

PORTUGUESE CONSONANTS FOR SPANISH SPEAKERS

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Following is a list of consonants that may be pronounced differently in Portuguese than in Spanish.

ç (“c cedilha”) is pronounced like the *c* of *cement*:

lenço <i>handkerchief</i>	diferença <i>difference</i>
dançar <i>to dance</i>	mudança <i>change</i>
começo <i>beginning</i>	almoçar <i>to eat lunch</i>

ch is pronounced like the *sh* of *ship*:

chamar <i>to call</i>	chuva <i>rain</i>
chegar <i>to arrive</i>	chave <i>key</i>
chefe <i>boss</i>	cachorro <i>bunch</i>

d before a long *ee* sound (spelled with an *i* or unstressed final *e*) is pronounced like the *j* of *jeep* in most of Brazil:

dito <i>said</i>	disse <i>he said</i>
tarde <i>afternoon</i>	medicina <i>medicine</i>
dia <i>day</i>	decidir <i>to decide</i>

g before *e* or *i* is pronounced like the *s* of *pleasure*:

gelo <i>ice</i>	geral <i>general</i>
página <i>page</i>	gelar <i>to freeze</i>
giz <i>chalk</i>	mágica <i>magic</i>

j is also pronounced like the *s* of *pleasure*:

já <i>already</i>	viajar <i>to travel</i>
jogar <i>to play</i>	justo <i>fair</i>
juiz <i>to judge</i>	ajudar <i>to help</i>

lh — These letters, when they occur together, are pronounced somewhat like the *li* of *million*:

alho <i>garlic</i>	trabalhar <i>to work</i>
mulher <i>woman</i>	folha <i>leaf</i>
lhe <i>to him</i>	olho <i>eye</i>

m or **n** at the end of a word or syllable are not pronounced; they are merely a spelling convention to indicate that the preceding vowel is nasal.

bom <i>good</i>	comem <i>they eat</i>
tem <i>he has</i>	aprendem <i>they learn</i>
bem <i>well</i>	vivem <i>they live</i>

nh — These letters, when they occur together, are pronounced somewhat like the *ny* of *canyon*:

sen**h**or *sir*
pon**h**o *I put*
vin**h**o *wine*

ban**h**ar *to bathe*
ten**h**o *I have*
un**h**a *finger nail*

r in the middle of a word is pronounced like the *d* of *ladder*:

para *for*
frio *cold*
coro *chorus*

quero *I want*
cara *face*
interessante *interesting*

rr is pronounced somewhat like the *h* of *house* in much of Brazil and Portugal. A single **r** at the start of a word is pronounced the same way. (Some speakers roll the **rr** as in Spanish.)

carro *car*
corr**er** *to run*
err**o** *mistake*

rio *river*
rato *rat*
ramo *branch*

s between two vowels, or before a voiced consonant (b, d, g, j, l, m, n, r, v) is pronounced like the *z* of *zebra*:

casa *house*
mesa *table*
desde *since*

mesmo *same*
Lisboa *Lisbon*
meus amigos *my friends*

t before a long **ee** sound (spelled with an *i* or unstressed final *e*) is pronounced like the *ch* of *cheese* in most of Brazil:

tio *uncle*
dente *tooth*
tente *try*

sentir *to feel*
mentir *to lie*
insistir *to insist*

x has four distinct pronunciations, depending on the word. It can be pronounced like the *sh* of *she* (this pronunciation is the most common); like the *z* of *zebra*; like the *x* of *taxi*; or like the *s* of *basic*.

like *sh* of *she*:
caixa *box*
puxar *to pull*
lixo *trash*
xadrez *chess*

like *z* of *zebra*: like *x* of *taxi*:
exame *exam* táxi *taxi*
exemplo *example* fixo *I fix*

like *s* of *basic*:
trouxe *he brought*
próximo *next*

z is pronounced like **z** of **zebra**:

zero *zero*
azul *blue*
azar *bad luck*

vizinho *neighbor*
bezerro *calf*
gozar *to enjoy*