To ask what time it is use the question: Que hora es?

To answer this question, you have to determine first where the minute hand (the big hand) is.

If the minutes are between :01 - :30, use the following structure:

Son las \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ y \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

 (hour) (minutes)

If the minutes are between :31 - :59, use the following structure:

Son las \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ menos \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

 (hour it is going to be next) (minutes left until it reaches that next hour)

Examples:

7:10 Son las siete y diez.

8:25 Son las ocho y veinticinco.

10:50 Son las once menos diez.

3:40 Son las cuatro menos veinte.

The One O’Clock Hour

We call any time between 12:31 – 1:30 the “one o’clock hour.” The one o’clock hour uses two different structures.

If the time is 1:01 to 1:30, use the following structure:

Es la una y \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

 (minutes)

If the time is 12:31 to 12:59, use the following structure.

Es la una menos \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

 (minutes left until it’s one o’clock)

Examples:

1:05 Es la una y cinco.

12:57 Es la una menos tres.

1:21 Es la una y veintiuno.

12:43 Es la una menos diecisiete.

Special Vocabulary for Telling Time

For 15 minutes, you can use quince or cuarto (¼ of an hour).

For 30 minutes, you can use treinta or media (½ of an hour).

Expressions To Add onto a Time Sentence

en punto – on the dot (sharp)

de la mañana – in the morning (A.M.)

de la tarde – in the afternoon (P.M.)

de la noche – in the evening/night (P.M.)

Expressions for 12:00

Es mediodía. – It’s noon. (12:00 P.M.)

Es medianoche. – It’s midnight. (12:00 A.M.)