

Difficulties for Spanish Speakers

Difficult Sounds

h	hat	w	water
j	jet	z	zoo
r	red	a	man
s	sad	e	egg
sh	ship	i	sit
th	thin	i	mile
th	then	o	hot
v	vote	u	up

SYNTAX AND GRAMMAR DIFFERENCES

1. Usually descriptive adjectives follow the nouns they modify.
2. Adjectives and articles must agree in gender and number with the nouns they modify.
3. There is no neuter in Spanish. Since the word "car" is masculine, its corresponding pronoun is "he." Since the word "pen" is feminine, its corresponding pronoun is "she."
4. In a question or an exclamation, the punctuation both precedes AND follows the statement: ...! ...?
5. All vowels are pronounced.

POSSIBLE PRONUNCIATION DIFFICULTIES

- • There are no voiceless consonant blends beginning with "s"; consequently, an "e" sound will precede these blends.
street > estreet; school > eschool
- • There is no SH sound. It becomes CH. (was one letter;)
shoe > choe
- The letters R and RR are formed in the front of the mouth and are trilled.
- The letter H has no sound. The letter J always carries the H sound as does G before the vowels E or I.
- • The sound TH exists in Spanish, but the letters TH are never used together. D will have the TH sound wherever possible in a Spanish sentence. In Spanish, Z and C (before E or I) carry the sound TH.
- In many cases V will sound like a soft B sound.
have > hab

On Speaking Terms: A Practical Guide to Pronunciation Produced by Northeast ABL Resource Center, Euclid, Ohio 1994

Staff Development: Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools, Second Language Department December 2003