

PRONUNCIATIONAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN AMERICAN AND BRITISH ENGLISH

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Annotation: *American and British cultures are fundamentally different in their histories, economies, environments, and social organizations. Although spoken American and British English are generally mutually intelligible, there are enough differences to cause misunderstandings or even a complete failure of communication. So, it is important to know differences in pronunciation between British and American English.*

Differences in pronunciation between American English (AmE) and British English (BrE) can be divided into differences in accent and differences in the pronunciation of individual words in the lexicon. Here, we have observed differences in all phonological aspects such as in stress, intonation, phoneme and syllable.

For many loanwords from French, AmE has final-syllable stress, while BrE stresses an earlier syllable. Most 2-syllable verbs ending in -ate have first-syllable stress in AmE and second-syllable stress in BrE. Where the syllable preceding the suffixes -ary, -ery, -ory, -mony or -ative is unstressed, AmE pronounces the penultimate syllable with a full vowel sound: /-əri/ for -ary and -ery, /-ɔ:ri/ for -ory, /-mɒni/ for -mony and /-eɪtɪv/ -ative. BrE reduces the vowel to a schwa or even elides it completely: [-əri] or [-ri].

There are differences in pronunciation of some sounds as well: the most important difference is in letter R. British people only pronounce the letter R when it is followed by a vowel. American people pronounce this letter always. A final Schwa is pronounced very very weak in both BrE and AmE, but if it happens at the end of speech (if after the schwa we pause or stop), then in BrE it often opens and becomes a sound very similar to / ʌ /, but in AmE it doesn't change. Moreover, there are differences in vowels [, ,] and the consonant [t] which is pronounced like [d] in AmE between vowels.

Aside from spelling and vocabulary, there are certain grammar differences between British and American English. For instance, in American English, collective nouns are considered singular (e.g. The band is playing). In contrast, collective nouns can be either singular or plural in British English, although the plural form is most often used (e.g. The band are playing). The British are also more likely to use formal speech, such as 'shall', whereas Americans favour the more informal 'will' or 'should'. Americans, however, continue to use 'gotten' as the past participle of 'get', which the British have long since dropped in favour of 'got'.

'Needn't', which is commonly used in British English, is rarely, if at all used in American English. In its place is 'don't need to'. In British English, 'at' is the preposition in relation to

time and place. However, in American English, 'on' is used instead of the former and 'in' for the latter. In spoken American English, it is very common to use the simple past tense as an alternative in situations where the present perfect would usually have been used in British English.

American and British cultures are fundamentally different in their histories, economies, environments, and social organizations. Although spoken American and British English are generally mutually intelligible, there are enough differences to cause misunderstandings or even a complete failure of communication. So, it is important to know lexical and semantic differences between British and American English.

Most differences can be found in ordinary life, especially in oral speech. In particular, attention must be paid to false cognates. For instance, British English 'suspenders' are called 'garters' in US English, which use 'suspenders' for the British 'braces'. This also occurs for American 'shorts' that are British 'underpants'; American 'pants' are British 'trousers'. Naturally, awareness of lexical differences is not only for sake of linguistic curiosity.

Sections have briefly given a description of lexical differences in the fields of housing, transport, shopping, food, and numerical systems, as part of everyday language that could be quite confusing. Some words which are typically taught as examples of US/UK differences were also quite obscure for the US sample, such as 'lorry/ truck', 'coach / bus', and 'full stop/period'.

Only a direct contact with the other language or a specific study on the differences can improve mutual intelligibility between the two varieties of English, admitting and respecting their differences.

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