

## Pronunciation – x: Transcript

### Context

*Hola y Buenos días.* In this lesson we're going to talk about the pronunciation of the letter **x**. It's a special letter in Spanish because it often appears in words that are either crossovers from English – meaning there's a temptation to pronounce it like we do in English – or it appears in words from indigenous languages as is the case with the **x** in *México*.

### Information

1. In most words in Spanish, the **x** is pronounced as a combination of **k** and **s** [ks] just like in English. Many times, especially in informal speech, people shorten the pronunciation to a simple “s.” This is particularly true in words where the **x** is followed by another consonant. For example, the word *extra* can be pronounced [ekstra] or [estra], depending on the preference of the speaker.
2. Not all **x**'s are pronounced this way, however. The exception to the rule is with names of native origin, primarily in Mexico and Central America. Most of these words are the names of places or the names of indigenous plants. The word *México* itself is an example of this pronunciation. In Spanish, this **x** is not pronounced like **ks**, but rather as an English “h,” exactly like the **g** in *gente* or the **j** in *jefe*. Listen to these different words and their pronunciation of the letter **x**.

*excepcional, expander, examen, extraordinario, Oaxaca, México, Xalapa  
xoconostle*

3. So now you're probably asking, “How do I know which pronunciation to use?” Well, unless the word is a name of a place or other native object in Mexico or Central America, the **x** will always be pronounced [ks] or simplified to [s].

### Review

So, the letter **x** is simple, but then you probably already knew that. It's a straightforward [ks] unless it's the name of a place or another native object from Mexico or Central America.