A Collection of
English Lessons
from around the WWW

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On English Pronunciation

If you can correctly pronounce every word in this poem you will be speaking English better than 90% of the native English speakers in the world

Dearest creature in creation,
Study English pronunciation
I will teach you in my verse
Sounds like corpse, corps, horse, and worse.
I will keep you, Suzy, busy,
Make your head with heat grow dizzy.
So shall I! Oh hear my prayer.
Just compare heart, beard, and heard,
Dies and diet, lord and word,
Sword and sward, retain and Britain,
(Mind the latter, show it's written.)
Now I surely will not plague you
With such words as plaque and ague.
But be careful how you speak:
Say break and steak, but not bleak and streak;
Cloven, oven how and low,
Script, receipt, show, poem and toe...

Saying vs Spelling

I take it you already know
Of tough and bough and cough and dough
Others may stumble, but not you,
On hiccough, thorough, lough and through?
Well done! And now you wish, perhaps,
To learn of less familiar traps?
Beware of heard, a dreadful word
That looks like beard and sounds like bird,
And dead: it's said like bed, not bead
For goodness sake don't call it deed!
Watch out for meat and great and threat
(They rhyme with suite and straight and debt).

A moth is not a moth in mother,
Nor both in bother, broth in brother,
And here is not a match for there
Nor dear and fear for bear and pear,
And then there's dose and rose and lose
Just look them up - and goose and choose,
And cork and work and card and ward,
And font and front and word and sword,
And do and go and thwart and cart -
Come, come, I've hardly made a start!
A dreadful language? Man alive!
I'd mastered it when I was five!

from **The Spelling Society**

Singular and Plural

We'll begin with box; the plural is boxes,
But the plural of ox is oxen, not oxes.
One fowl is a goose, and two are called geese,
Yet the plural of moose is never called meese.
You may find a lone mouse or a house full of mice,
But the plural of house is houses, not hice.
The plural of man is always men,

But the plural of pan is never pen.
If I speak of afoot, and you show me two feet,
And I give you a book, would a pair be a beek?
If one is a tooth and a whole set are teeth,
Why shouldn't two booths be called beeth?
If the singular's this and the plural is these,
Should the plural of kiss be ever called keese?
We speak of a brother and also of brethren,
But though we say mother, we never say methren,
Then the masculine pronouns are he, his, and him;
But imagine the feminine she, shis, and shim!

The Ten Pronunciations of -ough

thought it would
be rough
to plough
through the
slough,
though it was falling
Into the lough that
left me thoroughly
coughing and
hiccoughing

Spell Checker

I have a spelling checker.
It came with my PC.
It plane lee marks four my revue
Miss steaks aye can knot see.

Eye ran this poem threw it.
Your sure real glad two no.
Its very polished in its weigh,
My checker tolled me sew.

A checker is a blessing
It freeze yew lodes of thyme.
It helps me right awl stiles two reed,
And aides me when aye rime.

Each frays comes posed up on my screen
Eye trussed too bee a joule.
The checker pours o'er every word
To cheque sum spelling rule.

Bee fore a veiling checkers
Hour spelling mite decline,
And if we're laks oar have a laps,
We wood bee maid too wine.

Butt now bee cause my spelling
Is checked with such grate flare,
There are know faults with in my cite,
Of nun eye am a wear.

Now spelling does not phase me,
It does knot bring a tier.
My pay purrs awl due glad den
With wrapped words fare as hear.

To rite with care is quite a feet
Of witch won should be proud,
And wee mussed dew the best wee can,
Sew flaws are knot aloud.

Sow ewe can sea why aye dew prays
Such soft wear four pea seas,
And why eye brake in two averse
Buy righting want too please.

Oxymorons

An oxymoron is usually defined as a phrase in which two words of contradictory meaning are brought together:

Clearly misunderstood
Exact Estimate
Small Crowd
Act Naturally
Found Missing
Fully Empty
Pretty ugly
Seriously funny
Only choice
Original copies

An English Game

Place the word “only” anywhere in the sentence:

She told him that she loved him

How to Write Good

1. Avoid Alliteration. Always.

2. Prepositions are not words to end sentences with.

3. Avoid cliches like the plague. They're old hat.

4. Comparisons are as bad as cliches. 5. Be more or less specific.

6. Writers should never generalize.

7. Be consistent!

8. Don’t be redundant; don’t use more words than necessary;
   It’s highly superfluous.

9. Who needs rhetorical questions?

10. Exaggeration is a billion times worse than understatement.

Wordiness

1. a little bit ➞ a bit, a little
2. a number of ➞ some. many
3. advance planning ➞ planning
4, advance warning ➞ warning
5. after the conclusion or ➞ after
6. all or ➞ all
7. ascend up ➞ ascend
8. ask a question ➞ ask
9. ATM machine ➞ ATM
10 based on the tact that ➞ because
11 basic fundamentals ~ tundamentals
12. basically ➞ (delete)
13. be aware of the fact that ➞ note, understand
14. both agree ➞ agree
15 brief summary ➞ summary
16. by means of ➞ by, via
17. cheaper price ➞ cheaper, lower price
18. check and see ➞ check
19. close proximity ➞ near, proximity
20. close scrutiny ➞ scrutiny
21. collaborate together ➞ collaborate
22. collide into each other ➞ collide
23. combine together ➞ combine
24.come to an end ➞ end
25. compete with each other ➞ compete
26. completely destroyed ➞ destroyed
27. completely finished ➞ finished
28. completely opposite ➞ opposite
29. completely surrounded ➞ surrounded
30. completely unanimous ➞ unanimous
31. consensus of opinion ➞ consensus
32. considering the fact that ➞ because, since
33. continue on ➞ continue
34. cooperate together ➞ cooperate
35. descend down ➞ decend
36. despite the fact that ➞ although, even though
37. due to the facr that ➞ › because
38. each and every ➞ each
39. end result ➞ result
40. essentially ➞ (delete)
41. exact same ➞ same
42. famous celebrity ➞ celebrity
43. for the purpose of (gerund) ➞ + to
44 for the reason that ➞ because
45. forward progress ➞ progress
46. free gift ➞ gift
47. has the ability to ➞ › can
48. have an impact on ➞ affect. influence
49. in advance of ➞ before

50. in an effort to ➙ to
51. in light of the fact that ➙ considering
52. in my own personal opinion ➙ in my opinion
53. in order to ➙ to
54. in spite of the fact that ➙ although, though
55. in terms of ➙ regarding (or reword)
56. in the event that ➙ if
57. in the near future ➙ soon (or be specific)
58. is able to ➙ can
59. is located in ➙ is in
60. join together ➙ join
61. make a choice ➙ choose
62. make a decision ➙ decide
63. merde together ➙ › merae
64 more better ➙ * better
65. more often than not ➙ usually
66. mutual agreement ➙ agreement
67. new innovation ➙ innovation
68. notwithstanding the fact that ➙ although, even though
69. one and the same, the same
70. over the course of ➙ throughout, over
71. overexaggerate ➙ exaggerate
72. past history ➙ history
73. pick and choose ➙ pick, choose, select
74. prior to ➙ before
75. proceed forward ➙ proceed
76. rarely ever ➙ rarely
77. really ➙ (delete or replace with stronger adjective)
78. reconsider again ➙ reconsider
79. reflect back on ➙ reflect on
80. regardless of the fact that ➙ although, even though
81. repeat again ➙ repeat
82. retreat back ➙ retreat
83 return back ➙ * return
84. revert back ~ revert
85. share in common ➙ > share
86. subsequent to ➙ » after
87. take into consideration ➙ consider
88. the fact that ➙ (delete "the fact" or rephrase)
89. the maiority of ➙ › most
90. the reason why is that ➙ * because
91. there are times when ➙ sometimes
92. true fact ➙ fact
93. unexpecteo surorise ➙ surorise
94 utize ➙ * use
95. vast majority ➙ majority
96. very ➙ (delete or pick a stronger adjective)
97. when it comes to ➙ regarding (or reword)
98. whether or not ➙ whether
99. with regard to ➙ about
100. with the exception of ➙ except

Fractured Grammar

An Oxford comma walks into a bar, where it spends the evening watching the television, getting drunk, and smoking cigars.

A dangling participle walks into a bar. Enjoying a cocktail and chatting with the bartender, the evening passes pleasantly.

A bar was walked into by the passive voice.

An oxymoron walked into a bar, and the silence was deafening.

Two quotation marks walk into a “bar.”

A malapropism walks into a bar, looking for all intensive purposes like a wolf in cheap clothing, muttering epitaphs and casting dispersions on his magnificent other, who takes him for granite.

