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ALL-IN-ONE
FOR
DUMMIES®

by Cecie Kraynak
with Gail Stein, Susana Wald,
Jessica M. Langemeier, Berlitz



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Dedication

To my children, Nick and Ali, who have opened my eyes anew through their explorations of Spanish language and culture and who make great travel companions. — Cecie Kraynak

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Introduction



Gaining mastery over your first language is as easy as learning to walk. One day it's all goo-goo ga-ga, and the next you're stringing together words like a born orator. Picking up a second language, particularly when you're not immersed in it, is quite a bit more challenging. You have to set aside the conventions of your own language and get up to speed on new rules, structures, and vocabulary all at the same time.

Sure, you can pick up a handful of phrases overnight and perhaps recite the alphabet and count to ten by the end of the week, but that's not going to get you through a normal dinner conversation or enable you to understand foreign soap operas. You need some serious training to reach that point. Fortunately, *Spanish All-in-One For Dummies*, along with some practice, can get you there.

About This Book

Spanish All-in-One For Dummies is a comprehensive guide to acquiring Spanish as a second (or third or fourth or fifth) language that delivers the information and instruction in easily digestible, bite-sized chunks. It's the closest thing to a Spanish language immersion program you can get off a bookshelf — addressing both spoken and written Spanish and presenting it in the context of real-life situations. Think of it as your own personal tutor, reference book, and workbook all rolled into one.

This book is not a class that you have to drag yourself to twice a week for a specified period of time. You can use *Spanish All-in-One For Dummies* however you want to, whether your goal is to pick up a few common words and phrases, write a Spanish-speaking pen pal, or travel to a Spanish-speaking country. We set no timetable, so proceed at your own pace, reading as much or as little at a time as you like. You don't have to trudge through the chapters in order, either; just read the sections that interest you.

And don't forget to practice by using the CD at the back of this book for help in pronunciation. The only way to really know and love a language is to speak it. Throughout the book, we give you lots of words, phrases, and dialogues,

complete with pronunciations. Only a sampling of them are on the CD, but we've provided a broad selection that should serve most of your basic needs.

Conventions Used in This Book

To make this book easy for you to navigate, we've set up a couple of conventions:

- ✓ Spanish terms are set in **boldface** to make them stand out.
- ✓ English pronunciations, set in *italics*, accompany the Spanish terms.
- ✓ Whenever we include the phonetic pronunciation of a Spanish word, we also use italics to denote any stress you add to that word. (See Book 1, Chapter 1 for more on pronunciation and stress.)
- ✓ As you begin to use this book, you will no doubt notice that we chose a rather conventional method to introduce the different verb conjugations — a *conjugation box*, which looks like this:

pedir (e to i) (<i>to ask for</i>)	
pido	pedimos
pides	pedís
pide	piden

This handy little tool acts like a mental billboard. It displays the Spanish verb, its English meaning, and then conjugates the verb, presenting the three singular conjugations in the left column (for I; you informal singular; and he, she, it/you formal singular) and the three plural conjugations (we, you informal plural, and they/you formal plural) in the right column. Some even include an example sentence below the conjugations at no extra charge.

- ✓ **Vocabulary chart:** Vocabulary charts provide a quick rundown of common words or expressions, typically providing the Spanish word in the left column with its English equivalent in the right column. In some cases, the charts contain additional columns to illustrate different forms, such as a present participle.

Language learning is a peculiar beast, so this book includes a few elements that other *For Dummies* books don't, such as the Talkin' the Talk dialogue. One of the best ways to learn a language is to see and hear how it's used in conversation, so we include dialogues throughout Books I and IV. The

dialogues come under the heading “Talkin’ the Talk” and show you the Spanish phrases, the pronunciation, and the English translation.

Also note that because each language has its own ways of expressing ideas, the English translations that we provide for the Spanish terms may not be exactly literal. We want you to know the gist of what’s being said, not just the words that are being said. For example, you can translate the Spanish phrase **de nada** (deh *nah-dah*) literally as *of nothing*, but the phrase really means *you’re welcome*. This book gives the *you’re welcome* translation.

Foolish Assumptions

To write this book, we had to make some assumptions about who you are and what you want from a book called *Spanish All-in-One For Dummies*. Here are the assumptions we’ve made about you:

- ✓ You know little or no Spanish — or if you took a Spanish class some years ago, you don’t recall much of what you knew.
- ✓ You’re looking for more than your average conversational Spanish lesson, but you want that, too.
- ✓ You want to have fun and pick up a little bit of Spanish at the same time.

