

## Spanish Alphabet

### Letter      Sound in Spanish

a	<i>father</i>
b	<b>b</b> oy, sometimes is softer sound like the letter v
c	<b>c</b> ow, in Spain it has <i>th</i> sound before e or i
ch	<b>ch</b> oose
d	<b>d</b> og
e	<i>purée</i>
f	<i>frog</i>
g	<b>g</b> o, but can also sound like an h at the beginning of a word or after n for example, <i>gigante</i> is pronounced hee- <b>gahn</b> -teh
h	silent
i	ee sound in <i>street</i>
j	thick h sound in <i>hello</i>
k	<b>kit</b>
l	<i>long</i>
ll	y sound in <i>year</i>
m	<i>monkey</i>
n	<i>nose</i>
ñ	longer sound held with tongue, like in <i>onion</i>
o	<i>open</i>
p	<i>pan</i>
q	k sound in <b>kit</b> , always followed by silent u
r	combine <i>D</i> and <i>L</i> sounds
rr	r sound is trilled with tip of the tongue
s	<i>sing</i>
t	<i>time</i>
u	ou sound in <b>you</b> or <b>too</b>
v	<i>pronounced like B</i> , sometimes slightly harder
w	<i>wallet</i> , rarely used
x	<i>exit</i> , or sh sound in <b>show</b>
y	<i>yellow</i> , rarely used- <b>ll</b> is more common

z pronounced like S, in Spain it sounds like the th in **thick**

Note: There are NO silent vowels. This makes it fairly simple, just make sure to pronounce the double vowel sounds like *fuego*, *invierno*, or *río*. If a letter has an accent mark over it, than it receives the stress.

## Spanish Weather and Climate

Spain has an extremely diverse climate because of it's location. You may wonder, "What is the climate in Spain *most* of the time?" Well temperatures in Spain range from 50 F during winter to 90 F during summer. Spain has roughly three climate areas:

- Continental: the inland areas, including Madrid.
- Mediterranean: the southern and eastern coasts.
- Oceanic: the northern coast.

Central and South America cover a much larger area, obviously, and have a more diverse range of climates. Most of Central America is tropical as is the northern quarter of South America, but as you go further south you'll find seasonal changes as diverse as North America.

## Spanish Holidays, Events, and Festivities

Merry Christmas — Feliz Navidad

Happy (Prosperous) New Year — Prospero Año Nuevo

Happy Thanksgiving — Feliz Día de Gracias

Happy Easter — Feliz Día de Pascua

Happy Halloween — Feliz Día de los Muertos

Happy Valentine's Day — Feliz Día del amor y la amistad

Happy Birthday — Feliz Cùmpleaños

Happy Saint's Day — Feliz Día de los Santos

The nation celebrates several different holidays, and a few locally chosen holidays. These are influenced by the religious and regional devotions. To name a few, there are: Hogueras (Bonfires of Saint John), Carnival, El Rocío, Fallas, and Semana Santa. Some less known are the Spanish holidays in June: Artigas Day, Feast of San Juan Bautista, and San Pedro y San Pablo.

The *siesta*, or mid-afternoon nap, is not as popular as it once was. Many modern-day customs have taken over. Still, signs of the old tradition still remain in some places.

## Spanish Art, Music, and Sports

Some famous Spanish artists (artists who spoke Spanish) include Pablo Picasso, Frida Kahlo, and Diego Rivera.

The main sport for all Spanish speaking countries is dominated by soccer (*fútbol*). Historically, there is also bullfighting and bicycling.

When you think of Spain you might think of the flamenco. Flamenco dancing has been around since the mid 1700's, and continues to appear here and there. However, you will find a variety of music is played today as well as a variety of dance, specifically, Contradanza, Jota, Pasodoble, and Sardana.

## Politics of Spain

The monarchy of Spain, currently King Juan Carlos I and Queen Sofia, propose the Council of Ministers and its prime minister as the executive branch. The legislative branch is elected by vote and is made up of the Congress of Deputies and the Senate.

There are 17 autonomous communities and 50 provinces of Spain. Each territory takes care of its own affairs: health, education, finances, and security.

## Religion in Spain

Most of Spain is Roman Catholic. There are several other religions that are observed, but they are the minority. Both Jews and Muslims have been ordered to convert to Christianity or be expelled from the country during Spains history.

So what religion do the Spanish bring to Latin America? Most of Latin America is also Catholic, by nature of originating from Spain. Now, there is a more diverse range of religions found in Latin America than there is in Spain.

## Spanish Food and Spanish Clothing

Spain is heavily influenced by the variety of seafood available. The rich variety of Spanish food comes from the variety of cultures that have lived in Spain, including the Moors and the Jews. You will find foods like Chorizo, Cocido, Fideua, Gazpacho, Jamón, Paella, Sangria, and tortilla de patatas, in Spain.

Spanish native dress is similar to most of Europe, with some variety by region. However, Spanish clothing does have some stand-out features.

The dress and food found in Central and South America is influenced by the Native Indians. These natives (*naturales*) also make some of the most beautiful handmade clothing and accessories. Mexican foods, such as tacos, quesadillas, burritos, tamales, and enchiladas are internationally known.

## Localization

There are a variety of idioms that vary from country to country. There just isn't enough space or time to gather them all here for you.

If you ever have the privilege to visit a country where Spanish is spoken you will, no doubt, hear phrases that you're not familiar with. Generally speaking, most Spanish speaking people are very willing to explain their phraseology to you. Most are impressed (or amused enough) that you want to learn their language- so, don't be afraid to ask them.

Also, as you travel, or meet new Spanish speaking people, you will notice a variety of accents. This is to be expected, considering the fact that there are more countries and subdialects than there are states in the U.S.

Hopefully you have been able to learn a little bit about the Latin American and **Spanish culture**. If you are simply looking to [learn Spanish](#), you will soon learn how important culture is when you [learn a language](#). There are plenty of free resources available here to help you to learn Spanish. If you want to talk about love or you are looking for Spanish greetings, you must visit the [Spanish](#)

[phrases](#) page. There are also many [Spanish words](#) in many different categories from which you can learn. In addition, you can learn over 350 [Spanish verbs](#) and how to conjugate them with free audio flash cards and step-by-step instructions.