

El Abecedario

The Spanish alphabet: 27 letters, with sound tips for English-speaking parents.

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● vowels ● consonants ● silent letters ● hard c, g ● soft c, g

Aa **a** abeja
Say ah, like the a in father.

Bb **be** barco
Like b in boy. B and V sound the same.

Cc **ce** casa · cena
k before a, o, u. s or th before e, i.
s or th? Latin America says s, most of Spain says th. Both are correct.

Dd **de** dedo
Softer than English d. Tongue touches the top teeth.

Ee **e** elefante
Say eh, like the e in bed.

Ff **efe** foca
Like f in fun.

Gg **ge** gato · gente
g as in go before a, o, u. A raspy h before e, i.

Hh **hache** hoja
Always silent. Hoja sounds like oja.

Ii **i** isla
Say ee, like the ee in see.

Jj **jota** jugo
A raspy h, like the h in hand.

Kk **ka** kiwi
Like k in kite. Only in a few words.

Ll **ele** luna
Like l in lemon, light and clean.

Mm **eme** mano
Like m in moon.

Nn **ene** nube
Like n in nose.

Ññ **eñe** piña
Like the ny in canyon.

Oo **o** oso
Say oh, short and pure, with no glide.

Pp **pe** pato
Like p in spin, with no puff of air.

Qq **cu** queso
Sounds like k. Always written QU, and the u is silent.

Rr **erre** pera · rana
A quick tap, like the tt in butter. Rolled at the start of a word.

Ss **ese** sol
Like s in sun.

Tt **te** taza
Tongue on the top teeth, with no puff of air.

Uu **u** uva
Say oo, like the oo in moon.

Vv **uve** vaca
Sounds exactly like B. Also called ve.

Ww **uve doble** wafle
Like w in web. Also called doble ve. Rare.

Xx **equis** taxi
Usually ks, like taxi. In México, it sounds like J.

Yy **ye** yoyo
Like y in yes. Also called i grega.

Zz **zeta** zapato
s or th, just like C before e, i.
s or th? Latin America says s, most of Spain says th. Both are correct.

Letter teams

Two letters, one sound. Not separate letters, but you'll see them everywhere.

CH
chocolate
like ch in church

LL
llave
like y in yes

RR
perro
strong, rolled r

QU
queso
k, the u is silent

GU
guitarra
g as in go, u silent



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