If these statements apply to you, you’ve found the right book!

How This Book is Organized

This book is actually six books in one, each of which tackles Spanish and Spanish language acquisition in a different way. In the following sections, we provide a brief description of what you can expect to find in each book.

Book 1: Speaking in Everyday Settings

This book focuses on the spoken word and allows you to get your feet wet and wade in slowly. We begin with the bare basics, including some guidance on proper pronunciation; introduce words for numbers, colors, dates, and time; show you how to initiate conversations with greetings and small talk; and then place you in various situations where you pick up Spanish in everyday settings, including grocery stores, restaurants, department stores, and even in emergency situations.

Book II: Grasping Basic Grammar Essentials

In Book II, we get more formal as we introduce you to the various rules and regulations that govern the Spanish language. Don't worry, we start out very slowly with the building blocks — the parts of speech, including nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs — before moving on to slightly more involved topics like conjugating verbs in the simple past, present, and future tenses. In very short order, you'll be constructing your own original expressions in complete sentences! You also discover how to ask questions, spice up your expressions with adjectives and adverbs, and build your own prepositional phrases.

Book III: Mastering More Advanced Grammar Essentials

Consider this book a more advanced course in Spanish grammar than Book 2. Here, you discover how to issue commands with the imperative mood, take action on object pronouns, talk about yourself with the reflexive, wish and hope with the subjunctive, and double the number of verb tenses with the helping verb **haber**.

Book IV: Spanish at Work

Even if you're fairly fluent in everyday Spanish, you may have trouble communicating with customers or colleagues at work because the words and phrases you need so specific to your line of work. To assist you with your Spanish on the job, we've included several chapters that deal with various professions and workplace scenarios:

- ✓ Healthcare workers
- ✓ Law enforcement professionals
- ✓ Educators and administrators
- ✓ Banking and financing professionals
- ✓ Office workers
- ✓ Hotel and restaurant managers
- ✓ Builders, mechanics, and factory workers
- ✓ Real estate professionals
- ✓ Gardeners and landscapers

Book V: Appendixes

At the very back of this book, just before the index, we provide four appendixes for quick reference:

- ✓ **Appendix A:** Verb conjugations for regular and irregular verbs
- ✓ **Appendix B:** Spanish-to-English dictionary
- ✓ **Appendix C:** English-to-Spanish dictionary
- ✓ **Appendix D:** About the CD

Icons Used in This Book

You may be looking for particular information while reading this book. To make certain types of information easier for you to find, we've placed the following icons in the left-hand margins throughout the book:



This icon highlights tips that can make learning Spanish easier.



Languages are full of quirks that may trip you up if you're not prepared for them. This icon points to discussions of these weird grammar rules.



If you're looking for information and advice about culture and travel, look for these icons. They draw your attention to interesting tidbits about the countries in which Spanish is spoken.



The audio CD that comes with this book gives you the opportunity to listen to real Spanish speakers so that you can get a better understanding of what Spanish sounds like. This icon marks the Talkin' the Talk dialogues you can find on the CD.



Remember icons call your attention to important information about the language — something you shouldn't neglect or something that's out of the ordinary. Don't ignore these paragraphs.

Where to Go from Here

Like all *For Dummies* books, this one is designed for a skip-and-dip approach. You can skip to any chapter or section that catches your eye and find a mini-lesson on the topic du jour. If you've never had any instruction in Spanish or much exposure to it, we encourage you to begin with the first four chapters of Book I. These chapters form the foundation on which you can start building your knowledge.

Books I and IV present a more conversational, situational approach, for when you need to know a few key words and phrases and you don't have time for the rules or you need some specialized vocabulary you can't find anywhere else.

