

DXING THE LATINIS
by Bruce Portzer

Actually, it's pretty easy to hear and identify Latin American stations once you get the hang of it. The following suggestions should help, and some are useful for hearing stations in other parts of the world as well.

The first step is to read DX Worldwide and this Foreign Log very carefully. Check and see what is being heard in your area, at what time it is being heard, and how well and how often. Make a mental note of them or write them down on a sheet of paper and keep it near your receiver. Keep in mind which frequencies are usually blocked by strong domestics. However, don't rule these frequencies out completely as oftentimes auroral conditions can block out strong northern stations and let you hear Latins you would normally not hear.

The best places to listen are between the domestic channels (stations on these frequencies are called "splits"), on domestic channels clear of really strong domestic stations, in the null of domestic clears such as WGN, WLW, etc., or on a small number of regional channels. The Cubans on 590 and 600 are examples of stations you can hear in the latter case. There is no "best" time to listen for Latin American stations. On the east coast they start to come in around sunset and can be heard all evening and all night until local sunrise. Likewise in the midwest or west coast, although stations heard near sunrise are usually just Mexicans.

The important thing to watch for is Latin American music or Spanish talk. Don't be discouraged if you don't hear anything on your first few tries. Conditions can change radically from day to day and some evenings Latins will be pounding in where nothing was heard the night before.

Once you've latched on to a station stay with it, even if it fades out. Like domestics, they have a habit of fading back in again (at least sometimes...). Anyway, the problem now is to hear an ID. Even though you probably won't understand 99% of what you hear, the other one percent is usually an ID. Somehow ID's stick out like a sore thumb. Sometimes you can recognize an ID by the "big production" sound to it or by a change in announcers (if the ID is pre-recorded). Probably the best way to recognize an ID is simply by listening for a few key words. Many ID's begin "Este es..." (ESS-teh ESS), "Aqui..." (ah KEE), or "Transmite..." (trahns MEE teh), and then follow this with the call letters or slogan. At other times just the call or slogan is given.

Many slogans begin with "Radio..." (RAH de yo), "La Voz de..." (La Bohss deh), "La..." (lah), "Ondas de (or del)..." (OHN-das de (dehl)), or "cadena..." (kah DEH nah). "Cadena" is usually associated with a network, since it is the Spanish word for chain. You may also hear the location, frequency, or other information about the station during the ID. Keep in mind that hearing a slogan is sometimes not enough to identify a station definitely. For example, there are about five "Radio Mil"'s on 1000 khz. And hearing a city mentioned may not be enough. It may be a part of a news item or the address of a sponser. So be reasonably sure you really have a station before you count it in your totals.

Don't be discouraged if you don't ID the station. It happens to everyone, and every seasoned foreign DXer has a long list of mystery stations that haunt his dreams because he couldn't ID them. You may also mis-identify a station, for any number of reasons. While this can be a cause of embarrassment if you report the wrong station to the bulletin, it doesn't mean your reputation is washed up. Unless you start reporting a whole string of catches like Tierra del Fuego on 1400, hi. Most of us have made blunders based on hasty conclusions at one time or another. Just don't think you have a station because it's the most powerful one listed or the closest one listed.

Once you have heard a station, send a report of it to DX Worldwide, even if you can't identify it. If you send as much information as possible on an unidentified station, someone else may be able to tell you who it is.

The following is a list of some of the most frequently heard Latin Americans and when you can hear them:

- 540 XEWA "Radio X-E-W," San Luis Potosí, México. Evenings, if Canadian interference isn't too bad.
- 590 CMW "La Voz de Cuba," Habana. East coast evenings; midwest and west coast all night and Monday mornings.
- 640 CMQ "La Voz de Cuba," Habana. Evenings on east coast and midwest; evenings and all night to the northwest with KFI nulled. To California, when KFI is off (0300-0400 (PLT) on Monday mornings).
- 655 YSS "Radio Nacional de El Salvador," San Salvador, El Salvador. Evenings to 0500 GMT sign-off with what sounds like William Tell Overture, but actually isn't.
- 660 XEPRM "Radio Uno," México, D.F., México. Evenings. Plays lots of U.S. rock and roll.
- 670 CMKP "Radio Enciclopedia," Habana. East coast with WMAQ nulled; west coast after KBOI signs-off.
- 750 YNX "Estacion Equis," Managua, Nicaragua. Evenings. Strongest Latin American in Seattle at night. Good in the midwest, on the east coast with WSB nulled. In California, with KCBS or KFMB slop.
- 750 YVKS "Radio Caracas," Caracas, Venezuela. All night after YNX sign-off. Plays U.S. rock and roll.
- 760 CMCI "Reloj Nacional," Habana, Cuba. Heard nation wide with all-news and chimes every minute
- 800 PJB "Radio Transmundial," Bonaire, Netherlands Antilles. To the east coast with CKLW evenings. To the midwest and the west coast with XEROK and Canadians evenings or mornings. Also broadcasts in English and other languages, including Portuguese.
- 810 HJCY "Radio Sutatenza," Bogotá, Colombia. Heard Sunday and Monday mornings on the west coast with KGO off, and sometimes in the midwest and on the east coast with KCMO and WGY interference.
- 825 TIOS "Titania," San José, Costa Rica. Heard nation wide with rock music and frequent IDs by a young woman.
- 834 "Radio Belize," Belize City, Belize. Heard well nation wide with English and Spanish programming.

