



ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION TERMS AND TRANSLATIONS

ENGLISH-SPANISH

<u>ENGLISH</u>	<u>DEFINITION</u>	<u>SPANISH</u>
<u>SURFACES/SOILS:</u>		
clay	Sticky and malleable dirt	arcilla
marl	A crumbly earth deposit	marga
mud	Wet dirt	barro
pebble/gravel	Small stones	guijarro/grava
sand	Fine grained rocks	arena
soil/earth	Dirt used as fill	suelo/tierra
stratum/layer	A distinct level of archaeological context	estrato/capa
surface	The top of a layer	superficie
<u>FEATURES:</u>		
arch	A curved architectural feature	arco
<i>bothros</i>	An artificial hole or pit	<i>bothros</i>
corner	The place where two walls meet	esquina/ángulo
crack	A small gap between two surfaces	grieta
curve	A rounded surface	curva
deposit	Anything placed in the ground	depósito
drain	A trench or pipe used to take water out of an area	desagüe/drenaje

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dump	A place for discarded material, ancient or modern	vertedero/basural
edge/border	The boundary between two things	filo/borde/límite
floor	The lowest surface of a room	piso
foundation	Stones used as a base of a building	base/cimiento(s)
fill	Dirt or material put into a space in the ground	relleno
garbage	Trash, waste	residuos/desecho
grave	A burial place in the ground	tumba/sepultura
hole	A void in the ground	hoyo/agujero/cavidad
joint (building)	The point where building elements meet	unión
kiln	An oven used to bake pottery	horno
layer	A distinct level of archaeological context	capa
line	The shortest distance between two points	línea
pipe (clay)	A gutter	canaleta/canalón/conducto (de arcilla)
pipe (water)	A modern piece of plastic irrigation material	tubo/tubería
space, interval	An area between two things	espacio, intervalo
threshold	The passable boundary between two areas	umbral
wall	A vertical structure that divides or encloses an area	pared/muro
dividing wall	A wall used to separate two areas	pared divisoria
retaining wall	A wall used to hold up earth	muro de contención
enclosure wall	A wall used to block off an area (keep things inside)	(muro de) cercamiento/muro de cerramiento
defensive wall	A wall used as a defensive fortification of a town or settlement	muralla/muro (defensivo)

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well	A deep hole in the ground to access water	pozo/fuente
well-head	The top of a well, usually made of stone	boca de pozo
<u>MATERIALS/FINDS:</u>		
Bone	The calcified material that forms an animal's skeleton	hueso
brick	A small rectangular block typically made of fired or sun dried clay, used in building	ladrillo
bronze	A yellowish brown alloy of copper and tin	bronce
cement	A powdery substance made with calcined lime and clay	cemento
figurine	Small or tiny statues	estatuilla
find/discovery	An object found in an archaeological context	hallazgo/descubrimiento
fragment	A broken piece of pottery; potsherd	fragmento
fresco	A painting done on wet plaster which locks the colors in as it dries	fresco
glass	Hard and brittle material, usually transparent	vidrio
gold	A yellowish precious metal used in jewelry, coins, and art	oro
iron	A strong dark metal used for tools	hierro
ivory	Animal tusks used in art	marfil
lead	A somewhat soft silvery metal	plomo
lime mortar	A cement-like mixture of calcium calcium oxide and another medium, such as sand, with water	mortero de cal/argamasa de cal
plaster (wall)	A smooth lime-based cement used for making the surfaces of walls and ceilings	yeso
plaster (of Paris)	A lightweight cement-like mixture of gypsum and another medium, such as sand, and water	escolaya

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potsherd	A broken piece of ceramic material	tiesto/casco/fragmento cerámico
rock	A naturally occurring piece of solid mineral	roca
rubble	Debris or pile of broken segments of buildings, walls, waste, etc.	escombros(es)
silver	A grayish precious metal often used in making coins	plata
terracotta	Unglazed, brownish-red earthenware	terracota
tile (roof)	Thin slabs of material used to cover buildings	teja
wood	Hard, fibrous material from the trunks of trees	madera
vessel	A hollow container	vasija/recipiente/contenedor
<u>DRAWING/MEASURING:</u>		
centimeter	A metric unit of measure equaling one hundredth of a meter	centímetro
depth	The distance between the top and bottom of something	profundidad
elevation	The height of a given level	elevación
ground plan	The general outline of a building as viewed from above	planta/plano (del suelo)
height	The measurement from the base of something to its top	altura
measuring tape	A roll of thin metal marked at interval for measuring	cinta métrica
meter, meterstick	The base unit of measuring length in the metric system	metro
millimeter	The metric unit of length equaling one thousandth of a meter	milímetro