Hyperbole totally rips into this insane bar and absolutely destroys everything.

A question mark walks into a bar?

A non sequitur walks into a bar. In a strong wind, even turkeys can fly.

Papyrus and Comic Sans walk into a bar. The bartender says,
"Get out -- we don't serve your type."

A mixed metaphor walks into a bar, seeing the handwriting on the wall but hoping to nip it in the bud.

A comma splice walks into a bar, it has a drink and then leaves.

Three intransitive verbs walk into a bar. They sit. They converse. They depart.

A synonym strolls into a tavern.

At the end of the day, a cliché walks into a bar -- fresh as a daisy, cute as a button, and sharp as a tack.

A run-on sentence walks into a bar it starts flirting. With a cute little sentence fragment.

Falling slowly, softly falling, the chiasmus collapses to the bar floor.

A figure of speech literally walks into a bar and ends up getting figuratively hammered.

An allusion walks into a bar, despite the fact that alcohol is its Achilles heel.

The subjunctive would have walked into a bar, had it only known.

A misplaced modifier walks into a bar owned by a man with a glass eye named Ralph.

The past, present, and future walked into a bar. It was tense.

A dyslexic walks into a bra.

A verb walks into a bar, sees a beautiful noun, and suggests they conjugate. The noun declines.

A simile walks into a bar, as parched as a desert.

A gerund and an infinitive walk into a bar, drinking to forget.

A hyphenated word and a non-hyphenated word walk into a bar and the bartender nearly chokes on the irony.

How to Avoid Mixing Your Metaphors

It's not rocket surgery.
First, get all your ducks on the same page.
After all, you can’t make an omelette
without breaking stride.
Be sure to watch what you write
with a fine-tuned comb.
Check and re-check until the cows turn blue.
It’s as easy as falling off a piece of cake.
Don’t worry about opening up
a whole hill of beans:
You can burn that bridge when you come to it,
if you follow where I’m coming from.
Concentrate! Keep your door closed
and your enemies closer.
Finally, don’t take the moral high horse:
if the metaphor fits, walk a mile in it.

Brian Bilston

Play It By Ear

If a word sequence *sounds* wrong, it probably *is* wrong

Ever wondered why we say tick-tock, not tock-tick, or ding-dong, not dong-ding; King Kong, not Kong King? Turns out it is one of the unwritten rules of English that native speakers know without knowing.

The rule, explains a BBC article, is: “If there are three words then the order has to go I, A, O. If there are two words then the first is I and the second is either A or O. Mish-Mash, chit-chat, dilly-dally, shilly-shally, tip top, sing song, ding dong, King Kong, ping pong.”

There’s another unwritten rule at work in the Little Red Riding Hood, says the article.

“Adjectives in English absolutely have to be in this order: Opinion-sizeage-shape-colour-origin-material-purpose noun. So you can have a lovely little old rectangular green French silver whittling knife. But if you mess with that word order in the slightest you’ll sound like a maniac.”
That explains why we say “little green men,” but Big Bad Wolf” sounds like a gross violation of the “opinion (bad)-size (bad)-noun (wolf)” order. It won’t, though, if you recall the first rule about the I-A-O order. That rule seems inviolable: “All four of a horse’s feet make exactly the same sound, but we always, always say clip-clop, never clop-clip.”

This rule even has a technical name, if you care to know it — the rule of ablaut reduplication — but then life is simpler knowing that we know the rule without knowing it.

Why English is Not Phonetic

Simple, because the alphabet is the Latin alphabet, and Spanish sounds roughly like Latin sounded.

Latin's phonetics are very similar to Italian and Spanish phonetics, Romans sounded pretty much like Italians or Spaniards sound. They had less intonation than Italian and a few different consonant sounds than Spanish, but roughly sounded like these 2 languages (and some other Romances).

So as the alphabet is designed for Latin phonetics, it works for Spanish or Italian.

English sounds nothing like Latin so the Latin alphabet does not cover the sounds.

For example Latin had 5 vowels (it had 6, but the sixth æ, was a mixture of a and e that disappeared at the end from Latin). Spanish has exactly the 5 Latin vowels: a e i o u. English has dozens of vowels that Latin did not have, full and fool are different vowel sounds, reed, read and rid, fun and fan, this and these… those are English sounds with no equivalent in Latin, so there is no Latin letter for them. This causes English to look for ways of writing these sounds making structures like ee or oo or ea or ou… to make those sounds that have no letter. Spanish doesn't have this problem, Latin letters represent our sounds perfectly fine. The same with consonant sounds of all sorts starting with W which is solved by writing the consonant double or the sound of the H, which takes a mute letter in Latin and gives it a sound that doesn't exist and needs a letter! “No sound is using this letter? Ok, I'll take it for this sound that needs one” XD. If you look at Spanish, the H is mute and the W doesn't exist, because we don't need them, our sounds match Latin.

Some other languages like French whose phonetics have diverged a lot from Latin, do the same as English and have very hard to adapt phonetics. Other Germanic languages like German or Nordic languages solve this by adding new vowels ä, ë, ü, ø, å… and new consonants too such as the German ß, the W like English or clusters like CH in German. English took a different path from German, instead of adapting your Germanic phonetics to Latin alphabet by making up new letters, English makes pairs of letters that sound different (most of the times, others they don't), making for an incredibly irregular writting.

Portuguese is another Romance language that has diverged a lot from Latin in vowel sounds, what the Portuguese do is the same as Germans, make new letters: ã, õ, á, ô… and one consonant that French and Portuguese copied from Spanish “ç", but Spanish dropped this one as the sound it had disappeared from Spanish again, but Portuguese and French keep it from Spanish.

Slavic languages have even more different phonetics from Latin, but many of them use the Latin alphabet too, so they have a BIG mess of made up letters đ, ł, ţ, ğ…

Spanish has some letter we had to make up, like this ñ but that letter comes from Latin double n, so it's not fully made up either, it's just shortening the two nn by putting one on top of the other! (ñ) Other sounds diverged from Latin are LL in Spanish or Italian GL which actually is believed that Latin had it too but didn't have a letter for it. Or the Spanish CH, which existed too in late Latin and Church Latin, but not in Classical Latin. And most importantly the Spanish Z and J which are the consequence of the biggest change in Spanish phonetics, the sibilants readjustment of the 16th century in which Spanish had developed a lot of sibiliant sounds and all of them collapsed to Z, S and J but different from Latin J and Z. But everything else in Spanish is exactly like Latin.

Lingua latina et lingua hispana similes sonant

Any Spanish speaker reading that with Spanish pronunciation will sound pretty much like a Latin speaker (in fact most Spanish speakers will understand tha Latin phrase). That is what makes Spanish so “phonetic”.

But it is Phonetic Enough

A teacher tells a story about teaching reading:

I had a Kindergartner who I knew was on the cusp of reading. She knew her letter sounds. I had her tell me the sounds of the letters in *cat* and then I told her to say the sounds fast and see if she could figure out the word. She did it and quickly figured out that it was cat. Then she looked at me with one of the most incredulous looks I have ever seen.

She said, “That's all reading is? I just say the sounds and make words?”

I burst out laughing. She couldn't believe that this mystery called reading that she had heard about her whole life could be so simple. It had to be harder than that.

American Schools used to teach language using Phonics. One woman remarked that’s how she learned and it ruined her spelling.

America’s “Official” Language

Fact is, while English is the standard language spoken in this country, the United States of America has NO official language and we should not be attempting to enforce the use of one language over another. America was built on immigrants from all over the world, who brought their languages to our country. American English is a pastiche of the influence of many languages (see what I did there?) and we should be celebrating the variety and colorfulness they bring to our everyday speech, not trying to suppress it.

As other respondents have noted, there are a variety of reasons why a person might speak another language in public, but as long as it doesn't affect you (and if they're not talking to you, it shouldn't), you have no reason to care what another person is doing with their time.

Why it’s Good to be Bilingual
or at least respectful of linguistic differences

An Amish farmer is walking through his field when he sees a guy drinking from his pond, scooping it up with his hand.

The farmer says, "Trinken sie nicht das wasser, die kuhe unddie schweine haben in ihm geschissen," *('Don't drink the water, the cows and the pigs shit in it').*

The guy shouts back, "This is America! I don't understand your gibberish! Speak English, you moron!"

The farmer replies, "Use two hands, you'll get more."

Overheard at a grocery store by someone waiting in line behind a woman speaking on her cellphone in another language. Ahead of her was a white man:

After the woman hangs up, he speaks up.

Man: "I didn't want to say anything while you were on the phone, but you're in America now. You need to speak English."

