

How do divide a Spanish word correctly and find the natural accent.

1. Spanish is a vowel based language; every open vowel creates a syllable. Normally each syllable ends after an open vowel. However, when following consonants cannot be pronounced together, it is necessary to end the syllable by splitting the two unpronounceable consonants.

- a. The open vowels are a, o, e.
- b. The closed vowels are l, u.

When closed vowels are next to open or closed vowels they blend together forming a one syllable sound--the diphthong.

c. Example syllable divisions:

a / e / ro / puer / to
pi / no
pia / no
tu / xe / do

2. Finding the natural accent in Spanish is easy.

- a. First, we look at the last letter of the word.
- b. If the last letter is an "s", "n", or a vowel, then we pronounce with emphasis the second to last syllable of the word.
- c. If the last letter is anything else, then we pronounce with emphasis the very last syllable of the word.
- d. Since there are a few words that will break this natural accent rule, we mark these words with an artificial accent mark above the syllable the receives the emphasis. Since these exceptions are far and few between, we can very easily read and pronounce what we see written.

e. Examples of the natural accent and accent mark:

u / ni / ver / si / **dad**

pa / sa / **tiem** / pos

car / na / **val**

san / **da** / lia

dí / a

can / ci / **ón**