plan	A drawn record of features from an archaeological site on a horizontal plane	plano
section	A drawn record of features from an archaeological site on a vertical plane; a cross section	sección
width	The measurement of something from side to side	ancho
<u>ADJECTIVES:</u>		
burnt	Damaged by fire; charred	quemado
dark	A shade of black; not bright	oscuro
deep	Extending far down	profundo
fine	1) Very small particles 2) high quality	fino
glass	A brittle hard surface; glass-like	de vidrio
hard	Firm, rigid, compact	duro
high	Of great vertical extent, or great in quantity, size, or intensity	alto
horizontal	Parallel to the horizon	horizontal
light (color)	Not dark; pale	claro
mixed	Consisting of different qualities or elements	mixto/mixturado/mezclado
perpendicular	At an angle of 90° to a given line, plane, or surface	perpendicular
soft	Easy to shape, compress, or cut	blando
thin	Not thick; sparse	delgado
uneven	Irregular in pattern, quality, or shape; not smooth	irregular/rugoso
vertical	An alignment that is oriented upward; standing	vertical
wide	broad	amplio

wooden	Made of wood	de madera
<u>COLORS:</u>		
black		negro
blue		azul
blond/yellowish		rubio/amarillento
brown		marrón/castaño/café
gray		gris
green		verde
orange		naranja
red		rojo
white		blanco
yellow		amarillo
<u>TOOLS:</u>		
basin	A bowl for washing	barreño
basket	A container for carry things, typically with handles	canasta/cesto
box	A container for holding objects	caja
broom	A tool used for sweeping the floor	escoba
brush (scrub)	A stick with hard bristles used for cleaning or scrubbing hard surfaces	cepillo de fregado
brush (paint)	A stick with soft bristles used for applying paint	pincel/cepillo fino
compass	A tool that points toward magnetic north used for orienting directions	brújula
drawing board	A hard, flat board on which paper may be spread for drawing	mesa de dibujo/tablero de dibujo
dumpy level	An optical instrument used for verifying points along a horizontal	nivel topográfico

	plane; sometimes called a "surveyor's level"	
hammer	A tool with a heavy metal head used for striking nails into surfaces	martillo
knife	A sharp blade for cutting mounted on a handle	cuchillo
ladder	A portable device of two uprights with horizontal bars used for stepping up or down	escalera
nail	A thin metal rod with a sharp end driven into a surface in order to hold something in place	clavo
notebook	A small book for hand-written notes or drawings	cuaderno (de notas)
pick	A tool with a curved metal head used for chiseling or breaking up hard ground or rock	pico
plank	A long, thin, flat board used in flooring or as a bridge over a small gap	tabla/tablaón
plumb bob	A weight with a pointed tip used for marking locations	plomada
ruler	A instrument for measuring length	regla
scale	A device which determines an object's weight	balanza/báscula
shovel	A broad (curved or flat) metal plate attached to a handle used for scooping dirt	pala
sieve	A mesh screen used for sifting	tamiz
stadia rod	A pole used for measuring elevations; a leveling rod	mira topográfica/mira estadimétrica/varilla estadimétrica/estadal
stake (wood)	A piece of wood driven into the ground to mark boundaries	estaca
string	A thin length of material	cuerda
tool	A handheld device used for a particular function	herramienta

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total station	A piece of survey equipment used for taking GPS points	estación total
trowel	A small handheld tool with a curved metal scoop for scrapping or lifting dirt	paleta/paletín/cucharín/palustre
water cooler	A container that holds chilled drinking water	dispenser de agua
water sprayer	A device that spreads water in a fine mist	pulverizador/rociador
wheelbarrow	A small cart with a single wheel in the front, two support legs in the back, and two handles in the rear used for moving dirt and other objects	carretilla
wire	Thin metal string	alambre
<u>VERBS:</u>		
to cut	To divide something with a sharp tool	cortar
to dig	To break up and remove earth by hand or with a tool	cavar/excavar
to draw	To compose a picture or sketch	dibujar
to go under	To move beneath	ir por debajo de
to lift	To raise something to a higher position	levantar/alzar
to lower	To put something down	bajar
to photograph	To take a picture with a camera	fotografiar
to raise	To take something upward	levantar/elevar
to remove	To take something away	quitar
to separate	To divide into groups	separar
to shovel	To move something with a shovel	mover con pala/palear
to sieve	To put material through a sieve	tamizar
to spray	To apply a liquid as a shower of tiny droplets	rociar

