Basic Portuguese

A Grammar and Workbook

Cristina Sousa

BASIC PORTUGUESE

Basic Portuguese: A Grammar and Workbook comprises an accessible reference grammar and related exercises in a single volume.

Twenty units cover the core material which students can expect to encounter in their first year of learning Portuguese. Grammar points are followed by examples and exercises which allow students to reinforce and consolidate their learning.

Clearly presented and user-friendly, *Basic Portuguese* provides readers with a thorough grounding in the fundamentals of Portuguese grammar.

Cristina Sousa holds a PhD in literary translation. She is a translator, proofreader and copywriter and she has lectured in Portuguese at various universities in the UK.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

INTRODUCTION

This grammar workbook is aimed at English native speakers who have no previous knowledge of the Portuguese language, or who have a very basic level and would like to improve their ability and to practise key grammar functions. The grammatical notions included are presented in a clear and accessible way. All grammatical explanations are kept to a minimum and include exceptions to the rule only when these are frequently applied, which can often be the case in Portuguese. This course aims to provide learners with a solid basic knowledge of essential Portuguese grammar functions which can then be consolidated by further reading and by further study of accessible reference materials, such as *Portuguese: An Essential Grammar* by A. Hutchinson and J. Lloyd, also published by Routledge.

No audio material has been produced to accompany this book, but guides to pronunciation and stress are provided at the beginning of the book. This should provide beginners with clear guidance to the essential sounds, in order to help reproduce them successfully. This pronunciation guide is an initial working tool and does not claim to replace real contact with Portuguese speakers.

All vocabulary used is contemporary and every effort has been made to provide as wide a variety of vocabulary as possible. It is essentially European Portuguese in order to avoid potential confusion given that certain grammar rules are applied differently in Brazilian Portuguese, and an attempt to cover both variants would make it less accessible for beginners. Learners who work with this book should be able to communicate successfully with Brazilian speakers, in the same way that Portuguese people are able to communicate fully with Brazilians, and vice versa. Key differentiations between these two forms of Portuguese are provided in Hutchinson and Lloyd's *Portuguese: An Essential Grammar*, referred to above, and also in other dedicated reference materials by the same publisher.

This workbook should be particularly useful to independent adult learners, but can also provide a useful exercise tool for other learners.

PRONUNCIATION

In order to guide you with Portuguese pronunciation a list of roughly equivalent sounds in English is provided below. With some sounds it will be difficult to find the exact pronunciation using English words and sounds, but the list should provide you with a useful basis for further development.

a	open	sap**a**to	as in l**a**d
	closed	s**a**pato	as in **a**bout
	unstressed	boc**a**	as in **a**nnounce
e	open	ch**e**que	as in ch**e**que
	closed	cab**e**lo	as in f**i**ll
	unstressed	cheq**ue**	bak**e**
	e (= and)	**ee**l
i		f**i**ta	f**ee**t
o	open	l**o**ja	l**o**zenge
	closed	p**o**ço	t**o**rso
	unstressed	po**ço**	z**oo** (approximate)
u		l**u**ta	l**oo**t

Note: vowels with acute accents produce an open vowel (á, é); vowels with circumflex accents produce a closed vowel (ê, ô)

nasals

ã	l**ã**	l**a**mb
am	**am**plo	**am**ple
an	pl**an**ta	pl**an**kton
em	**em**préstimo	**em**power
en	**en**tre	**en**tertain
om	**com**pras	**com**petition
on	**con**tar	**con**trary

im		s**im**	**scen**e
in		ti**n**ta	ti**n**der
um		tu**m**ba	to**m**b
un		n**un**ca	to**m**b
c	+ **a, o, u**	**c**asa	**c**ase
	+ **e, i**	**c**edo	la**c**e
ç		la**ç**o	la**c**e
ch		**ch**ampô	**sh**ampoo
g	+ **a, o, u**	**g**ás	**g**ash
	+ **e, i**	**g**elo	mea**s**ure
	+ **ue**	**gue**rra	**g**ain (**u** is silent)
	+ **ui**	**gui**tarra	**g**ain (**u** is silent)
h		**h**ora	(not pronounced)
j		**j**á	mea**s**ure
lh		mi**lh**ão	mi**lli**on
nh		vi**nh**o	o**ni**on
q		**q**uadro	**q**uack
	+ **ui**	má**qui**na	**Kee** (**u** is silent)
r		pa**r**a**r**	(rolling **r**)
		com**p**ra**s**	(rolling **r**)
	initial, after **n, l**	**r**abo	**r**obber
		ten**r**o	
		pal**r**ar	
rr		ca**rr**o	(as initial **r**)
s	initial	**s**amba	**s**amba
	between vowels	ca**s**a	ka**s**bah
		meu**s** amigos	
	end, before **c, f, p, t**	ve**s**pa	**s**ugar
		mo**s**ca	
		fó**s**foros	
		meu**s** pais	
		re**s**taurante	
	before **b, d, g, m, n, r**	Li**s**boa	mea**s**ure
		há**s**-de	
		ra**s**gar	
		me**s**mo	
		ci**s**ne	
		I**s**rael	
		a**s** mãos	

