SPANISH ALPHABET SOUNDS

The below chart tells you how to pronounce letters in Spanish. As you'll learn, not only can a letter like 'a' sound a bit different, letters like 'j', 'h', 'e', and 'i' are completely different from English to Spanish. And then there are the double letter sounds, such as the well-known 'rr' and 'll', but also the lesser-known sounds, 'ga', 'ge', 'gi', 'go', & 'gü'.

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How to Pronounce Spanish Letters and Sounds

Letter	Pronunciation in English & Tips for Pronouncing	Words in Spanish w/ this Sound (translation in English)
a	AH (It's a soft "ah" like in "aha!)	**Acaba** (Just) **Adelante** (Ahead/Come in) **Amistad** (Friendship) **Alumno** (Student) **Avión** (Airplane) **Azul** (Blue) El **Alumno** se fue de vieja en un **Avión Azul** (The student travels in a blue airplane)

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b	BEH (like the 'b' in 'bay')	**Bueno** (Ok) **Bacan** (Great) **Biblioteca** (Library) **Bote** (Boat) Leer es **bueno.** (Reading is good) La **biblioteca** esté cerca. (The library is good)
ba	BAH	**Bailar** (To dance) **Ballena** (Whale) A Maria le gusta **bailar.** (Maria likes to dance)
be	BEH	**Beso** (Kiss) **Belleza** (Beauty) Ellos se dan un **beso** al saludarse. (They kiss when greeting each other)
bi	BE	**Bienvenida** (Welcome) **Bigote** (Mustache) Mi papa tiene el **bigote** largo. (My dad has a long mustache)
bo	BOW	**Bonita** (Pretty) **Botella** (Bottle) La **botella** esta vacia. (The bottle is empty)

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bu	BOO	**Buscar** (To look for) **Burro** (Donkey) Fui a **buscar** a mi mamá. (I went looking for my mom)
c	CEH (Like the 'sa' in 'say') (Like the 'th' in 'thay' in Spain) This letter has exceptions with Ce and Ci (When is followed by "e" or "i", it is pronounced either as "th" in "think" or as "s" in "son".) In all other cases it is pronounced as "k" in 'key'	**Carcajada** (Loud laugh) **Carro** (Car) **Criminal** (Criminal) **Celular** (Cell Phone) **Cielo** (Sky) El **carro** esta estacionado. (The car is parked) El **celular** debe estar apagado. (The cell phone must be turned off)
ca	KAH	**Cama** (Bed) **Calamidad** (Calamity) Me voy a mi **cama.** (I go to my bed)
ce	CEH	**Cena** (Dinner) **Cerebro** (Brain) El **cerebro** es una órgano. (The brain is an organ)

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ci	SEE	**Cilantro** (Cilantro) **Ciudad** (City) La **ciudad** que nunca duerme. (The city that never sleeps)
co	COH	**Coco** (Coconut) **Compromiso** (Commitment) El helado de **coco** es mi favorito.
cu	KOO	**Cuerpo** (Body) **Cupido** (Cupid) Me duele el **cuerpo.** (My body hurts)
ch	CHE (Like the 'ch' in chair)	**Chocolate** (Chocolate) **Chao** (Bye) **Chao!** Nos vemos mañana. (Bye! See you tomorrow)

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d	DEE (Like the 'da' in 'day') Sounds similar to the d in english but the thought should be against your upper teeth instead of the roof of your mouth when pronouncing it.	**Dios** (God) **Decisión** (Decision) **Dado** (Dice) **Dedo** (Finger) **Dormir** (Sleep) El matrimonio es una **decisión** importante. (Marriage is an important decision) Anoche me **dormi** tarde (Last night i went to sleep late)
e	EH (Pronounced like the 'e' in 'bet')	**Elefante** (Elephant) **Educación** (Education) **Economy** (Economia) **Eliminar** (Delete) **Ejercicio** (Exercise) No me gusta hacer **ejercicio.** (I don't like to exercise) La **economía** se ve afectada por la cuarentena. (The economy is affected by quarantine.)

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f	EFE (EH-fay phonetical) (In words it's similar to the english f, like 'f' in 'fox')	**Fuerza** (Force/Strength) **Firma** (Firm/Signature) **Fuerte** (Strong) **Fantasma** (Ghost) **Ferreteria** (Hardware store) Unidos somos más **fuerte.** (United we are stronger) Necesito una buena **firma.** (I need a good signature)
g	HEH (The pronunciation depends on its position in the word. This letter usually sounds much like an English g.) (Before e or i, it sounds like a harsh English h. It's very similar to the j in Spanish.)	**Gracias** (Thanks) **Gritar** (Scream) **Globos** (Balloons) **Gramatica** (Grammar) **Gigante** (Giant) Muchas **gracias** por la ayuda. (Thank you very much for the help.) Compre **globos** morados (I bought purple balloons.)
ga	GAH	**Gato** (Cat) **Galleta** (Cookies) El **gato** es negro. (The cat is black)
ge	HEH	**Gente** (People) **Gelatina** (Jelly) Me gusta la **gelatina.** (I like jelly)

