



# Pronunciation Guide

## 1. The 5 Basic Vowels (“Vocales”)

**A** = “ah” (as in “ball”)      **E** = “ay” or “eh” (as in “may”)      **I** = “ee” (as in “cheese”)      **O** = “oh” (as in “Okay”)      **U** = “ew” (as in “New”)

*To hear these vowels pronounced and used in words, go to this Quizlet list:*  
<https://quizlet.com/517907929/lss-pronunciation-the-5-vowels-flash-cards/>

## 2. The Consonants (“Consonantes”)

**D, F, K, L, M, N, P, S, T,** and **W** are the same as in English

**B** and **V** are both the same as an English **B**

**C** and **G** are pronounced differently depending on the **vowel that follows**:

**Ca** = “Kah”      **Ce** = “Say”      **Ci** = “See”      **Co** = “Koh”      **Cu** = “Kew”

**Ga** = “Gah”      **Ge** = “Hay”      **Gi** = “Hee”      **Go** = “Goh”      **Gu** = “Gew”

**H** is always silent!

**J** is pronounced like an English **H** (as in “Hotel”)

**LL** is pronounced like an English **Y** (as in “Yellow”) or in some regions like a **G** (as in “Wage”)

**Ñ** is called “enyay” and is pronounced “neyah” (as in “Canyon”)

**Q** is pronounced like an English **K** (as in “kite”)

**R** is pronounced **three different ways**:

1. In the middle of a word: With a slight roll of the tongue.
2. At the beginning of a word: With a harder roll of the tongue.
3. As a double-R (“RR”): With a very hard roll of the tongue.

Both **S** and **Z** are pronounced like an English **S** as in “Sorry”

**X** is usually pronounced “ks” as in “Talks” but it also is pronounced like an English **H** in certain proper names (e.g. “Mexico,” “Xavier”)

**Y** as a **consonant** either be pronounced like an English **Y** as in “Yes” or like an English **J** as in “Joy,” depending on the region.

**Y** as a **vowel** is pronounced like “eye”

**Y** by itself is pronounced “ee”

*To hear these vowels pronounced and used in words, go to this Quizlet list:*  
<https://quizlet.com/517917491/lss-pronunciation-consonants-flash-cards/>

### 3. Stress on Syllables

The **next-to-the last syllable** is stressed in:

- all words that end in a vowel:
  - casa (KAH-sah)
  - casita (Kah-SEE-tah)
  - pollo (POH-yoh)
  - elefante (el-ay-FAHN-tay)
- all words that end in “n” or “s”:
  - examen (eks-AH-mayn)
  - equis (AY-kees)

The **last syllable** is stressed in all other words...

- cantar (kahn-TAHR)
- feliz (feh-LEES)
- estoy (ays-TOY)

...except words with an **accent mark** above the vowel, which is always stressed:

- balcón (bahl-KOHN)
- fotógrafo (foh-TOH-grah-foh)
- pájaro (PAH-hah-roh)
- colibrí (Coh-lee-BREE)

*To practice these words, go to this Quizlet list: <https://quizlet.com/518002101/lss-pronunciation-accents-flash-cards/>*

### 4. Diphthongs

Combinations of vowels use the basic vowel sounds, but the two vowels are **combined into a single sound**:

Diphthong:	Examples:
ai / ay	baile, hay
oi / oy	oir, hoy
ui / uy	ruido, muy
ei	seis, veinte
eu	Europa, deuda
ia	seria, medio
ie	bien, cielo
io	idioma, novia
iu	viuda, ciudad
ua	agua, cuando
ue	bueno, puerta
uo	antiguo, monstruo

*To practice these diphthongs, go to this Quizlet list: <https://quizlet.com/518002546/lss-pronunciation-diphthongs-flash-cards/>*

## 5. Cognates

Words that are spelled the same in Spanish and English can be very helpful to learn and practice pronunciation. Here's a suggested list:

Accidental

Actor

Animal

Capital

Casual

Color

Cultural

Doctor

Exterior

General

Hotel

Inventor

Legal

Liberal

Manual

Normal

Profesional

Social

Total

Universal

*To practice these cognates, go to this Quizlet list: <https://quizlet.com/518004769/lss-pronunciation-cognates-flash-cards/>*