Woman: "Excuse me?"

Man [*very slowly*]: "If you want to speak Mexican, go back to Mexico. In America we speak English"

Woman: "Sir, I was speaking Navajo. If you want to speak English, go back to England."

Insults

These insults are from an era before the English language got boiled down to 4-letter words. Insults then, had some class!

"I am enclosing two tickets to the first night of my new play;
Bring a friend, if you have one."
George Bernard Shaw to Winston Churchill.
"Cannot possibly attend first night, I will attend the second...If there is one."
Winston Churchill, in response.

A member of Parliament to Disraeli:
"Sir, you will either die on the gallows, or of some unspeakable disease."
That depends, Sir," *said Disraeli*, "whether I embrace your policies or your mistress."

"He had delusions of adequacy."
Walter Kerr

"I have never killed a man, but I have read many obituaries with great pleasure."
Clarence Darrow

"He has never been known to use a word that might send a reader to the dictionary."
William Faulkner (about Ernest Hemingway).

"Thank you for sending me a copy of your book; I'll waste no time reading it."
Moses Hadas

"I didn't attend the funeral, but I sent a nice letter saying I approved of it."
Mark Twain

"He has no enemies, but is intensely disliked by his friends.."
Oscar Wilde

"I feel so miserable without you; it's almost like having you here."
Stephen Bisho"He is a self-made man and worships his creator."
John Bright

"I've just learned about his illness. Let's hope it's nothing trivial."
Irvin S. Cobb

"He is not only dull himself; he is the cause of dullness in others."
Samuel Johnson

"He is simply a shiver looking for a spine to run up."
Paul Keatin

"In order to avoid being called a flirt, she always yielded easily."
Charles, Count Talleyrand

"He loves nature in spite of what it did to him."
Forrest Tucker

"Why do you sit there looking like an envelope without any address on it?"
Mark Twain

"His mother should have thrown him away and kept the stork."
Mae West

"Some cause happiness wherever they go; others, whenever they go."
Oscar Wilde

"He uses statistics as a drunken man uses lamp-posts... For support rather than illumination."
Andrew Lang

"He has Van Gogh's ear for music."
Billy Wilde

"I've had a perfectly wonderful evening. But this wasn't it."
Groucho Marx

"He has all the virtues I dislike and none of the vices I admire."
Winston Churchill

More Wisdom

And a few more insults

"The trouble ain't that the is too many fools, but the lightening ain't distributed right"
Mark Twain

"I never forget a face, but in your case I'lll make an exception"
-*Groucho Marx*

"If your brains were dynamite, there wouldn't be enough to blow your hat off"
Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.

"Two things are infinite, the universe and human stupidity, and I'm not sure about the former"
Albert Einstein

"I like your opera, I think I will set it to music"
Beethoven

After a drunk commented,
"I can't bear fools"
"Apparently your mother could"
Dorothy Parker

"They don't make them like Hubert [Humphrey] but to be on the safe side he should be castrated anyway"
Hunter S. Thompson

"The thing that impresses me most about America is the way parents obey their children"
King Edward VIII

"America will allways do the right thing—after they've tried everything else"
Winston Churchil

When asked about Civilization,
"I think it would be a good idea"
Mahatma Ghandi

"If you gave [Jerry] Falwell an enema, you could bury him in a matchbox
Christopher Hittchens

"Women who want to be equal to men lack ambition"
Timothy Leary

"Thinking is the most unhealthy disease in the world, and people die of it just as they die of any disease. Luckily, in England at any rate, thought is not catching"
Oscar Wilde

"The tautness of his face sours ripe grapes"
William Shakespeare

On FDR, "if he became convinced tomorrow that coming out for cannibalism would get him the votes he needs so sorely, he would begin fattening a missionary in the White House yard come Wednesday:
H.L. Menken

"If you want anything said, ask a man. If you want anything done, ask a woman"
Margaret Thatcher

"I always wanted somebody, but now I realize I should have been more specific"
Lily Tomlin

"The woman speaks eighteen languages and can't say 'no' in any of them"
Dorothy Parker

"It is Homer who has chiefly taught other poets the art of lying skillfully."
Aristotle

"In my many years I have come to a conclusion that one useless man is a shame, two is a law firm, and three or more is a congress"
John Adams

"Whatever women must do they must do twice as welll as men to be thought half as good. Luckily, this is not difficult"
Charlotte Whittton

About a performance,
“What did you think of the singer’s execution ?”
“I’m all for it”
Calvin Coolidge.

Calvin Coolidge, nicknamed “Silent Cal,” once sat next to a woman at a dinner party who reportedly said to him, “I have made a bet, Mr. Coolidge, that I could get more than two words out of you.”
To which he replied, “You lose.”

Names for Groups of Animals

A

Alligators: congregation
Antelope: herd
Ants: colony, an army
Albatross: rookery
Apes: troop, shrewdness

B

Baboons: troop, flange
Badgers: cete
Barracudas: battery
Bass: shoal
Bats: colony, cloud, cauldron
Bees: hive, swarm, grist
Bears: sloth, sleuth; Cubs litter
Beavers: colony. family
Bitterns: sedge
Buzzards: wake
Bobolinks: chain
Bloodhounds: sute
Bees: swarm
Boar: sounder
Boys: blush
Buffalo: gang, obstinacy
Butterflies: kaleidoscope, flutter, swarm

C

Camels: caravan, train, flock, herd
Caterpillars: an army
Cats: clowder, glaring, pounce, nuisance, clutter; Kittens litter, kindle, intrigue; Wild cats destruction
Cattle: herd, mob, drove
Cheetahs: coalition
Chickens: brood, peep; Chicks clutch, chattering
Clams: bed
Cobblers: drunkship
Cobras: quiver
Cockroaches: intrusion
Colts: rag, rake
Cormorants: gulp
Cooks: hastiness
Coots: cover
Cows: kine, drove, herd, fold; twelve, more cows are a flink
Coyotes: band
Crabs: cast, consortium
Cranes: sedge
Crocodiles: float, bask
Crows: murder, conspiracy, horde, unkindness

D

Deer: herd, parcel
Dogs: pack (if wild), cowardice (if curs); Puppies litter
Dolphins: pod
Donkeys: drove, pace
Dotterels: trip
Doves: dule; pitying (only for turtle doves)
Ducks: brace, team, badling; flock (in flight); raft, paddling, (on water)

E

Eagles: convocation
Eels: bed
Elephants: herd, parade, memory
Elk: gang, herd
Emus: mob

F

Falcons: cast

Ferrets: business, fesnyng, hob (male), jil (female), kit (young)
Finches: charm
Fish: school, shoal, run, haul, catch, draft, nest
Flamingos stand, flamboyance
Flies: swarm, hatch, business
Foxes: skulk, leash, earth
Frogs: army, a colony

G

Geese: gaggle (on the ground); flock, skein (when in flight)
Giraffes: tower
Gnats: cloud, horde
Gnus: implausibility
Goats: herd, tribe, trip, drove, flock
Goldfinches: charm
Goldfish: troubling
Gorillas: troop, band,
Grasshoppers: cloud
Greyhounds: leach
Grouse: pack

H

Hares: down, husk
Hawks: cast; kettle (in flight); boil (2 or more spiraling in flight)
Hedgehogs: array
Herons: sedge, siege
Herrings: army
Hippopotami/hippopotamuses: bloat, thunder
Hogs: drift, parcel
Horses: team, harras
Hounds: pack, mute, cry
Hummingbirds: charm
Hyenas: clan, cackle

I

Iguanas: slaughter

J

Jaguars: prowl, shadow
Jays: scold, party
Jellyfish: bloom, fluther, smack, brood

K

Kangaroos: troop, mob
Komodo dragons: bank

L

Lapwings: deceit
Larks: exaltation, ascension
Lemurs: conspiracy
Leopards: leap
Lice: flock
Lions: pride, sawt
Lobster: risk
Locust plague, cloud
Lyrebirds: musket

M

Magpies: tiding, tittering, charm, gulp
Mallards: brace; sord (in flight)
Manatees: an aggregation
Mares: stud
Martens: richness
Merchants: faith
Minnows: steam
Moles: labor
Monkeys: troop, barrel, cartload
Mosquitos: swarm, scourge
Mules: pack, barren, span

N

Nightingales: watch
Narwhals: blessing
Nuns: superfluity

O

Octopi/Octopuses: consortium, rally
Otters: family, romp, raft
Owls: parliament
Oxen: team, team, yoke