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gi	HE	**Gigante** (Giant) **Girasol** (Sunflower) El **girasol** esta en el jardin. (The sunflower is in the garden)
go	GOH	**Gordo** (Fat) **Gorila** (Gorilla) El hombre es **gordo.** (The man is fat.)
gu	GOO	**Guapo** (Handsome/Gorgeous) **Guante** (Glove) Juan se quitó el guante. (Juan took his glove)
gue	GEH	**Guerra** (War)(war) **Guepardo** (Cheetah) Nadie gano a guerra (No one won the war.)
gui	GHEE	**Guitarra** (Guitar) **Guión** (Script) Quiero aprender a tocar la **guitarra.** (II want to learn to play the guitar.)

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h	AAH-cheh (but in words it is silent, like in “honour” in English.) (However, in words from other languages, the breathy aspiration is maintained. For example Hawaii)	**Hola** (Hello) **Hornilla** (Burner) **Hechizo** (Spell) **Huevo** (Egg) **Hada** (Fairy) **Huevos** revueltos. (Scrambled eggs) Las **hadas** existen (Fairies are real)
i	EE (Like ‘ee’ in ‘see’ but shorter)	**Iguana** (Iguana) **Iglesia** (Church) **Isla** (Island) **Invierno** (Winter) **Impuesto** (Tax) La **iglesia** esté cerrada. (The church is close) Los **impuestos** se paga el final del año. (The taxes are paid at the end of the year.)
j	HOTA (Sounds close to the English h sound)	**Joven** (Young) **Jirafa** (Giraffe) **Joya** (Jewel) **Jugo** (Juice) **Juguete** (Toy) El **joven** toma **jugo** de manzana. (The young man drinks apple juice.) Las **jirafas** viven en África. (Giraffes live in Africa.)

Letter	Pronunciation in English & Tips for Pronouncing	Words in Spanish w/ this Sound (translation in English)
k	KAH (is an uncommon letter in Spanish, but sounds much like the English k. Like the 'k' in 'ask')	**Kiwi** (Kiwi) **Kayak** (Kayak) **Koala** (Koala) **Kiosko** (Kiosk) **Kimono** (Kimono) El **koala** es muy tierno. (The koala is very tender.) Los **kiwis** son una excelente fuente de vitamina C. (Kiwis are an excellent source of vitamin C.)
l	ELE Phonetically EH-leh (In words like "l" in "line" but shorter.) (Instead of the tongue touching the roof of the mouth behind the teeth, it should touch the tip of the teeth themselves.)	**Lago** (Lake) **Limon** (Lemon) **Leche** (Milk) **Láminas** (Sheets) **Lingote** (Ingot) La vaca da **leche.** (The cow gives milk Las **láminas** son cobre. (The sheets are copper.)

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ll	ELLE (in most places, pronounced as Y. In certain dialects, pronounced as S sound in English word "vision") (It's not considered a letter anymore by the RAE)	**Llave** (key) **Me llamo** (My name is...) **Lluvia** (rain) **Llama** (Llama) **Pollo** (Chicken) Se me han perdido las **llaves.** (I've lost the keys) Quiero comer **pollo.** (I want to eat chicken.)
m	EME Phonetically EH-may (Like "m" in "mine".) (In words sounds similar to the english M)	**Madre** (Mother) **Milagro** (Miracle) **Mapa** (Map) **Montaña** (Mountain) **Mano** (Hand) Las **montañas** son altas. (The mountains are tall) Mi **madre** cree en los milagros. (Mi mother believes in miracles.)
n	ENE Phonetically EH-neh (Like "n" in "now".) (In words sounds similar to the english M)	**Nachos** (Nachos) **Nombre** (Name) **Naranja** (Orange) **Niño** (Kid) **Nube** (Cloud) Mi **nombre** es Diego. (My name s Diego) El **niño** es muy amable. (The kid is very kind).

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ñ	ENYE Phonetic EH-nyay (Like “gn” in the Italian word “gnocchi” or in english this letter sounds much like the ni in onion or the ny in canyon.)	**Ñame** (Yam) **Piñata** (Piñata) **Mañana** (Morning/Tomorrow) **Español** (Spanish) **Ñandú** (Rhea - animal) El **ñandú** es una ave sudamérica. (The rhea is a South American bird) En **España** se habla **español.** (Spanish is spoken in Spain)
o	OH (Close to “aw” in “saw”.) (This letter sounds close to the o in so, but shorter.)	**Oso** (Bear) **Oscuridad** (Darkness) **Organizar** (Organize) **Orgullo** (Pride) **Ojo** (Eye) Ella tiene los **ojos** cerrados. (She had the eyes closed.) No me gusta la **oscuridad.** (I don’t like darkness.)

