

LATINO VOICES

Spanish Phrases That Literally Make No Sense

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Jun. 27, 2014, 01:24 PM EDT | Updated Dec. 6, 2017



If you want to learn Spanish it might be a good idea to familiarize yourself with the meaning of these commonly used phrases, for if the flies.

Anyone who grew up around Spanish speakers might be used to hearing these idioms, but when you stop and think about it their literal translations don't make any sense. For those trying to learn Spanish it might complicate the process if they take any of these literally.

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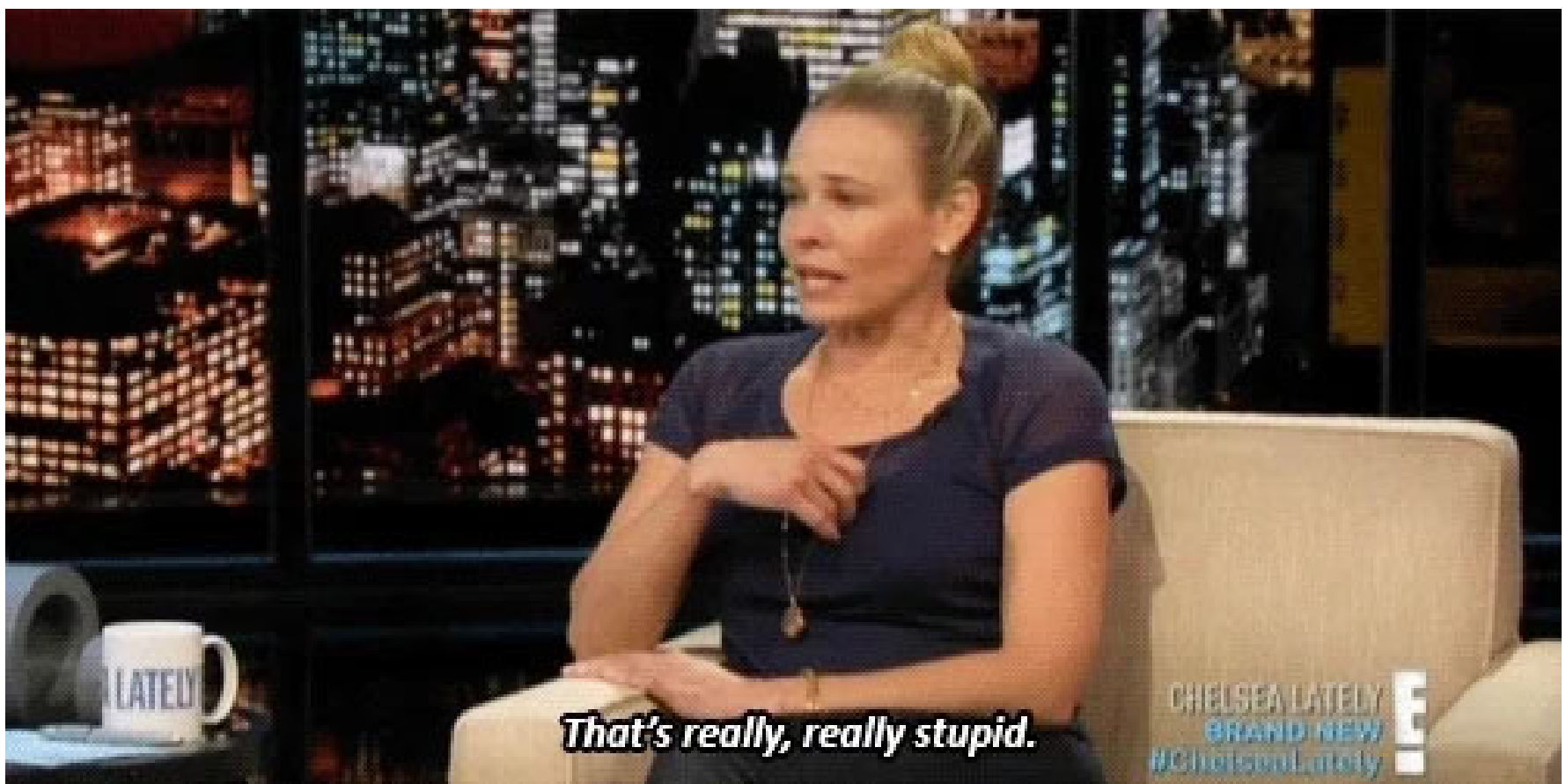
So for the sake of all those future Spanish speakers out there we've put together a list of some of these commonly used, nonsensical phrases. Since the Spanish language varies so much from region to region these could change somewhat or be unfamiliar to some, depending on their country of origin.

