

El alfabeto o abecedario (The alphabet)

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Las vocales (vowels)

In English, a vowel can have more than one sound. i.e. fat, and fate
Spanish is 100% phonetic, this means once you learn the sound, you always pronounce that vowel the same way, every time you find it in a new word. So let's learn the vowels...

A (ah) as in "fa,la,la,la,la" Example: Caracas (kah'rah'kas) the capital of Venezuela

E (eh) (as in pen). Example: Pelele - peh-leh-leh (puppet).

I (ee) (as in seen, but shorter). Ex: piña (pee-nyah) pineapple, pintar (peen-tahr) to paint.

O (oh) (sounds like the o in floor but shorter). Example: Orinoco (oh-ree-noh-koh) a river.

U (oo) (like oo in moon). Examples: Cuna (koo-nah) cradle, Cúrcuma (koo-koo-mah)

turmeric

Letter's name		Pronunciation (in English "phonetics")	Example (ejemplo)
A	A	ah	mapa, La casa blanca, pasa, bananas
B	Be	bveh	bolos, bandana, bebé, bien, Bolivia
C	Ce	seh	Alicia, cenote, centro, cinco Inca, cucú, loca, como, color
D	De	deh	Dolores, don, día, dos, ciudad
E	E	eh	Pelo, seco, el té, el elefante, pepe, excelente
F	Efe	eh-feh	Foto, familia, fin, fatal, fiesta
G	Ge	heh	Geología, ingeniero, general ("h" sound) gusto, Guatemala, gol ("G" sound)
H	Hache	ah-cheh (Always silent)	Habana, hotel, hospital, chihuahua

Letter's name		Pronunciation (in English "phonetics")	Example (ejemplo)
I	I	ee	Mimí, Lilí, Misisipi, Miami, sí, aspirina, tímido
J	Jota	hoh-tah	Jorge, frijoles, jade, jaguar, Méjico
K	Ka	kah	Kilómetro (origen Inglés)
L	Ele	eh-leh	Lana, lodo, luna, lino
M	Eme	eh-meh	Mapa, mamá, mono, mala
N	Ene	eh-neh	Nene, no, nido, nada
Ñ	Eñe	eh-nyeh	Cuñado, niño, mañana, español, señora
O	O	oh	Rodolfo, nosotros, dos cocos, color, ocho, poco
P	Pe	peh	Peso, para, pelo, pila, primo
Q	Cu	koo	Quito, queso, tequila, quince
R	Ere	eh-reh	Pero, caro, cero, rápido, rata, Enrique, Israel, alrededor, enredo
S	Ese	eh-seh	mesero, mesa, sala, seis, siete
T	Te	teh	techo, tabaco, tapa
U	U	oo	curioso, fruta, luna
V	Uve	oo bveh	Vaso, Verónica, vaca, vino, vídeo
W	Doble v/ doble u	doh-bleh bveh	William, Wilfredo (origen Inglés)
X	Equis	eh-kees	externo, texto, examen
Y	I griega	ee-gree-eh-gah	Yucatán, yo (at beginning of the word "LL" sound) muy, hay (at end of the word "I" sound)
Z	Zeta	seh-tah	Zarzuela, cerveza, zócalo, diez

Consonantes - consonants

- ✓ The consonants in Spanish sound are the same as in English. The Spanish alphabet no longer has the CH, LL and RR - there are now only 27 letters, the same as in English except that Spanish has one more- the ñ.



The letters B and V

- These letters are pronounced the same, they sound like a combination of the two letters "bv" sound (position your lips and teeth to make a V sound, then try to make a b sound)
Examples: cabeza (kah-bveh-sah) head, vida (bvee-dah) life, violín (bveeoh-leen) violin

The letter C

- ✓ Double personality...
- In front of the vowels **A, O** and **U**, the C sounds like the letter K in English.
Examples: acabar (ah-kah-bvahr) to finish, café (kah-feh) coffee, casa (kah-sah) house
- In front of the vowels **E** and **I**, it sounds like the **S** in English.
Examples: acero (ah-she-roh) steel, cero (seh-roh) zero, cine (see-neh) cinema.

The letter G

- ✓ Double personality, like the letter c.
- When combined with the letters e and I, G sounds like the Spanish J
Examples: agenda, gerente
- Combined with the vowels **A, O & U** - it sounds like "g" in goose.
Examples: begonia, gato, gracias, pagado
- To say words like guia, or guerra, you must insert a U in front of the vowels **E** and **I**, **then you get the sounds** gue and gui.

The letter H

- Is mute. Examples: hueso (ooeh-soh) bone, huevo (ooeh-bvoh) egg

The letter J

- Sounds like a guttural h. Ex: cajeta (kah-heh-tah) a desert, cajón (kah-hohn) big box.

The letter K

- Is only used in words with a foreign origin. i.e. kilo (kee-loh) means 1,000 in Greek

The letter Y

- at the beginning of word it sounds like "LL". Ejemplo: Yo, Yucatan.

At the end of a word it sounds like "I". Ejemplo: Voy, Soy.

The letters S and Z

- In all 19 Latin American speaking countries where Spanish is spoken, the s and the Z have the same sound – they sound like the S in the English language.
✓ Ex: Asiento, Sol, Zarzuela.
- However, in Spain, the letter Z is pronounced like a th (as in thesis, or thanks).
✓ Example: Sol (Th-ohl), Asiento (ah-th-eeenh-toh)

The letter Q

- It's not used much in the Spanish language. It sounds like a K sound in front of the letters e and I, like in queso (cheese).
Examples: pequeño, tequila





The letter Ñ

•This letter is pronounced (Eh-nyeh), like in the English word onion. The wiggly line is called a Tilde (teel-deh). **Examples: Cuñado, mañana, nina**

The letter Y

•This letter is always a consonant, never a vowel. **Examples: Playa, yema, yodo**

Practice exercise – partner up!

1. Practice saying the alphabet with a partner
2. Practice the following dialogue:

¿Cómo se escribe su nombre?

Se escribe _____ y el suyo?

Se escribe _____

TAREA - At home practice

Watch the video by Butterfly Spanish “Learn how to say the letters and sounds in Spanish”
(You can find this video under Learning resources)