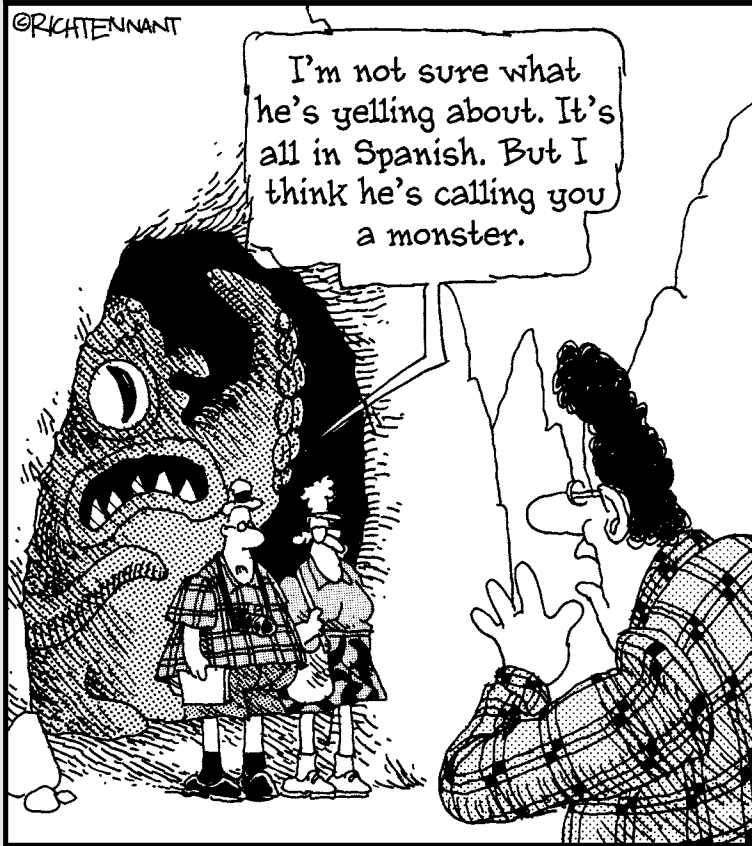
When you do have time for the rules, spend some time cozying up to Books II and III, where true Spanish mastery is laid and hatched. This stuff is the meat-and-potatoes Spanish . . . or should we say rice and beans?

Book I

Speaking in Everyday Settings

The 5th Wave

By Rich Tennant



In this book . . .

When you're just getting started with a new language, sampling a few appetizers can whet your appetite for more. In this book, we warm you up with some basics, including rules on pronunciation and stress (without stressing you out too much). We cover numbers, colors, dates, and time; engage you in some Spanish small talk; and then place you in common situations in which you pick up the language quite naturally.

Here are the contents of Book I at a glance:

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Chapter 1

Warming Up with the Bare Basics

In This Chapter

- ✓ Recognizing the little Spanish you know
- ✓ Pronouncing the Spanish alphabet
- ✓ Adding stress to the correct syllables
- ✓ Utilizing Spanish punctuation and pause-fillers

The learning curve for Spanish is steep enough to give most people vertigo and convince some people to throw in the towel before their first conversation. The key to success in acquiring any language, even your first language, is to take baby steps. Start slowly and try to gain some momentum.

This chapter starts you out very gradually, introducing you to the Spanish language by pointing out some words and phrases you're probably already familiar with, leading you through the process of reciting your Spanish ABCs and then encouraging you to stretch your abilities by reaching for some words and phrases that may not be so familiar.

Starting with What You Already Know

The English language is ever evolving. It evolved from other older languages and continues to be influenced by other languages old and new. As a result, English has many words that are identical or very similar to foreign words. These words can cause both delight and embarrassment. The delight comes in the words that look and sound alike and have similar meanings. The embarrassment comes from words that have the same roots but mean completely different things.

Among the delightful similarities are words like **soprano** (soh-prah-noh) (*soprano*), **pronto** (prohn-toh) (*right away; soon*), and thousands of others that differ by just one or two letters such as **conclusión** (kohn-kloo-see-ohn)

(*conclusion*), **composición** (kohm-poh-see-see-ohn) (*composition*), **invención** (een-bvehn-see-ohn) (*invention*), and **presidente** (preh-see-dehn-teh) (*president*).

Don't let the false cognates fool ya

False cognates are words in different languages that look very similar and even have the same root yet mean completely different things. One that comes to mind is the word *actual*. In English, *actual* means *real*; *in reality*; or *the very one*. Not so in Spanish. **Actual** (ahk-tooahl) in Spanish means *present*; *current*; *belonging to this moment, this day, or this year*. When you say *the actual painting* in English, you're referring to the real one — the very one people are looking at or want to see. But, when you say **la pintura actual** (lah peen-too-rah ahk-tooahl) in Spanish, you're referring to the painting that belongs to the current time, the one that follows present day trends — a modern painting.