Check out some nonsensical Spanish phrases below and let us know which ones you'd add in the comments!



Literal: For if the flies Used as: [Just in case.](#) Example: El día está nublado, me voy a llevar el paraguas por si las moscas. Translation: It's a cloudy day, I'm taking an umbrella just in case.

Poner las pilas





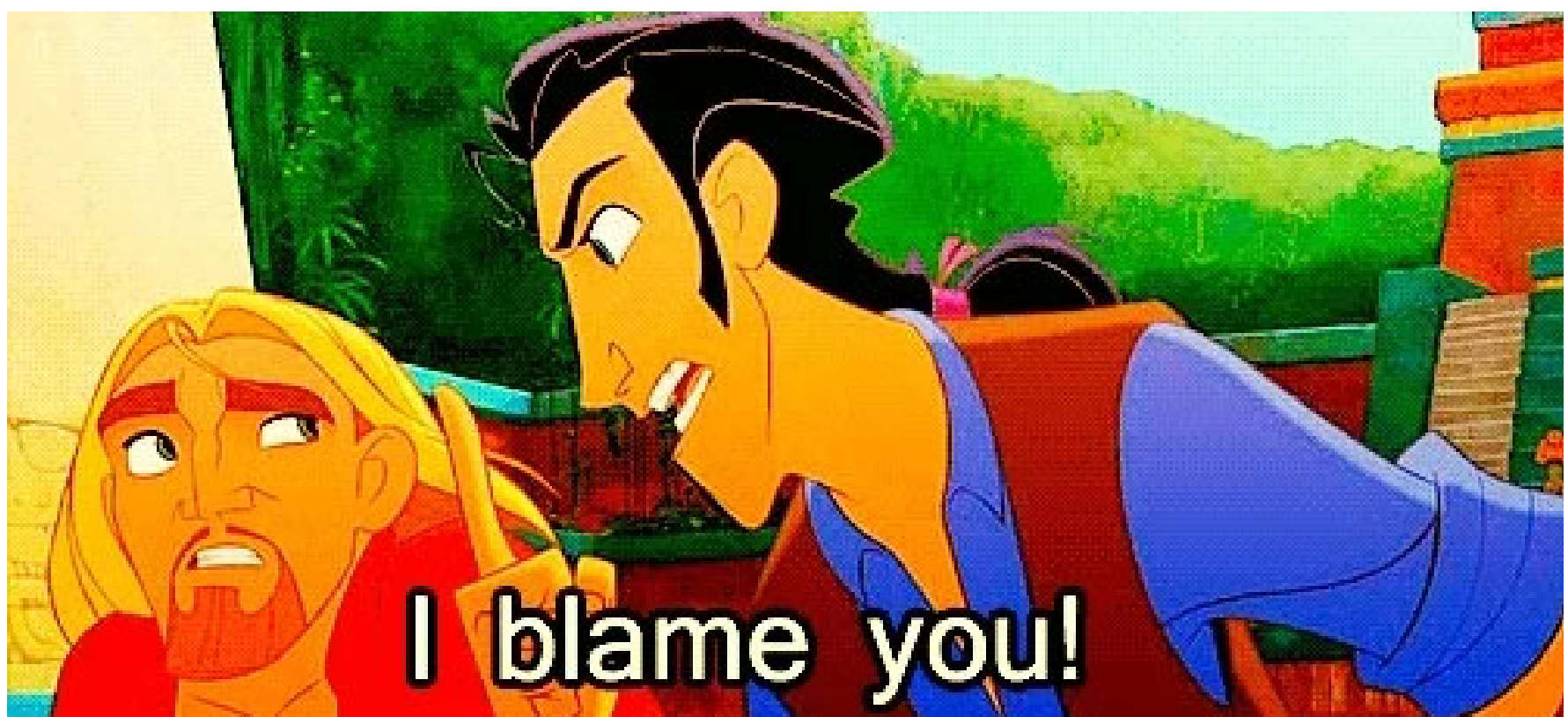
Literal: Put batteries in Used: Get ready / Wake up / [Be alert](#) Example: Si quieres que te asciendan te tienes que poner las pilas. Translation: If you want that promotion you have to put in your batteries.