- 840 HJBI "Ondas del Caribe," or "Radio Libertad," Santa Marta, Colombia.
- 840 HOL80 "Radio Libertad, La Voz de la Revolución," Panama. Both stations can be heard with WHAS interference evenings on the west coast and the midwest, or with WHAS nulled or off on the east coast.
- 880 CMAF Pinar del Rio, Cuba. Heard on the west coast nightly over-under WQEC after KRVN signs off.
- 1035 4VEC "Radio 4VEH," Cap-Haitien, Haiti. Usually on Monday morning when adjacent channels are free. Broadcasts mostly in French.
- 1040 HJCJ "Radio Super," Bogotá, Colombia. Sunday mornings with WHC off.
- 1165 "Caribbean Radio Lighthouse," Antigua. Evenings on the east coast with religious programs.
- 1265 "Radio Paradise," St. Kitts. Evenings on the east coast, Monday mornings on the west coast with English religious programs and gospel music.

The preceding list is by no means a complete one but it does give the beginner a few things to try for. These stations were picked because they are heard often and with good signals coast to coast. Whether or not you get them depends on your own local interference problems. Don't forget to report to DXWV if you do pick one up.

How do you recognize call letters or numbers in Spanish? The following is a pronunciation guide for Spanish letters and numbers:

A	Ah	N	EH-neh	1	uno	14	catorce	70	setenta
B	Beh	O	Oh	2	dos	15	quince	80	ochenta
C	Say	P	Pey	3	tres	16	dieciseis	90	noventa
D	Day	Q	Coo	4	cuatro	17	diecisiete	100	cien or ciento
E	Eh	R	EH-reh	5	cinco	18	dieciocho	101	ciento (y) uno
F	EF-fay	S	ES-seh	6	seis	19	diecinueve	200	doscientos
G	Hay	T	Tay	7	seite	20	veinte	300	trescientos
H	AH-cheh	U	Co	8	ocho	21	veintiuno	400	cuatrocientos
I	Ee	V	Beh	9	nueve		or veinteuno	500	quinientos
J	HO-tah	W	Doh-ble-oo	10	diez	30	treinta	600	seiscientos
K	Kah	X	EH-keece	11	once	40	cuarenta	700	setecientos
L	EL-leh	Y	Yeh	12	doce	50	cincuenta	800	ochocientos
M	EM-meh	Z	SEH-tah	13	trece	60	sesenta	900	novecientos
								1000	mil

How to pronounce what you see in print:

- B, C, D, F, M, N, T, X are pronounced the same as in English, except the letter "X" as used in Aztec words in México is pronounced like an "H."
- A is always AH
- E is always EH
- CH is always as in choose
- G as in go except before "E" and "I"
- G before "E" and "I" is like J in José
- H is always silent
- I is like I in police
- J has an H sound, like in José
- L is like L in light
- LL sounds like Y in yard
- O sounds like O in low
- Ñ sounds like NY in canyon
- QU always appears in the following combination of "que" and "qui." The first is pronounced "kay," the latter "key."
- R is like R in three
- RR rrrrrr
- S as in sing except when followed by B, V, D, M, N, L, G, R, when it's as in rose.
- U like U in rude or OO in fool
- V like B in band
- Y like Y in yawn
- Z like S in sign

Words ending in a vowel, N or S, are accented on the next to last syllable. Words ending in a consonant other than N or S are accented on the last syllable. Vowels with an accent mark over them are always stressed.

Syllables are divided as follows: when consonant and vowel alternate, the division is after the vowel (i.e., ma-ma, mu-cho). Syllables are divided between consonants except for PL, PR, BL, BR, FL, FR, TL, TR, DR, CL, CR, GL, GR. Three adjacent consonants are always divided, the last two going with the following vowel (i.e., hom-bre).

The above information should be of use to everyone. It was based mainly on info in the University of Chicago English/Spanish dictionary, plus my own very limited knowledge of the language.