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# May 2025 OPEN Intermediate Workshop



**American English vs British English**

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# American English vs British English

When working in English in a global company like Micron, you might notice that there are some **differences in the way English is used** by native speakers from different countries. This is because some team members are using **American English** and some **British English**. These differences may include variations in **vocabulary, spelling, grammar, and punctuation**.

The aim of this workshop is to **raise awareness of these cultural differences in English usage**, so you can notice them and understand their meaning.

# Differences in Vocabulary 1

American English	British English
vacation	holiday
elevator	lift
cafeteria	canteen
line	queue
apartment	flat
co-worker	colleague
store	shop
schedule	timetable
cell phone	mobile phone
resume	CV
soccer	football
college	university
trash/garbage	rubbish
trash can	bin
baggage	luggage
first floor	ground floor
aluminum	aluminium

# Differences in Vocabulary 2

American English	British English
gasoline	petrol
truck	lorry
hood (car)	bonnet (car)
trunk (car)	boot (car)
parking lot	car park
intersection	crossroads
highway	motorway
sidewalk	pavement
crosswalk	pedestrian crossing
cab	taxi
movie theater	cinema
pants	trousers
sweater	jumper
cookie	biscuit
candy	sweets
French fries	chips
potato chips	crisps

## Differences in Vocabulary – Example Sentences

- John put the **baggage** in the **trunk** of his car. (US)
- Lots of employees have returned from **holiday**, so there is a **queue** to enter the building. (UK)
- Be careful when throwing away cloths in the **garbage** that have been soaked in **gasoline**. (US)
- She left her car in the **car park** and took the **lift** to the 4<sup>th</sup> floor. (UK)

# Differences in Spelling

American English		British English	
-ize	(e.g., organize, apologize)	-ise	(e.g. organise, apologise)
-yze	(e.g., analyze, paralyze)	-yse	(e.g. analyse, paralyse)
-or	(e.g., color, behavior)	-our	(e.g. colour, behaviour)
-er	(e.g., center, meter)	-re	(e.g. centre, metre)
-e-	(e.g., encyclopedia, pediatrician)	-ae-	(e.g. encyclopaedia, paediatrician)
-e-	(e.g., maneuver, diarrhea)	-oe-	(e.g. manoeuvre, diarrhoea)
-ense	(e.g., defense, license)	-ence	(e.g. defence, licence)
-el-	(e.g., canceled, traveled)	-ell-	(e.g. cancelled, travelled)
-ll-	(e.g., enroll, fulfill)	-l-	(e.g. enrol, fulfil)
-og	(e.g., analog, dialog)	-ogue	(e.g. analogue, dialogue)

## Differences in Spelling – Example Sentences

- She decided to **analyze** the **center** of the wafer. (US)
- He **apologised** for his **behaviour** in the meeting. (UK)
- Hiroshi **canceled** the meeting and **organized** another one. (US)
- Sue had to **enroll** in that course in order to get a **licence**. (UK)

# Differences in Grammar 1

## American English

## British English

### Prepositions

**-in-** (I studied engineering **in** college.)  
**-on-** (What are you doing **on** the weekend?)  
**-through-** (I worked Monday **through** Friday.)  
**-than-** (It's different **than/from** the others.)

**-at-** (I studied engineering **at** university).  
**-at-** (What are you doing **at** the weekend?)  
**-to-** (I worked Monday **to** Friday).  
**-to-** (It's different **to/from** the others.)

### Collective Nouns

The team **was** happy with **its** performance.  
The government **is** doing everything **it** can.

The team **was/were** happy with **its/their** performance.  
The government **is/are** doing everything **it/they** can.

# Differences in Grammar 2

## American English

### Past Simple vs Present Perfect

Aki feels ill. She **ate** too much.

Tom already **saw** the movie.

I can't find my keys. **Did** you **see** them anywhere?

### Choice of Verbs

I am going to **take** a bath.

Please **take** a look at the slide.

I **will** be there later.

**Should** we ask our supervisor about this?

I have **learned** a lot.

## British English

Aki feels ill. She **has eaten** too much.

Tom **has** already **seen** the movie.

I can't find my keys. **Have** you **seen** them anywhere?

I am going to **have** a bath.

Please **have** a look at the slide.

I **shall** be there later.

