



## Spanish Onomatopoeia and Sound Effects

Not all onomatopoeias are born equal. The truth is, you're not going to use all of them while speaking and writing; it's very uncommon to hear some of these or even find them in a text. So, I divided this list into three categories:

1. useful for speaking
2. useful for writing, and
3. useful for listening and creative writing.

Though naturally, they're interchangeable, it's more likely that you'd want to imitate the sound of a car's engine or a door slamming than a cricket's chirp.

### Spanish Onomatopoeia Useful for Speaking

The first category is devoted to objects' sound effects. Learn these, practice them, and next time you're speaking with a Spanish speaker, try to incorporate them into your speech.

#### Objects Sound Effects

<b>Spanish Onomatopoeia</b>	<b>Spanish Action</b>	<b>English Onomatopoeia</b>	<b>English Action</b>
<i>Bang, pam, pum</i>	<i>Disparo</i>	Bang, boom, pop	Shooting, gunshot
<i>Bip</i>	<i>Pitido agudo, silbato</i>	Breet	High-pitched whistle
<i>Boing</i>	<i>Objeto elástico o algo que rebota, como un balón</i>	Boing	Elastic object or something that bounces like a ball
<i>Bum</i>	<i>Golpe o explosión</i>	Boom	Hit or explosion
<i>Chinchín</i>	<i>Platillos o para hacer un brindis</i>	Clink, chink	Cymbals crashing or for making a toast
<i>Chucu-chucu-chucu</i>	<i>Tren</i>	Choo-choo	Train
<i>Clic</i>	<i>Ratón de computadora, pulsar un interruptor</i>	Click	Computer mouse, press a switch, pull the trigger of a gun



<i>Clanc</i>	<i>Sonido de un objeto metálico</i>	Clank	A metallic object
<i>Crac</i>	<i>Algo que se quiebra</i>	Crack	Something that breaks
<i>Crash</i>	<i>Algo que se rompe</i>	Crash, smash	Something that breaks
<i>Crunch</i>	<i>Sonido al morder algo crujiente</i>	Crunch	Sound of something crunchy
<i>Din-don</i>	<i>Timbre de puerta</i>	Ding-dong	Ringing bell, door bell
<i>Ding</i>	<i>Campana</i>	Ding	Bell
<i>Fiu</i>	<i>Silbido, chiflido</i>	Breet	Whistle
<i>Gluglú</i>	<i>Burbujas en el agua, tomar agua</i>	Glug	Bubbles in water, drinking water
<i>Pfff, Pssss</i>	<i>Algo que se desinfla o tiene un escape, queja</i>	Pfff	Something that deflates, has a hole, or is a complaint
<i>Pip-piiip</i>	<i>Bocina de carro</i>	Beep-beep	Car's horn
<i>Plaf, pum</i>	<i>Golpes, caídas</i>	Splat	Something falling
<i>Plof, ploch</i>	<i>Golpe en un líquido o en un objeto blando</i>	Plop	Something hitting on water
<i>Plop</i>	<i>Globo al estallar</i>	Plop	Balloon exploding
<i>Pom, porrón, ropoponpon</i>	<i>Tambores</i>	Boom, badum-tish	Drums
<i>Ring</i>	<i>Timbre, teléfono</i>	Ding-dong, ring-ring	Bell, phone
<i>Ris, ras</i>	<i>Rasgadura</i>	Rip	Tearing
<i>Run-run</i>	<i>Motor de carro</i>	Vroom	Car motor
<i>Ssss...</i>	<i>Aceite chispeando</i>	Sizzle	Oil sizzling



<i>Taca-taca-taca</i>	<i>Traqueteo, como tren sobre la vía férrea</i>	Tctctctc	Rattle, like a train going over the train tracks
<i>Tic-tac</i>	<i>Reloj</i>	Tick tock	Clock
<i>Tilín</i>	<i>Campanilla</i>	Ding	Little bell
<i>Toc-toc</i>	<i>Golpear un objeto, llamar a la puerta</i>	Knock-knock	Hit an object, knock on a door
<i>Tolón</i>	<i>Campana</i>	Ding-dong	Bell
<i>Ui-yu-ui-yu</i>	<i>Sirena de ambulancia o policía</i>	Waaah!	Ambulance or police siren
<i>Zas</i>	<i>Golpe</i>	Pow, ka-pow	Hit or punch

## Spanish Onomatopoeia Useful for Writing (and Speaking)

Here are where things change a bit. While some of these verbs' sound effects might mimic or imitate an action in English, the Spanish translation of these words doesn't necessarily do that.

They are, well, just words.

They are verbs that often don't sound anything like the action they represent. *Chillar*, for example, pronounced “chee-yahr,” sounds nothing like something squeaking.

You can and will find yourself often using these while speaking too.