Oysters: bed

P

Pandas: embarrassment
Parrots: pandemonium, company
Partridges: covey, tuxedo, convent, muster, parcel, rookery
Peacocks: muster, ostentation
Pelicans: pod, squadron
Penguins: colony
Pheasants: nest; nide (a brood); bouquet (taking off); nye, guff (in flight);
Pigeons: flock, flights
Pigs: drift, sounder, litter, team (older pigs); drove, litter (younger pigs)
Plovers: congregation; wing (in flight)
Polar bears: pack, aurora, celebration
Ponies: string
Porcupines: prickle
Porpoises: pod, school, herd, turmoil
Prairie Dogs: colonies, coteries
Ptarmigans: covey

Q

Quail: bevy, covey, jug

R

Rabbits: colony, warren, nest, herd, down
Raccoons: gaze; boars (males); sows (females)
Rats: colony, pack, swarm, mischief
Rattlesnakes: rhumba
Ravens:: an unkindness
Rhinoceroses :stubbornness, crash
Rooks: bulding

S

Salamanders: maelstron
Salmon: family
Sardines: run
Seagulls: squabble
Seals: harem
Sharks shiver
Sheep: drove, flock
Skunks: stench
Sloths: bed
Snails: rout, walk, hood, escargatoire
Snakes: nest, pit, den, knot
Snipes: walk, wisp
Sparrows: host
Spiders: cluster
Squid: audience
Squirrels: scurry; dray (mother and babies in nest)
Starlings: murmuration
Stingrays: fever
Storks: muster, mustering
Swans: bevy, game, lamentation; a wedge (in flight)

T

Teal: spring
Thrushes: mutation
Tigers: ambush, streak
Toads: knot, knab
Trout: hover
Turkeys: gang, posse, rafter
Turtles: bale, nest

V

Vipers: generation (biblical reference)
Vultures: venue, committee, kettle; wake (feeding on carcass)

W

Wasps: pledge
Weasels: colony, gang, pack
Whales: pod, school, herd, gam
Wolves: pack; route/rout (when moving)
Wombats: wisdom
Woodcocks: fall
Woodpeckers: descent

Worms: bunch

Z

Zebras: herd, zeal, dazzle

Odd Names for Odd Things

glabella = the space between your eyebrows

petrichor = the way it smells after the rain =

aglet = the plastic or metallic coating at the end of your shoe laces.

wamble the rumbling of stomach.

vagitus = the cry of a new born baby is called

tines = the prongs on a fork are called

phosphenes = the sheen or light that you see when you close your eyes and press your hands on them.

box tent = the tiny plastic table placed in the middle of a pizza box is called

overmorrow = the day after tomorrow =

minimus = your tiny toe or finger

agraffe.the wired cage that holds the cork in a bottle of champagne is called

vocables = the 'na na na' and 'la la la', which don't really have a meaning in song lyrics.

iterrobang = when you combine an exclamation mark with a question mark (?!).

columella nasi = the space between our nostrils.

armscye = the armhole in clothes where the sleeves are sewn.

dysania = the condition of finding it difficult to get out of the bed in the morning.

griffonage = legible hand-writing.

tittle = the dot over an "¡" or an !.

crapulence = that utterly sick feeling you get after eating or drinking too much.

Bannock device = the metallic device used to measure your feet at the shoe store.

50 Phrases Only Southerners Use

from *Southern Living* via *Apple News*

Southerners know that sometimes there's just no other way to get your point across. Here are some favorite Southern phrases and sayings.

Someone once said that when you visit the South, you need a translator. It's true, we do have a mouthful of sayings that only Southerners understand. However, if you're from the South, you know that sometimes there's just no other way to get your point across. If you're trying to be nice, but you just can't quite let it go, "bless your heart" is a go-to. When you've met the girl of your dreams, chances are she is "pretty as a peach." If you just heard your mama come home and you haven't finished your chores, she will definitely be "madder than a wet hen." Take a look at some of our favorite Southern slang and sayings that we just couldn't live without.

Expressing How You Feel

Bless Your Heart

It can be deployed sincerely, but if you're hearing "bless your heart" in the South, it probably has an edge to it. It's almost always accompanied by a good-natured, perhaps slightly exasperated, shake of the head. It can express empathy or judgment, or it can be said in place of a person's true feelings. Don't worry, though, everyone hears this every now and again.

She Was Madder Than A Wet Hen

Have you ever seen a wet hen? If so, you know that being madder than a wet hen is very mad indeed. Some say farmers used to dunk their hens when they got broody.

If I Had My Druthers

"Druthers" roughly translates to "I would rather," meaning, "If had things my way…" The phrase is celebrated in song in the hilarious, Southern-inspired Broadway musical Li'l Abner, in which the title character sings "If I had my druthers, I'd druther have my druthers than anything else I know." And really, wouldn't we all druther have our druthers?

Full As A Tick

If you've just had a big Southern lunch, complete with cornbread, collard greens, and pecan pie, you're definitely full as a tick. It's a vivid phrase, and it's an accurate one too.

Worn Slap Out

When you're exhausted in an I'm-so-beat-I-can't-go-on kind of way, you're definitely worn slap out. It is a physical and mental state a few degrees past weary and

just this side of dog-tired. It happens often during a Southern summer when the heat rises and the temperatures shoot past 100.

Hankering
When you have a hankering for a tomato sandwich, you're in the mood for it. What's for dinner tonight? I have a hankering for chicken potpie.

Tore Up
She was tore up about not getting invited to the ladies' luncheon. It truly upset her.

Might Could
This is simply "might" with Southern flair. I might could pick that package up for you. It's a possibility.

Expressing Time And Place

Fixin' To
I'm fixin' to tell you that this phrase is as Southern as sweet tea. When you're fixin' to do
something, it's going to happen, but you also may decide to take your sweet time.

Over Yonder
When you're in the South, "over yonder" is a distant direction—any direction. The phrase may be accompanied by a gesture indicating north, south, east, or west. Over yonder down the road. Over yonder past the field. Over yonder toward the water tower. This phrase can be intensified by the addition of the word "way," as in "way over yonder."

Til The Cows Come Home
Settle in, because whatever we're talking about is going to take all day. Cows aren't known for their speed, and they are usually out and about, wandering until feeding time. Farmers know that if you do something 'til the cows come home, it's going to take all day.

If The Creek Don't Rise
Translated, this means: "We'll be there unless something out of our control stops us." Unlike the United States Postal Service, whose motto proclaims "Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night" will keep them from their routes, sometimes a Southern visit is thwarted by a rising creek or other unexpected bump in the road.

Let Me Let You Go
Since we'd never dare hang up the phone while Mama's chatting away, this may be the only way to end your conversation in a timely manner.

Carry Me to…
If you're not from the South, you might wonder why someone would carry another person to the store. This phrase isn't literal. You simply take someone to the store.

When you provide transportation for someone, you are carrying them in your car or on your bike to the next location.

A Month Of Sundays
If you haven't seen your mother in a month of Sundays, it's been too long. This expression is another way of saying something has taken a long time or that something is unlikely to happen. Better visit your mom.

Expressing Value

Hill Of Beans
In the South, a hill of beans is its own measuring stick. Whether you're talking about volume or value, a hill of beans isn't worth much. That means whatever you're talking about is worth less than very little.

More Than Carter's Got Little Pills
This one originates from the 19th century when Carter Products marketed "Little Liver Pills" across the country. Apparently, Carter had a great many pills, because the phrase found its way into the Southern vocabulary. It indicates there is a lot of something, from problems to money. You may still hear it if you stop into a country store.

No Bigger Than A Minnow In A Fishing Pond
When you arrive on the banks of the fishing pond on Saturday mornings, you're hoping for a good catch—enough big catfish and bream to fry up for the family on Saturday night. If you find only minnows, though, they look even smaller compared to the heavy catch you hoped for. No bigger than a minnow in a fishing pond is as tiny as can be.

You Can't Make A Silk Purse Out Of A Sow's Ear
We're not talking about purses here. This phrase means that if something isn't good to begin with, you can't make anything of value from it.

Plumb
You may be not just truly, completely, absolutely tired, but plumb tired. Your neighbor may be plumb-crazy. This is the absolute of absolutes.

Hotter Than Blazes
Get you some sweet tea. It's hot, y'all. You may hear a declaration about the heat as "hotter than blue blazes." Either way, it's a day for sipping on the porch.

Piddlin'
A piddlin' is a small amount that's not worth bothering with. Someone who is piddlin' in the yard is wasting time and not doing a whole lot.

Expressing Love Or Beauty

Pretty As A Peach
This is a high compliment in the South since Southern states are known for their peaches. In fact,
Georgia and South Carolina produce more peaches than any other states in the South. And of course, there's nothing prettier than a warm summer day picking peaches in the sunshine.

