

One way that auxiliary verbs help the main verb of a sentence is by their placement before the infinitive verb form.

to want - querer

I want to go home now.

Quiero irme a casa ahora.

Andre wanted to eat the whole pie.

Andre quería comer todo el pastel.

He will want to drive to Miami.

Querrá conducir a Miami.

to be able to/can – poder

She is able to help with the chores.

Ella puede ayudar con los quehaceres.

Maria wasn't able to do a thing.

María no pudo hacer nada.

They will be able to sing at the concert.

Podrán cantar en el concierto.

to ought to/should – deber

We ought to do the work tomorrow.

Deberíamos hacer el trabajo mañana.

Jose should write the letter to his sister.

José debería escribir la carta a su hermana.

I ought to get a car.

Debería conseguir un auto.

to be – ser, estar

The verb "to be" is used as an auxiliary verb before the present progressive or present participle verb form.

I am waiting for an answer to my question.

Estoy esperando una respuesta a mi pregunta.

They were waiting all day at the office.

Estuvieron esperando todo el día en la oficina.

He will be waiting there tomorrow.

Él estará esperando allí mañana.



to learn to, to start/begin to, to teach to – aprender a, empezar a, enseñar a

Some Spanish auxiliary verbs use the word “a” after the conjugated form of the auxiliary verb, followed by the infinitive form of the main verb.

I taught him to spell a thousand words.	Le enseñé a deletrear mil palabras.
I will teach him to spell a thousand words.	Le enseñaré a deletrear mil palabras.
He learned to read English very well.	Aprendió a leer inglés muy bien.
He will learn to speak English very well.	Aprenderá a hablar inglés muy bien.
We began to swim to the boat.	Comenzamos a nadar hacia el bote.
We will begin to swim to the boat.	We will begin to swim to the boat.

The examples above are in the past and future tenses. If you are speaking in the present tense, you will want to use the conjugated verb of “to be” as an auxiliary verb, followed by the infinitive form of the main verb in many cases,

I am teaching him to spell a thousand words. Le estoy enseñando a deletrear mil palabras.

to be going to – ir a

If you use the conjugated verb “ir” followed by the word “a”, when translated to English, you are basically saying “to be going to”.

I think they are going to eat dinner.	Creo que van a cenar.
What were they going to do now?	Que iban a hacer ahora?
We will be going to play at the park.	Vamos a jugar en el parque.



to have to - tener que, hay que, haber de

Using the word "que" after the verbs tener and the third person form of haber (hay) forms either a personal obligation or an impersonal obligation. Haber de is a formal form of obligation.

I have to go to Chicago tomorrow.	Tengo que ir a Chicago mañana.
Someone has to go to Chicago tomorrow.	Alguien hay que ir a Chicago mañana.
I had to go to Chicago yesterday.	Tuve que ir a Chicago ayer.
One needs to study a lot.	Hay que estudiar mucho.
I will have to leave in the morning.	Tendré que irme por la mañana.
You need to think about your life.	Has de pensar en tu vida.

to know how to - saber

I know how to play tennis.	Sé jugar al tenis.
Juan knew how to cook chicken.	Juan sabía cocinar pollo.
I will know how to do it soon.	Sabré cómo hacerlo pronto.

it must be (true) – deber de

It must be seven by now.	Deben de ser las siete ya.
--------------------------	----------------------------

usually, normally – soler

He usually goes on Tuesdays.	Suele ir los martes.
They normally eat dinner at six.	Suelen cenar a las seis.

