

## Spanish Learning Suite (Transparent Languages)

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Spanish Learning Suite by Transparent Languages is a combination of five products aimed at the complete beginner. The promise of the course is to quickly bring the beginner to the intermediate level. It comes with features expected of any language course software. The low price for the five products included in this package is such a sweet deal, making it impossible to pass up.

Price: \$119.95

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The five products included in this package are: Spanish BYKI Deluxe, Learn Spanish Now!, the Everyday Spanish audio course, Lexicon Translation Dictionary and LinguaMatch Panoramic Phrasebook.  
Learn Spanish Now!

We've previously reviewed Learn Spanish Now!, a software course which offers a 15,000 word vocabulary, including exercises and activities involving vocabulary, grammar, reading, listening, and pronunciation. Like most of the major courseware programs it includes a speech recognition component to help you with your pronunciation. The driving philosophy behind Learn Spanish Now!, however, is immersion and this is provided with "Big Screen Video", a series of videos intended to immerse you in the sights and sounds of all things Spanish, including individuals and groups speaking the language. It's not just a video, however, as tools are provided so you can easily pause things and research, as when you're having trouble following a particular conversation. This multimedia experience also includes interactive games and conversations, so you aren't just passively sitting there but also actively engaging in the experience.{sidebar id=14}

Spanish BYKI DeluxeBYKI (Before You Know It) is also included in Learn Spanish Now! and so we've encountered it as part of our previous review and were very impressed with it. Essentially, it is flash card software designed to help you quickly memorize thousands of words and phrases from different categories. You'll see and hear each word in action, with the program keeping track of how often you recognize words, and when you have difficulty with one particular word or phrase it repeats it more often until you've mastered it. It's a simple process but extremely effective - there really isn't a quicker way to learn a large vocabulary. Additionally, when you've mastered the included categories of words you can always visit the Transparent Languages site and download more.

Everywhere Spanish Audio Course

The Everywhere Spanish Audio Course comes with 35 Spanish lessons across 5 audio CD's. English instructors explain what you're about to learn, followed by native Spanish speakers repeatedly pronouncing words, phrases and complete sentences. All you have to do is repeat after the speaker until you get it right. Because it's designed to be as hands-free as possible, it's ideal for your daily commute to work and perhaps even while you work. It's a great complement to the software component of the course and lends itself well to an overall sense of immersion.

Lexicon Translation Dictionary

The Lexicon Translation Dictionary is not a book of the sort you can carry around. It's software which translates 65,000 words and phrases to and from a variety of languages, including English, Spanish, French, German, Italian and Portuguese. Can you really learn a language without such a dictionary? Definitely not, so this is a very thoughtful inclusion on the part of Transparent Languages.

## LinguaMatch Panoramic Phrasebook

The Lingua Match Panoramic Phrasebook is a fascinating concept and once again not a book in the regular sense of the word. It's software which allows you to move around and explore scenes in three dimensional worlds, learning Spanish as you interact with objects and people within those worlds. Click on an object to learn its name and hear its pronunciation in Spanish. Meet people and hear Spanish conversation. Not sure of a word meaning? Simply switch between English and Spanish. In this way you'll learn 2000 words and 1200 phrases to do with everyday life experiences, all in a pseudo-immersive experience.

### Criticisms

The only criticisms we have are the fact that there is no overall progress indicator or lesson plan. Each product is separate, meaning your learning experience will be somewhat fragmented rather than part of an overriding course strategy. The speech-recognition software is also not highly accurate and has some minor bugs which need to be worked out, such as misidentifying words and phrases. However, neither of these criticisms would stop us from recommending the the product.

### What We Have Here: A Spanish Mega-Course On Steroids

Learn Spanish Now! is the only product which on its own can be called a full language course, but when you add four additional tools to the mix, each of which complements the course and is eminently useful for learning Spanish, what you wind up with is a Spanish course on steroids. On its own, with only a 15,000 word vocabulary, Learn Spanish Now! would be a weak offering. With all of these additional products you'll be armed to the teeth with everything you need to succeed. And the low price for the whole lot certainly makes it an impossible deal to pass up.

Overall we give this product an rating of 87%. We would recommend it to anyone, especially beginners.