Gimme Some Sugar
What Grandma says when you pull in the driveway, pop out of the car, and come running. She's not looking for sweets; she wants a hug and a kiss.

Gussied Up
This means you are dressing up and looking nicer than your everyday look. Whether you're going to church, a wedding, or some other special event, you'll wear your best for the occasion.

Sayings Of Exclamation and Surprise

Hold Your Horses
Stop right there! This one may be self-explanatory, but we can imagine it originating back in the days of stagecoaches, when horse-and-buggy pairs filled the streets. If you hear this one, it's best to slow down.

Well, I Declare
A multipurpose Southernism. If you use this phrase, you could be declaring any number of things: surprise, dissent, happiness. The only requirement is that you declare it loud and proud.

He Was Funny As All Get Out
"All get out" finds its way into Southern phrases constantly, and it intensifies any statement. I was surprised as all get out. It was bad as all get out. Anything to the degree of "all get out" is something to talk about.

Heavens To Betsy
An exclamation—of surprise, anger, happiness, really any emotion—that is appropriate in nearly every Southern scenario.

Hush Your Mouth
Grandma might whisper this one over her hymnal if she sees you cutting up in church on Sunday morning. We admit that we've heard this Southernism more than once.

Well, I S'wanee
Instead of "Well, I swear," Southerners have adopted a geographically inspired alternative. "Well I s'wanee" evokes the Southern Suwannee River. Or, depending on where you live, it could be Sewanee, the small college town in Tennessee.

I'll Tell You What
This is a point of emphasis and exclamation that often ends without any additional telling at all. It can also be the opening to striking a bargain, sharing a strongly held opinion, or offering a piece of advice you may or may not want to hear.

Well, Butter My Backside And Call Me a Biscuit
You told your grandma you came in first place and this is her response. It has nothing to do with buttered biscuits. This is just a long and descriptive way to show surprise at something unbelievable, something you never thought would happen. The surprise is usually positive.

I Reckon
I reckon "I reckon" can replace any number of phrases, such as I guess, I suppose, I think, and I imagine. It is a quintessential Southern phrase, said by friends and family on porches and in rocking chairs all across the South.

Sayings That Describe People

Too Big For His Britches
Unarguable Southern criticism. Translated, it means, "He sure does think a lot of himself." If you hear this one, you should probably pause a moment. Southerners tell it like it is—no matter what it is—so think of this as a learning moment.

She's Got Gumption
Gumption is spirit, courage, spunk, boldness, and initiative. If someone tells you that you've got gumption, you should thank them, and then walk a little taller, because you've received a lovely Southern compliment. Southerners adopted this phrase wholeheartedly from its early usages in 1700s England and Scotland (where it meant "common sense"). In the 1900s, the word evolved, taking on a Southern spin as well as new meanings such as "courage" and "get-up-and-go."

A Rooster One Day And A Feather Duster The Next
This is our creative way of saying that you shouldn't crow like a rooster about your wealth and belonging today, because it could all disappear tomorrow.

Quit Being Ugly
No, we don't mean you need to go fix your hair. This phrase isn't about physical appearance. Rather, when this phrase is used, we'd like you to mind your manners and stop acting inappropriately. You'll most often hear it coming out of Mama's mouth when the kids are running amok.

He Thinks The Sun Comes Up Just To Hear Him Crow
When you hear this phrase, it's the Southern way to say a person thinks highly of himself. The person in question is cocky and thinks when they talk, everyone wants to hear what they have tosay.

Livin’ In High Cotton
If a person is living in high cotton, it means success. It comes from the antebellum South and refers to plentiful cotton that grew high and promised a good crop, which meant a good profit. This phrase is used to mean life is good.

The Porch Light's On But No One's Home
While there are many ways to say it, this is a polite and colorful way to say a person is not very bright.

He Ain't Got The Sense God Gave A Goose
This is another nice way to say that someone is ignorant or isn’t using their brain.

Y'all
Let’s talk contractions. When talking to two or more people in the South, you don’t refer to them as “you” or even “you all.” It’s y’all.

Expressions About Problems

Can't Never Could
Positive thinking, Southern style. If you think you can't, you won't be able to accomplish something, but if you think you can, you'll succeed. We like to read this as one of the greatest Southern encouragements, but, like most of these phrases, you can use it however you'd like.

That’s Cattywampus
While this phrase may sound made up, it's simply our multisyllabic manner of saying something is askew. This 19th-century phrase was once used to refer to some fierce, imaginary beast, until we went off course and adopted the current meaning of "awry."

It’s Blowin Up A Storm
If you've ever been caught in a summer storm, you know that you can feel, smell, and see a storm blowin' up across the wide Southern skies. These skies can darken at a moment's notice, and summer afternoons often see winds churning and heavy rain clouds blowing in to cool that Southern summer heat.

Hissy Fit
If you’ve ever had a tantrum because Grandma’s mac and cheese ran out before you got a second helping, you know what a hissy fit is. Even if there’s nothing left to scrape in that pan, use your manners and move along. A proper Southerner behaves—no hissy fits allowed.

Three Sheets To The Wind
This expression has a nautical origin, referring to the sheets that control the sails. When the sheets are loose, the ship rocks uncontrollably. Southerners use the

phrase as a polite way to say someone who has had too many porch cocktails is very drunk.

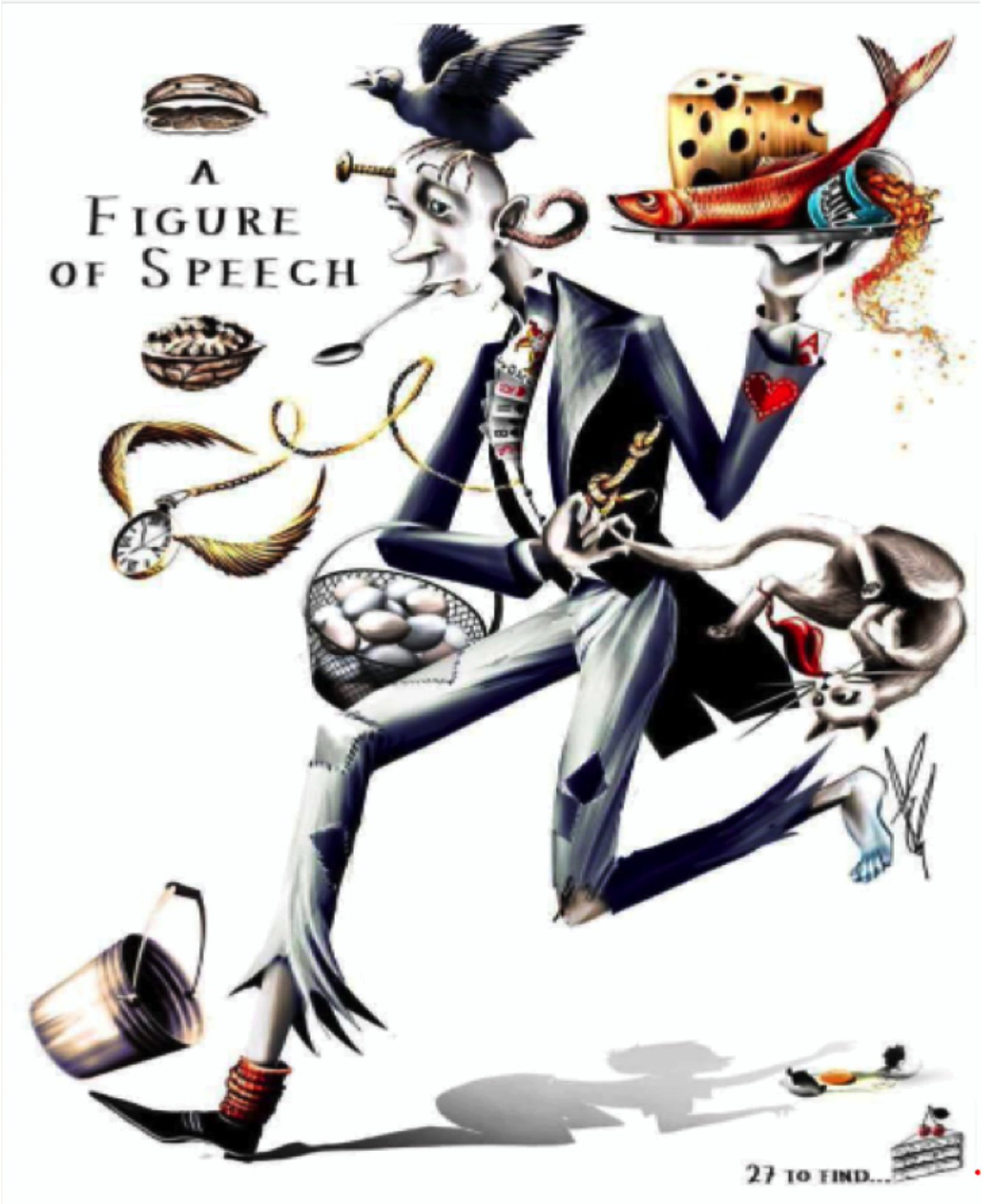
Preachin' To The Choir

When you are preachin' to the choir, you are trying to convince someone who already agrees with you. Save your breath. You're all in solidarity.

