

GRAMMAR

# British and American English: vocabulary

**LEVEL**

Upper-Intermediate  
(B2)

**NUMBER**

EN\_B2\_1082G

**LANGUAGE**

English

## Learning outcomes

- I can recognise examples of British and American English vocabulary.
- I can identify the use of British and American English in a sentence.



## Warm-up

**Do you know any words  
that are used in British  
English?**



**What are their  
American English  
equivalents?**



# British and American English

- Let's look at some **differences** in **vocabulary** between these two varieties of English.
- It doesn't matter which variety of English you use – just be **consistent**!



In Britain, people go on **holiday** and live in **flats**.

In the U.S., people go on **vacation** and live in **apartments**.





# Do you have work tomorrow?



No, tomorrow's the 4<sup>th</sup> of July! It's a **holiday**.

No, tomorrow's **bank holiday** Monday!

A **holiday** in the U.S. is a day when schools, banks and businesses are closed!

In the UK, it's called a **bank holiday**!



# Fill in the gaps

**Complete** the lists using the words from the red boxes.

British  
English

American  
English

1. *film* \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. *cell phone* \_\_\_\_\_

5. *underground* \_\_\_\_\_

6. \_\_\_\_\_

7. *to queue* \_\_\_\_\_

8. \_\_\_\_\_

9. \_\_\_\_\_

10. *sweater* \_\_\_\_\_

11. *rubbish* \_\_\_\_\_

12. \_\_\_\_\_

13. \_\_\_\_\_

14. *trash can* \_\_\_\_\_

subway

bin

to line up

movie

mobile phone

garbage

jumper



# Match the equivalents

Do the activity yourself. Then, **check** your answers in **breakout rooms**.

1

chemist

2

car park

3

town centre

4

shop assistant

5

trolley

6

trousers

7

toilet

8

rubber



a

eraser

b

pants

c

restroom

d

parking lot

e

sales clerk

f

cart

g

drug store

h

downtown



# Write a sentence

1. **Choose** a pair of words.
2. **Write** a sentence using both of them.
3. **Re-write** your sentence in American English.

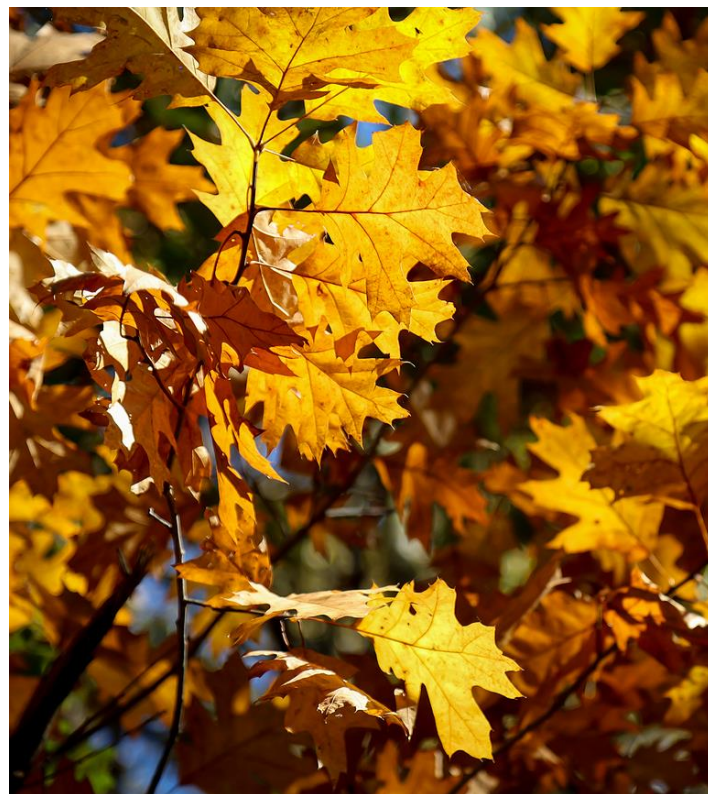
1 autumn, holiday

2 crisps, film

3 jumper, shop assistant

4 town centre, car park

5 mobile phone, jumper





# Guess the American equivalents

**courgette**



z \_ cch \_ n \_

**aubergine**



\_ ggpl \_ nt

**coriander**



c \_ l \_ ntr \_



# Game: Find the pairs

**Match** the American English (pink) with the British English (yellow). Who can do it the quickest?

faucet

ladybird

check

nappy

janitor

cleaner,  
caretaker

phone booth

sweets

ladybug

phone box

diaper

tap

candy

bill



# More vocabulary

- Here are some **more words** which differ in British and American English.

British English	American English
reception	front desk
full stop	period
stock	inventory
cutlery	silverware

# Read each sentence

**Identify** if it's written in British or American English. **Explain** why.

1. I can't believe the start of autumn is next week!
2. Where is the closest store? I need to get some bread.
3. Would you like some biscuits with your tea?
4. You should stop eating those potato chips. They are not good for you.
5. He orders a big portion of chips every time he gets a burger.
6. Come up to the fifth floor! Remember there's no elevator in this building.
7. I live in a modern city where the public transit system, especially the subway, is convenient.





