

APROSAE



PRESCHOOL SPANISH

Here's a pronunciation guide to help those who are new to learning Spanish.

Please note that since Spanish pronunciation can vary greatly (just like the differences in English pronunciation between Massachusetts and Texas), the following pronunciation guide is not representative of all Spanish-speaking areas.

The rows highlighted in light blue are the 27 letters of the Spanish alphabet. The rest are letter combinations worthy of note.

| Spanish Sound* | Pronunciation |
|----------------|---|
| a | "a(h)" in "c <u>a</u> lm" |
| ai, ay | "i" in "p <u>i</u> e"; if the accent mark is over the i (ai), then the 2 vowels are pronounced separately |
| au | "ow" in "h <u>ow</u> "; if the accent mark is over the u (áu), then the 2 vowels are pronounced separately |
| b | strong "b" in "b <u>o</u> at" when at the beginning of a word or when after the letters m or n; weak "b" in "b <u>o</u> y" when b is between vowels |
| c | "k" in "k <u>i</u> te"; "s" in "s <u>i</u> gn" when before e or i ("z" or "th" in some regions) |
| ch | "ch" in "c <u>h</u> ain" |
| d | "d" in "d <u>o</u> ne"; "th" in "t <u>h</u> en" when between vowels or at the end of a word |
| e | "e(h)" in "m <u>e</u> ss", especially when at the beginning of a word ("a(y)" in "d <u>a</u> y" in some regions) |
| ei, ey | "a(y)" in "d <u>a</u> y"; if the accent mark is over the i (ei), then the 2 vowels are pronounced separately |
| f | "f" in "f <u>i</u> ne" |
| g | "g" in "g <u>a</u> te"; "h" in "h <u>o</u> w" when before e or i |
| gue | "ga(y)" in "g <u>a</u> te" |
| gui | "gee" in "g <u>e</u> ese" |
| h | silent |
| i | "ee" in "f <u>e</u> e" |
| j | "h" in "h <u>a</u> t" |
| k | "k" in "k <u>i</u> te" |
| l | "l" in "l <u>a</u> wn" |
| ll | "y" in "y <u>a</u> rn" ("lli" in "mill <u>i</u> on" in some regions) |
| m | "m" in "m <u>i</u> lk" |
| n | "n" in "n <u>i</u> ght" |
| ñ | "ny" in "c <u>a</u> nyon" |
| o | "o(h)" in "s <u>o</u> " |
| oi, oy | "oy" in "t <u>o</u> y"; if the accent mark is over the i (oi), then the 2 vowels are pronounced separately |
| p | "p" in "p <u>a</u> rty" |
| q | "k" in "k <u>i</u> te"; always followed by a u |
| que | "ka(y)" in "k <u>a</u> ngaroo" |
| qui | "kee" in "k <u>e</u> en" |
| r | weakly trilled (see rr below) or "tt" in "l <u>e</u> tter"; strongly trilled when the first letter of a word |
| rr | strong trilled sound (vibrating the tongue forward, against the top of the mouth) |
| s | "s" in "s <u>o</u> up" |
| t | "t" in "t <u>a</u> ke" |
| u | "oo" in "t <u>o</u> o" |
| ua | "wa" in "w <u>a</u> lk"; if the accent mark is over the u (úa), then the 2 vowels are pronounced separately |
| ue | "oo" in "t <u>o</u> o" combined with "a(y)" in "d <u>a</u> y" |
| uo | "wo" in "w <u>o</u> eful"; if the accent mark is over the u (úo), then the 2 vowels are pronounced separately |
| v | weak "b" in "b <u>o</u> at" |
| w | "w" in "w <u>a</u> lk"; pronounced like Spanish b and v when between vowels |
| x | "ex" in "e <u>x</u> tra"; in some proper nouns, pronounced "h" (Mé <u>x</u> ico) or "ch" |
| y | "y" in "y <u>a</u> rn"; "ee" in "f <u>e</u> e" when alone |
| z | "s" in "s <u>o</u> up" ("th" in "t <u>h</u> en" in some regions) |

* "Sound" refers to letters of the Spanish alphabet, diphthongs (two vowels (a, e, i, o, u, and y) combined together to form one syllable (e.g., ai, ey, ua)), and other combinations.