

Spain's new football jersey* to be delayed

Critics say the official shirt for the World Cup resembles the flag of the Spanish Second Republic

Before you read the complete article, look at this vocabulary and find it in the text

to creep: to develop or occur gradually almost without being seen or noticed

to subside: to become less intense, less violent or less severe

row [rau] : a serious dispute or argument

to brew: (context - of an unwelcome situation) to begin to develop

fuss: unnecessary or excessive excitement

jersey: (context) a shirt worn by a player or competitor in certain sports

to red-card something: (sporting analogy) to dismiss or reject (an idea)

to rule out: to exclude something as a possibility

Spanish politics is **creeping** into football once again. The controversy surrounding Gerard Piqué's place in the Spain squad; given his support of independence in Catalonia; may have **subsided**, but there's another **row brewing**. This time, because of the national team's new football shirt.

Last Tuesday, the interim president of the national football federation, Juan Luis Larrea, made this informal statement to a Spanish sports newspaper: "We have received complaints from the top," he said. "The government does not like the **fuss**, or the shirt."

A strip of blue rhombuses, printed on the **jersey** designed by Adidas for the Spanish team for the 2018 World Cup in Russia, has had an unexpected response. Some see the blue rhombuses against the red shirt as purple and have taken the choice of colour as a homage to the flag of the Spanish Second Republic - the country's official flag from 1931 to 1939, before the right-wing dictator, Francisco Franco, came to power. The flag has long been a left-wing symbol in Spain, and the new jersey could therefore be seen as an implicit attack on the monarchy and the Constitution.

Politicians including Pablo Iglesias, leader of the anti-austerity party, Podemos, and Alberto Garzón, leader of the United Left, both celebrated the proposal. Garzón said he likes the "tricolour" design more than the "red and yellow" of the Spanish flag, because it incorporates "the purple of Castile." When asked about the **row**, sports minister Íñigo Méndez de Vigo responded with an enigmatic smile: "The Spanish team has had more beautiful shirts than this one."

But Larrea went into more detail. "The government has not officially said anything to us, but I have lines of communication and I know they are worried about this issue, specifically because there are people in parliament who have linked the colour of the shirt with the Republican flag. The Spanish World Cup **jersey** for the United States tournament in 1994 had a purple stripe and nobody said anything."

Such is the concern that the official presentation of the **jersey** with the team due for last Wednesday was called off. Both the German sports brand and the federation made the decision **to red-card** what would have been the beginning of the sales campaign.

"There is no easy solution," said Larrea, who has **ruled out** a change of plans, "because the sale of the garments has already begun and there are already thousands distributed throughout shopping centres and sports stores in Spain." Adidas issued a statement describing the colour as a "petroleum blue" and stated that there is "no political connotation." The German multinational explains that "players' performance has always been its priority." The team wore the new sweatshirts for the first time recently, at the first training session before they faced Costa Rica in Malaga last Saturday.

adapted from: [El Pais - In English](#)

"Let's chat about that!"

Write your answers in an email and send them to your ECP coach!

- Do you like football or any other sport? Why / why not?
- Do you own a sports shirt/jersey? Why do you like it?
- Are flags important to you? Why? If not, why not?
- In your opinion, what is the link between sports & politics? Why is there a connection? Should it exist? Could it be changed?



Luis Enrique in 1994

Two vintage-style, unofficial football jerseys



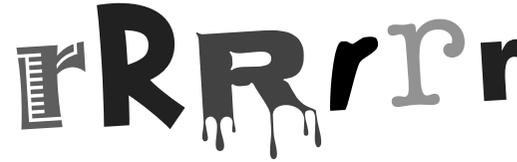
Deportivo Alavés



Wolverhampton Wanderers



How to pronounce the 'r' (in British English)



<https://pronunciationstudio.com/silent-r-british-pronunciation/>

One of the easiest rules to learn when studying British English pronunciation is that of the silent < r >. It really is very simple:

RULE

- ❖ Only say an < r > when it appears before a vowel sound.
- ❖ Never say an < r > when it appears before a consonant or at the end of a word.

So in the word 'fork', you don't say the < r > because there is a consonant after it.

In the name 'Charlie' you don't say the < r > for the same reason.

However in the word 'grass' we do say the < r > because there is a vowel sound after it.

Linking /r/

The rule also works to join words together. For example, consider the word 'mother'. We normally would not say the < r > because it is at the end of the word, however, if a vowel sound begins the next word, we do pronounce it to join the words:

motherr_and daughter

the < r > effectively moves on to the beginning of the word 'and'.

Intrusive /r/

Sometimes, native speakers join words together with an /r/ even if there is no < r > in the spelling, some examples are:

China(**r**)_and India / My idea(**r**)_of a joke

This occurs when a schwa appears at the end of a word, followed by another vowel sound, although some speakers would argue that it is not correct to join in this way.

Rhoticity & Accents

The technical term for an accent that does not pronounce < r > sounds in syllable-final positions is 'Non-Rhotic', so a lot of British English accents are known as non-rhotic. American English is mainly rhotic – speakers say every written < r >.

This is, however, a generalisation, as there are areas of Britain that are rhotic, and areas of America that are non-rhotic.

Strong and weak syllables

The < r > spelling tells us a lot about which vowel sound to pronounce, so it is really our friend.

On strong syllables, the < r > after a vowel sound always indicates a long vowel: /ɑ:/ for car, /ɔ:/ for four, /ɜ:/ for bird, /eə/ for where, or /Iə/ for 'near'.

On a weak syllable it nearly always indicates /ə/ for mother.

Anfield (Kez)

Between 1884 and 1892, Anfield was the home of Everton Athletic. However, after a dispute with the owners, they moved to a different ground nearby and a new team was formed, called **Liverpool**. That team has played at Anfield for the last 125 years.

St James' Park (John)

Newcastle United have played football here since 1892. The name of the stadium is controversial for English teachers as there is disagreement about the use of the apostrophe. For many people, the correct form is *St James's Park*.

The Den (Ali)

Ali isn't a fan of football but her step-dad is a **Millwall** fan. The club has played at two grounds called 'The Den', moving to the current one in 1993. Millwall fans are famous for chanting "*No one likes us, we don't care!*"

Molineux (Rob)

This has been the home ground of **Wolves** since 1889. It was one of the first grounds in the country to install floodlights and the club hosted some of the first European club games in the 1950s. Curiously, there is a school opposite ECP called 'Molinuevo'.

And the store room: **Highbury (Darren)**

Highbury, in North London, was the home ground of Arsenal between 1913 and 2006. When the club moved to a new stadium, it was redeveloped into apartments and the pitch became gardens.