



FOUNDATIONS · FREE GUIDE

Portuguese Alphabet & Pronunciation Guide

Every letter, every sound, with example words — the foundation everything else is built on.

Fala Portuguese.

Free resource from the Fala Portuguese Resource Library — falaportuguese.com

FOUNDATIONS

Alphabet & Pronunciation Guide

Letter-by-letter, plus the sounds English speakers find trickiest.

LETTER	SOUNDS LIKE	EXAMPLE
A a	ah	casa (house)
B b	bay	bola (ball)
C c	say (soft before e/i)	casa / cinema
Ç ç	ss sound (cedilla)	moço (young man)
D d	day	dado (die)
E e	eh / ee (unstressed)	escola (school)
F f	eff	faca (knife)
G g	zh before e/i, hard elsewhere	gente / gato
H h	silent	hora (hour)
I i	ee	isso (that)
J j	zh (like French 'j')	janela (window)
L l	l / dark l after vowel (BR)	lua (moon)
M m	m, nasalizes vowel at end	com (with)
N n	n, nasalizes vowel	não (no)
O o	oh / oo (unstressed)	olho (eye)
P p	p	pato (duck)
Q q	k (always with u)	que (what)
R r	tapped mid-word, guttural at start/rr	rua (street) / carro (car)
S s	s / z between vowels	sol (sun) / casa (house)
T t	t / ch before i (BR)	tarde / tio
U u	oo	uva (grape)
V v	v	vida (life)
X x	sh / ks / z (varies)	xícara (cup)
Z z	z	zero

THE HARD PART

Sounds English Doesn't Have

Master these five and your accent improves overnight.

- Nasal vowels (ão, ãe, õe, ã, õ) — air escapes through your nose. English speakers often say "ow" for ão; try humming through "coração" (heart) instead.
- NH — like the "ny" in "canyon". Banho (bath), ninho (nest).
- LH — like the "lli" in "million". Filho (son), trabalho (work).
- RR / initial R — a guttural sound from the back of the throat (BR) or a rolled/tapped R (PT). Carro (car), rua (street).
- Open vs. closed vowels — avó (grandmother, open ó) vs. avô (grandfather, closed ô) change meaning entirely.

For guided drills on all five, see our Pronunciation Drill Sheet (Nasal Vowels & ão Sounds) in the Resource Library.