nasals

x		**x**erife	**sh**eriff
		Mé**x**ico	me**sh**
		pei**x**e	fi**sh**
		e**x**celente	gei**sh**a
ex	+ vowel	**ex**ame	**eas**y
z	initial, between vowels	**z**ebra	**z**ebra
		di**z**er	des**s**ert
	end	lu**z**	lou**ch**e

diphthongs

ai	p**ai**	p**ie**
au	m**au**	p**ow**er
ei	l**ei**	l**ay**
eu	t**eu**	ph**ew** (approximate)
iu	part**iu**	**Eu**rope
oi	f**oi**	'**oy**!'
ou	s**ou**	th**ou**gh
ui	f**ui**	Lo**ui**siana
ãe	m**ãe**	m**ai**n (approximate)
ão	p**ão**	p**ou**nd (more nasal)
-am	am**am**	m**ou**nd (more nasal)
-em	s**em**	s**ai**nt (approximate)
-en(s)	parab**én**s	ch**ai**n (approximate)
õe	p**õe**	b**oi**ng (approximate)

Note: the letters 'k', 'w' and 'y' are not used in Portuguese and they do not normally feature in the Portuguese alphabet. They are, however, recognised in foreign words and names and are named **kappa**, **duplo v** and **i grego**.

STRESS

In Portuguese words, if there is no graphic accent, the stress is usually on the penultimate syllable, or on the last syllable for words ending in -r, -l, -z, or -u.

do-cu-**men**-to	document
ves-**ti**-do	dress
pro-fes-**sor**	teacher
ti-**rar**	to take
co-**mer**	eat
pa-**pel**	paper
a-**zul**	blue
ra-**paz**	boy
fe-**liz**	happy
per-**u**	turkey

When the stress falls on another syllable, a graphic accent has to be applied.

pró-xi-mo	next
cha-mi-**né**	chimney
ir-**mã**	sister

There are four graphic accents in Portuguese:

´	acute accent: opens the vowel	**á**gua
^	circumflex accent: closes vowel	p**ê**lo
~	tilde: nasalizes the vowel	irm**ã**
`	grave accent: used on contracted preposition with article	**à**quilo

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UNIT 1
Nouns

Gender of nouns

In Portuguese, all nouns have a gender, either masculine or feminine. When you learn a new noun, you should memorise its gender at the same time:

masculine nouns:	**o carro**	the car
	o mar	the sea
feminine singular:	**a casa**	the house
	a hora	the hour

General rules can provide some guidance and so they have been summarised below. The most common exceptions are also provided. You will need to learn these, so it's a good idea to note the examples as you go along.

Several nouns can be learnt as pairs – masculine and feminine – as they are used to denote male and female beings:

o homem	**a mulher**	man	woman
o rapaz	**a rapariga**	boy	girl
o cidadão	**a cidadã**	(male) citizen	(female) citizen
o cão	**a cadela**	dog	bitch
o gato	**a gata**	(male) cat	(female) cat
o galo	**a galinha**	cockerel	chicken
o pai	**a mãe**	father	mother
o filho	**a filha**	son	daughter
o irmão	**a irmã**	brother	sister
o tio	**a tia**	uncle	aunt
o sobrinho	**a sobrinha**	nephew	niece
o primo	**a prima**	(male) cousin	(female) cousin
o avô	**a avó**	grandfather	grandmother
o neto	**a neta**	grandson	granddaughter
o marido	**a esposa**	husband	wife
o sogro	**a sogra**	father-in-law	mother-in-law
o genro	**a nora**	son-in-law	daughter-in-law
o cunhado	**a cunhada**	brother-in-law	sister-in-law

Many other nouns with a masculine and a feminine form change to the feminine by adding **-a**, for example:

o professor	**a professora**	teacher
o cantor	**a cantora**	singer
o português	**a portuguesa**	the Portuguese

Some nouns can be masculine or feminine, depending on the gender of the person to whom they refer:

o presidente	(male) president
a presidente	(female) president
o contabilista	(male) accountant
a contabilista	(female) accountant
o turista	(male) tourist
a turista	(female) tourist
o guia	(male) guide
a guia	(female) guide
o jovem	(male) youngster
a jovem	(female) youngster

There are also nouns that have a fixed gender, irrespective of whether they refer to male or female:

a criança	(male or female) child
a vítima	(male or female) victim

In general, the ending of the noun will indicate its gender, as illustrated below.

