

Received Pronunciation VS Upper Received Pronunciation

RP & URP (PRP)

Presentation based mainly on [PronunciationStudio.com](https://www.pronunciationstudio.com)¹

Defining RP & URP (PRP)

- Neither RP nor URP are regional or geographically distinguishable.
- Indicative of social class or educational institutions.
- **RP: Conservative & Contemporary** (Traditional vs Modern, Collins & Mees²)
(Historical)
 - HMQ (URP) & Emma Watson³ (RP)
 - Freddie Mercury⁴ (RP)

Differences RP & URP

SEGMENTALS ASPECTS

- CONSONANTS pronounced more clearly, but no real difference
 - HMQ pronouncing her "r" (very)⁵



VOWELS

- **FRONT VOWELS** tendency towards /e/
 - /æ/ as in MAN – towards the /e/ in MEN
 - /əʊ/ as in GO nearer the front – towards the /e/ position
 - /i/ as in REALLY / more open towards the /e/ position
- **BACK VOWELS** tendency towards /ɑ/
 - /aʊ/ as in HOW near the back in the /ɑ/ position
 - /ʌ/ in FUN further open and back, towards the /ɑ/ position
 - Defining sound for RP (ESDE)
 - /ɜ:/ in BIRD more open and back, towards /ɑ/ more like BARRED
 - /u:/ sound in YOU is made with the tongue further back (but HMQ fronting it, ESDE)

VOWELS

- **TRIPHTONGS:** Smoothing

- /aɪə/ in WIRE, RIOT² and /aʊə/ in HOUR, POWER are realised as one long /ɑː/ sound ■

SUPRASEGMENTAL ASPECTS

Tone. Intonation - rising, falling. Stress. Pitch. Length. Word accent.

- URP

- high falling patterns ■

- creaky voice towards ends of sentences ■ (E.W.⁶)

- RP

- Uptalk⁷

Endings (segmental) interfering with (suprasegmental) as in 'happy' realized by Emma or HMQ?
(ZJ)⁸





Complaints & Weaknesses, Strengths

- Unfair! - Emma Watson (modern) Americanized /t/, mixture of RP and URP.
- Plenty of resources, not contradictory, but possibly inconsistent.
- **Strengths**
 - Possible to learn (Freddie Mercury, Elisa Doolittle⁹ - historical)
- Highly recommend the www.PronunciationStudio.com free package



Resources

1. <https://pronunciationstudio.com/upper-received-pronunciation/>
2. Tomkova, K. Materials in AJL52066
3. <https://youtu.be/xrWXsoXuuKs?t=66>
4. <https://youtu.be/g0qShxkuS7Q?t=760>
5. <https://youtu.be/DPZkrRpJ4Zc?t=463>
6. <https://youtu.be/xrWXsoXuuKs?t=282>
7. EatSleepDream English YT. <https://youtu.be/xrWXsoXuuKs?t=173>
8. EatSleepDream English YT. <https://youtu.be/xrWXsoXuuKs?t=396>
9. Doolittle, E. in My Fair Lady. https://youtu.be/P_5RyXYhdP8?t=67