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p	PE (Like “p” in “park”.) (This letter sounds close to the English p, but with less breath.)	**Papa** (Potato) **Publicidad** (Advertising) **Pera** (Pear) **Pez** (Fish) **Payaso** (Clown) Las **papas** crecen en el suelo. (Potatoes grow in the soil.) El **pez** nada en el océano. (The fish swims in the ocean)
q	KOO (sounds like English k when used in a word.)	This letter must be with an ¨u¨ To create a word.
que	KEH	**Queso** (Cheese) **Quemar** (To burn) El **queso** esté caliente (The cheese is hot.)
qui	KEY	**Quito** (The capital of Ecuador) **Quieto** (Still) Es mejor quedarse **quito.** (It’s better to stay still.)

Letter	Pronunciation in English & Tips for Pronouncing	Words in Spanish w/ this Sound (translation in English)
r	ERE (pronounced as a shortened eh reh) This letter has two different sounds, this depends on its position Rosa (Rose), if it's at beginning sounds like rr with a strong sound. Caro (Expensive), if it's in the middle of word sounds softer	**Primo** (Cousin) **Caminar** (Walk) **Gris** (Grey) **Caro** (Expensive) **Jugar** (Play) El rinoceronte es **gris** (The rhino is very gray) Voy a **jugar** (I will play)
rr	ERRE Phonetically eh reh (This is a very unique sound to spanish. The key is practice. Practice tip: you can practice it by saying the tt sound in butter over and over.) Trilled R sound. Trills can also occur at the beginning of words that start with R.	**Carro** (Car) **Rueda** (Wheel) **Radio** (Radio) **Rey** (King) **Tierra** (Earth/dirt/land) El **rey** se sienta en su trono (The king sits on his throne) La **tierra** de las maravillas. (The land of wonders.)

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s	ESE Phonetically EH-seh (It sounds like the English letter "S")	**Sopa** (Soup) **Sabiduria** (Wisdom) **Sandia** (Watermelon) **Silla** (Silla) **Sol** (Sun) El **sol** esta brillando hoy (The sun is shining today) La **silla** es de madera. (The chair is of wood.)
t	TEH or TAY (It's softer in sound to the english T. Like 't' in 'table')	**Tomate** (Tomato) **Taza** (Cup) **Teléfono** (Phone) **Tiger** (Tiger) **Tenedor** (Fork) Mañana te llamaré por **teléfono.** (Tomorrow I will call you over the phone.) La **taza** de té esté caliente. (The tea cup is hot)

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u	OOH (Like 'oo' in 'food')	**Uva** (Grape) **Uña** (Nail) **Unicornio** (Unicorn) **Universo** (Universe) **Util** (Useful) La **uva** está en el viñedo. (The grape is in the vineyard) El **universo** se sigue expandiendo (The universe continues to expand)
v	OOH-bay (This letter sounds much like the Spanish b. The lips do not touch and there is less aspiration.)	**Vaso** (Glass) **Vaca** (Cow) **Ventana** (Window) **Viento** (Wind) **Vino** (Wine) Quiero un **vaso** con agua. (I want a glass of water) El **viento** sopla fuerte (The wind blows strong)

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w	DOH-blay OOH-bay (This letter is not native to Spanish most of the words with this letter come from different languages.) (sounds similar to English 'w'.)	**Whisky** (Whisky) **Wi-fi** (Wi-fi) **Waffle** (Waffle) **Web** (Web) **Watt** (Watt) La **web** es muy grande. (The web is very big.) Quiero la clave del **wi-fi.** (I want the wi-fi password.)
x	EH-kees (This letter is pronounced like the 'ks' in 'socks'.)	**Xilofonista** (A person who plays the xylophone) El **xilofonista** es muy talentoso. (The xylophone player is very talented.)
y	YAY (or 'i griega' in spanish) (Most of the time, this letter sounds like the 'y' in English 'yes'. At the end of a word, it sounds like the letter i in spanish.)	**Yate** (Yacht) **Yeso** (Cast) **Yegua** (Mare) **Yema** (Egg yolk) **Yelmo** (Helmet) El **yelmo** estaba en el suelo (The helmet was on the floor) Me compre un **yate** lujoso. (I bought a luxurious yacht.)

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z	ZETA (Sounds just like s, but can sound like the th in English in parts of Spain.)	**Zebra** (Zebra) **Zapato** (Shoe) **Zanahoria** (Carrot) **Zorro** (Fox) **Zurdo** (Left handed) Migue es **zurdo.** (Miguel is left handed) ¿Donde esté el **zorro**? (Where is the fox?)