It'll All Come Out In The Wash

Just like dirt and stains, worries and problems will wash away. Whatever is bothering you isn't serious, and it will eventually be resolved with no lasting effects. So don't worry.

A Figure of Speech



Key to Figures of Speech

1) Spilt the beans
2) Kicked the bucket
3) Hit the nail on the head
4) Keeping all the eggs in one basket
5) Ace up the sleeve
6) Cherry on the top
7) Piece of cake
8) Walking on egg shells
9) Cat got your tongue
10) Born with a silver spoon
11) Time Flies
12) Swing a cat by the tail
13) Wear your heart on your sleeve
14) Red herring
15) Playing your cards close to your chest
16) Getting cold feet
17) Rags to riches
18) Pull up your socks
19) Head over heals
20) Tied up in knots
21) A shadow of oneself
22) More holes than Swiss cheese
23) Served on a silver platter
24) A sitting duck
25) In a nutshell
26) Earworm
27) Joker in the pack

English Sayings Explained

The apple of my eye
This Old English phrase was first attributed to King Aelfred (the Great) of Wessex, AD 885, in Gregory's Pastoral Care, but also appears in Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream.

Hold a candle to
This phrase originates from when apprentices were expected to hold the candle up, so their more experienced colleagues could see what they were doing. The phrase first appeared in print in Sir Edward Dering's The fower cardinal-vertues of a Carmelite fryar, in 1641.

Chow down
'Chow down' was first used by the U.S. military during WWII. 'Chow' is a Chinese breed of dog, that became a western slang term for food due to the Chinese's reputation for eating dog meat.

Come up trumps
'Come up trumps' is a variant of 'turn up trumps', which has been used since the early 17th century. "Trump" is a corruption of triumph, which was the name of a popular card game during this period.

A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush
This medieval proverb comes from the sport of falconry, where the 'bird in the hand' (the preying falcon) was worth more than 'two in the bush' - the prey.

Hair of the dog that bit you
This term for a hangover cure is another medieval saying, originating from the belief that once bitten by a rabid dog, the victim would be cured by applying the same dog's hair to the wound. The first use of it being applied to drinking was in John Heywood's 1546 tome A dialogue conteinyng the nomber in effect of all the prouerbes in the Englishe tongue.

Off the record
This American phrase was first attributed to President Franklin Roosevelt in 1932, who was recorded in The Daily Times-News saying "he was going to talk 'off the record', that it was mighty nice to be able to talk 'off the record' for a change and that he hoped to be able to talk 'off the record' often in the future."

A sight for sore eyes
Jonathan Swift, author of Gulliver's Travels, first used this phrase in A complete

collection of genteel and ingenious conversation, 1738, with the line “The Sight of you is good for sore Eyes.”

A stone’s throw
This term for ‘a short distance’ is a variation of ‘a stone's cast’, first used in early editions of the Bible, but it fell out of use. Writer John Arbuthnot revived it in The History of John Bull, in 1712.

Absence makes the heart grow fonder
This sweet saying came from the Roman poet Sextus Propertius’ Elegies: “Always toward absent lovers love's tide stronger flows.” In 1832, the modern variant of the phrase was coined by a ‘Miss Strickland’ in The Pocket Magazine of Classic and Polite Literature.

The Acid Test
This term came from the California Gold Rush in the 19th century, when prospectors and dealers used acid to distinguish gold from base metal - if the metal dissolved in a mixture of hydrochloric acid and nitric acid, it was real.

An apple a day keeps the doctor away
Was this catchy rhyme a proverb from Pembrokeshire, or Devon? The earliest recording of the phrase in 1866, states “Eat an apple on going to bed, And you'll keep the doctor from earning his bread” is from the former. But in 1913, Elizabeth Wright recorded this phrase from the latter: “Ait a happle avore gwain to bed, An’ you’ll make the doctor beg his bread; or as the more popular version runs: An apple a day Keeps the doctor away.”

Cool as a cucumber
Despite sounding like a modern-day phrase, Cool as a cucumber actually first appeared in John Gay's Poems, New Song on New Similies, in 1732: “I ... cool as a cucumber could see The rest of womankind.”

Busy as a bee
Chaucer coined the term in the Squire’s Tale, from his Canterbury Tales, around 1386-1400.

As happy as Larry
This saying has Australia and New Zealand origins, but who is ‘Larry’? There are two contenders. The first is late nineteenth-century Australian boxer Larry Foley, who never lost a fight. The other is a deriviation of the Australian/New Zealand slang term ‘larrikin’, meaning a rough type or hooligan.

Bring home the bacon
This phrase is often attributed to the story of Dunmow Flitch. In 1104, a couple in Great Dunmow, Essex, impressed the Prior of Little Dunmow with their love and devotion so much, that he awarded them a flitch [a side] of bacon.

A baker's dozen
This phrase is widely believed to originate from medieval times, when English bakers gave an extra loaf when selling a dozen in order to avoid being penalized for selling a short weight. Bakers could be fined, pilloried or flogged for selling 'underweight' bread.

Ball and chain
This rather crude description of a wife refers to the ball and chain strapped to a prisoner's leg in American and British prisons in the early 19th century.

Barking mad
The most probable meaning for this phrase is a reference to rabid dogs, barking in their madness. A more interesting (but less likely) tale is that 'barking mad' originates from the east London suburb of Barking, where there was an asylum for the insane during the medieval period.

Basket case
Originally, this term was used by the US military after WWI, referring to soldiers who had lost arms and legs and had to be carried by others.

Bee in your bonnet
This phrase was first recorded in Alexander Douglas's Aeneis, in 1513: "Quhat bern be thou in bed with heid full of beis?". It has been speculated that the bonnet could refer to the protective headgear beekeepers wear.

Beat around the bush
Beat around the bush evolved from "beat about the bush", a term used in birdhunting to rouse the prey out of the bushes, and into nets. Grouse hunters still use beaters today.

Two peas in a pod
Referring to the fact that two peas in a pod are identical, this phrase dates from the 16th century, and appeared in John Lyly's Euphues and his England, in 1580: "Wherin I am not unlike unto the unskilfull Painter, who having drawen the Twinnes of Hippocrates, (who wer as lyke as one pease is to an other)."

Born with a silver spoon in one's mouth
Although this phrase was thought to be British, referring to the upper classes born into privilege, the first recorded use was in America in 1801, in a speech made in U.S. Congress: "It was a common proverb that few lawyers were born with silver spoons in their mouths."

A man after my own heart
This saying comes from the Bible (King James Version): Samuel 13:14: "But now thy kingdom shall not continue: the LORD hath sought him a man after his own

heart, and the LORD hath commanded him to be captain over his people, because thou hast not kept that which the LORD commanded thee."

Cut of your jib
Sir Walter Scott brought this phrase into common use in 1824, but what actually is a jib? This triangular sail is used on sailing ships, and as each country has its own style of 'jib', the 'cut of your jib' determines where a boat originates from.

Namby Pamby
'Namby Pamby' was a nickname invented in the eighteenth century by poets John Gay, Alexander Pope and Jonathan Swift to mock the English poet and playright Ambrose Philips. Philips, a tutor to King George's grandchildren, gained notoriety for the sycophantic poems he wrote about his charges, often using babyish language such as "eensy weesy"– and his rival poets gave his own name the same treatment.

The female of the species is more deadly than the male
This now famous phrase is a line from Jungle Book author Rudyard Kipling's poem The Female of the Species , published in 1911.

Frog in the throat
The earliest use of this name for a sore throat, was actually supposed to be a 'cure'. In The Stevens Point Journal, November 1894, the Taylor Bros advertised a medicine called 'Frog in the Throat' that will "cure hoarseness" for only 10 cents a box. What a bargain…

Fools rush in
This is a shortened line from English poet Alexander Pope's An Essay on Criticism, 1709: "For Fools rush in where Angels fear to tread". The 'fools' in question are literary critics – although fool did not have such negative connotations in the 18th century.

