

# Learning Portuguese

Daniel Cardoso

Olá

Como  
está?





# LEARNING PORTUGUESE A1

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Daniel  
Cardoso





Dedicated to...

Seven.



Your quiet companionship helped more  
than words ever could.



## Author's Note



This manual was created with a clear goal:  
to make European Portuguese accessible  
to English-speaking learners through  
practical, structured, and honest content.

It wasn't produced by a team or a  
company; it was built carefully, one step at  
a time, by someone who knows what it  
feels like to start from scratch, to learn  
with limited resources, and to try to create  
something that matters.

If this book helps you understand  
Portuguese more clearly, feel more  
confident speaking it, or even just feel a  
little more curious about the language and  
culture, then it has served its purpose.

Thank you for reading and for trusting this  
journey.

*Daniel Cardoso*



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# A1 | 1: Introductions and Greetings

## 🎯 Objectives:

- Greet and say goodbye
- Introduce yourself and others
- Say your name, nationality, and profession
- Use the verbs "ser" and "chamar-se" in the present tense

 Apresentações e saudações	Introductions and Greetings
Olá	Hello
Oi	Hi
Bom dia	Good morning
Boa tarde	Good afternoon
Boa noite	Good evening/Good night
Até já	See you soon
Até logo	See you later
Até amanhã	See you tomorrow
Adeus	Goodbye
Como estás? (informal)	How are you?
Como está? (formal)	How are you?
Estou bem, obrigado/obrigada.	I'm well, thank you.
E tu? (informal)	And you?
E você? (formal)	And you?
Qual é o teu nome? (informal)	What is your name?
Qual é o seu nome? (formal)	What is your name?
O meu nome é...	My name is...
Prazer!	Nice to meet you!

## 🗣️ Useful Expressions:

- Olá. O meu nome é João! → Hello. My name is João!
- E tu? Como te chamas? → And you? What is your name?
- O meu nome é Artur! Como estás? → My name is Artur. How are you?

# A1 | 1: Introductions and Greetings



## Formal vs Informal Forms of Address

In Portuguese, there are two ways to speak to someone: **formal** and **informal**.

- Use **formal** speech with strangers, older people, or in professional settings.
- Use **informal** speech with friends, family, or young people.

### Examples:

- **Formal:**
  - Como **está**? → How are you? (respectful)
  - Qual é o **seu** nome? → What is your name?
- **Informal:**
  - Como **estás**? → How are you? (casual)
  - Qual é o **teu** nome? → What is your name?

Notice that "**você**" (you, formal) often requires different verb conjugations compared to "**tu**" (you, informal).

## Verb chamar (to call) – Present Tense

Subject	Conjugation
Eu	chamo-me
Tu	chamas-te
Ele/Ela/Você	chama-se
Nós	chamamo-nos
Eles/Elas/Vocês	chamam-se

### Example

Chamo-me Marta. → My name is Marta.

Como te chamas? → What's your name?

Como se chama? → What's your name?

Chamamo-nos Luís e Ana. → We are called Luís and Ana.

Eles chamam-se Pedro e Maria. → They are called Pedro and Maria.

- Reflexive verbs like "**chamar-se**" need a pronoun (**me, te, se, nos, se**) connected to the verb.

# A1 | 1: Introductions and Greetings



## Word Order with Reflexive Verbs in Questions

In Portuguese, some verbs are **reflexive**, like “**chamar-se**” (literally: to call oneself). When conjugated, these verbs include a reflexive pronoun (**me, te, se, nos, vos, se**).

You may have learned:

Tu **chamas-te** João. → You are called João.

But when asking a question, the word order changes:

✗ **Incorrect:** Como **chamas-te**?

✓ **Correct:** Como **te chamas**?

🔍 Why does this happen?

In questions and negative sentences, **reflexive pronouns usually come before the verb**.

Statement	Question
Tu <b>chamas-te</b> João.	Como <b>te</b> chamas?
Ele <b>chama-se</b> Paulo.	Como <b>se</b> chama ele?

- This rule helps sentences flow more naturally in spoken Portuguese.
- When you're asking something with a reflexive verb, place the pronoun **before the verb**.