Another example is the adjective *embarrassed*. In English, *embarrassed* means *ashamed*. In Spanish, **embarazada** (ehm-bvah-rah-sah-dah) comes from the same root as the English word, but it's almost exclusively used to mean *pregnant*. So you can say in English that you're a little *embarrassed*, but in Spanish you can't be just a little **embarazada**. Either you're pregnant or you're not.

Noting common similarities

Word trouble ends at the point where a word originating in English is absorbed into Spanish or vice versa. The proximity of the United States to Mexico produces a change in the Spanish spoken there. An example is the word *car*. In Mexico, people say **carro** (kah-rroh). In South America, on the other hand, people say **auto** (ahoo-toh). In Spain, people say **coche** (koh-cheh). Here are just a few examples of Spanish words that you already know because English uses them, too:

- ✓ You've been to a **rodeo** (roh-deh-oh) or a **fiesta** (fee-ehs-tah).
- ✓ You've probably taken a **siesta** (see-ehs-tah) or two.
- ✓ You probably know at least one **señorita** (seh-nyoh-ree-tah), and you surely have an **amigo** (ah-mee-goh). Maybe you'll see him **mañana** (mah-nyah-nah).
- ✓ You already know the names of places like **Los Angeles** (lohs ahn-Heh-lehs) (*the angels*), **San Francisco** (sahn frahn-sees-koh) (*St. Francis*), **La Jolla** (la Hoh-yah) (*the jewel*), and **Florida** (floh-ree-dah) (*the blooming one*).

- ✓ You've had a **tortilla** (tohr-tee-yah), **taco** (tah-koh), or **burrito** (bvoo-ree-toh).
- ✓ You fancy the **tango** (tahn-goh), **bolero** (bvo-leh-roh), or **rumba** (room-bvah).

Reciting Your ABC's

Correct pronunciation is key to avoiding misunderstandings. The following sections present some basic guidelines for proper pronunciation.



Next to the Spanish words throughout this book, the pronunciation is in parentheses (*pronunciation brackets*). Within the pronunciation brackets, we separate all the words that have more than one syllable with a hyphen, like this: (*kah-sah*). An italicized syllable within the pronunciation brackets tells you to stress that syllable. We say much more about stress later in this chapter.

In the following section we comment on some letters of the alphabet from the Spanish point of view. The aim is to help you to understand Spanish pronunciations. Here is the basic Spanish alphabet and its pronunciation:

a (ah)	b (bveh)	c (seh)	d (deh)
e (eh)	f (eh-feh)	g (Heh)	h (ah-cheh)
i (ee)	j (Hoh-tah)	k (kah)	l (eh-leh)
m (eh-meh)	n (eh-neh)	ñ (eh-nyeh)	o (oh)
p (peh)	q (koo)	r (eh-reh)	s (eh-seh)
t (teh)	u (oo)	v (bveh)	w (<i>doh-bleh</i> bveh) (oo-bveh <i>doh-bvleh</i>) (Spain)
x (eh-kees)	y (ee-gree-eh-gah)	z (seh-tah)	

Spanish also includes some double letters in its alphabet: **ch** (cheh), **ll** (eh-yeh or ye), and **rr** (a trilled *r*).

We don't go through every letter of the alphabet in the sections that follow, only those that you use differently in Spanish than in English. The differences can lie in pronunciation or the way they look, or in the fact that you seldom see the letters/don't pronounce them at all.

Consonants

Consonants tend to sound the same in English and Spanish. Only a few consonants in Spanish differ from their English counterparts. The following sections look more closely at the behavior and pronunciation of these consonants.



Inside the Spanish-speaking world, consonants may be pronounced differently than in English. For example, in Spain the consonant **z** is pronounced like the *th* in the English word *thesis*. (Latin Americans don't use this sound; in all other Spanish-speaking countries, **z** and **s** sound the same.)



In the Spanish speaker's mind, a consonant is any sound that needs a vowel next to it when you pronounce it. For example, saying the letter **t** by itself may be difficult for a Spanish speaker. To the Spanish ear, pronouncing **t** sounds like "*te*" (teh). Likewise, the Spanish speaker says **ese** (eh-seh) when pronouncing the letter **s**.

The letter K

In Spanish, the letter **k** is used only in words that have their origin in foreign languages. More often than not, this letter is seen in **kilo** (kee-loh), meaning "thousand" in Greek. An example is **kilómetro** (kee-loh-meh-troh) (*kilometer*) — a thousand-meter measure for distance.

