

¿What's up with Lo?

Lo (and the fem version la – not to be confused with “the”) is what’s called a direct object pronoun. Direct objects are things that get verbed (receive the action).

I buy the book – BOOK is the direct object – it got bought (I am the subject)
She kisses the dog – dog is the direct object – it got kissed (She is the subject)
He had an idea – the idea is the object
They kiss him – HE is the object, he got kissed

And so on....

The lo is used to replace the object so you don’t have to keep saying the whole word. Just like we use ella so we don’t have to repeat Jessica over and over: this is my sister Jessica, Jessica is a sophomore, Jessica goes to Mt Horeb, Jessica is annoying...etc.

Yo tengo un libro, LO leo en la clase de español, LO pongo en mi mochila. Puedo leerLO en mi casa.

So the first sentence tells us what the thing is – it’s a book. In each of the later sentences, the lo replaces libro to cut out the repetition.

Same with la – Tengo una bicicleta, LA monto todos los dias. LA compré en una tienda de bicicletas y LA compré para cien dólares.

RULES –

1 - Lo goes either in front of a changed verb (lo pongo) or after an infinitive (leerlo) or a command (pégalo)

2 – Spanish uses lo and la when we would use he/she or it as an object. NEVER use Lo as the subject (when “it” does the verb... never).

Es = it is (it is built into Spanish verb endings but not said)

Lo es – makes no sense as “it is” (NEVER NEVER NEVER)

In Spanish, when “it” is the subject, “it” is built into the verb

Tengo una computadora, es muy chulo – (it) is very cool

Amo mi clase de español, es muy interesante – (it) is very interesting

Note that before you can use the built in “it”, both people need to know what you’re talking about