## Masculine vs Feminine & Singular vs Plural

Portuguese nouns have gender: **masculine** or **feminine**. Articles must match the **gender** and **number** (singular/plural).

- ◆ **Definite Articles** (specific: the)
- ◆ **Indefinite Articles** (specific: a; some)

Gender	Singular	Plural
<b>Masculine</b>	o	os
<b>Feminine</b>	a	as

# A1 | 1: Introductions and Greetings

## Examples:

- o livro → the book (masculine)
- a casa → the house (feminine)
- os livros → the books (masculin, plural)
- as casas → the houses (feminine, plural)

Gender	Singular	Plural
Masculine	um	uns
Feminine	uma	umas

## Examples:

- um livro → a book (masculine)
- uma casa → a house (feminine)
- uns livros → some books (masculin, plural)
- umas casas → some houses (feminine, plural)



## Masculine vs Feminine

In Portuguese, most nouns have a **gender**: they are either **masculine** or **feminine**.

A general rule is:

- Nouns ending in **-o** are usually **masculine**.
  - o **livro** (the book), um **amigo** (a friend)
- Nouns ending in **-a** are usually **feminine**.
  - a **casa** (the house), uma **amiga** (a friend)



However, there are **exceptions**. Some words don't follow this pattern, so it's important to learn the article (**o** or **a**) together with the noun.

- o **dia** (the day – masculine, not feminine)
- a **foto** (the photo – feminine, short for fotografia)

Some nouns also have the same form for masculine and feminine, and only the article changes:

- o **estudante** (male student), a **estudante** (female student)

# A1 | 1: Introductions and Greetings



## Plural in Portuguese

Forming the plural in Portuguese is usually simple. For many words, you just add **-s** at the end:

- **o amigo** → **os amigos**
- **a casa** → **as casas**

But again, there are some variations depending on the final letter of the word:

- Words ending in **-m** change to **-ns**:
  - → ex: **o homem** → **os homens** (the men)
- Words ending in **-l** often change to **-is** or **-eis**, depending on the accent and stress:
  - → ex: **o animal** → **os animais**
  - → ex: **o hotel** → **os hotéis**
- Words ending in **-ão** can change in different ways:
  - → ex: **o irmão** → **os irmãos**
  - → ex: **a estação** → **as estações**

Unfortunately, the plural of **-ão** words often has to be memorized, because there's no single rule that covers all of them.

So, while most plurals are regular, some need special attention – but don't worry, you'll get used to them with practice!



## Greetings in Portugal

In Portugal, greetings are very important and often involve a handshake or even two kisses on the cheek (usually starting with the right cheek) among friends and acquaintances, even between men and women.

A handshake is more common in professional or formal situations.

It is polite to say “Bom dia,” “Boa tarde,” or “Boa noite” depending on the time of day – greetings are used even when entering a shop or an elevator!

People often greet each other warmly, even if they don't know each other well. Not greeting someone can be seen as cold or impolite.

# A1 | 1: Introductions and Greetings

## Reading Practice

**Título:** No primeiro dia de aula

**Contexto:** Dois alunos conhecem-se pela primeira vez numa aula de português.

**Maria:** Olá!

**Pedro:** Olá! Tudo bem?

**Maria:** Tudo ótimo, obrigada. E contigo?

**Pedro:** Estou bem, obrigado. Como te chamas?

**Maria:** Chamo-me Maria. E tu?

**Pedro:** Eu sou o Pedro. És portuguesa?

**Maria:** Sim, sou de Lisboa. E tu?

**Pedro:** Eu sou brasileiro, do Rio de Janeiro.

**Maria:** Prazer em conhecer-te!

**Pedro:** Igualmente!

### Exercise 1.1: Match the sentences

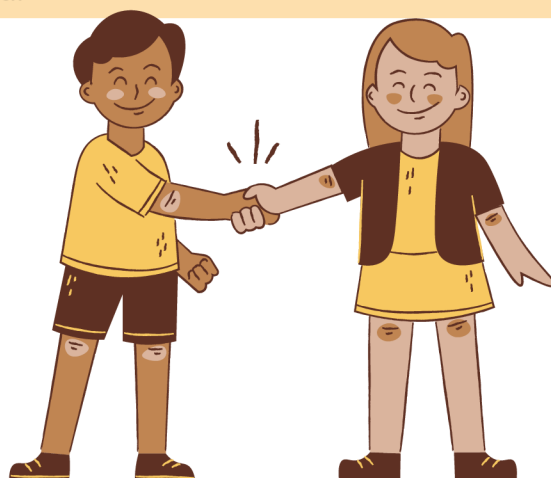
Match the Portuguese phrases with their English meaning.