# Pronunciation

**Listen** to your teacher say each word aloud. Are they using British or American pronunciation?

vitamin

tomato

advertisement

schedule

mobile

route

privacy

herb





## Practise your pronunciation

	British English	American English
<b>vitamin</b>	/ˈvɪt.ə.mɪn/	/ˈvaɪ.tə-mɪn/
<b>tomato</b>	/təˈmɑː.təʊ/	/təˈmeɪ.təʊ/
<b>herb</b>	/hɜːb/	/ɜːb/
<b>advertisement</b>	/ədˈvɜː.tɪs.mənt/	/æd.vɜːˈtaɪz.mənt/
<b>schedule</b>	/ˈʃedʒ.uːl/	/ˈskedʒ.uːl/
<b>mobile</b>	/ˈməʊ.baɪl/	/ˈmoʊ.bəl/
<b>route</b>	/ruːt/	/raʊt/
<b>privacy</b>	/ˈprɪv.ə.sɪ/	/ˈpraɪ.və.sɪ/



# Game: how many words can you write in 1 minute?

British English

American English

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# End of the lesson

Idiom

***drop the ball***

**Meaning:** make a mistake and cause something that you are responsible for to fail

**Example:** Let's not **drop the ball** on this. It's really important!



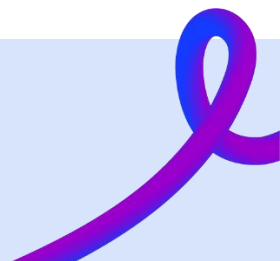
# Additional practice





# Give the American English equivalent

1	underground	>	subway	
2	holiday	>		
3	autumn	>		
4	mobile phone	>		
5	jumper	>		
6	car park	>		





# Read each sentence

**Say** if it's written in British or American English. **Explain** why.

1. I just went on the most amazing two-week vacation to Italy. It was awesome!
2. Has anyone seen my jumper anywhere? I'm freezing!
3. Johnny cut out all processed sugar from his diet, so he doesn't drink soda or eat any candy anymore.
4. You need to put a full stop at the end of a sentence.
5. Please keep your mobile phones switched off for the duration of the performance.
6. Could you please run to the grocery store and grab a pound of zucchinis and half a dozen eggplants?





# Choose four words

1. **Write** two or three sentences telling a short story.
2. **Re-write** your sentence using British English.

sidewalk

candy

front desk

janitor

vacation

eraser

ladybug

restroom

subway

theater

sales clerk

cart

downtown

movie

garbage





# Answer key

- P. 6:** 2. movie  
3. mobile phone  
6. subway  
8. to line up  
9. jumper  
12. garbage  
13. bin
- P. 7:** 1. g, 2. d, 3. h, 4. e, 5. f, 6. b, 7. c, 8. a
- P. 9:** zucchini, eggplant, cilantro
- P. 10:** faucet – tap  
check – bill  
janitor – cleaner, caretaker  
phone booth – phone box  
ladybug – lady bird  
diaper – nappy  
candy – sweets



# Answer key

- P. 12:**
1. British English (*autumn*)
  2. American English (*store*)
  3. British English (*biscuits*)
  4. American English (*potato chips*)
  5. British English (*chips*)
  6. American English (*elevator*)
  7. American English (*public transportation, subway*)
- P. 19:**
2. vacation
  3. fall
  4. cell phone
  5. sweater
  6. parking lot
- P. 20:**
1. American English (*vacation*)
  2. British English (*jumper*)
  3. American English (*soda, candy*)
  4. British English (*full stop*)





# Answer Key

- P. 20:** 5. British English (*mobile phones*)  
**(cont')** 6. American English (*grocery store, zucchinis, eggplants*)



# Summary

## British English vocabulary

- *holiday; flat; bank holiday; film; mobile phone; underground; to queue; jumper; rubbish; bin*
- *chemist; car park; town centre; shop assistant; trolley; trousers; toilet; rubber*
- *courgette; aubergine; coriander; tap; ladybird; bill; nappy; cleaner; phone box; sweets*

## American English vocabulary

- *vacation; apartment; holiday; movie; cell phone; subway; to line up; sweater; garbage; trash can*
- *drug store; parking lot; downtown; sales clerk; cart; pants; restroom; eraser*
- *zucchini; eggplant; coriander; faucet; ladybug; check; diaper; janitor; phone booth; candy*

## More British and American English vocabulary

- **British:** *reception; full stop; stock; cutlery*
- **American:** *front desk; period; inventory; silverware*



# Vocabulary

ladybird

ladybug

faucet

diaper

nappy

full stop

period

stock

inventory

cutlery

silverware

