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DIFFERENCES BETWEEN AMERICAN AND BRITISH DIALECTS

The English language has many varieties of dialects. The most important are American and British dialects. They have a lot of differences in the levels of pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, spelling, and so on. The main reason for this is the vast distance between each country.

The common grammatical differences can be grouped under three levels: differences with the verb, with noun and pronoun, and differences with the preposition. The differences in verb show that American and British have different usage of verb. In both British and American English, the verbs *to have* and *to get* are among the most frequent, especially in speech. The American usage over *gotten* is changing, so is British usage over *have got*.

In a number of American dialects the pronoun *I* occurs when *me* would be in British English. For example: "*Between you and I.*"(AmE); "*Won't he permit you and I to swim?*"(AmE); "*Between you and me.*"(BrE); "*Won't he permit you and me to swim?*"(BrE).

The American and British varieties have some differences with prepositions. For example: to call (to ring) someone on his telephone number (BrE) / to call (to ring) smb. at his telephone number (AmE); opposite to (BrE) / opposite of (AmE), *on the weekend*(AmE) / *at the weekend*(BrE); *on a team*(AmE) / *in a team*(BrE); *please write me soon*(AmE) / *please write to me soon.*(BrE). *The new air service begins January 1*(AmE); *The new air service begins on January 1*(BrE); *I start my vacation Friday*(AmE); *I start my holidays on Friday*(BrE).

In addition, there is a difference in the article, for example: *He's in hospital* (BrE); *He's in the hospital* (AmE).

Probably the major differences between British and American English lie in the choice of vocabulary. For example: *Mean*: (AmE– *angry, bad humored*, BrE – *not generous, tight fisted*); a *lift to the first floor* in England, but *an elevator* in America; *five gallons of petrol* in London, *gas* in America. *Biscuit - dinner roll*(AmE), *cookie*(BrE); *brew - beer*(AmE), *tea*(BrE); *bureau - chest of drawers*(AmE), *writing table/desk*(BrE); *casket - coffin*(AmE), *jewelry box*(BrE); *first floor - ground floor*(AmE), *second" floor*(BrE); *to hire - to employ*(AmE), *to rent*(BrE).

American and British English have differences in spelling. American English has the more economical and phonetic spelling. Unnecessary letters are left out and words are spelled how they sound. An obvious example is the omission in AmE of the letter *u* in words such as *color, neighbor, honor* (AmE) etc. Compare also the

AmE words *traveling*, *jewelry* and *program* with their BrE counterparts *travelling*, *jewellery* and *programme*.

Also the deletion of the second constant letter in many words with double consonant. For example “*traveller–traveler*, *waggon–wagon*” also the replacement of *–re* by *–er* in words of French origin. For example “*theatre–theater*, *centre–center*”.

When a British word ends with “-se”, the American equivalent usually has a “-ze” ending:

AmE– “-ze”: *Analyze*, *Criticize*, *Memorize*; BrE – “-se”: *Analyse*, *Criticise*, *Memorise*; AmE – “-og”: *Analog*, *Catalog*, *Dialog*; BrE – “-ogue”: *Analogue*, *Catalogue*, *Dialogue*; AmE – “-e”: *Encyclopedia*, *Maneuver*, *Medieval*; BrE – “-ae” or “-oe”: *Encyclopaedia*, *Manoeuvre*, *Mediaeval*.

Here are the major differences in pronunciation:

1. Before a voiceless fricative and occasionally [n], British [a] American [æ], e.g., *calf*, *patch*, *pass*, *aunt*;
2. The British [r] is usually pronounced with a flat tongue and hence we have the r-less dialect. The American [r] is usually a retroflex;
3. The British [o] is often an American [a], e.g., *cot*, *dog*, *hot*.
4. The intervocalic British [t] is usually American [d], e.g., *letter*, *water*.

There are several words that are pronounced differently in American and British English: *dance* = [dæns](AmE), *dance* = [dɑ: ns](BrE); *arm* (noun): *arm* = [ɑ: rm](AmE), *arm* = [ɑ: m](BrE).

In spite of the American and British differences, they don't cause big problems.

LITERATURE

1. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comparison_of_American_and_British_English
2. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lists_of_words_having_different_meanings_in_American_and_British_English
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4. <https://ru.scribd.com/doc/16096386/Differences-between-American-and-British-Dialects>