

STEM CHANGING VERBS or Boot/shoe Verbs

Reminder: The infinitive is the base form of the verb. Spanish verbs end in –ar, –er or –ir. When the endings are removed that which remains is called the **stem**. This handout introduces **stem-changing verbs**.

Stem-changing verbs that end in “-ar”, “-er” or “-ir” change the stem vowel in the present tense in four possible ways: e>ie, e>i, o>ue and u>ue in all forms **except nosotros**. **The conjugations that stem change form a boot or a shoe [except the nosotros conjugation because[“we”got kicked out].**

a.) Examples of e>ie:pensar – to think

pienso	<i>pensamos</i>
piensas	x
piensa	piensan

querer – to want, love

quiero	<i>queremos</i>
quieres	x
quiere	quieren

Some common “e>ie”:

Empezar a – to begin
Comenzar a – to start
Preferir – to prefer
Perder- to lose

Recomendar – to recommend
Entender – to understand
Nevar - to snow
Sentar (se) – to seat, sit down
Cerrar – to close

b.) Examples of e>i:pedir – to ask for; request

pido	<i>pedimos</i>
pides	x
pide	piden

Some common “-ir” verbs that pattern “e>i”:

Servir- to serve
Vestir(se) – to dress

c.) Examples of o>ue:volver – to return

vuelvo	<i>volvemos</i>
vuelves	x
vuelve	vuelven

dormir- to sleep

duermo	<i>dormimos</i>
duermes	x
duerme	duermen

Some common verbs“-ar” and “-er” verbs that pattern “o>ue” (two exceptions noted):

Poder- to be able to [can]
Morir- to die
Almorzar – to eat lunch

Costar – to cost
Volver – to return, give back

d.) Example of u>ue:jugar- to play [sports or board games]

juego	<i>jugamos</i>
juegas	x
juega	jugan

Vamos a practicar:

Empezar=_____ e->ie

	x

Jugar=_____ u->ue

	x

Pedir=_____ e ->i

	x

Poder=_____ o-> ue

	x

Morir=_____ o ->ue

	x

Preferir=_____ e->ie

	x

Now practice using these conjugations by filling in the blanks below & translate the sentences to the right.

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------|-------|
| 1. ¿Cuándo_____ dormir tú?. | [to want] | _____ |
| 2. Ellos_____ hablar | [to prefer] | _____ |
| 3. ¿_____ tú mucho? | [to think] | _____ |
| 4. Ud. no _____ jugar fútbol. | [to be able (can)] | _____ |
| 5. El mesero _____ la cena. | [to serve] | _____ |
| 6. Nosotros _____ aprender. | [to begin] | _____ |
| 7. Ryan no _____ ahora. | [to die] | _____ |
| 8. Jessica y Angie _____ cantar. | [to want] | _____ |
| 9. ¿Dónde _____ baloncesto Uds? | [to play] | _____ |
| 10. La manzana no _____ ser verde. | [to return] | _____ |

