

IB DP Spanish B  
Paper 2: Listening Comprehension

## **7 Tips to Secure a 7**

## What is Paper 2?

Standard Level (SL)	Higher Level (HL)
<b>Duration:</b> 1 hour (listening section only) <b>Texts:</b> 3 audio passages <b>Marks:</b> 25 marks	<b>Duration:</b> 1 hour (listening section only) <b>Texts:</b> 3 audios, longer and more complex <b>Marks:</b> 25 marks

## Listening Skills Assessed

Skill	What it means in the exam
<b>Identifying main ideas</b>	Recognising the speaker's overall message and purpose
<b>Listening for specific detail</b>	Locating particular facts, figures, or supporting information
<b>Making inferences</b>	Understanding implied meaning — what the speaker suggests, not just states
<b>Using context</b>	Decoding unfamiliar vocabulary using surrounding content and logic
<b>Recognising text type &amp; purpose</b>	Identifying whether the text is an interview, debate, report, or conversation



The Listening exam tests your ability to comprehend and interpret authentic spoken Spanish.  
Every question rewards strategic, active listening.

# The 7 Tips to Secure a 7

1

## Use Your Reading Time Strategically

Before the audio plays, you are given reading time. This is not waiting time; it is working time. Read every question carefully, identify the focus of each one (is it asking for a specific detail, a general idea, or an inference?), underline key words, and begin predicting what the audio might contain.

Students who activate their prior knowledge and schema before listening consistently outperform those who don't. This single habit is one of the highest-return strategies available to you.



**The reading pause is a gift. Use it as working time, not recovery time.**

2

## Think in Spanish. Always.

Mental translation is one of the most damaging habits in a listening exam. The moment you begin converting Spanish into your first language, you fall behind and the audio does not wait.

Train yourself to process meaning directly in Spanish. This takes deliberate practice, but it is entirely achievable. Regular exposure to authentic Spanish audio, even 10 minutes a day in the weeks before the exam, rewires your processing instincts.



**Commit to processing in the target language, even when it feels uncomfortable.**

3

## Anticipate synonyms

You will never hear the words of the questions in the audio. It is important that you use your reading time to anticipate the type of language you may hear. This is called 'priming', and it will prepare your brain for the decoding work it needs to do during the actual audition.



**Use context, trust the bigger picture.**

**4****Train Your Ear for the sound of Spanish**

In natural spoken Spanish sounds link, words reduce, and syllables blur; this is called connected speech and it affects every variety of Spanish. In the weeks before the exam, listen daily to authentic Spanish: podcasts, radio interviews, short documentaries, news broadcasts. The IB audio is recorded at natural pace with authentic speakers. Ear training is essential.



**The more variety you expose your ear to, the more resilient your listening becomes.**

**5****Listen to Authentic Language. Know Your Accents**

The IB deliberately includes a range of Spanish-speaking voices from across the world. You do not need to understand every regional feature perfectly, but familiarity with 3–4 major varieties significantly reduces surprise on exam day.



**Diversify your listening. Include different accents.**

**6****Master the Inference Question**

Not every answer is stated directly in the audio. Some questions require you to read between the lines, to combine what you hear with logic, context, and implication. These are the questions that separate strong performers from exceptional ones. When reviewing past papers, practise categorising each question as literal (the answer is directly stated) or inferential (the answer must be deduced).



**Inferential questions require active engagement.**

**7****Build Your Aural Vocabulary**

You may recognise a word on a page but completely miss it when you hear it spoken at speed. When learning new vocabulary, always say it aloud, listen to it in context, and practise recognising it in authentic audio.



**Build your vocabulary aurally from the start, not just visually.**

## Exam Day Checklist

✓	Use reading time actively: predict, annotate, identify question focus
✓	Commit to processing meaning directly in Spanish (no mental translation)
✓	Listen for chunks and context
✓	Stay composed if you miss something. Make notes, keep listening and recover
✓	Expect a range of accents.
✓	Identify before listening: is each question literal or inferential?
✓	Trust your aural vocabulary: pause, breathe, use context to decode

- **The Listening exam is not a test of perfection.**
- **It is a test of strategic, flexible comprehension.**
- **It is not about understanding every word.**
- **It is about managing attention, using context intelligently, and staying composed under pressure.**