos veremos pronto.</i>	We'll see each other soon.
<u>Present Progressive</u>	<i>Nos estamos escribiendo. / Estamos escribiéndonos.</i>	We are writing to each other.

7) Reciprocal Reflexives with Direct and Indirect Objects

Sometimes reciprocal verbs can also take **additional pronouns** for things or people **exchanged** between the two subjects.

Examples:

- *Nos damos regalos.* → We give each other gifts.
- *Se escriben cartas.* → They write letters to each other.
- *Nos decimos la verdad.* → We tell each other the truth.

Here, *nos / se* = “to each other,” while the **object** (regalos, cartas, la verdad) shows *what* they give or tell.

8) Clarifying “Each Other”

Sometimes it's unclear who is acting on whom, so Spanish often adds **uno a otro** (**one another**) or **el uno al otro** (**each other**) for emphasis or clarity.

Examples:

- *Nos miramos el uno al otro.* → We look at each other.
- *Se mandan mensajes uno a otro.* → They send messages to each other.
- *Nos escribimos cartas el uno al otro.* → We write letters to one another.

If the group is all female, use **la una a la otra**.

9) Negative and Question Forms

Negative

Place *no* before the pronoun:

- *No nos hablamos desde ayer.* → We haven't spoken since yesterday.
- *No se ayudan mucho.* → They don't help each other much.

Questions

Place the pronoun before the verb:

- *¿Se conocen bien?* → Do they know each other well?
- *¿Nos vemos mañana?* → Will we see each other tomorrow?

10) Reflexive + Reciprocal Combined with Other Pronouns

In the **progressive** or **infinitive** constructions, the reciprocal pronoun placement follows the same rules as with [reflexive verbs](#):

Structure	Example	Translation
Before conjugated verb	<i>Nos queremos ver.</i>	We want to see each other.
Attached to infinitive	<i>Queremos vernos.</i>	We want to see each other.

Attached to gerund *Estamos viéndonos.* We are seeing each other.

11) Practice: Fill in the Blanks

Complete the sentences with the correct reciprocal pronoun and verb.

1. Nosotros _____ (llamarse) todos los días.
2. Ellos _____ (ayudarse) con la tarea.
3. Tú y yo _____ (verse) mañana en la escuela.
4. Mis padres _____ (escribirse) cuando eran novios.
5. Los estudiantes _____ (respetarse) mucho.

Answers:

1. nos llamamos
2. se ayudan
3. nos vemos
4. se escribían
5. se respetan

12) Practice with Meaning

Translate into Spanish using a reciprocal reflexive.

1. They hug each other.
2. We see each other every morning.
3. The friends help each other.
4. You all (vosotros) talk to each other a lot.
5. My grandparents love each other very much.

Answers:

1. Se abrazan.
2. Nos vemos todas las mañanas.
3. Los amigos se ayudan.
4. Os habláis mucho.
5. Mis abuelos se quieren mucho.

13) Common Pitfalls & Fixes

Wrong	Correct	Explanation
<i>Nos ayuda.</i>	<i>Nos ayudamos.</i>	Both people are doing the action → plural verb.
<i>Me abrazo.</i>	<i>Nos abrazamos.</i>	Reciprocal → more than one subject.
<i>Se mira a sí mismo.</i>	<i>Se miran el uno al otro.</i>	Reflexive = self; reciprocal = each other.
<i>Nos hablamos uno al uno.</i>	<i>Nos hablamos el uno al otro.</i>	Correct reciprocal expression.

14) Quick Reference Chart

Pronoun Used With	Meaning	Example
nos nosotros	each other / one another	<i>Nos escribimos todos los días.</i>
os vosotros	each other (Spain)	<i>Os conocéis desde la infancia.</i>
se ellos / ellas / Uds.	each other / one another	<i>Se saludan con una sonrisa.</i>

Why Reciprocal Reflexives Matter

Reciprocal verbs help express **real, natural communication** between people — actions, emotions, and relationships that go both ways. They're essential for:

- Talking about **friendships, families, and relationships**
- Describing **communication and cooperation**
- Using **authentic everyday phrases** like *nos vemos, nos llamamos, se ayudan, se quieren*

Learning reciprocal reflexives gives your Spanish a **more conversational, natural, and interpersonal tone.**

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