The letter H

In Spanish, the letter **h** is always mute unless it follows **c** as in **ch** (ch eh), discussed earlier in this chapter. Following are some examples of the Spanish **h**:

- ✓ **hada** (ah-dah) (*fairy*)
- ✓ **hola** (oh-lah) (*hello*)
- ✓ **huevo** (ooeh-bvoh) (*egg*)

The letter J

The consonant **j** sounds like a guttural **h**. Normally, you say **h** quite softly, as though you were just breathing out. Now, say your **h** but gently raise the back of your tongue as if you were saying **k**. Push the air out real hard, and you get the sound. Try it! There — it sounds like you're gargling, doesn't it?

To signal that you need to make this sound, we use a capital letter **H** within the pronunciation brackets. Now try the sound out on these words:

- ✓ **Cajamarca** (kah-Hah-mahr-kah) (the name of a city in Peru)
- ✓ **cajeta** (kah-Heh-tah) (a delicious, thick sauce made of milk and sugar)
- ✓ **cajón** (kah-Hohn) (*big box*)

- ✓ **jadeo** (Hah-deh-oh) (*panting*)
- ✓ **Jijón** (Hee-Hohn) (the name of a city in Spain)
- ✓ **jota** (Hoh-tah) (the Spanish name for the letter **j**; also the name of a folk dance in Spain)
- ✓ **tijera** (tee-Heh-rah) (*scissors*)

The letter C

The letter **c**, in front of the vowels **a**, **o**, and **u**, sounds like the English **k**. We use the letter **k** in the pronunciation brackets to signal this sound. Following are some examples:

- ✓ **acabar** (ah-kah-bvahr) (*to finish*)
- ✓ **café** (kah-feh) (*coffee*)
- ✓ **casa** (kah-sah) (*house*)
- ✓ **ocaso** (oh-kah-soh) (*sunset*)

When the letter **c** is in front of the vowels **e** and **i**, it sounds like the English **s**. In the pronunciation brackets, we signal this sound as **s**. Following are some examples:

- ✓ **acero** (ah-seh-roh) (*steel*)
- ✓ **cero** (seh-roh) (*zero*)
- ✓ **cine** (see-neh) (*cinema*)

In much of Spain — primarily the northern and central parts — the letter **c** is pronounced like the **th** in thanks when placed before the vowels **e** and **i**.

The letters S and Z

In Latin American Spanish, the letters **s** and **z** always sound like the English letter **s**. We use the letter **s** in the pronunciation brackets to signal this sound. Following are some examples:

- ✓ **asiento** (ah-seeehn-toh) (*seat*)
- ✓ **sol** (sohl) (*sun*)
- ✓ **zarzuela** (sahr-sooeh-lah) (Spanish-style operetta)

In Spain, **z** also has the sound of the **th** in thanks, rather than the **s** sound prevalent in Latin America.



The letters B and V

The letters **b** and **v** are pronounced the same, the sound being somewhere in-between the two letters. This in-between is a fuzzy, bland sound — closer to **v** than to **b**. If you position your lips and teeth to make a **v** sound, and then try to make a **b** sound, you have it. To remind you to make this sound, we use **bv** in our pronunciation brackets, for both **b** and **v**. Here are some examples:

- ✓ **cabeza** (kah-bveh-sah) (*head*)
- ✓ **vida** (bvee-dah) (*life*)
- ✓ **violín** (bveeoh-leen) (*violin*)

The letter Q

Spanish doesn't use the letter **k** very much; when the language wants a **k** sound in front of the vowels **e** and **i**, it unfolds the letter combination **qu**. So when you see the word **queso** (keh-soh) (*cheese*), you immediately know that you say the **k** sound. Here are some examples of the Spanish letter combination **qu**, which we indicate by the letter **k** in pronunciation brackets. Check out these examples:

- ✓ **Coquimbo** (koh-keem-bvoh) (the name of a city in Chile)
- ✓ **paquete** (pah-keh-teh) (*package*)
- ✓ **pequeño** (peh-keh-nyoh) (*small*)
- ✓ **tequila** (teh-kee-lah) (Mexican liquor, spirits)

The letter G

In Spanish the letter **g** has a double personality, like the letter **c**. When you combine the letter **g** with a consonant or when you see it in front of the vowels **a**, **o**, and **u**, it sounds like the **g** in goose. Here are some examples:

- ✓ **begonia** (bveh-goh-neeah) (*begonia*)
- ✓ **gato** (gah-toh) (*cat*)
- ✓ **gracias** (grah-seeahs) (*thank you*)

The **g** changes personality in front of the vowels **e** and **i**. It sounds like the Spanish **j**, which we signal with the capital **H** in our pronunciation brackets.