### Verbs Sound Effects

<b>Spanish</b>	<b>English</b>
<i>Chocar</i>	Clash, crash
<i>Pegar</i>	Smack
<i>Crujir</i>	Creak, crunch
<i>Chillar</i>	Squeak
<i>Chisporrotear</i>	Sputter, fizzle



<i>Susurrar</i>	Rustle, whisper
<i>Tintinear</i>	Jingle
<i>Traquetear</i>	Rattle, clatter
<i>Zumbar, zumbido</i>	Buzz
<i>Pitar</i>	Beep
<i>Gotear</i>	Trickle
<i>Salpicar</i>	Splatter
<i>Sisear</i>	Sizzle, hiss
<i>Silbar</i>	Whistle
<i>Aullar</i>	Howl
<i>Balar, gemir</i>	Bleat
<i>Maullar</i>	Meow
<i>Cloquear</i>	Cluck
<i>Cacarear</i>	Cackle
<i>Estallar</i>	Boom
<i>Morder</i>	Chomp
<i>Aleteo</i>	Flutter
<i>Gemido</i>	Groan
<i>Retumbar</i>	Rumble
<i>Sorber</i>	Slurp
<i>Chapotear</i>	Squish
<i>Girar</i>	Swish
<i>Golpear</i>	Thunk
<i>Tañir (tocar un instrumento de cuerda)</i>	Twang (play an instrument with chords)



<i>Golpear con un látigo</i>	(Whip) crack
<i>Gañir, graznar</i>	Yelp
<i>Golpe (de energía o sonido; ciencia ficción)</i>	Zap
<i>Eructar</i>	Burp
<i>Balbucear</i>	Mumble
<i>Estornudar</i>	Sneeze
<i>Gruñir</i>	Growl
<i>Oler</i>	Snif

## Spanish Onomatopoeia for Listening and Creative Writing

Unless you're working with children, it's unlikely you'll use these in everyday conversations. However, it might be a great listening exercise to creatively match these onomatopoeias to what you hear in real life.

Also, writers and poets often use these inventive words. For example, have you heard of the K'iche' Maya poet Humberto Ak'abal?

He famously used onomatopoeias in his idiosyncratic and snappy poems, like in [El Caminante](#).

**Recommended reading:** [5 exceptional poets from Latin America](#)

### Animal Onomatopoeias

<b>Spanish Onomatopoeia</b>	<b>Spanish Action</b>	<b>English Onomatopoeia</b>	<b>English Action</b>
<i>Auuu</i>	<i>Aullido de lobo</i>	Owooo	Wolf's howling
<i>Bzzz</i>	<i>Zumbido de abeja</i>	Bzzz	Bee's buzz
<i>Meee</i>	<i>Balido de oveja</i>	Baa	Sheep's bleat
<i>Croa-croa</i>	<i>Croar de rana</i>	Ribbit	Frog's croak
<i>Oink</i>	<i>Gruñido de cerdo</i>	Oink	Pig's snarl



<i>Miau</i>	<i>Maullido de gato</i>	Meow	Cat's meow
<i>Hiiic</i>	<i>Chillido de ratón</i>	Eeek	Rat or mouse's squeal
<i>Qui-qui-ri-quí</i>	<i>Cacareo de gallo</i>	Cocka-doodle-doo	Rooster's cackle
<i>Clo-clo</i>	<i>Cacareo de gallina</i>	Cluck	Hen's cackle
<i>Cuac-cuac</i>	<i>Cacareo de pato</i>	Quack	Duck's cackle
<i>Cri-cri</i>	<i>Chirriar de un grillo</i>	Chirp	Cricket's chirp
<i>Guau</i>	<i>Ladrado de perro</i>	Woof	Dog's bark
<i>Pío-pío</i>	<i>Piar de un pollo</i>	Cheep-cheep	Chick's tweet
<i>Ssss</i>	<i>Siseo de serpiente</i>	Ssss	Snake's hissing
<i>Muuu</i>	<i>Mugido de vaca</i>	Moo	Cow's bellow
<i>Guru-guru-gur</i>	<i>Voceo de pavo</i>	Gobble	Turkey's gobble
<i>Ñee</i>	<i>Relincho de caballo</i>	Neigh	Horse's neigh
<i>Rua</i>	<i>Rugido de león</i>	Roar	Lion's roar
<i>Cuu-cuu</i>	<i>Gorjeo de paloma</i>	Coo-coo	Pigeon's chirp

### People Onomatopoeias

<b>Spanish Onomatopoeia</b>	<b>Spanish Action</b>	<b>English Onomatopoeia</b>	<b>English Action</b>
<i>Achís</i>	<i>Estornudo</i>	Achoo	Sneeze
<i>Grr</i>	<i>Gruñido, enfado</i>	Grrr	Snarl, anger
<i>Igh</i>	<i>Hipo</i>	Hiccup	Hiccups
<i>Mua, muac</i>	<i>Beso</i>	Muah	Kiss
<i>Ñam</i>	<i>Masticar, comer</i>	Nom-nom	To chew, to eat



<i>Puf, buf</i>	<i>Molestia por malos olores</i>	Pew-yew	When something smells bad
<i>Aj</i>	<i>Cansancio, algo repugnante</i>	Ugh	Tired, something gross
<i>Zzz</i>	<i>Dormido</i>	<i>Zzz</i>	Sleeping
<i>Bla-bla-bla</i>	<i>Personas hablando</i>	Blah-blah	People talking
<i>Brrr</i>	<i>Sentimiento de frío</i>	Brrr	Cold
<i>Bua-bua</i>	<i>Llanto de bebé</i>	Wah!	Baby crying
<i>Cof-cof</i>	<i>Tos</i>	Cof-cof	Coughing
<i>Ejem</i>	<i>Carraspeo</i>	Ehem	Throat clearing
<i>Jaja</i>	<i>Risa</i>	Haha	Laughter
<i>Shh</i>	<i>Petición de silencio</i>	Hush	To ask someone to be quiet
<i>Rrrr</i>	<i>Ronquido</i>	Srnnk	Someone snoring

Now that you know what onomatopoeias are and can use them when you talk, you're ready to become one of the 580 million people in the world who speak Spanish!