

Spanish on Your Computer or Mobile Device

There are several options for working more easily with the Spanish language on your electronic device. We're talking about getting the accents and ñ when you are writing. It's best to include the accents, especially when you are learning. It's best to practice the words with their accents so you learn to remember them correctly. While there are a number of methods to access the special characters used in Spanish; those we have listed here are the ones that we think work the best. Basically you'll be adding another keyboard that will give you the Spanish (ESP) characters, and the ability to easily switch back and forth with your usual English (ENG) keyboard.

We've included instructions for Windows 7, 10, Apple OS X, iOS (iPhone and iPad), and Android. These were last updated in December, 2016 so it is possible that operating systems have made some minor revisions.

Adding a Language on Your Windows Computer

This is our favorite option; easy to turn on and off and it works for all programs. You can add a language at the operating system level (Windows). You can then easily toggle back and forth between ENG and ESP, with the difference being in the keyboard definition. It's pretty easy to learn and get used to, and for ESP you get all those characters you want in whatever program you are using. You still want to add ESP to Word though (if you have not) since that gives you parallel power plus spelling, grammar correction and more in ESP. Don't let the steps deter you; it's not that bad and you only need to do it once. Here are the steps.

Windows 10:

Click the window icon in the lower left corner of your screen, then
Settings > Time & language > Region & language
The under "Languages" click "Add a language" and select the language you wish to add.

Windows 7:

Click the window icon in the lower left corner of your screen, then
Control Panel (in category view): Clock, language, and Region > Change keyboards or other input methods > Keyboards and Languages tab > Change Keyboards button.
Click the Add button on the General tab. In the window that opens, select Spanish.

So how do I use it?

To toggle between languages, press Left Alt key and Shift key at the same time. You should see either ENG or ESP down on the toolbar, lower right, to tell you which you are on.




Adding a Language on Your Apple Computer (OS X)

Choose Apple menu > System Preferences, click Keyboard, then click Input Sources. Click + to add a language; select Spanish from the list (or other language you may want). Click Add. You'll also see an illustration of the keyboard layout for your selection, as well as a flag icon that represents the language.

The menu bar (upper right) will show the flag icon to indicate which keyboard you currently have selected. Click the flag icon to see the list and re-select. This lets you quickly switch as needed.


Adding a Language on Your iPhone or iPad (iOS)

It's pretty simple; here are the steps:
Settings > General > Keyboard > Keyboards > Add New Keyboard

Switch input sources (language keyboards, emoticons, etc) by touching the round symbol  to the left of the spacebar.

You can also download the Gboard app by Google for use on your iOS device, which can work with multiple languages at the same time so you won't even have to switch keyboards. First download the Gboard app and then add it as a keyboard as described above.

Adding a Language on Your Android Device

Just follow these simple steps:
Settings > Personal: Language & input > Gboard or Google Keyboard > Languages.
Select as many as you want. Switch back and forth at keyboard by touching the round symbol  to the left of spacebar. Gboard was released in late 2016 and can work with both English and Spanish at the same time, eliminating the need to switch keyboards.



Spanish Keyboard Layout

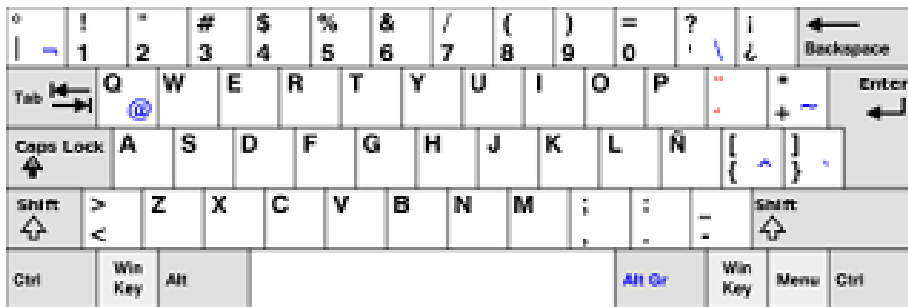
So how do you know what keys are what on your computer keyboard when you switch to Spanish? The keyboard shown below is generally correct with Windows. It's a bit more complicated with Apple; you can see all too many details at this web page:

<https://support.apple.com/en-us/HT201794>

Fortunately, there are only a couple of things you need to remember and they work pretty universally:

For ñ, it will usually be the ; key on an English keyboard.

To get an accent, you usually type the [key and then the letter you want the accent to go with.



Spanish Keyboard Character Map (most common)	
To Get	Press
letter w/accent	[letter
ñ	;
¿	=
?	Shift -
¡	Shift =
=	Shift)
(Shift *
)	Shift (
;	Shift <
:	Shift >
-	/ or NumPad
+] or NumPad
,	-
/	Shift & or NumPad
&	Shift ^
“	Shift @