1 Most nouns ending in **-o** and **-l** are masculine:

o jogo	game	**o hotel**	hotel
o copo	glass, tumbler	**o anel**	ring
o bolo	cake	**o papel**	paper
o preço	price	**o automóvel**	automobile
o coelho	rabbit	**o sol**	sun

2 Most nouns ending in **-a**, **-de**, **-gem**, **-ice**, **-ie**, **-ção** and **-zão** are feminine:

a mesa	table	**a coragem**	courage
a cama	bed	**a viagem**	journey, voyage
a cadeira	chair	**a velhice**	old age
a tarde	afternoon	**a superfície**	surface
a caridade	charity	**a condição**	condition
a verdade	truth	**a lição**	lesson
a juventude	youth	**a operação**	operation
a virtude	virtue	**a razão**	reason

Exceptions: **o dia** (day), **o problema** (problem), **o planeta** (planet), **o mapa** (map), **o coração** (heart).

Nouns

Forming the plural

Below are a few simple rules on how to form the plural of nouns in Portuguese.

1 Nouns ending in a vowel form the plural by adding **-s**:

o carro	**os carros**	car(s)
a casa	**as casas**	house(s)
a cidade	**as cidades**	city/cities
o dia	**os dias**	day(s)
o pneu	**os pneus**	tyre(s)

2 Nouns ending in **-r**, **-s** and **-z** form the plural by adding **-es**:

o mar	**os mares**	sea(s)
o colar	**os colares**	necklace(s)
o mês	**os meses**	month(s)
o inglês	**os ingleses**	English/the English
a luz	**as luzes**	light(s)

Exceptions: **o lápis**, **os lápis** (pencil/pencils)

3 To form the plural of nouns ending in **-l**, you will need to replace this consonant with **-is**:

o casal	**os casais**	couple(s)
o anel	**os anéis**	ring(s)
o papel	**os papéis**	paper(s)
o funil	**os funis**	funnel(s)
o azul	**os azuis**	blue/blue tones

4 Nouns ending in **-ão** make their plural by changing **-ão** into **-ões**:

o coração	**os corações**	heart(s)
a operação	**as operações**	operation(s)
a conclusão	**as conclusões**	conclusion(s)
a opinião	**as opiniões**	opinion(s)

Exceptions: **a mão**, **as mãos** (hand/hands), **o pão**, **os pães** (bread roll/bread rolls).

3

5 Nouns ending in **-m** form the plural by changing the **-m** into **-ns**:

o home*m*	**os home*ns***	man/men
o jove*m*	**os jove*ns***	young person(s)
a viage*m*	**as viage*ns***	journey(s)
a garage*m*	**as garage*ns***	garage(s)

When used in the plural, the meaning of some nouns changes, depending on the context. This is the case with family relationship nouns and other nouns that can form a pair.

o pai	**os pais**	father/fathers, parents
o filho	**os filhos**	son/sons, children
o irmão	**os irmãos**	brother/brothers, brother(s) and sister(s)
o professor	**os professores**	male teacher/teachers
o vizinho	**os vizinhos**	male neighbour/neighbours

Examples: **O meu *pai* chama-se Eugénio.**
My father is called Eugénio.

Os meus *pais* são portugueses.
My parents are Portuguese.

O Mário é teu *irmão*.
Mário is your brother.

Eu tenho quatro *irmãos*: dois irmãos e duas irmãs.
I have four brothers and sisters: two brothers and two sisters.

Note: some nouns only have a plural form, for example: **os óculos** (spectacles); **as calças** (trousers); **as costas** (back).

Diminutives and augmentatives

Diminutive and augmentative forms of nouns modify their meaning, expressing size, intensity or emotion.