- |                  |                      |
|------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Bom dia!      | a) Nice to meet you! |
| 2. Boa noite!    | b) See you later!    |
| 3. Até logo!     | c) Good night!       |
| 4. Muito prazer! | d) Good morning!     |

### Exercise 1.2: Fill in the blanks

Complete the sentences with the correct word:

1. Olá! Como \_\_\_\_\_ ? (formal)
2. O meu \_\_\_\_\_ é Maria.
3. Qual é o \_\_\_\_\_ nome? (informal)
4. Estou \_\_\_\_\_, obrigado.



# A1 | 1: Introductions and Greetings

## Exercise 1.3: Organize the dialog

Organize the following dialog in the correct order:

- Olá! Como te chamas?
- Chamo-me Ana. E tu?
- Até logo!
- Sou o João.
- Prazer em conhecer-te.

## Exercise 1.4: Phrase construction

Write sentences using words based on the prompts:

1. eu / chamar / João → \_\_\_\_\_
2. Como / tu / chamar? → \_\_\_\_\_
3. Prazer/ em / conhecer? → \_\_\_\_\_

## Exercise 1.5: Free writing

Complete the dialog with your own words:

1. Olá! Bom dia! Como estás? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Qual é o seu nome? → \_\_\_\_\_
3. Prazer! Até amanhã! → \_\_\_\_\_

## Exercise 1.6 – Listening Practice (Listening Prompt)

Listen to the audio and write it in Portuguese.



# A1 | 2: Countries, Nationalities, Professions

## 🎯 Objectives:

- Learn the verb "ser"
- Talk about country of origin
- State nationality and profession
- Ask and answer basic questions with "ser"



## Talking About Yourself and Others

Portuguese	English
Eu	I
Tu (informal)	You
Ele	He
Ela	She
Você (formal)	You
Nós	We
Eles	They
Elas	They
Vocês (plural)	You
De onde és?	Where are you from? (informal)
De onde é?	Where are you from? (formal)
Chamo-me...	My name is...
Este é o João.	This is João.
Esta é a Maria.	This is Maria.
Quem é?	Who is it?
É o meu amigo.	It's my friend (male).
É a minha amiga.	It's my friend (female).

## 🗣️ Useful Expressions:

- Eu chamo-me Maria. → My name is Maria.
- Este é o Manuel. Ele é meu amigo. → This is Manuel. He is my friend.
- De onde é o teu amigo? → Where is your friend from?
- Ele é de Lisboa. → He is from Lisbon.

# A1 | 2: Countries, Nationalities, Professions

Profissão	Profession
médico/médica	doctor
enfermeiro/enfermeira	nurse
professor/professora	teacher
estudante	student
engenheiro/engenheira	engineer
arquiteto/arquiteta	architect
advogado/advogada	lawyer
polícia	police officer
bombeiro/bombeira	firefighter
empregado/empregada	employee/waiter
cozinheiro/cozinheira	cook/chef
motorista	driver
cantor/cantora	singer
ator/atriz	actor/actress
artista	artist
empresário/empresária	entrepreneur/businessperson
reformado/reformada	retired person
desempregado/desempregada	unemployed

## Useful Expressions:

- Ele é polícia. → He is a police officer.
- O meu amigo é enfermeiro. → My friend is a nurse.
- A minha amiga é professora. → My friend is a teacher.
- Ela é médica. → She is a doctor.



