

SER vs. ESTAR

Remember that **ser** is used with fixed qualities, and **estar** refers to temporary qualities and situations. Apart from this general rule, both verbs have their specific uses.

This table will help you make the right choice.

| | SER | ESTAR |
|---|------------|--------------|
| Designation of people, animals and things | X | |
| Usual profession / occupation | X | |
| Temporary profession / occupation | X | |
| What somebody / something becomes | X | |
| Property | X | |
| Characteristics that are always true | X | |
| Indication of place / time of event | X | |
| Passive constructions | X | |
| Introducing reasons and excuses | X | |
| Situation and position | | X |
| Temporary characteristics | | X |
| Progressive / continuous tenses | | X |
| Semi passive structures | | X |
| Changes in characteristics | | X |
| Marital, economic, and social status | X | X |
| Reference to moment of speaking | | X |
| English adjectives ending in <i>-ed</i> | | X |
| English adjectives ending in <i>-ing</i> | X | |

Source: Essential Spanish Verb Skills, Rogelio Alonso Vallecillos, McGrawHill p.167