

# USING THE BRAILLE SPANISH CODE



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This document is based on the braille code used **in the United Kingdom** for transcribing text in Spanish, and includes advice about various layout conventions.

## THE BRAILLE SIGNS

For ordinary letters of the alphabet, the braille signs are the same as for Standard English Braille (SEB).

For accented letters, the following special accent signs should be used:

⠠	á	⠠	ë
⠡	é	⠡	ü
⠢	í	⠢	ñ
⠣	ó		
⠤	ú		

There are only two contractions:

⠠⠠	æ diphthong
⠠⠠	ll

Composition signs, e.g. letter sign, numeral sign, etc., are the same as in SEB, with the following exceptions:

⠠	capital sign
⠡	italic sign
⠠⠡	double italic sign

Punctuation signs are the same as in SEB, with the following exceptions:

⠠	abbreviation point (as well as apostrophe)
⠡	question mark
⠠⠠	opening guión
⠠⠠	closing guión









## Unit abbreviations.

Unit abbreviations should generally be brailled as in SEB. If you're not sure what to do, following the print is not a bad idea! **Remember:** use the dot 3 abbreviation point rather than the full stop; upper case letters take the Spanish capital sign; lower case letters should be spaced from the preceding number to avoid confusion; where print uses a special symbol, the equivalent SEB braille sign should be used.

### *Money.*

In Spanish print, the word "pesetas" (or one of its abbreviations, e.g. "pts.", "ptas", etc.) is generally written after the number, and transcription into braille is straightforward.

5000 pesetas	
£5 = 1000 pts.	

### *Time.*

son casi las 9	
a las 7.30	

### *Measurements.*

NB: Measurement abbreviations are usually spaced from their preceding number, even if close up in the print. Exceptions (e.g. the degree sign) are the same as in SEB.

2 m (or 2m)	
55 g (or 55g)	
89 kg	
60 km/h	
21°C	
60 W (or 60W)	
8,25 %	

(Notice in this last example the Spanish use of the comma rather than a stop to represent the decimal point. In braille we use dot 2, the same as in SEB.)

## WORD DIVISION

The following information on word division may be useful.

- (a) The following combinations of written consonants are not divided: *ch, ll, rr*, and combinations of stops and liquids, i.e. *br, bl, cr, cl, fr, fl, gr, gl, pr, pl, dr, tr*. (But beware of compound nouns, e.g. *interracial* can be split *inter-racial* because *inter-* is clearly a prefix and the *rr* is therefore not one consonant.)
- (b) Bearing in mind that the combinations listed under (a) count as one consonant, a single consonant is always grouped with the following vowel:  
*ha-cha, ca-lle, pe-rro, ca-bra, co-fre, o-tro*, etc.  
and no syllable begins with more than one consonant:  
*ex-cla-mar, hem-bra, con-lle-var, em-ble-ma, cons-truc-ción*, etc.
- (c) Any two adjacent strong vowels (*a, e, o*) may be split:  
*A-te-ne-o, co-ar-ta-da, le-a, a-é-re-o*, etc.  
but in practice it is considered inelegant to begin a line with a single vowel, so *Ate-neo, a-é-reo* are preferred.
- (d) Combinations of weak vowels (*i, u*) with another weak vowel or with a strong vowel (*a, e, o*) may only be split if an accent is written on a weak vowel. Thus:  
*viu-do, fiel-tro, ha-cia, bue-no, re-cien-te, can-táis*, etc.  
but:  
*pa-ís, re-ís, pí-o, ha-cí-amos*, etc.
- (e) Some words, whilst complying with the above rules, may be split more than one way, in which case it's a matter of preference:  
*de-sa-gra-da-ble* or *des-a-gra-da-ble*  
*vos-o-tros* or *vo-so-tros*, etc.

## SPANISH/ENGLISH BILINGUAL TEXT

### English Context.

(This would apply to such works as: books teaching Spanish as a foreign language; grammar books; critiques including excerpts from Spanish texts, etc.)

**1. Spanish code** (including Spanish italics where necessary) should be used for the following:

- (a) Spanish words in quotes or italics.
- (b) Spanish words which form a centred heading.
- (c) Spanish passages which are inset.
- (d) Spanish words which form a source at the end of a sentence or passage in Spanish.
- (e) Spanish words which are separated from an English interpretation by a colon or other suitable punctuation, as in Notes or Vocabulary.

