Lesson 9: Oraciones de infinitivo 1 - Las intenciones

This lesson explores how to express intentions in Spanish using **pensar + infinitive**. You will learn the difference between using **pensar + infinitive** (expressing a general intention) versus **ir + infinitive** (expressing a firm future plan). You'll also understand when to use **pensar** versus **creer** for different types of thinking.

Vocabulary to listen out for

- **Pienso hacerlo:** I intend to do it
- **Voy a hacerlo**: I'm going to do it
- **Cuándo piensas ir:** When do you intend to go
- **Pienso mucho en ti:** I think about you a lot
- **Creo que viene:** I think/believe they're coming
- **Viene mañana:** He/she is coming tomorrow

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Target Language Focus

Pensar + Infinitive : To intend to do something

- **Pienso hacerlo**

Notice how this literally means "I think to do it" but is used to express intention - "I intend to do it" or "I aim to do it"

Key differences:

Voy a hacerlo vs. pienso hacerlo

Notice how **voy a hacerlo** expresses a firm future plan ("I'm going to do it"), while **pienso hacerlo** expresses a more general intention.

Pensar vs. Creer:

- **Pienso mucho en ti:** Used for the cognitive process of thinking
- **Creo que viene mañana:** Used for expressing beliefs/opinions

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The combination of **pensar + infinitive** is used in Spanish to express intentions. Unlike **ir + a + infinitive**, which expresses a firm future plan, **pensar + infinitive** indicates a more general intention or aim.

Let's look at an example:

If you say **voy a estudiar mañana** ("I'm going to study tomorrow"), you're expressing a **definite plan**.

However, if you say **pienso estudiar mañana** ("I intend to study tomorrow"), you're expressing a general intention that might be less certain.

It's also important to understand the difference between **pensar** and **creer**. While both can translate to "think" in English, they serve different purposes. **Pensar** is used for the actual process of thinking or considering (**pienso en ti** - "I think about you"), while **creer** is used for expressing beliefs or opinions (**creo que llueve** - "I think it's raining").

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Vocabulary bank

Pensar - to think

Hacer - to do

Ir - to go

Creer - to believe

Pienso hacerlo - I intend to do it

Voy a hacerlo - I'm going to do it

¿Cuándo piensas ir? - when do you intend to go?

Creo que viene mañana - I think he/she is coming tomorrow

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Exercises

1) Complete the sentences with the correct form of **pensar** + infinitive:

1. María _____ **(estudiar)** medicina el próximo año.
2. Nosotros _____ **(viajar)** a España en verano.
3. ¿Tú _____ **(hacer)** la tarea hoy?

2) Choose whether to use **pensar** or **creer**:

1. _____ que va a llover mañana.
2. _____ viajar a París el próximo mes.
3. _____ en mis amigos cuando estoy lejos.

3) Translate these sentences using either **pensar** + infinitive or **ir** + **a** + infinitive depending on the certainty of the plan:

1. I'm definitely going to the party tomorrow
2. I intend to learn Japanese next year
3. We're planning to move house next month

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Answer key

1)
1. María **piensa estudiar** medicina el próximo año
2. Nosotros **pensamos viajar** a España en verano
3. ¿Tú **piensas hacer** la tarea hoy?

2)
1. **Creo** que va a llover mañana (expressing belief/opinion)
2. **Pienso** viajar a París el próximo mes (expressing intention)
3. **Pienso** en mis amigos cuando estoy lejos (cognitive process)

3)
1. **Voy a ir** a la fiesta mañana (definite plan)
2. **Pienso** aprender japonés el próximo año (general intention)
3. **Vamos a** mudarnos el próximo mes (definite plan)

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