

# Common English Pronunciation Errors Made by Spanish Speakers

Let's look at some common difficulties that native Spanish speakers often have in English.

## 1) Saying /s/ instead of /z/

**Example:** saying "Sue" instead of "zoo"

**Tip:** Your mouth is in the same position as for /s/, but there is vibration in your throat for /z/.

**Words to practise:** zoo (not: Sue), prize (not: price), zip (not: sip), easy, busy, these, those, is, isn't, example, does, doesn't, has, hasn't

## 2) Saying /b/ instead of /v/

**Example:** saying "berry" instead of "very"

**Tip:** Make sure your bottom lip touches your top teeth.

**Words to practise:** very (not: berry), vote (not: boat), vet (not: bet) van (not: ban), vowels (not: bowels), verb, village, dove, gloves, five

## 3) Adding a vowel sound in front of /st/ and /sp/

**Example:** saying "estreet" instead of "street", or "Espanish" instead of "Spanish"

**Tip:** Start by saying ssss and then say the word. It's okay to exaggerate when you are practising.

**Words to practise:** street, stop, still, stand, strong, story, start, Spain, Spanish, speak, spring, spider

## 4) Saying /n/ instead of /m/ at the end of a word

**Example:** saying "gain" instead of "game"

**Tip:** The /m/ sound exists in Spanish, but not at the ends of words. When you see an English word that ends in /m/, concentrate on the ending and make sure you put your lips together.

**Words to practise:** game (not: gain), some (not: sun), seem (not: seen), foam (not: phone), time, him, dream, jam, gym, swim

## 5) Saying /dʒ/ instead of /j/

**Example:** saying "Jess" instead of "yes"

**Tip:** Exaggerate first. Choose a word that starts with a "y" and imagine that it starts with a Spanish "i".

yes → "ies"

yesterday → "iesterday"

Then reduce the length of the "i".

**Words to practise:** yes (not: Jess), you (not: Jew), yell (not: gel), yellow (not: jello), yam (not: jam), yesterday, year, your, yacht