

Doña Ana

The children’s song “*Doña Ana no está aquí*” is a *ronda*, a “round,” a song sung by children in a circle while playing a game. This *ronda* is traditionally attributed to Nicaragua. In the original song, two children sit in the middle of the circle. One is *Doña Ana*, and the other is her caregiver. The children, holding each other by the hands and circling the two girls, sing about how *Doña Ana* is not here; rather, she is in her orchard tending her flowers. At the end of each short verse, they ask, “¿Dónde está *Doña Ana*?” and the caregiver can give any answer about where she is or what she is doing. They continue to sing until they ask, “¿Cómo está *Doña Ana*?” and the caregiver responds, “¡*Doña Ana se murió!*” (*Doña Ana* is dead!). At this point the circle comes in to approach the girls and *Doña Ana* jumps up to chase the children in the circle. The child she catches is the next one to play *Doña Ana*.

As often happens with traditional children’s songs and games, there are many variations of “*Doña Ana*.” Often there is no caregiver; *Doña Ana* is the only child in the middle and answers for herself. Often the question ¿Dónde está *Doña Ana*? is not asked, but rather only ¿Cómo está *Doña Ana*? and *Doña Ana* answers that she doesn’t feel well, or that she has a fever, until she answers that she is dying, and then runs to catch the next *Doña Ana*.

In the version of “*Doña Ana*” we present here, we have altered the lyrics to tell you that *Doña Ana* is in different rooms in her house, participating in a different activity in each place. She wants to know who these people are that keep coming in her house and keep her from doing what she wants to do. The children answer who they are; they are the children who are coming to eat in the red house, and by the way, how is *Doña Ana*?

To play the game with your children, use the track labeled “*Doña Ana - para jugar*.” In this track, when the children ask, “¿Cómo está *Doña Ana*?” there is no answer, so that your own *Doña Ana* can answer for herself.

The game should proceed this way:

Assign gestures to different possible answers to ¿Cómo está? (See suggested gestures below.) When the song asks ¿Cómo está *Doña Ana*? the children in the circle should stop moving. You or someone in the circle should make one of these gestures at your *Doña Ana*. If she can respond correctly, she gets to run and catch a new *Doña Ana*. If she cannot, she plays *Doña Ana* for another round.

Example

Judith is in the middle playing *Doña Ana*. You, Andrew, and Bri circle around her (singing more and more of the song as you become more familiar with it) until you ask, “¿Cómo está *Doña Ana*?” You rub your stomach. Judith correctly answers, “*Tengo hambre*.” Then, she runs and catches Andrew, who will be the next *Doña Ana*.

You may refer to the poster ¿Cómo estás? to help you remember the answers to this question that you have learned so far.

For a video example of this game, visit CalicoSpanish.com/LevelC/resources.

Suggested answers and gestures:

<i>Estoy bien.</i>	Thumbs up
<i>Estoy mal.</i>	Thumbs down
<i>Estoy feliz.</i>	Big smile
<i>Estoy triste.</i>	Sad face
<i>Tengo hambre.</i>	Rubbing stomach
<i>Tengo sed.</i>	Panting
<i>Estoy listo / lista.</i>	Posture to start running
<i>Tengo sueño</i>	Yawning