

American English



Pronunciation

Word:	British	American
<i>hairy</i>	/ heəri /	/ heri /
<i>near</i>	/ niə(r) /	/ nɪr /
<i>ask</i>	/ ɑ:sk /	/ æsk /
<i>answer</i>	/ ɑ:nsə(r) /	/ ænsər /
<i>grass</i>	/ grɑ:s /	/ græs /
<i>dance</i>	/ dɑ:ns /	/ dæns /
<i>process</i>	/ prəuses /	/ prɑ:ses /
<i>fear</i>	/ fiə /	/ fir /
<i>sheer</i>	/ fiə /	/ fir /
<i>buy</i>	/ baɪ /	/ baɪ /
<i>fate</i>	/ feɪt /	/ feɪt /
<i>tour</i>	/ tuə(r) /	/ tur /
<i>later</i>	/ leɪtə(r) /	/ leɪdər /

There is a greater difference in British English between the length of vowel sounds, with some being pronounced significantly longer than their American counterparts.

Spelling

British English	American English
-oe/-ae- (e.g. anaemia, diarrhoea, encyclopaedia)	-e- (e.g. anemia, diarrhea, encyclopedia)
-t (e.g. burnt, dreamt, leapt)	-ed (e.g. burned, dreamed, leaped)
-ence (e.g. defence, offence, licence)	-ense (defense, offense, license)
-ell- (e.g. cancelled, jeweller, marvellous)	-el- (e.g. canceled, jeweler, marvelous)
-ise (e.g. appetiser, familiarise, organise)	-ize (e.g. appetizer, familiarize, organize)
-l- (e.g. enrol, fulfil, skilful)	-ll- (e.g. enroll, fulfill, skillfull)
-ogue (e.g. analogue, monologue, catalogue)	-og (e.g. analog, monolog, catalog) *Note that American English also recognizes words spelled with -ogue
-ou (e.g. colour, behaviour, mould)	-o (e.g. color, behavior, mold)
-re (e.g. metre, fibre, centre)	-er (e.g. meter, fiber, center)
-y- (e.g. tyre)	-i- (e.g. tire)

The main difference is that British English keeps the spelling of words it has absorbed from other languages, mainly French and German, whilst American English spellings are based mostly on how the word sounds when it is spoken.

Grammar

	UK	USA
1	The class are happy.	The class is happy.
2	I'd forgot .	I'd forgotten .
3	I learnt it.	I learned it.

1. There are certain grammar differences between British and American English. For example, in American English, collective nouns are considered singular. In contrast, collective nouns can be either singular or plural in British English, although the plural form is most often used.

2. Americans use 'gotten' as the past participle of 'get', which the British have long since dropped in favour of 'got'.

3. These are forms of the past tense and past participle of the verb "learn". Both are acceptable, but "learned" is often used in both British English and American English, while "learnt" is much more common in British English than in American English.

Vocabulary

British English	American English
trousers	pants
flat	apartment
bonnet (the front of the car)	hood
boot (the back of the car)	trunk
lorry	truck
university	college
holiday	vacation
jumper	sweater
crisps	chips

British English	American English
chips	French fries
trainers	sneakers
fizzy drink	soda
postbox	mailbox
biscuit	cookie
chemist	drugstore
shop	store
football	soccer

Varieties



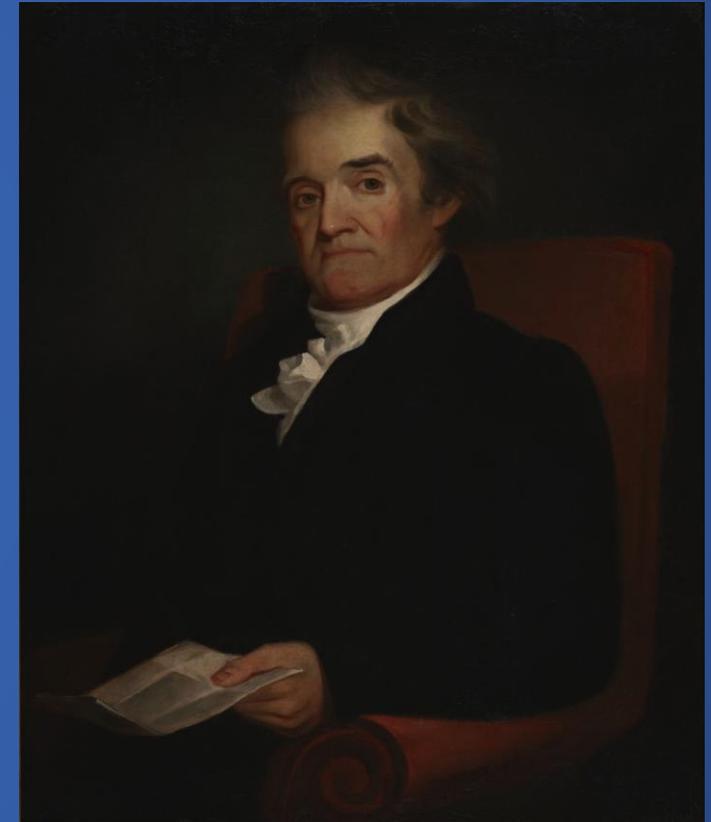
While written American English is largely standardized across the country and spoken American English dialects are highly mutually intelligible, there are still several recognizable regional and ethnic accents and lexical distinctions.

The map above shows the major regional dialects of American English and smaller local dialects.

History of American English

The British introduced the language when they reached America. It took place between 16th and 17th century. At that time the spelling hadn't been standardised.

In 1755, Samuel Johnson wrote the first English dictionary. Meanwhile, in the United States, the lexicographer was Noah Webster. In 1828, he wrote the first American English dictionary. He changed how the words were spelled to make American version different from the British one. It was a way of showing cultural independence.



The picture above shows Noah Webster.

Sources

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