

## RECEIVED PRONUNCIATION

rɪ'si:vd prəˌnʌnsɪ'eɪʃən

English is spoken by more than 300 million people. There are many varieties of English – British, American, Canadian, Australian, New Zealand, South –African to take just the main examples. For more information on the different varieties of English see David Crystal's entry in the Encyclopaedia Britannica: <http://www.britannica.com/topic/English-language/Varieties-of-English#toc74817>

The variety of English examined here is the pronunciation of educated speakers of the language. It is recognised, used and taught all over the world, not just in Britain. It shows no regional variation. It has often been viewed as a prestige variety of English.

This type of standard English is often referred to as **Received Pronunciation** (RP). It can have a number of other names such as Standard English, British English, the Queen's English, Oxford English or BBC English.

See the British Library's page on Received Pronunciation:

<http://www.bl.uk/learning/langlit/sounds/find-out-more/received-pronunciation/>

Most speakers of English all over the world will understand RP.

There are some differences between RP and Standard American English pronunciation (SAE) but these usually cause no difficulties in understanding.

For example, RP uses the phoneme /ɒ/, whereas most Americans would use another phoneme which does not exist in RP, usually /ɑ/.

The RP pronunciation of *hot* is /hɒt/

The SAE pronunciation is /hat/

Another difference is that speakers of RP do not have an /r/ sound before a consonant. There is an /r/ sound in SAE.

Examples:    *farm* /fɑ:m/ || /f a:rm/  
                  *car*    /kɑ:/ || /kɑ:r/

The symbol || separates Standard British English, (or RP), from Standard American English. which are on the left, and right, of the parallel lines respectively.

A good English dictionary will give you both alternatives if there is a difference in pronunciation.

A good online dictionary which will give you Cambridge English Dictionary & Thesaurus <http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/>

## Meaning of "pronunciation" in the English Dictionary

British

American

### "pronunciation" in British English

[See all translations](#)

# pronunciation

*noun* [C or U] **UK**  **US**  /prəˌnʌn.siˈeɪ.ʃən/



#### **B1** how words are pronounced:

*English pronunciation is notoriously difficult.*

*There are two different pronunciations of this word.*

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#### Grammar

**Pronunciation** Pronunciation means how we say words. Most people speak the dialect of standard English with an accent that belongs to the part of the country they come from or live in. Learners of British English commonly hear RP (received pronunciation), which is an accent often used on the BBC and other news media and in some course materials for language learners, but it is also common to hear a variety of regional accents of English from across the world. ...

(Definition of pronunciation from the [Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary & Thesaurus](#) © Cambridge University Press)

**See also *Some Remarks on Received Pronunciation* under the section For Teachers**