

Contractions

When **a** or **de** precedes the definite article **el**, the two words combine to form a contraction. That is, two words become one.

a + el = al
de + el = del

A + el is always contracted.

Incorrect: ¿Llevas a el hermano de Raúl?
Correct: ¿Llevas al hermano de Raúl?

De + el is always contracted.

Incorrect: ¿El libro es de el profesor?
Correct: ¿El libro es del profesor?

De + la, de + las, de + los, a + la, a + las, and a + los are **never** contracted.

¿Llevas al hermano de Raúl? Are you taking Raul's brother?
No, llevo a las hermanas de Pilar No, I'm taking Pilar's sisters.
¿El libro es del profesor? Is the book the profesor's?
No, el libro es de la profesora No, the book is the profesor's (fem).

Remember the difference between **el** and **él**. The pronoun (**él**) does have a written accent and means "he." The definite article (**el**) does not have a written accent and means "the."

el libro / the book él come / he eats

Only the definite article (**el**) is contracted. The pronoun (**él**) is not.

La Casa Blanca es la casa del presidente The White House is the president's house.
Es la casa de él It's his house.
A él no le gusta fumar He doesn't like to smoke.