- ✓ **agenda** (ah-Hehn-dah) (*agenda; date book*)
- ✓ **gerente** (Heh-rehn-teh) (*manager*)

To hear the sound **g** (as in *goat*) in front of the vowels **e** and **i**, you must insert a **u**, making **gue** and **gui**. To remind you to make the goat sound (**g**, not “mmehehe”) we use **gh** in our pronunciation brackets. Some examples:

- ✓ **guía** (*ghee-ah*) (*guide*)
- ✓ **guiño** (*ghee-nyoh*) (*wink*)
- ✓ **guerra** (*gheh-rrah*) (*war*)

Double consonants

Spanish has two double consonants: **ll** and **rr**. They’re considered singular letters, and each has a singular sound. Because these consonants are considered singular, they stick together when you separate syllables. For example, the word **calle** (*kah-yeh*) (*street*) appears as **ca-ll**e. And **torre** (*toh-rreh*), (*tower*) separates into **to-rr**e.

The letter LL

The **ll** consonant sounds like the **y** in the English word *yes*, except in Argentina and Uruguay.



Argentineans and Uruguayans pronounce this consonant as the sound that happens when you have your lips pursed to say **s** and then make the **z** sound through them. Try it. Fun, isn’t it? But really, the sound isn’t that difficult to make, because you can find the English equivalent in words like *measure* and *pleasure*. The way you say those *s* sounds is exactly how **ll** is pronounced in Argentina and Uruguay.

Throughout this book, we use the sound like the English **y** in the word *yes*, which is how **ll** is pronounced in 18 of the 20 Spanish-speaking countries. In the pronunciation brackets, we use **y** to signal this sound.

Now try the **ll** sound, using the **y** sound, in the following examples:

- ✓ **brillo** (*bvree-yoh*) (*shine*)
- ✓ **llama** (*yah-mah*) (*flame*; also the name of an animal in Peru)
- ✓ **lluvia** (*yoo-bveeah*) (*rain*)

The letter RR

The **rr** sounds like a strongly rolled **r**. In fact, every **r** is strongly rolled in Spanish, but the double one is the real winner. To roll an **r**, curl your tongue against the roof of your mouth as if you were pronouncing the double *d* in the word *ladder* and direct your outward airflow over the top of your tongue. This should cause the tongue to vibrate against the roof of your mouth, making the trill sound.



An easy way to make this sound is to say the letter **r** as though you were pretending to sound like an outboard motor. There. You have it!

Spanish speakers take special pleasure in rolling their **rrs**. One fun fact about **rr** is that no words begin with it. Isn't that a relief! In pronunciation brackets, we simply signal this sound as **rr**.

Play with these words:

- ✓ **carrera** (kah-rreh-rah) (*race; profession*)
- ✓ **correo** (koh-rreh-oh) (*mail, post*)
- ✓ **tierra** (teeeh-rrah) (*land*)

The letter **y**

This letter represents sounds that are very similar to those of **ll**. The people of both Argentina and Uruguay pronounce this sound differently from the rest of Latin America. We advise that you pronounce it as the English **y** in *yes* and *you*. In the pronunciation brackets, we signal this sound as **y**. Following are some examples:

- ✓ **playa** (plah-yah) (*beach*)
- ✓ **yema** (yeh-mah) (*yolk; also fingertip*)
- ✓ **yodo** (yoh-doh) (*iodine*)



In Spanish, the letter **y** is never a vowel, always a consonant.

The letter **Ñ**

When you see a wiggly line on top of the letter **n** that looks like **ñ**, use the **ny** sound that you use for the English word *canyon*. The wiggly line is called a *tilde* (teel-deh). In pronunciation brackets, we show this sound as **ny**. Here are some examples:

- ✓ **cuñado** (koo-nyah-doh) (*brother-in-law*)
- ✓ **mañana** (mah-nyah-nah) (*tomorrow*)
- ✓ **niña** (nee-nyah) (*girl*)

Vowels

If you want your Spanish to sound like a native's, you have to concentrate on your vowels. The biggest difference between English and Spanish is almost certainly in the way the vowels are written and pronounced. By now, you may be well aware that one vowel in English can have more than one sound.