TYPING SPANISH ACCENTS AND PUNCTUATION

Windows:

There are two main methods: the numeric keypad method, which can be used regardless of whether the computer has a non-English keyboard enabled, and use of an international keyboard. Don't worry about having to buy a special keyboard; the change is accomplished through software.

Numeric keypad method: This is the method to use if for some reason you can't change the keyboard settings on the computer keyboard you're using. It can also come in handy if the key combinations used with the international keyboard conflict with the wordprocessing or other software you're using.

Windows allows the user to type any available character by holding down one of the Alt keys while typing in a numeric code on the numeric keypad. For example, to type the long dash — such as those used surrounding this clause — hold down the Alt key while typing 0151 on the numeric keypad. Here is a chart showing the combinations you're most likely to need when typing Spanish:

Numeric keypad method
á Alt + 0225 Á Alt + 0193
é Alt + 0233 É Alt + 0201
í Alt + 0237 Í Alt + 0205
ñ Alt + 0241 Ñ Alt + 0209
ó Alt + 0243 Ó Alt + 0211
ú Alt + 0250 Ú Alt + 0218
ü Alt + 0252 Ü Alt + 0220
¿ Alt + 0191 ¡ Alt + 0161
« Alt + 0171 » Alt + 0187

This list of numeric codes can be found with the **Character Map** utility that comes with the operating system. From the Start menu, select Programs, then Accessories, then Character Map. If it's not there, use the Start menu to select "Run..." and type in "charmap" (without the quotes) to launch the accessory.

International keyboard method: This method is less cumbersome than the other method, but it involves a change to the system configuration. The change involves installation of the international keyboard. Unless you make the international keyboard the default, this won't affect use of the keyboard unless you need the special characters.

To install the international keyboard, open the keyboard configuration utility. This normally would be done from the Start menu, then selecting Settings and then Control Panel and then Keyboard.

Within the keyboard configuration utility, select the Language tab, then press the "Add..." button to add Spanish (for most purposes it doesn't matter which nationality of Spanish you pick). Then with the Spanish keyboard selected, press the "Properties" button and select the "U.S.-International" keyboard. You will also be offered a selection of methods for switching between the English and Spanish keyboards. If you select "None," you will need to shift between the two keyboards manually from the Control Panel. If you select "Ctrl + Shift," you can switch between the keyboards by pressing the Ctrl and Shift keys simultaneously at any time. The special characters will work only when the international keyboard is activated.

The international keyboard gives us two ways of typing special characters: the sticky keys method and the Right-Alt method. The first can be used for the accented characters and the ñ character; the other can be used for punctuation as well.

Sticky keys: Once the international keyboard is activated, accented vowels can be typed by pressing the single-quote key followed by
the vowel. When typing the single quote, nothing appears on the screen until another key is pressed. Then if a vowel is pressed it will
appear with an accent. If another character is pressed, that character will appear regularly. To print the *ü*, use a double quote (shift + ')
followed by the *u*. To type the *ñ*, type the tilde (shift + opening single quote) followed by *n*.
This method can be awkward if you're typing quotation marks, but becomes easier to use with practice. Here is a chart summarizing
the keyboard combinations for various letters. A plus sign (+) indicates that two or three keys are pressed simultaneously; a comma
indicates that keys are pressed in sequence.

Sticky-keys method
á ; , a Á ; , Shift + a
é ;, e É ;, Shift + e
í ;, i Í ;, Shift + i
ñ Shift + `, n Ñ Shift + `, Shift + n
ó ;, o Ó ;, Shift + o
ú ;, u Ú ;, Shift + u
ü Shift + ;, u Ü Shift + ;, Shift + u

Right-Alt: This method uses the Alt key to the right of the space bar in combination with another key or keys. It won't work with the other Alt key. In Spanish, most of the key combinations are fairly intuitive. The main problem with this method is that some wordprocessing or other software may have various Alt-key combinations reserved for other uses. In that cases, you may have to reconfigure the application to use this method. The following key combinations should work with standard keyboards. European or other nonstandard keyboards may yield different results.

Right-Alt method
á Right-Alt + a Á Right-Alt + Shift + a
é Right-Alt + e É Right-Alt + Shift + e
í Right-Alt + i Í Right-Alt + Shift + i
ñ Right-Alt + n Ñ Right-Alt + Shift + n
ó Right-Alt + o Ó Right-Alt + Shift + o
ú Right-Alt + u Ú Right-Alt + Shift + u
ü Right-Alt + y Ü Right-Alt + Shift + y
¿ Right-Alt + / ¡ Right-Alt + 1
« Right-Alt + [» Right-Alt +]

Macintosh

The Macintosh operating system uses a procedure similar to the sticky-keys method described above. A two-key combination involving the Option key (sometimes labeled Alt) is followed by the appropriate key. To type an *á*, for example, press the Option and *e* keys simultaneously, and then press the *a* key. Nothing appears on the screen when the first two keys are pressed; in this case, nothing appears until after the *a* is pressed.
In the chart below, a plus (+) sign indicates two or more keys are pressed simultaneously. A comma indicates keys are pressed in sequence.

Macintosh
á Option + e, a Á Option + e + Shift + a
é Option + e, e É Option + e, Shift + e
í Option + e, i Í Option + e, Shift + i
ñ Option + n, n Ñ Option + n, Shift + n
ó Option + e, o Ó Option + e, Shift + o
ú Option + e, u Ú Option + e, Shift + u
ü Option + u, u Ü Option + u, u
¿ Option + Shift + / ¡ Option + 1

Problems:
Due to the variety of configurations, these methods will not always work. Common problems include:
• Not all fonts include all characters. Use the Character Map utility in Windows or the Key Caps utility with a Macintosh to see what characters are available in each font.
• Some software reserves key combinations for its own purposes, disabling the keyboard for some or all foreign-character uses.
• Some keyboards, such as those made for languages other than English, may require different combinations.
• In Windows, the international keyboard might not be activated. If so, switch to that keyboard using the method chosen when you configured the keyboard.