

El alfabeto español = The Spanish Alphabet

<u>Letter</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Sound</u>	<u>Spanish Example</u>	<u>English</u>
A	a	ah	padre – (pah dreh)	father
B	be	beh	baño – (bahn yo)	bathroom
C	ce	ceh	cinco – (seen koh)	five
CH	che	ch eh	chile – (chee leh)	chile
D	de	deh	dedo – (deh doh)	finger
E	e	eh	mesa – (meh sah)	table
F	efe	ef eh	fábrica – (fah bree kah)	factory
G	ge	heh	gigante – (hee gan teh)	giant
H	hache	ah cheh	helado – (eh lah thoh)	ice cream
I	i	ee	silla – (see yah)	chair
J	jota	hoh tah	jabon – (hah bohn)	soap
K	ka	kah	kilómetro – (kee loh meh trdoh)	kilometer
L	ele	eh leh	lata – (lah tah)	can or tin
LL	elle	eh yeh	llave – (yah beh)	key
M	eme	eh meh	madre – (mah dreh)	mother
N	ene	eh neh	nariz – (nah rdeez)	nose
Ñ	eñe	ehn yeh	cañón – (cahn yohn)	canyon
O	o	oh	votar – (voh tard)	to vote
P	pe	peh	papel – (pah pehl)	paper
Q	cu	koo	queso – (keh soh)	cheese
R	ere	eh reh	radio – (rah dee oh)	radio
RR	erre	eh (trill) rreh	perro – (peh rroh) (trilled)	dog
S	ese	eh seh	señor – (seh nyohr)	sir
T	te	teh	tomate – (toh mah teh)	tomato
U	u	oo	uniforme – (oo nah for meh)	uniform
V	ve	veh or beh	vaca – (bah kah)	cow
W	doble ve	doh bleh veh	Washington – see below	Washington
X	equis	eh kees	excelente – (ehk seh lehn teh)	excellent
Y	i griega	ee gree eh gah	y – (ee)	and
Z	zeta	seh tah	zapatos – (sah pah tohs)	shoes

(My note: My written examples of how to say the Spanish words are an approximation of the sound. Keep in mind that our book uses the E sound in Spanish as AY but notes that it is an approximation of the sound. Eh and Ay are very close. Also there are variations of sounds in Castillian Spanish [Spain]) and some of the other Latin American countries.)

* See next page for notes regarding the above listed letters.

- ❖ C - The letter **C** sounds like a "k" when it is before the vowels a, o and u: *casa*, *cosa*, *cuchara*. It is pronounced as an "s" when it is before the vowels i and e: *ciudad*, *cebra*.
(Castillian Spanish – c (before e and i) and z are like the th in think)
- ❖ **CH** – has been officially dropped from the Spanish Alphabet but in dictionaries published before 1994 as a separate letter. It is pronounced like the sound in the word *church*. (see note below)
- ❖ D - When **D** is between two vowels as in the word *nada* [nothing], or occurs at the end of a word, like *verdad* [truth], it is pronounced like the "th" in the English word "they": NAH-thah, ver-DATHh.
- ❖ G - The letter **G** is hard (like the word "gate") when it is before the vowels a, o and u: *gato*, *gordo*, *gusto*. It is soft (like the English 'H') when it is before the vowels i and e: *gimnasio*, *general*.
- ❖ The letter **H** is always silent.
- ❖ K- **K** is a foreign letter and used only in words borrowed from other languages.
- ❖ **LL** – has been officially dropped from the Spanish Alphabet but in dictionaries published before 1994 as a separate letter.(see my note)
- ❖ Q- **Qu** is always pronounced like a `k'. It never makes the `kw' sound as it does in English.
- ❖ R- (a tap like the "d" sound in ladder) Eh deh (or eh reh but tapping at the top behind the teeth)
- ❖ **RR** – (extend the tap to a trill) has been officially dropped from the Spanish Alphabet but in dictionaries published before 1994 as a separate letter. (see note below)
- ❖ V -**V** is pronounced the same as B. The names *ve chica* and *be grande* mean `little b' and `big b' respectively. A common native speaker error is to switch these letters when writing. Do not pronounce this letter like the English letter `v'. Both **V** and **B** are pronounced like a softened version of the English letter `b'.
- ❖ W- (or) oo veh doh bleh - **W** is a foreign letter and used only in words borrowed from other languages.
- ❖ X- can have an "h" sound as in México (Meh hee koh); sh sound as in Texcoco (Tesh koh koh); but usually a "ks" sound as in taxi (tah ksee).

(NOTE: In 1995 the Spanish alphabet was revised to eliminate most of the compound letters. Therefore, the Spanish alphabet has all the letters of the English alphabet except for the additional ñ. However, most dictionaries still adhere to the traditional letters. Many Latin American countries have not decided to follow Spain's lead in this matter. Also, these traditional letters are used when spelling aloud. Therefore it is important to know the original standard Spanish alphabet.)

All Spanish letters are feminine; therefore, *la a*, *la jota*, *la doble ve* ...etc.

When you are spelling aloud a word in which a letter carries an accent, say "con acento" after saying the name of the vowel. For example: *Policía*: pe-o-ele-ce-i con acento-a

The 3 Rules of Stress in Spanish Words:

- 1.) If a word ends in **a e i o u n** or **s**: The next to the last syllable is stressed. (señora, rebozo, siete)
- 2.) If a word ends in any consonant except **n** or **s**: The last syllable is stressed. (señor, favor, cambiar, hotel)
- 3.) If the stress does not follow the first two rules: **An accent mark shows which syllable is stressed.** (sábado, jabón, automóvil, razón)