

UPTOWN FUNK

MARK RONSON, FT. BRUNO MARS

APPEARS IN
ROCK & POP
2018

⚡ Released: 2014 ⚡ Album: Uptown Special ⚡ Label: RCA Records

ABOUT THE SONG

'Uptown Funk' was the lead single from British record producer Mark Ronson's fourth studio album, *Uptown Special* (2015) and featured American artist Bruno Mars. Released in November 2014, it was a worldwide hit, staying at the No. 1 position on the Billboard Hot 100 in the US for 14 consecutive weeks and topping the charts in several other countries including the UK. It was the best-selling single of 2015 and won multiple awards that year, including the Grammy Award for Record of the Year.

The track was co-written over six months by Ronson and Mars, along with Jeff Bhasker, Phillip Lawrence, Nicholas Williams and Devon Gallaspy. Copyright claims arose after its release, resulting in lawsuits and ultimately changes to the song's writing credits.

RECORDING AND PRODUCTION

Not many songs have been worked on by as many people in as many different locations as 'Uptown Funk'. Mark Ronson and Jeff Bhasker set up recordings in studios and dressing rooms all over the world, whenever and wherever they could tie in with Bruno Mars' schedule. Along the way, a vast array of other musicians contributed material. The distinctive vocal 'doh' bass line was recorded when no bassist was available, and Ronson decided to keep it as it added a unique touch.

COMPOSITION

Inspired by the 1980s Minneapolis funk style of Prince, 'Uptown Funk' is notable for its simplicity as well as its floor-filling individuality. Only two chords are used in the whole song. Ronson and Mars worked on a chorus for months, before they came up with the idea of not having one at all. Indeed, for a song so insanely catchy it is remarkable that there is no hook line. However, the call and response 'Girls hit your hallelujah - whoo!' never fails to stir up some audience participation.

“SATURDAY NIGHT
AND WE'RE IN THE SPOT
DON'T BELIEVE ME
JUST WATCH”

AWARDS

- ⚡ **Best Male Video**
MTV Video Music Awards 2015
- ⚡ **Record of the Year**
Grammy Awards 2016
- ⚡ **Best Pop Duo/Group Performance**
Grammy Awards 2016
- ⚡ **British Single**
BRIT Awards 2015
- ⚡ **Video of the Year**
Soul Train Music Awards 2015
- ⚡ **Video of the Year**
Soul Train Music Awards 2015



THE VIDEO

Released in November 2014, the music video for 'Uptown Funk' was directed by Bruno Mars and Cameron Duddy. It was filmed in many cities where Mars was touring as well as at 20th Century Fox Studio's 'New York Street' set in Los Angeles. The retro style video features Ronson and Mars strutting around with Mars' backing band the Hooligans. It's the fifth most watched video on YouTube ever, with over 2.6 billion views.



THE ALBUM

Uptown Special was released in January 2015 and became Mark Ronson's first number one album on the UK Albums Chart. It reached number two in the Australian ARIA Charts and number five on the US Billboard 200. Ronson dedicated the album to his friend the late Amy Winehouse, who he had worked with multiple times including on her album *Back to Black* (2006). 'Daffodils', which featured the vocals of Tame Impala's Kevin Parker, was also released as a single.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Mark Ronson is a British musician, DJ, producer and songwriter who has worked with a huge range of artists. Ronson became a regular DJ on the New York club scene in the early 1990s, and his reputation for diverse funk, hip-hop and rock influenced playlists soon led to him being a sought-after DJ for high-profile parties. He began working as a producer in 2001 and released his debut album *Here Comes the Fuzz* in 2003. His second album *Version* was released in 2007 and featured three top 10 singles – 'Valerie' (with Amy Winehouse), 'Oh My God' (with Lily Allen), and 'Stop Me' (with Daniel Merriweather). The album earned him the Brit Award for Best British Male Artist in 2008.

Ronson produced Bruno Mars' second studio album *Unorthodox Jukebox* in 2012, including the smash hit 'Locked Out of Heaven', and had hoped to work together with Mars again. Bruno Mars (birth name Peter Hernandez) grew up in a family of musicians in Hawaii, and began singing on stage at an early age. His debut album *Doo-Wops and Hooligans* (2010) included the No. 1 single 'Just The Way You Are'. Mars' first five No. 1 singles came faster than for any other male solo artist since Elvis Presley.

MORE TO EXPLORE

Songs: 'Daffodils', Mark Ronson, feat. Kevin Parker (2015), 'Valerie', Mark Ronson, feat. Amy Winehouse (2007), 'Oh My God', Mark Ronson, feat. Lily Allen (2007), 'Stop Me', Mark Ronson, feat. Daniel Merriweather (2007), 'Locked Out of Heaven', Bruno Mars (2012), 'Just The Way You Are', Bruno Mars (2010). **Albums:** *Here Comes The Fuzz*, Mark Ronson (2003), *Version*, Mark Ronson (2007), *Back to Black*, Amy Winehouse (2006), *Doo-Wops and Hooligans*, Bruno Mars (2010), *Unorthodox Jukebox*, Bruno Mars (2012). **Influencers:** Prince.

Trinity Rock & Pop syllabus: Drums, Grade 1, Keyboards, Grade 2, Vocals, Grade 2.

'IT'S QUITE A FEAT TO PRODUCE MUSIC THAT WORKS FOR THE MIND AND THE HIPS, BUT RONSON HAS PULLED IT OFF MAGNIFICENTLY, WITH VIRTUALLY EVERY TRACK SOUNDING LIKE A SINGLE'

Q MAGAZINE

'HE'S HAD A [SIC] INCREDIBLE RUN AND IT WAS GREAT TO BE ABLE TO WORK ON THAT RECORD WITH HIM AND HOPEFULLY WE'LL BE MAKING MUSIC FOR A WHILE.'

MARK RONSON

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