

## **Make & do**

The Spanish speaking learner of English is faced with a serious problem when he has to "translate" expressions involving the Spanish verb *hacer*. Some of these require the English verb 'make', some 'do' (and some neither of the two), and the poor learner has no real way of learning which is which, other than memorizing them.

It may be useful for the learner however to have a list of some common expressions involving *make* and *do* to which he can refer. I include as an image some of the more common ones, culled from the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* and the *Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary*, both excellent dictionaries for learners of English.

Make	Do
an accusation	your best
an attempt	the cleaning
a comment	damage to something
a decision	a dance
an estimate	the dishes
a gesture	your duty
an impression	the gardening
a mistake	harm to someone
a movement	the housework
an offer	a job
a promise	the shopping
a remark	the wash (US)

Make	Do
an arrangement	business
a change	a course (of study)
a deal (in US)	a deal (in UK)
an effort	a degree
a fuss (UK)	the washing up
a guess (UK)	a favour
a meal	a good turn
money	your homework
a noise	the ironing
progress	research
a recommendation	the washing
a request	some work

This is of course not a complete list and, in any case, although useful for reference, lists like this don't always help the learner when he needs the expression.

I have in my files a rather entertaining composition about the uses of 'make' and 'do'. I quote verbatim:

- Let's start with couples. First they make trouble (just for kicks), then they make up and, bye and bye, they end up making love, not war.
- And, if he is a gentleman, he will marry and make a lady out of her. After that, she'll make a home for him, while he tries to make ends meet (the end of the month with the end of the paycheck that is).
- When you have guests you make room for them by clearing your cluttered room. In the morning you make breakfast, but they must make their own beds. (Hell, some people walk around all day looking like an unmade bed).
- Do you like to buy things ready made ? Or do you like to make them yourself ? At home, hand made ? Or, better still, do you go for "Made in Japan", better and you cheaper, you bet.
- And which was the beer that made Milwaukee famous ? No longer being made, there or elsewhere.
- Make three wishes before you blow out the candles on your birthday cake.
- Don't make messes, that's the first rule, that way you'll never have to make amends.
- Can't you ever make up your mind ?
- This deal will make me or break me, the latter likely.
- Her hair is done and her face is made up - get the message ?
- As I said, when you don't have things you have to do without; make do with what you've got. Tough !
- And they say you can't make an omelette without breaking eggs. (This for the "make or break" philosophers)

- The world is full of trouble-makers, money-makers, and movie-makers. Not enough shoe-makers. Do I make sense ? And where do the lace-makers and tat-makers stand, anyway ?
- God made the world in 6 days and She took Sunday off. Then She made Eve out of Adam's rib, (or conversely ?)
- Some people like to make things with their hands, others don't like to do anything.
- What's a mother to do with a teenage daughter who's constantly on a diet ?
- Whatever you can do, do it right.
- Do-gooders can often do a lot of harm, so do me a favour and don't do anything for me.
- Do you like your steak well-done or medium done ?
- When a thing is worth doing it's worth doing well --or is it better to do it, well or badly, than not doing it at all ? God knows.
- Do as you are told, and do unto others as you wish done unto you.
- A. How do you do ?  
B. How do you do what ? (Fine thanks, and you ?)
- Here are some do's and don'ts in society: do in Rome like the Romans do (But in Madrid do like the Madridians).
- You must do your homework, Johnny.
- And who was the guy who said "what's done is done" ? Judas Iscariot ? Pontius the Pilot ? I forget.
- Do this, don't do that !! Enough.

In short, you make when you build, create out of nihilo. Doing is acting, shaking and moving. You can do without making, but you can't make without doing, I presume.

After so many years I, I'm not altogether sure whether I wrote this or copied [some of] it. Apologies if the latter, and acknowledgments to possible unknown sources.