

### The Letter **r**

Spanish **r** has two pronunciations, called the **tap** and the **trill**. For the first, simply tap the tip of your tongue against the **alveolar ridge** (the “gum ridge” just above your upper front teeth). The sound, which expresses every “non-initial” occurrence of Spanish **r**, is almost identical to the *rr* of Midwestern English *better* or *letter*.

Say:	<b>pero</b>	but
	<b>caro,-a</b>	dear, expensive
	<b>hablar</b>	to talk
	<b>comer</b>	to eat
	<b>gris</b>	gray
	<b>triste</b>	sad

The **trill**, used to express initial Spanish **r**, is like the tap, except that it is multiple. Just place the tip of your tongue on the alveolar ridge as you did for the **r** sound of the previous words, and let it vibrate strongly. Always trill the **r** when it is the first letter of a word. The sound is like that often made by children “playing cars.”

Say:	<b>ratón</b>	mouse
	<b>rata</b>	rat
	<b>reloj</b>	watch, clock
	<b>rio</b>	river
	<b>resultado</b>	result
	<b>ropa</b>	clothing

### The Letter **rr**

Now that you have practiced the trilled **r** at the beginning of words, you are ready for the **rr**, which has exactly the same sound, but is written as a double **r**. Always trill it.

Say:	<b>perro</b>	dog
	<b>carro</b>	car
	<b>correcto,-a</b>	correct
	<b>horrible</b>	horrible
	<b>zorro</b>	fox
	<b>ferrocarril</b>	railroad

Contrast the **r** and the **rr** in the following words. Take care not to trill the tapped **r**, for doing so will change the meaning of the word.

Say:	<b>pero</b>	but	<b>perro</b>	dog
	<b>caro</b>	expensive	<b>carro</b>	car
	<b>cero</b>	zero	<b>cerro</b>	hill

Now, to really test your skill, say these words; each has both an **r** and an **rr**.

<b>raro,-a</b>	rare
<b>repasar</b>	to review
<b>romper</b>	to tear, to break
<b>carrera</b>	race (competition)
<b>correr</b>	to run
<b>carretera</b>	highway