

## British English vs. American English

The two languages differ primarily in the following aspects:

**Vocabulary:** Let us consider some vocabulary differences –

1. Americans use the word apartment whereas in India (or Britain) the word is replaced with flat.
2. Trash is a common term in USA but British English uses the word 'rubbish' for the same.
3. The term ill is specific to the British form of the language. In America, it is replaced with the word sick.
4. The word schedule is specific to the American form. The British form of the word is timetable.
5. The commonly used term toilet or public toilet is hardly heard in America. If in need, ask for a rest room.

**Spelling:** Let us consider some spelling differences –

1. OUR VS OR - In America, words like favour are spelt without the 'U'. The correct spelling according to the American form is favor. Another example would be the word labour which in USA is spelt as labor.
2. RE VS ER - British English spells words like centre, theatre and litre using 'RE', however, American English replaces the 'RE' with 'ER' so centre becomes center, theatre becomes theater and litre becomes liter.
3. ISE VS IZE - British English spells words like specialise, commercialise using 'ISE' but American English replaces the 'ISE' with 'IZE'.
4. CE VS SE - We're used to spelling defence using 'CE' but Americans replace the 'CE' with 'SE', so defence becomes defense.
5. AE VS E - British English spells archaeology with an 'AE'(highlighted), Americans use only 'E' and omit the 'A', thus spelling the word as archeology
6. OEU VS EU - A similar rule applies to words like manoeuvre, which British English spells with 'OEU' whereas American English spells using only 'EU'.
7. OGUE VS OG - British English spells words like Catalogue using 'OGUE' whereas American English spells them as Catalog, thus omitting ue and using 'OG'.

## Let us now take a look at some more rules.

| British English                 | American English           |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Woollen, Jewellery , Travelling | Woolen, Jewelry, Traveling |
| Omelette                        | Omelet                     |
| Pyjamas                         | Pajamas                    |
| Sulphur                         | Sulfur                     |
| Colour                          | Color                      |
| Counsellor                      | Counselor                  |
| Transferral                     | Transferal                 |

**Date and Time:** Let us consider some differences in date and time –

1. In the United States, dates are written in the month/date/year format (12/13/2011). Followers of the British form, though, are more familiar with the 'date/month/year' format (13/12/2011).
2. British English teaches us to write time using a full stop (6.00). American English uses a colon in place of the period, making it look like 6:00.

**Pronunciation :** Certain words are pronounced differently by those who align themselves with American English and those who follow the British form. For example, 'hostile' is pronounced to rhyme with 'file' by the British, whereas, the Americans prefer to homophonise it with 'hostel', even though it is spelt the same way everywhere. The same applies to 'missile'. Other examples include 'privacy', pronounced 'priv-uh-see' by the British but 'pra-eye--vuh-see' by the Americans, and 'semi' pronounced 'sem-ee' by the British and 'sem-eye' by the Americans.

**Titles and acronyms:** The British form omits the period after Dr, Mr, Mrs, etc, while American speakers feel the need for one. They would write, Dr., Mr., and Mrs., etc. The rule works differently when it comes to acronyms. The American form believes in the use of the period after each initial (U.S.), whereas, the British form does not (US).