Fly off the handle
Coined by American writer Thomas C Haliburton in 1843 (he also invented "won't take no for answer" and "ginger up"), this phrase was inspired by the way an axe-head will fly off its handle if loose.

Fly by the seat of your pants
This aviation term emerged in 1938 in US newspapers, to describe pilot Douglas Corrigan's (slightly perilous) flight from the USA to Ireland.

Flogging a dead horse
Dating from the 17th century, a "dead horse" was a term for work which a person had been paid for in advance (and already spent).

Gee Whiz!
First used in the late 19th century, Gee Whiz is actually shorthand (or a "minced oath" in linguistic terms) for Jesus.

Get the sack
This slang term for getting fired originates in France, and alludes to tradesmen, who would take their own bag or "sac" of tools with them when dismissed from employment

Wide Berth
Originally a nautical term, a "berth" is a large space where a ship can be moored.

Go down like a lead balloon
The US version of this phrase "Go over like a lead balloon", first appeared in a Mom-N-Pop cartoon in several newspapers in 1924. It then fell out of use until after WWII – and was said to inspire a certain heavy metal band to name themselves Led Zeppelin.

Gadzooks!
This word brings comic strip superheroes to mind, but like Gee Whizz, it's another minced oath – meaning "God's words", and first used in various 17th century plays.

Goody two shoes
Good two shoes comes from a Christian retelling of Cinderella, a nursery tale named The History of Little Goody Two-Shoes, published in 1765. The poor orphan of the title only has one shoe – but is given two shoes by a rich man as a reward for her virtue.

Green-eyed monster
Shakespeare coined this term in The Merchant of Venice, when Portia says: "And shuddering fear, and green-eyed jealousy! O love, Be moderate;". He then used green eyed monster again in his most famous play about jealousy – Othello.

Saved by the bell
Contrary to popular belief, this phrase didn't priginate from the popular 90s sitcom. 'Saved by the Bell' is boxing slang from the late 19th century. A boxer who is in danger of losing a bout can be 'saved' from defeat by the bell that marks the end of a round.

Dead Ringer
This word was used in US horse-racing at the end of the 19th century. A 'ringer' is a horse substituted for another of similar appearance in order to defraud the bookies.

Bad Books
In the Middle Ages, ‘one’s books’ meant ‘one’s reckoning or cognizance’. So to be 'out of someone's books' meant you were no longer part of their life or of interest to them.

In Spades
The expression ‘in spades’, used to described a large amount, is a 20th century US word used in Bridge and card games, referring to Spades as one of the highest ranking suits.

I’ll be there with bells on
The first record of this phrase in print is in F. Scott Fitzgerald's The Beautiful and the Damned, 1922: "All-ll-ll righty. I'll be there with bells!"

In stitches
Another Shakespeare coinage, although not used again until the 20th century. In Twelfth Night, 1602, Maria says: “If you desire the spleen, and will laugh yourself into stitches, follow me.”

In the limelight
Limelight is an intense white light widely used in 19th century theatres to illuminate the stage. Clearly, actors who were the centre of attention on stage being said to be in the limelight.

I**n the buff**
A buff-coat was a light browny/yellow leather tunic worn by English soldiers up until the 17th century. The original meaning of ‘in the buff’ was simply to be wearing such a coat. Later on, ‘in the buff’ was used to mean naked, due to the colour of the skin, which is similar to the buff coat.

Keeping up with the Joneses
This American term emerged in 1913, when Arthur (Pop) Momand started a Keep Up With The Joneses comic strip in the New York Globe. The strip was so popular in, that in 1915 a cartoon film of the same name was released.

Mad as a hatter
19th century Mercury used to be used in the making of hats. This was known to have affected the nervous systems of hatters, causing them to tremble and appear insane. Mercury poisoning is still known today as ‘Mad Hatter’s disease’.

Sayings Used Today That Kids Won't Understand

It’s funny how our technology changes, yet our vocabulary still reflects a time long gone. We remember a time when records and train travel were common. Even though kids won’t know what these sayings really refer to, they’ll still be used years from now

Broken Record
Few kids today will understand the annoying sound a broken record makes, skipping on repeat. But, most kids know the phrase means someone who sounds repetitive.

Roll the Window Down
Before power-everything, we rolled down the windows of a car with a crank that rolled. Well, ok, so maybe the kids of classic car collectors will understand this one.

Hang Up the Phone
Back then you actually had to hang up the phone on the receiver in order to end the call. Kids who’ve only ever used cell phones or cordless phones won’t have a clue how we used to talk on the phone.

Rewind
Ok, due to the resurgence in cassette tapes, some kids may know what this one means. Remember rewinding machines for VHS tapes? Blast from the past!

Close But no Cigar
Once upon a time, cigars were among the prizes given out at carnivals. When you inevitably did not win, this phrase was the only consolation prize.

Been Through the Ringer
Back when washing day was an all-day affair, the clothes would need to be wrung out. Even folks who had a washing machine often did not have a dryer. Most kids today wouldn’t even know what a wringer is!

On the Flip Side
The other side of the record is something kids won’t experience. They still use this term, many without understanding where it comes from.

Blowing Off Steam
Back when trains were the main form of long-distance transport for people and for cargo, the steam engines had to occasionally release steam in order to stabilize the whole mechanism. It was so much fun to ride the train back then! Kids today are really missing out.

Ditto
Ditto is a popular term these days, but most kids have no idea that it refers to an early form of copy machine. Used from the 1920s to the 1980s, the small machine produced mimeograph-like copies on the cheap.**Drop a Dime**
Way back when people used public pay phones, you would drop a dime into the coin slot in order to make a call. It's hard to believe sometimes that a call used to be that cheap!

Johnny Law
The hero of the day, Johnny Law, will fight for justice! The DC comic book character of Johnny Law made such an impression on us that we still use this phrase to mean police officers. In the Golden Age of comics, from the 1930s into the 1950s, Johnny Law was a role model for kids across America.

Clean Slate
Chalkboards used to be used in every single classroom. Back in the old days, they were made with slate. Thus, a clean slate is the fresh start of a new day, when the mistakes of yesterday have been erased. Kids today are used to dry erase boards and computers.

Ring Up a Purchase
Oh so many years ago, a cash register was manual and had an actual physical bell inside of it that rang when the lever was pulled for the bill total. Remember hearing that familiar sound?

S**tay Tuned**
Back when TV and radio stations had to be tuned to the right frequency to o get good reception and enjoy your program, before a commercial the announcer would tell everyone to "stay tuned" for the rest of the show. How long has it been since you used a tuning dial?!

Origin of Some Sayings

They used to use urine to tan animal skins, so families used to all pee in a pot & then once a day it was taken & sold to the tannery. If you had to do this to survive you were “piss poor.”

But worse than that were the really poor folk who couldn’t even afford to buy a pot; they “didn’t have a pot to piss in” and were the lowest of the low.

The next time you are washing your hands and complain because the water temperature isn’t just how you like it, think about how things used to be. Here are some facts about the 1500s:

> Most people got married in June because they took their yearly bath in May, and they still smelled pretty good by June. Since they were starting to smell, however, brides carried a bouquet of flowers to hide the body odor. Hence the custom today of carrying a bouquet when getting married.
>
> Baths consisted of a big tub filled with hot water. The man of the house had the privilege of the nice clean water, then all the other sons and men, then the women, and finally the children. Last of all the babies. By then the water was so dirty you could actually lose someone in it … hence the saying, “Don’t throw the baby out with the Bath water!”
>
> Houses had thatched roofs-thick straw-piled high, with no wood underneath. It was the only place for animals to get warm, so all the cats and other small animals (mice, bugs) lived in the roof. When it rained it became slippery and sometimes the animals would slip and fall off the roof, resulting in the idiom, “It’s raining cats and dogs.”
>
> There was nothing to stop things from falling into the house. This posed a real problem in the bedroom where bugs and other droppings could mess up your nice clean bed, therefore, a bed with big posts and a sheet hung over the top afforded some protection. That’s how canopy beds came into existence.
>
> The floor was dirt. Only the wealthy had something other than dirt, leading folks to coin the phrase “dirt poor.”
>
> The wealthy had slate floors that would get slippery in the winter when wet, so they spread thresh (straw) on floor to help keep their footing. As the winter wore on, they added more thresh until, when

you opened the door, it would all start slipping outside. A piece of wood was placed in the entrance-way, subsequently creating a “thresh hold.”