*Examples:*

*Señorita* is the diminutive form of *Señora*.

Señorita is the diminutive form of Señora.

By far the biggest chain of department stores in Spain is “El Corte Inglés”.

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buenos días: good morning

buenos días: good morning

**2. Spanish words** which are in the **same type** as the surrounding text and which do not fall into any of the above categories should be regarded as Anglicized and English contractions may be used, with care, when these would not distort the pronunciation. However, if any of these words contain accents, they should be uncontracted, preceded by a letter sign, and the special accent sign should be used.

*Example:*

Unamuno mentions three villages built round the shore of the lake: Riba de Lago, San Martín de la Castañeda, and Galande.

Unamuno mentions three villages built round the shore of the lake: Riba de Lago, San Martín de la Castañeda, and Galande.

**3. Any foreign words other than Spanish** which are in quotes or italics should be uncontracted and dot 4 should be used for any accent signs. Use SEB italics and capital signs.

*Example:*

Colonel Casado's unreliable tale of his *coup d'état* is related in *La defensa de Madrid*.

Colonel Casado's unreliable tale of his *coup d'état* is related in *La defensa de Madrid*.

**4. Foreign words other than Spanish** which are **NOT** in quotes or italics should be regarded as Anglicized and English contractions should be used, with care, when these would not distort the pronunciation. The dot 4 method should be used for any accent signs.

*Example:*

It was the Frenchman, Pierre Broué, who finally published *Historia de la guerra civil española*.

It was the Frenchman, Pierre Broué, who finally published *Historia de la guerra civil española*.

### **Spanish Context.**

(This is rare. It is unlikely we would produce bilingual text where Spanish is the base language and English is the foreign language! In case the unlikely happens though, the above rules are reversed. In brief ...)

**5. English words in quotes or italics**, etc. (see point 1 on p.8 for the other categories) should be brailled as SEB with English italics, contractions, etc.

**6. Other foreign words in quotes or italics** should be uncontracted and dot 4 should be used for any accent signs. Use Spanish italics and capital signs.

**7. ALL foreign words** (including English) which are in the **same type** as the surrounding text should be regarded as Hispanicized and Spanish code should be used. The dot 4 method should be used for any accent signs.





Examples:

All nouns in Spanish are either **masculine** or **feminine**:

<i>Masculine singular</i>	<i>Feminine singular</i>
<b>un</b> hospital	<b>una</b> clínica
<b>el</b> hombre	<b>la</b> mujer

un hospital    una clínica  
 el hombre    la mujer

¿Por qué	tocas juegas practicas coleccionas haces montas	la guitarra/el piano? al tenis/al fútbol? el judo/el baile? los sellos? la fotografía? a caballo?
Porque	es interesante / entretenido / diferente / algo nuevo.	

¿Por qué    Porque  
 tocas    juegas    practicas    coleccionas    haces    montas  
 la guitarra/el piano?    al tenis/al fútbol?    el judo/el baile?    los sellos?    la fotografía?    a caballo?  
 es interesante / entretenido / diferente / algo nuevo.

(Notice that the options are separated by semi-colons, not strokes. This helps to avoid long wordstrings, which are not easy to read.)

With your partner, practise expressing your opinion, using the table below to help you.

¿Qué piensas de ...?				
		☺	☹	☺
En mi opinión	es	espectacular	Aburrido/a	Simpático/a
Creo que		magnífico/a	horrible	gracioso/a
A mi ver		maravilloso/a	inaceptable	original
Me parece que		imprescindible	nulo/a	elocuente
Lo/le/la considero		interesante	imposible	(in)justo
Los/les/las encuentro		divertido/a	ridículo	severo/a

¿Qué piensas de ...?  
 En mi opinión es espectacular  
 Creo que es magnífico/a  
 A mi ver es maravilloso/a  
 Me parece que es imprescindible  
 Lo/le/la considero interesante  
 Los/les/las encuentro divertido/a  
 Aburrido/a  
 horrible  
 inaceptable  
 nulo/a  
 imposible  
 ridículo  
 Simpático/a  
 gracioso/a  
 original  
 elocuente  
 (in)justo  
 severo/a

(Notice the change of wording in the braille instruction to account for the difference in format from table to lists.)











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ISBN 1 85878 503 0

TC20911  
June 2007

Produced by RNIB on behalf of  
VIEW Modern Foreign Languages Curriculum Group