

British and American English 2

WORKSHEET A

Exercise 1

How many differences between British and American English can you find from reading these two short texts?

Mark (Hampshire, England)

'I'm going to rake up the leaves in the garden, then get a DVD for tonight from the shop on the High Street, unless you'd rather go to the cinema. There's no point cleaning the house now because Simon's got his mates coming round to watch the football, and the last time they came they left crisps all over the carpet!'

Mark (New Hampshire, United States)

'My buddy Jim must be one of the most accident-prone people in the world. Last year he went to hospital four times – first he broke his toe playing soccer, then he tripped over and broke his wrist when he was walking out of a store on Main Street, then he burnt himself at a barbecue here in our yard, then he somehow got a potato chip stuck in his throat at the movie theatre!'

Exercise 2

Fill in the gaps to complete the table of British English words and their American equivalents.

BRITISH	AMERICAN	BRITISH	AMERICAN
1. biscuit	c _ _ kie	11. torch	flashl _ _ _ _
2. l _ rry	truck	12. p _ yrise	raise
3. puncture	f _ _ t	13. curtains	dr _ pe _
4. rubbish bin	t _ _ _ h can	14. note (money)	_ ill
5. ground floor	f _ _ _ _ floor	15. bill (e.g. in a restaurant)	ch _ _ k
6. c _ retaker	janitor	16. boot (of a car)	tr _ nk
7. t _ n	can	17. cook _ _	stove
8. zip	zipp _ _	18. return (ticket)	r _ _ nd trip
9. windscr _ _ n	windshield	19. single (ticket)	o _ e-w _ y
10. underground (train system)	subw _ _	20. p _ _ tbox	mailbox

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Exercise 3

Look each of the sentences below and decide whether they are written in British English (B), American English (A), or if they would be the same in both types of English (AB).

Then change the British English sentences into American English, and the American English sentences into British English.

1. Did you get a single or a return?
2. It's a really busy, noisy road – there are trucks going past all the time.
3. She lives on the first floor, so you won't have to go up any stairs.
4. Shall I just put this stuff in the trash can?
5. I got a puncture when I was cycling to work yesterday.
6. My dad works as a janitor at the local school.
7. I went to the shop to buy five tins of peaches and some biscuits.
8. It's one of the biggest cities in Europe.
9. Excuse me, could we have the check please?
10. Yes, thank you, the meal was excellent.
11. It's dark out there, so take a torch.
12. I'm going to have to clean this windshield – I can hardly see out of it. If you could just bring me some water, I'll use the cloth I've got in the trunk.
13. That bag looks far too heavy for you to carry.
14. I need to get this bag repaired because the zip's broken.
15. It's about twenty minutes on the subway.
16. I'd like a new cooker, but we can't really afford it.
17. I hate my job – my boss is an idiot and I haven't had a raise for four years.
18. Their new carpet's a weird colour and it doesn't match the drapes at all.
19. I'm sure I had a twenty-dollar bill in this pocket, so where is it now?
20. Honey, can you go and put this in the mailbox for me?