1 The most common diminutives are formed by dropping the ending vowel and adding **-inho/-inha** or simply by adding **-zinho/-zinha** to the ending diphthong or consonant:

a cama	**a cam*inha***	bed/small, little bed
o filho	**o filh*inho***	son/wee, little son
o pão	**o pão*zinho***	bread/bread roll
o João	**o João*zinho***	John/wee, little John

2 The most common augmentatives are added to the end of nouns, by replacing the ending vowel with **-ão**:

> **o livro** **livr*ão*** book/massive book
> **o carro** **carr*ão*** car/big car

Diminutives and augmentatives can be used to express size.

More commonly, and particularly used in informal Portuguese, a diminutive can express affection or endearment, in the same way that English often uses 'nice' or even 'nice little'.

Example: **Vamos tomar um cafezinho.**
Let's go and have a (nice little) coffee.

Diminutives are commonly used as a form of endearment between parents and children (and vice versa) and grandparents and grandchildren (and vice versa).

Examples: **Bom dia, mãezinha!**
Good morning, mummy!

Olá meu netinho, como estás?
Hello, my little grandson, how are you?

In a similar context, diminutives are added to proper names:

Examples: **Olá Paulinha, como estás?**
Hi dear/little Paula, how are you?

O Pedrinho só tem três anos.
Little Pedro is only three years old.

Diminutives are more commonly used than augmentatives.

This basic information on nouns is enough to get you started in Portuguese. You will see more examples of masculine and feminine, singular and plural nouns as we progress through the book.

Exercise 1

Are the following nouns masculine or feminine? Write the correct definite article in the gap.

1	_____ coração	7	_____ cidade
2	_____ mão	8	_____ cadeira
3	_____ casa	9	_____ professor
4	_____ mulher	10	_____ cão
5	_____ viagem	11	_____ homem
6	_____ anel	12	_____ automóvel

Exercise 2

Form the plural of the following nouns:

1 o irmão / _____
2 o professor / _____
3 o perfil / _____
4 a viagem / _____
5 a estação / _____
6 a cidade / _____

7 a cor / _____
8 a mulher / _____
9 a opinião / _____
10 o casaco / _____
11 o pai / _____
12 o papel / _____

Exercise 3

Write the feminine of the following nouns:

1 o irmão / _____
2 o professor / _____
3 o contabilista / _____
4 o pai / _____
5 o filho / _____
6 o gato / _____

7 o cão / _____
8 o homem / _____
9 o marido / _____
10 o tio / _____
11 o paciente / _____
12 o avô / _____

Exercise 4

Rewrite the following nouns by applying the diminutive forms appropriately:

1 o irmão / _____
2 o cão / _____
3 a filha / _____
4 o pai / _____
5 o filho / _____
6 o gato / _____

7 o cavalo / _____
8 a casa / _____
9 a mão / _____
10 a janela / _____
11 a neta / _____
12 o avô / _____

Exercise 5

Identify the masculine nouns in the list below:

1 cão
2 mão
3 pedra
4 canção
5 sol
6 cidade
7 gato
8 homem

9   avô
10 mulher
11 cadeira
12 coração
13 caneta
14 pão
15 viagem
16 coelho

Exercise 6

Complete the following narrative by filling in the blank spaces with the appropriate noun.

filhos   professora   manhã   dias   crianças   casa   pai   professores

O _____ (1) e a mãe da Mariana moram em Lisboa. A mãe é _____ (2) na escola primária e ensina _____ (3) pequenas, e o pai também é professor mas ensina jovens. São os dois _____ (4) de português. Estão na escola todos os _____ (5) entre as oito horas da _____ (6) e as quatro horas da tarde. À noite estão sempre em _____ (7) a descansar. Ao fim-de-semana visitam os _____, (8) a Mariana e o Pedro.

Exercise 7

Complete the following narrative by filling in the blank spaces with the appropriate plural noun.

línguas   pessoas   organizações   continentes   Nações   países   milhões

O Português é língua oficial em vários _____ (1): Portugal, Brasil, Angola, Moçambique, Cabo Verde, Guiné-Bissau, São Tomé e Príncipe, Timor Leste e Macau. É uma língua falada em quatro _____ (2) por quase 300 _____ (3) de _____ (4) e é, por isso, a quinta língua mais usada do mundo. É também língua oficial de várias _____ (5) internacionais, como por exemplo a União Europeia, o Mercosul, a União das _____ (6) Sul-Americanas e a União Africana e dos Países Lusófonos. Assim como três outras _____ (7) europeias – o Espanhol, Italiano e Francês, – o Português é uma língua românica e tem a sua origem direta no Latim.