# A1 | 2: Countries, Nationalities, Professions



## Countries

País	Country
Portugal	Portugal
Brasil	Brazil
Espanha	Spain
Inglaterra	England
Estados Unidos da América	United States of América
França	France
Itália	Italy
Alemanha	Germany
China	China
Japão	Japan
Rússia	Russia
Índia	India
Canadá	Canada
Austrália	Australia
México	Mexico
Suécia	Sweden
Bélgica	Belgium
Irlanda	Ireland
Argentina	Argentina
Dinamarca	Denmark
Finlândia	Finland
Holanda/Países Baixos	Netherlands
Suiça	Switzerland

### Useful Expressions:

- Ele é de Portugal. → He is from Portugal.
- Vocês são do Brasil? → Are you from Brazil?
- Não, nós somos de Espanha. → No, we are from Spain.

# A1 | 2: Countries, Nationalities, Professions



## Nationalities

Nacionalidade	Nationality
português/portuguesa	Portuguese
brasileiro/brasileira	Brazilian
espanhol/espanhola	Spanish
inglês/inglesa	English
americano/americana	American
francês/francesa	French
italiano/italiana	Italian
alemão/alemã	German
chinês/chinesa	Chinese
japonês/japonesa	Japanese
russo/russa	Russian
indiano/indiana	Indian
canadense	Canadian
australiano/australiana	Australian
mexicano/mexicana	Mexican
sueco/sueca	Swedish
belgo/belga	Belgian
irlandês/irlandesa	Irish
argentino/argentina	Argentinian/Argentine
dinamarquês/dinamarquesa	Danish
finlandês/finlandesa	Finnish
holandês/holandesa	Dutch
suíço/suíça	Swiss

### Useful Expressions:

- Ele é português. → He is portuguese.
- Vocês são brasileiros? → Are you brazilian?
- Não, nós somos espanhóis. → No, we are spanish.

# A1 | 2: Countries, Nationalities, Professions



## Introducing Yourself

- “**ser**” is used to talk about identity, origin, professions, and permanent characteristics.

## Verb **ser** (to be) – Present Tense

Subject	Conjugation
Eu	sou
Tu	és
Ele/Ela/Você	é
Nós	somos
Eles/Elas/Vocês	são

### Example

Eu sou o Pedro. → I am Pedro.

Tu és a Ana. → You are Ana.

Você é o João. → You are João.

Nós somos amigos. → We are friends.

Eles são estudantes. → They are students.

### Examples:

- Eu sou português. → I am Portuguese.
- Tu és engenheiro. → You are an engineer.
- Nós somos estudantes. → We are students.
- Eles são espanhóis. → They are Spanish.



## Greetings in Portugal

In Portugal, people commonly have two first names and two family names (one from the mother and one from the father), e.g., Maria João Silva Costa. Informally, only one first name is typically used.

For formal address, use "Senhor" (Mr.) or "Senhora" (Mrs.) followed by the first name or surname (e.g., "Senhor João", "Senhora Silva"). This is considered more respectful than using "Você." Example: "Como se chama o senhor?"

Also, before saying our name we use “o” or “a” before (e.g., “Eu sou a Laura”).

## Reading Practice

**Título:** Diálogo entre dois alunos

**Contexto:** Dois colegas conversam no início do curso de português.

**Carlos:** Olá!

**Emily:** Olá! Tudo bem?

**Carlos:** Tudo ótimo. Como te chamas?

**Emily:** Chamo-me Emily. E tu?

**Carlos:** Eu sou o Carlos. És de onde?

**Emily:** Sou de Londres, sou inglesa. E tu?

**Carlos:** Sou português, de Lisboa.

**Emily:** És estudante?

**Carlos:** Não, sou médico. E tu?

**Emily:** Sou estudante de línguas.

**Carlos:** Muito prazer, Emily!

**Emily:** Prazer em conhecer-te!

### Exercise 2.1: Match the sentences

Match the Portuguese phrases with their English meaning.

- |              |                |
|--------------|----------------|
| 1. Médico    | a) Switzerland |
| 2. Estudante | b) Doctor      |
| 3. Alemão    | c) German      |
| 4. Suiça     | d) Student     |

### Exercise 2.2: Fill in the blanks

Complete the sentences with the correct word (verb **ser**):

1. Eu \_\_\_\_\_ o Carlos.
2. Ela \_\_\_\_\_ inglesa.
3. Tu \_\_\_\_\_ estudante?
4. Nós \_\_\_\_\_ do Brasil.
5. Ele \_\_\_\_\_ médico.