**Shall** we ask our supervisor about this?

I have **learnt** a lot.

# Differences in Punctuation

## American English

### Quotation marks

“We have no time for a meeting,” Tom said.

Kate said, “I heard him shouting, ‘Fire!’ as well.”

### Periods for titles

Mr. Smith is meeting Dr. Williams tomorrow.

## British English

‘We have no time for a meeting’, Tom said.

Kate said, ‘I heard him shouting, “Fire!” as well’.

Mr Smith is meeting Dr Williams tomorrow.

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# Workshop Activity 1



Select the sentence that is written completely in American English or British English.

Read it out loud.

If possible, explain the reason for your choice.

# Workshop Activity 1

## 1. American English

- a) Should we go home early today to watch the soccer game?
- b) Shall we go home early today to watch the football game?

## 2. British English

- a) That was a dangerous maneuver to do on the highway.
- b) That was a dangerous manoeuvre to do on the motorway.

## 3. American English

- a) She wants to enrol in an engineering course at university.
- b) She wants to enroll in an engineering course in college.

## 4. British English

- a) He decided to go to the canteen to have a break.
- b) He decided to go to the cafeteria to take a break.

# Workshop Activity 1

## 5. American English

- a) The manager said, 'Please drive safely in the car park'.
- b) The manager said, "Please drive safely in the parking lot."

## 6. British English

- a) We analysed the section in the centre of the wafer.
- b) We analyzed the section in the center of the wafer.

## 7. American English

- a) The team was told not to use cell phones while walking on the sidewalk.
- b) The team were told not to use mobile phones while walking on the pavement.

## 8. British English

- a) He opened the boot of his car to get his jumper.
- b) He opened the trunk of his car to get his sweater.

# Workshop Activity 1

## 9. American English

- a) He said, “We are going to use aluminum for that new product.”
- b) He said, ‘We are going to use aluminium for that new product’.

## 10. British English

- a) The manager emphasized the need for more skilled labor.
- b) The manager emphasised the need for more skilled labour.

## 11. American English

- a) I went down in the lift to the ground floor.
- b) I went down in the elevator to the first floor.

## 12. British English

- b) They have invited Dr Tanaka to give a presentation at the weekend.
- d) They have invited Dr. Tanaka to give a presentation on the weekend.

# Workshop

## Activity 2

Select the correct word from the two options to complete each sentence.

Try to be consistent and keep the sentence completely in American English or British English.

Read the two sentences out loud.

If possible, explain the reason for your choices.



## Workshop Activity 2

### 1. Answer choice: rubbish / trash

- a) He decided to throw away an old pair of pants, so he put them in the \_\_\_\_\_.
- b) He decided to throw away an old pair of trousers, so he put them in the \_\_\_\_\_.

### 2. Answer choice: co-workers / colleagues

- a) I went to the canteen with my \_\_\_\_\_ to eat burger and chips for lunch.
- b) I went to the cafeteria with my \_\_\_\_\_ to eat burger and fries for lunch.

### 3. Answer choice: intersection / crossroads

- a) She said, “Turn left at the \_\_\_\_\_ to get to the movie theater.”
- b) She said, ‘Turn left at the \_\_\_\_\_ to get to the cinema’.

### 4. Answer choice: schedule / timetable

- a) We looked at the \_\_\_\_\_ to see when the bus will arrive at her apartment.
- b) We looked at the \_\_\_\_\_ to see when the bus will arrive at her flat.

## Workshop Activity 2

### 5. Answer choice: fall / autumn

- a) She likes to see the colour of the leaves in \_\_\_\_\_.
- b) She likes to see the color of the leaves in \_\_\_\_\_.

### 6. Answer choice: line / queue

- a) There was a long \_\_\_\_\_ at the gas station to get gasoline.
- b) There was a long \_\_\_\_\_ at the petrol station to get petrol.

### 7. Answer choice: program / programme

- a) The college graduates learned a lot of new skills in the training \_\_\_\_\_.
- b) The university graduates have learnt a lot of new skills in the training \_\_\_\_\_.

### 8. Answer choice: highway / motorway

- a) The manager said, 'The delivery will be late due to the number of lorries on the \_\_\_\_\_'.
- b) The manager said, "The delivery will be late due to the number of trucks on the \_\_\_\_\_."