Montar cachos / Poner los cuernos



Literal: To mount/put horns on someone Used as: To cheat or [be unfaithful](#).
Ex: Terminé con mi ex-novio porque me puso los cuernos. Translation: I broke up with my ex boyfriend because he cheated on me.

No tener dos dedos de frente

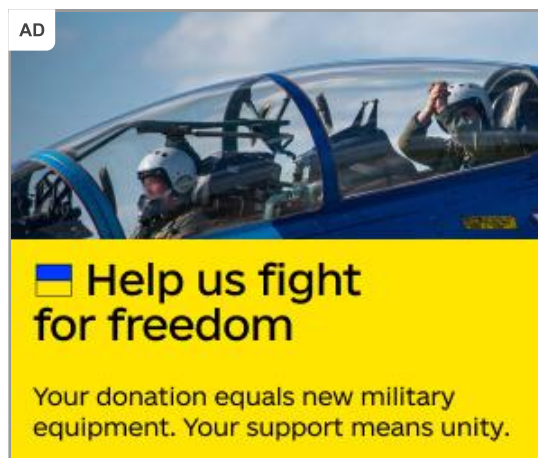


Literal: Not having two fingers of forehead Used as: He/She [is not smart](#).
Ex: No pasó el examen porque no tiene dos dedos de frente. Translation: He failed the test because he's not smart.



Literal: Take out of the doorjamb or frame. Used as: [Exasperate](#). Example: Me saca de quicio cuando mis alumnos no me prestan atención.
Translation: It exasperates me when my students don't pay attention.

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Sacar la piedra



Literal: Take the rock out (of someone) Used as: Frustrate / Upset / [Anger](#)
Example: Su tono de voz me sacó la piedra Translation: Her tone of voice really angered me.

Tomar el pelo



Literal: Grab or drink the hair Used as: To kid or fool someone. [Equivalent to pulling someone's leg.](#) Example: Mi hija me estaba tomando el pelo cuando me dijo que se hizo un tatuaje. Translation: My daughter was pulling my leg when she told me she'd gotten a tattoo.

Echar el muerto



Literal: throw the deceased Used as: [To put the blame](#) or the responsibility on someone else. Example: Yo no rompí la lámpara, no me eches ese muerto a mi. Translation: I didn't break the lamp, don't put that on me.

Que onda?



Literal: What wave? Used as: [What's up?](#)

Poner la mano/las manos en el fuego



Literal: Put your hands in the fire Figurative: Be 100% sure of something or [have complete faith in someone](#). Example: Pongo las manos en el fuego que él no contó mi secreto. Translation: I'm 100% sure he didn't divulge my secret.

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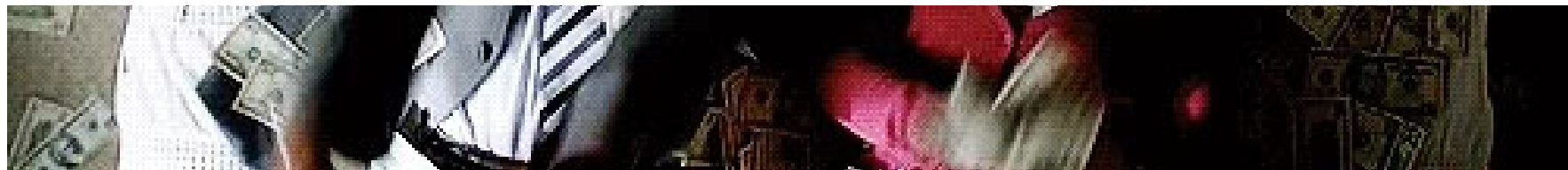
Le zumba el mango



Literal: He flings the mango Used as: Commonly used as [an expression of shock or incredulity](#). Example: [Le zumba el mango](#) que llegó desde hace un mes y no me ha llamado Translation: I can't believe he's been here for a month and he hasn't called.

