

Accessing Spanish characters and diacritics on your computer

Your computer comes with all the characters and symbols that you need for working in Spanish (and many other languages). One easy method of accessing them applies only to Word; another works not only in your word processor, but also in every other Windows program.

It takes only a few minutes to functionally remap your keyboard to create a “dead key” for accents. The only effect on your normal English typing will be that to get an apostrophe (') or quotes (""), you'll need to follow that keystroke with a spacebar. You may easily toggle between the standard and modified keyboards, if you need to do so (most users don't).

The specific steps for thus changing your keyboard layout to **United States–International** varies with your version of Windows; see the instructions for Windows 10 at

<http://windows.microsoft.com/en-us/windows-vista/type-and-display-accents-and-diacritical-marks>,

or for earlier versions at <http://support.microsoft.com/kb/306560>. See also the useful tutorial

at <http://www.guidingtech.com/5279/change-keyboard-layout-spanish-characters/>.

To access Spanish characters and diacritics only in Microsoft Word, try the following pointers:

in Word for Windows

á, é, í, ó, ú	Á, É, Í, Ó, Ú	CTRL+' (APOSTROPHE), <i>the letter</i>
ñ	Ñ	CTRL+SHIFT+~ (TILDE), <i>the letter</i>
ü	Ü	CTRL+SHIFT+: (COLON), <i>the letter</i>
¿		ALT+CTRL+SHIFT+?
¡		ALT+CTRL+SHIFT+!

in Word for Mac

Holding down the OPTION key (to the left of the COMMAND key, lower-left keyboard), combined with tapping a second key, produces the following Spanish characters.

- ◆ for an accent mark over a vowel, as in *día* or *tú*, type Option-e, then type the vowel.
- ◆ for an accented capital letter, such as *Óscar* or *Íbamos*, type Option-e, hold down the Shift key, then type the vowel.
- ◆ for a diéresis (2 dots) over *u*, (*lingüística*, *vergüenza*), type Option-u, then the vowel.
- ◆ for a tilde over the *n*, as in *mañana*, type Option-n, then type the *n*.
- ◆ for a tilde over capital *N* (*AÑO*), type Option-n, hold down the Shift key, then type the *n*.
- ◆ for an upside-down question mark, as in *¿Cómo?*, type Shift-Option-?.
- ◆ for an upside-down exclamation mark, as in *¡Sí!*, type Option-1.