FREE GUIDE

Understanding a Spanish official letter without translating it all

Almost all of them say the same things in the same order. Know where to look and two minutes tell you whether a deadline is running.

1 · The papers to gather first

Get everything together before you start. Almost every step in this guide stops dead for one missing document, and starting again costs more than waiting a day.

- The envelope, with the postmark or delivery slip: the notification date is what counts, not the date in the text.
- The whole first page, with the body, your name, the file number and the reference.
- The last paragraph, where the deadline and the appeal live: look for plazo, recurso and días.
- Any earlier letter in the same file, if there is one.
- Your cadastral reference or your number plate, depending on what the letter is about.

2 · The order to do things in

1. Look first at who is writing. A town hall, a tax collection body, the national tax agency and a court have neither the same deadlines nor the same consequences.
2. Find the notification date, not the signature date. Administrative time limits run from the day after notification, under Law 39/2015.
3. Identify the type: information, formal request, proposed decision, decision, or enforcement order. Only the last three really bite.
4. Find the deadline and write it in the calendar the day you open the letter, with an alarm a week before.
5. If it is a bill, check whether you are inside the voluntary period or already in enforcement: the difference is the surcharge.

3 · The mistakes we see again and again

- Keeping the letter for when you have time. The clock runs from notification, not from reading.
- Throwing away the envelope. Sometimes it is the only proof of when it arrived.
- Confusing an information notice with a formal request. One asks nothing, the other asks something by a date.
- Answering by phone something that asks for a written reply. Nothing is recorded and the clock keeps running.

- Leaving an electronic notification unopened. Once the period passes it is treated as served anyway.

4 · Where you can check it yourself

Official pages, checked on 22/09/2026. The administration changes its screens without warning: if something does not match, the official source wins, not this guide.

- **Ley 39/2015 del Procedimiento Administrativo Común (notificaciones y plazos)**
  https://www.boe.es/buscar/act.php?id=BOE-A-2015-10565
- **Suma Gestión Tributaria, el periodo de pago voluntario**
  https://www.suma.es/periodo-pago-voluntario
- **Suma Gestión Tributaria, la vía ejecutiva**
  https://www.suma.es/pago-ejecutiva
- **Sede Electrónica del Catastro**
  https://www.sedecatastro.gob.es/

If you would rather we did it

€29 a letter	read, translated into your language and explained in writing
€59 a form	prepared with you, with the list of documents
€99 a folder	your papers scanned, sorted and indexed

We are not a gestoría or a law firm, and we sign and file nothing in your name as your representative. We do not do sworn translations: ours is a working translation, so that you understand, and it is not valid before the administration.

A question? One message is enough

Write to us on WhatsApp at **+34 613 13 87 84** (wa.me/34613138784) and a person answers. Asking costs nothing and commits you to nothing.