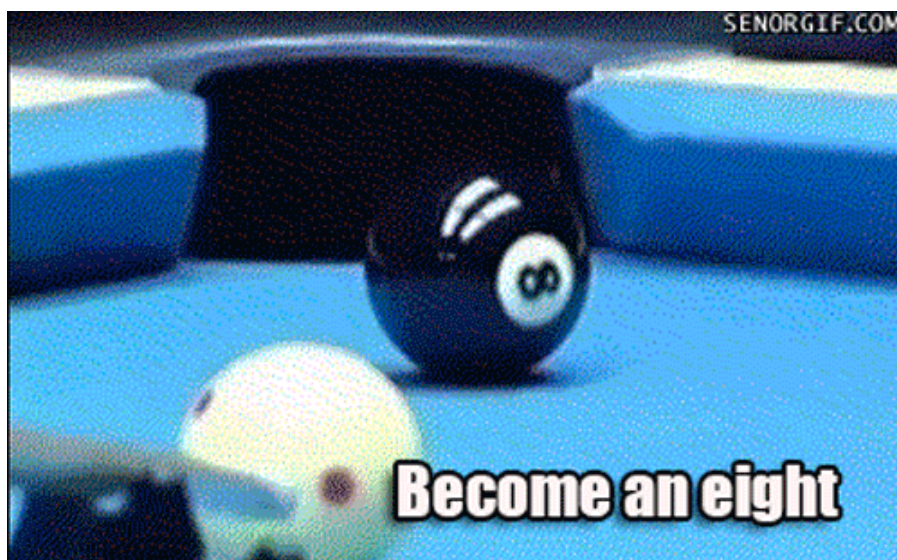
Tirar/Echar la casa por la ventana





Literal: Throw the house out the window Used as: To spare no expense or [go all out.](#) Example: Decidieron tirar la casa por la ventana para la boda de su hija. Translation: They decided to spare no expense for their daughter's wedding.

Volverse un ocho



Literal: Become an eight Figurative: To complicate or [confuse oneself or a situation.](#) Ex: Se volvió un ocho tratando de explicar la materia para el examen. Translation: He confused himself trying to explain what was going on the exam.

Let us know what other phrases like these you'd add to the list in the comments below!

[Suggest a correction](#)

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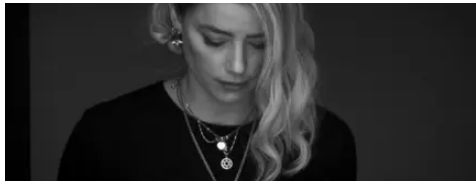
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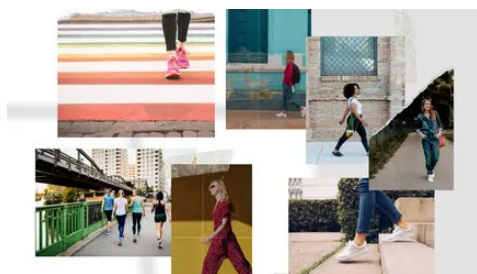
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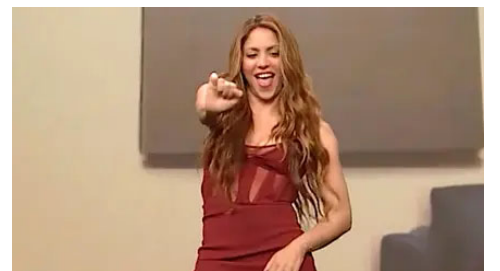
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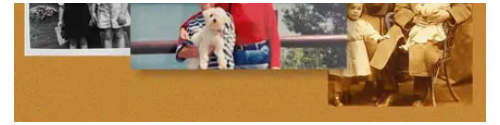
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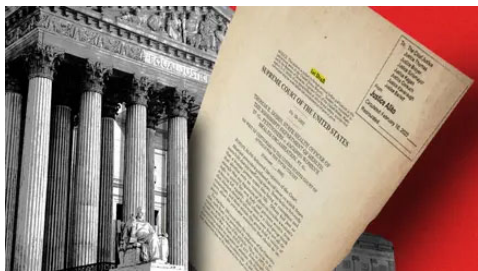
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