

Pronunciation – d: Transcript

Context

Hola y Buenos días. This lesson focuses on the letter **d**. This is one of those letters that can make the difference between sounding very much like an American, or something like a native speaker. Let's take a look at how the **d** should be pronounced.

Information

1. If the **d** occurs at the very beginning of a phrase, after a nasal sound (m or n), or after “l”, it is pronounced somewhat like the English **d** in “dog” or “door”. However, unlike the English **d** which is pronounced by placing the tip of the tongue against the roof of the mouth, the Spanish **d** is pronounced by placing the tip of the tongue against the back of the upper teeth. This produces a slightly softer sound than the English **d**. Make sure that the tip of your tongue is touching the back of your upper teeth when pronouncing the **d**. Listen to these cognates and their English counterparts. Can you tell the difference. I'll pronounce the English word first in each pair.

dormitory	<i>dormitorio</i>
David	<i>David</i>
dentist	<i>dentista</i>
Denmark	<i>Dinamarca</i>
director	<i>director</i>
band	<i>banda</i>

2. Now, if the letter **d** is not at the very beginning of a phrase, immediately after a nasal sound, or immediately after “l”, it's pronounced in a softer manner. This **d** sound is made by putting the tip of your tongue lightly against the back of your upper teeth or between your upper and lower teeth. The air passes between the tip of the tongue and the teeth but is never completely stopped. This sound is almost identical to the “th” in English words like “this” and “that”. Be sure that your tongue does not touch the roof of your mouth at any time when pronouncing this **d** in Spanish. Try these words.

nada
nadie
una duda
la dama
verde
las drogas
ella duerme
me ducho

Review

So the **d** is always pronounced differently than in English. The tongue has to move forward in the mouth and the sound has to be softened. Okay, I think we've covered enough for you to work on your own now. *Adiós.*