# A1 | 2: Countries, Nationalities, Professions

## Exercise 2.3: Organize the dialog

Organize the following dialog in the correct order:

- Muito prazer, Emily!
- Eu sou o Carlos. És de onde?
- Olá!
- Chamo-me Emily. E tu?
- Sou de Londres, sou inglesa.
- Olá! Tudo bem?
- Tudo ótimo. Como te chamas?

## Exercise 2.4: Phrase construction

Write sentences using words based on the prompts:

1. Eu / ser / português → \_\_\_\_\_
2. Ela / ser / estudante / Londres → \_\_\_\_\_
3. tu / ser / brasileiro → \_\_\_\_\_
4. Nós/ ser / médicos → \_\_\_\_\_
5. Ele / ser / de / Rio de Janeiro → \_\_\_\_\_

## Exercise 2.5: Free writing

Complete the dialog with your own words:

1. Olá! De onde és? → \_\_\_\_\_
2. És português? → \_\_\_\_\_
3. E o que fazes? → \_\_\_\_\_
4. Prazer em conhecer-te! → \_\_\_\_\_

## Exercise 2.6 – Listening Practice (Listening Prompt)

Listen to the audio and write it in Portuguese.



# A1 | 3: Ser & Estar — Two Forms of “To Be”

## 🎯 Objectives:

- Learn the difference between “ser” and “estar” (both mean “to be”)
- Use “ser” for permanent traits (e.g. profession, personality) and “estar” for temporary states (e.g. emotions, location)
- Practice describing people’s characteristics and emotions using both verbs correctly
- Expand vocabulary related to personality traits and feelings



## Emotions and Characteristics

Estados e emoções	States and emotions
feliz	happy
triste	sad
cansado/cansada	tired
doente	sick
furioso/furiosa	furious
magoado/magoada	hurt
excitado/excitada	excited
desiludido/desiludida	disappointed
apaixonado/apaixonada	in love
inspirado/inspirada	inspired
atrasado/atrasada	late
contente	happy
zangado/zangada	angry

## 🗣️ Useful Expressions:

- Olá, como estás? → Hello, how are you?
- Eu estou doente. E tu? → I am sick. And you?
- Eu estou atrasado. → I am late.
- O meu chefe vai ficar zangado. → My boss is going to be angry.

# A1 | 3: Ser & Estar – Two Forms of “To Be”



## Ser vs. Estar – Two Verbs for “To Be”

Portuguese has two verbs that both mean “to be”: “**ser**” and “**estar**”. While this may seem confusing at first, each verb is used in different situations.

- Use “**ser**” to describe permanent or defining characteristics, such as someone's profession, nationality, or personality.
- 
- Use “**estar**” to talk about temporary states or conditions, like emotions, physical states, or location.
- 

Choosing the correct verb depends on how **permanent** or **temporary** the situation is. As you progress, this distinction will start to feel natural.



## Understanding “ser” and “estar”

“**Ser**” – used for:

- Identity, nationality, profession
- Permanent characteristics
- Telling the time and dates

## Verb ser (to be) – Present Tense

Subject	Conjugation
Eu	sou
Tu	és
Ele/Ela/Você	é
Nós	somos
Eles/Elas/Vocês	são

### Example

Eu sou feliz. → I am happy. (As in, a happy person)

Tu és médica. → You are a doctor.

Ele é brasileiro. → He is brazilian.

Nós somos portugueses. → We are portuguese.

Eles são estrangeiros . → They are foreigners.

# A1 | 3: Ser & Estar — Two Forms of “To Be”



## Understanding “ser” and “estar”

“Estar” – used for:

- Temporary physical or emotional states
- Locations
- Present progressive (we will study this in A2)

## Verb estar (to be) – Present Tense

Subject	Conjugation
Eu	estou
Tu	estás
Ele/Ela/Você	está
Nós	estamos
Eles/Elas/Vocês	estão

### Example

Eu estou feliz. → I am happy. (As in, right now)

Tu estás atrasado. → You are late.

Ele está a chegar. → He is arriving.

Nós estamos cansados. → We are tired.

