Hay — It’s not for horses!

Hay (pronounced like “eye”) is a very easy verb to use in Spanish. It means “there is / there are”. You don’t have to worry about conjugating!

Let’s look at some examples:

You can use it to ask how many things there are.
¿Cuántos estudiantes hay en la clase? — How many students are there in the class?

Answer like this:
Hay veinte estudiantes en la clase.
There are twenty students in the class.

You can use it to ask what items are in something
¿Qué hay en tu dormitorio? — What is (there) in your bedroom?

Hay una cama y un armario.
There is a bed and a closet.

¿Qué hay en tu mochila? — What is (there) in your back pack?

En mi mochila hay libros y lápices.
In my backpack there are books and pencils.

You can also use it to ask if something exists

¿Hay un hotel en el centro? — Is there a hotel downtown?

Sí. Sí hay.
Yes. Yes there is.

¿Hay algunos libros por aquí? — Are there any books around here?

No. No hay.
No. No there aren't.