

Spanish Accent Marks and Stress Rules

41 words - 2026-07-08

Word	Type	Example	Translation	Explanation
Á	accent mark	Mi mamá vive aquí.	My mom lives here.	Shows stress on a different syllable than the usual rule.
É	accent mark	Yo bebí café por la mañana.	I drank coffee in the morning.	Marks the stressed vowel in a word.
Í	accent mark	Sí, voy contigo.	Yes, I am going with you.	Marks stress on the vowel i.
Ó	accent mark	Él compró pan y leche.	He bought bread and milk.	Marks stress on the vowel o.
Ú	accent mark	La música está muy alta.	The music is very loud.	Marks stress on the vowel u.
Ñ	letter	El niño juega en el parque.	The boy plays in the park.	A separate letter in Spanish, not just an n with a mark.
Interrogative accent	accent mark	¿Qué quieres comer?	What do you want to eat?	Question words keep an accent in questions and indirect questions.
Exclamative accent	accent mark	¡Qué bonito es este lugar!	How beautiful this place is!	Question words also keep an accent in exclamations.
Stress on the last syllable	stress rule	El café es una palabra común.	Coffee is a common word.	Words ending in n, s, or a vowel usually stress the last syllable if they have an accent mark there.
Stress on the next-to-last syllable	stress rule	La mesa está limpia.	The table is clean.	Many words ending in a vowel, n, or s are stressed here without an accent mark.
Stress on the third-from-last syllable	stress rule	El teléfono suena mucho.	The phone rings a lot.	Some longer words are stressed here and need an accent mark.
Hiatus with accent	accent rule	País es una palabra fácil.	Country is an easy word.	An accent can separate two vowels that would normally form one sound.
á	Accent mark	Mi mamá vive aquí.	My mom lives here.	Shows the stressed syllable in a word.
é	Accent mark	Tomé café por la mañana.	I drank coffee in the morning.	Shows the stressed syllable in a word.
í	Accent mark	Sí, voy al cine.	Yes, I am going to the movies.	Shows the stressed syllable in a word.

Word	Type	Example	Translation	Explanation
ó	Accent mark	Él compró pan en la tienda.	He bought bread at the store.	Shows the stressed syllable in a word.
ú	Accent mark	Tú tienes razón.	You are right.	Shows the stressed syllable in a word.
ñ	Special letter	El niño juega en el parque.	The child plays in the park.	A separate letter in Spanish, not just n with a mark.
¿	Question mark	¿Cómo estás?	How are you?	Starts a question in Spanish.
¡	Exclamation mark	¡Qué bonito!	How pretty!	Starts an excited or strong sentence.
tú	Pronoun with accent	Tú eres mi amigo.	You are my friend.	Means 'you'. The accent helps show it is the subject pronoun.
tu	Possessive adjective	Tu casa es grande.	Your house is big.	Means 'your'. It does not have an accent.
él	Pronoun with accent	Él trabaja hoy.	He works today.	Means 'he'. The accent helps show it is a pronoun.
el	Definite article	El perro duerme.	The dog is sleeping.	Means 'the'. It does not have an accent.
ll	consonant digraph	Llamo a mi madre.	I call my mother.	Two letters that make one sound in many Spanish words.
rr	consonant digraph	El perro es común.	Dog is a common word.	A strong rolled sound in the middle of a word.
ch	consonant digraph	El chico come pan.	The boy eats bread.	Two letters that make one sound.
qu	spelling pattern	Quiero café.	I want coffee.	Used before e or i to keep the k sound.
gu	spelling pattern	Tengo un amigo guapo.	I have a handsome friend.	Used before e or i to keep the g sound.
c	letter sound	Como arroz.	I eat rice.	Can sound like s or like k, depending on the vowel.
g	letter sound	Mi gato duerme.	My cat sleeps.	Can sound soft or hard, depending on the vowel.
h	silent letter	Hola, ¿cómo estás?	Hi, how are you?	It is written, but usually not pronounced.

Word	Type	Example	Translation	Explanation
b	letter sound	Mi bebé duerme.	My baby sleeps.	A common Spanish consonant with a soft sound.
v	letter sound	Vivo en una casa pequeña.	I live in a small house.	Usually sounds very similar to b in Spanish.
z	letter sound	La zapatería está cerca.	The shoe store is nearby.	In many places, it sounds like s.
x	letter sound	Mañana hay examen.	Exam tomorrow.	A less common letter with different sounds in some words.
accent on stressed vowel	accent mark	Mi mamá vive aquí.	My mom lives here.	Shows the stressed syllable in a word.
tilde on n	letter	El niño juega en el parque.	The boy plays in the park.	Makes a different sound from n.
inverted question mark	punctuation	¿Cómo estás?	How are you?	Starts a question in Spanish.
inverted exclamation mark	punctuation	¡Qué sorpresa!	What a surprise!	Starts an exclamation in Spanish.
double l sound	letter combination	Llamo a mi amigo.	I call my friend.	A common sound in Spanish words.