Eles estão doentes. → They are sick.



## Different uses of “ser” and “estar”

Some adjectives can be used with both “ser” and “estar”, but the meaning changes.

- **Sou** envergonhado = I’m a shy person (personality)
- **Estou** envergonhado = I’m embarrassed (feeling)

But not all adjectives work with both:

- **✗ Sou** cansado (incorrect)
- **✓ Estou** cansado = I’m tired (temporary state)

The verb you choose can change the meaning completely.



# A1 | 3: Ser & Estar — Two Forms of “To Be”

## Exercise 3.1: Match the sentences

Match the Portuguese phrases with their English meaning.

- |                            |                                  |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Eu sou feliz.           | a) Pedro is nervous (right now). |
| 2. Eu estou feliz.         | b) Pedro is a nervous person.    |
| 3. O Pedro é nervoso.      | c) We are being nice.            |
| 4. O Pedro está nervoso.   | d) We are friendly people.       |
| 5. Nós somos simpáticos.   | e) I'm happy (right now).        |
| 6. Nós estamos simpáticos. | f) I'm a happy person.           |

## Exercise 3.2: Fill in the blanks

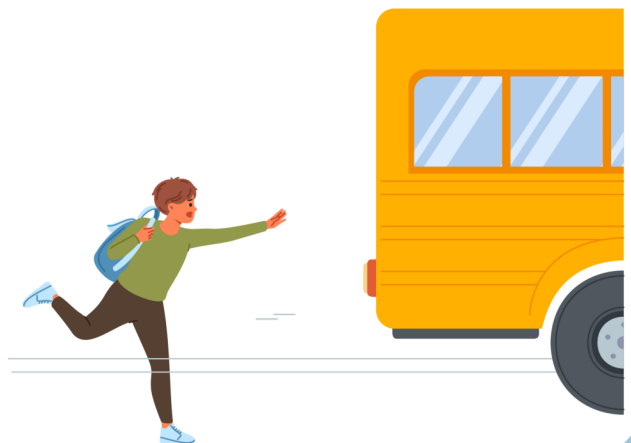
Complete the sentences with the correct form of **ser** or **estar**:

1. Eu \_\_\_\_\_ cansado.
2. Ela \_\_\_\_\_ médica.
3. Nós \_\_\_\_\_ no escritório.
4. Tu \_\_\_\_\_ muito simpático hoje!
5. O Miguel \_\_\_\_\_ alto e magro.

## Exercise 3.3: Organize the dialog

Organize the following dialog in the correct order:

- Olá, Mariana! Estás bem?
- Sim, estou um pouco cansada.
- Sim, é verdade. Eu sou muito ocupada! E tu? Como estás?
- Estás sempre cansada!
- Olá, João!
- Eu estou atrasado para a escola.
- Até logo!
- Eu também! Até logo!



## A1 | 3: Ser & Estar — Two Forms of “To Be”

### Exercise 3.4: Phrase construction

Write sentences using words based on the prompts with **ser** or **estar**:

1. Eu / doente → \_\_\_\_\_
2. Ela / simpática → \_\_\_\_\_
3. Nós / em casa → \_\_\_\_\_
4. Tu / feliz → \_\_\_\_\_
5. O Paulo / brasileiro → \_\_\_\_\_

### Exercise 3.5: Free writing

Complete the dialog with your own words:

1. Olá! Como estás? → \_\_\_\_\_
2. És português? → \_\_\_\_\_
3. Também és estudante? → \_\_\_\_\_
4. Estás cansado/a hoje? → \_\_\_\_\_
5. E estás nervoso para o exame? → \_\_\_\_\_

### Exercise 3.6 – Listening Practice (Listening Prompt)

Listen to the audio and write it in Portuguese.







DANIEL CARDOSO

# Your journey into Portuguese starts here

Learning Portuguese (A1) is a complete beginner's guide designed for English speakers. With clear explanations, practical dialogues, grammar notes, and exercises, this book gives you the tools you need to start speaking real, everyday Portuguese from Portugal.

Whether you're moving, traveling, or just passionate about the language, this is the book for you.

Visit [www.learningportuguese.pt](http://www.learningportuguese.pt) for audios and more resources.