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to sweep	To clean an area with a broom or brush	barrer
to throw (away)	To discard something	tirar/descartar/desechar/botar
to throw (dump)	To dispose by dropping	descargar/depositar
<u>NUMISMATICS:</u>		
coin	A thin flat metal disk used as currency	moneda
metal	A solid material that is typically hard, shiny, malleable, fusible, and conducts electricity	metal
hoard	Three or more coins found buried in close proximity	tesoro
electrum	An alloy of gold and silver	electro
gold, <i>aurum</i>	A yellowish precious metal used in jewelry, coins, and art	oro
silver, <i>argentum</i>	A grayish precious metal often used in making coins	plata
bronze, <i>aes</i>	A yellowish brown alloy of copper and tin	bronce
weight	The relative mass of a coin	peso
field	The background of a coin not used for design or image	campo
exergue	The segment of a coin separated by a line in which the legend is placed	exergo
attribute	Something attached to the central image on a coin	atributo
adjunct	Something separate from the central image on a coin	adjunto
type	The central motif on either side of a coin	tipo
legend	The main inscription on a coin	leyenda
mint	The place of coin manufacture	acuñar
casting	Pouring molten metal into a mold	fundir

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striking	Hammering a softened (heated) metal flan to produce an image on the coin	acuñar
die	A metal piece engraved with the image to be struck onto a flan	acuñado
anvil	A fixed metal block upon which a coin is struck	yunque
block	The metal base upon which a coin is struck	
flan	A flat metal disk to be struck into a coin	cospel
obverse	The front or "heads" side of a coin	anverso
reverse	The back or "tails" side of a coin	reverso
axis	The relative alignment between the two coin faces	ejes
module	The diameter of a coin	módulo
fabric	The general appearance of the coin as reflects the mint's method of fabrication	
brockage	When a previously struck coin is used as a die	incuso
double-strike	When a coin is struck twice	doble acuñación
over-strike	When an earlier coin is reused as a flan	
patina	copper oxidation	pátina
alloy	A combination of two metals	aleación
ingot	A mold-made bar of solid metal	lingote
circulation	When coins are allowed to be used for everyday transactions	circulación
<u>PLANTS:</u>		
beech		haya
oak		roble
holm oak		encina

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olive tree		olivo
laurel		laurel
myrtle		mirto/arrayán
cypress		ciprés
daffodil		narciso
ash tree		fresno
poppy		amapola
grapevine		vid
cedar		cedro
palm		palmera
apple tree		manzano
pine		pino
eucalyptus		eucalipto
acacia		acacia
chestnut		castaño
bottle brush tree	callistemon citrinus	calistemo/cepillo rojo
cedar		cedro
medlar		níspero
jacaranda		jacarandá
walnut		nogal
palm		palmera
willow		sauce
elderberry		saúco
fig tree		higuera

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peach tree		melocotonero/duraznero
wheat		trigo
buckwheat		trigo sarraceno
durum wheat		trigo duro/trigo durum
einkorn wheat		escaña menor/trigo einkorn
emmer wheat		trigo farro/trigo emmer
barley		cebada
malt		malta
rice		arroz
rye		centeno
sorghum		sorgo
corn		maíz
millet		mijo
cabbage		col/repollo
rhizomes		rizomas
chayote		chayote
dates		dátil
<u>CATTLE/LIVESTOCK:</u>		
Ovine	Referring to sheep	ovino
Sheep		oveja
Bovine	Referring to a cow	bovino
Cow	An adult female bovine	vaca
Ox	A castrated bull	buey
Bull	A male cow	toro

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Steer	A male cow castrated before reaching sexual maturity	cabestro
Caprine	Referring to a goat	caprino
Goat		cabra
Horse		caballo
Donkey		burro
Mule	A cross between a donkey and a horse	mula
Llama		llama
Alpaca		alpaca
Pig		cerdo
Chicken		pollo
Duck		pato
Turkey		pavo
Swan		cisne
Goose		ganso/oca