In those old days, they cooked in the kitchen with a big kettle that always hung over the fire.. Every day they lit the fire and added things to the pot. They ate mostly vegetables and did not get much meat. They would eat the stew for dinner, leaving leftovers in the pot to get cold overnight and then start over the next day. Sometimes stew had food in it that had been there for quite a while, and thus the rhyme, “Peas porridge hot, peas porridge cold, peas porridge in the pot nine days old.”

Sometimes they could obtain pork, which made them feel quite special. When visitors came over, they would hang up their bacon to show off. It was a sign of wealth that a man could, “bring home the bacon.” They would cut off a little to share with guests and would all sit around and “chew the fat.”

Those with money had plates made of pewter. Food with high acid content caused some of the lead to leach onto the food, causing lead poisoning death. This happened most often with tomatoes, so for the next 400 years or so, tomatoes were considered poisonous.

Bread was divided according to status. Workers got the burnt bottom of the loaf, the family got the middle, and guests got the top, or the “upper crust.”

Lead cups were used to drink ale or whisky. The combination would sometimes knock the imbibers out for a couple of days. Someone walking along the road would take them for dead and prepare them for burial.. They were laid out on the kitchen table for a couple of days and the family would gather around and eat and drink and wait and see if they would wake up, creating the custom of holding a wake.

England is old and small and the local folks started running out of places to bury people. So they would dig up coffins and would take the bones to a bone-house, and reuse the grave. When reopening these coffins, 1 out of 25 coffins were found to have scratch marks on the inside and they realized they had been burying people alive, so they would tie a string on the wrist of the corpse, lead it through the coffin and up through the ground and tie it to a bell.

Someone would have to sit out in the graveyard all night (the grave-yard shift.) to listen for the bell; thus, someone could be, saved by the bell or was considered a dead ringer.

The History of the Middle Finger

Not strictly English, but…

Before the Battle of Agincourt in 1415, the French, anticipating victory over the English, proposed to cut off the middle finger of all captured English soldiers. Without the middle finger it would be impossible to draw the renowned English longbow and therefore they would be incapable of fighting in the future. This famous English longbow was made of the native English Yew tree, and the act of drawing the longbow was known as 'plucking the yew' (or 'pluck yew'), Much to the bewilderment of the French, the English won a major upset and began mocking the French by waving their middle fingers at the defeated French, saying, See, we can still pluck yew!
Over the decades Americans have since changed up the words , the 'pluck yew' is now "f**K you" and the words often used in conjunction with the one-finger-salute! It is also because of the pheasant feathers on the arrows used with the longbow that the symbolic gesture is known as 'giving the bird.' And yew thought yew knew every plucking thing.

From the Ohio Guardian

British and American English

"Two Countries separated by a common language"
George Bernard Shaw

Key: Britsh ↔ American (Notes) [optional]
Br=British, Am=American

A

A year back ↔ A year ago
Afters ↔ Dessert
All ↔ Inclusive
Alsatian ↔ German shepherd
Aluminium ↔ Aluminum
Anorak ↔ Parka
Antenatal ↔ Prenatal
Anticlockwise ↔ Counterclockwise
Br: appointed (People are appointed for each action)
Am: assigned (People are assigned to each job function)
Archaeology ↔ Archeology
Assure ↔ Ensure
At a single shot ↔ In one step
Attache ↔ Briefcase
Automobile ↔ Automobile, Car (Am: Vehicle for other highway transport)
Autumn ↔ Fall
Avail of ↔ Use

B

Back of beyond ↔ Middle of nowhere (BFE?)
Bank holiday ↔ National holiday
Batch ↔ Class ?
Bill ↔ Check (at a restaurant)
Bills ↔ Invoices
Bin ↔ Garbage [can]
Biscuit ↔ Cookie, Cracker
Blinds ↔ Shades (on windows)
Block of flats ↔ Apartments
Bloke ↔ Guy
Bobby ↔ Policeman, Cop
Bonnet ↔ Hood (vehicles)

Book ↔ Reserve (as hold for use)
Boot ↔ Trunk (vehicles)
Bootlace ↔ Shoelace, Shoestring
Brooch ↔ Pin
Bureau ↔ Chest of drawers

C

Cabinet maker ↔ [Skilled] Carpenter
Cafe ↔ Diner
Car components ↔ Car parts
Car park ↔ Parking lot
Caravan ↔ Motor home, Trailer (3rd wheel)
Carrier bag ↔ Shopping bag
Cashier ↔ Teller (Am: tellers in banks, Cashiers in stores)
Catalogue ↔ Catalog
Centre ↔ Center
Chat show ↔ Talk show
Chat up ↔ Flirt
Cheap ↔ Inexpensive
Chemist ↔ Pharmacist
Cheque ↔ Check
Chief editor ↔ Editor-in-chief
Christian name ↔ First name or given name
Cinema ↔ Movie
Cinema hall ↔ Movie theater
Cloakroom ↔ Checkroom (?)
Clothes peg ↔ Clothes pin
Clubbed ↔ Joined ?
Colour ↔ Color
Conscription ↔ Draft (into Military)
Cooker Stove, Oven
Copse ↔ Thicket
Cotton ↔ wool Cotton (?)
Counterfoil ↔ Stub (as in remaining short piece) ?
Creche ↔ Day care center
Crisps ↔ Potato chips
Crossroads ↔ Intersection
Cul de sac ↔ Dead end
Kerb ↔ Curb
Current account ↔ Checking account

Curriculum vitae (CV) ↔ Résumé (In Br a résumé is a summary)
Cutting ↔ Clipping (eg from a newspaper)

D

Daft ↔ Stupid
Dear ↔ Expensive
Deduce ↔ figured
Defence ↔ Defense
Departmental store ↔ Department store
Dependent ↔ Dependant
Dialling code ↔ Area code
Dialogue ↔ Dialog
Diary ↔ Appointment book (In Am, diary is a personal written account)
Din into ↔ Hammer on (emphasize a point or idea)
Distension ↔ Distention
Diversion ↔ Detour
Do the needful ↔ Do what is necessary
Downmarket ↔ Seedy
Downwards ↔ Downward
Draughts ↔ Checkers
Dressing gown ↔ Bathrobe
Dummy ↔ Pacifier
Dustbin ↔ Garbage can (wastebasket ?)
Duvet ↔ Comforter

E

Earthing ↔ Grounding (electrical)
Eiderdown ↔ Quilt Comforter
Elastoplast ↔ Band-aid (both brand names for bandages)
Electric fire ↔ Heater (electric)
Else ↔ Otherwise
Enterprise ↔ Company
Estate Agent ↔ Realtor
Expiry ↔ Expiration

F

FA Cup ↔ Superbowl of Soccer (?)
Fancy (verb) ↔ Like
Favourite ↔ Favorite
Fetch ↔ Retrieve, get
Fill a form ↔ Fill out a form
Film ↔ Movie/film

Ground Floor ↔ First floor (i.e., Br first floor is Am second floor)
Fishmongers' ↔ Fish Store
Fixed ↔ Scheduled
Flat ↔ Apartment
Flyover ↔ Overpass
Folio ↔ Stock certificate, or share
Football ↔ Soccer
Form ↔ Grade
Fortnight ↔ Two weeks
Fringe ↔ Bangs (hair?)
Full stop ↔ Period (punctuation)
Furore ↔ Furor

G

Gaffer ↔ Boss (in Theater, Lighting Director)
Gammon ↔ Ham
Gaol ↔ Jail
Garden ↔ Yard ?
Gas fire ↔ Gas heater
Gear lever ↔ Gear shift, stick [-shift]
Gents ↔ Men's room
Glycerine ↔ Glycerin
Goose pimples ↔ Goose bumps
Guard ↔ Conductor (on trains?)

H

Hair pin ↔ Bobby pin
Handbag ↔ Purse
Facility (capability) Building, center
Hedgerow ↔ Hedge
Hence ↔ Therefore
Hereunder ↔ “the following”, “listed [below]”
High street ↔ Main street
Hire purchase ↔ Credit
Holiday ↔ Vacation
Honour ↔ Honor
Hood ↔ Vinyl Top (of convertible)
Housing Estate ↔ Tenement
humour ↔ Humor

I

Ice lolly ↔ Popsicle

Identity parade ↔ Lineup (police)?
increase ↔ Hike (the cost of...)
In good nick ↔ In good condition
Interval ↔ Intermission
Ironmongers' ↔ Hardware store
J
Jacket potato ↔ Baked potato (potato with skin on)?
Jam ↔ Jelly
Jelly ↔ Gelatin, Jell-O (US term is proprietary)
Jeweller ↔ Jeweler
Jewellery ↔ Jewelry
Job vacancy ↔ Job opening
Joining date ↔ Hiring date
Joint ↔ Roast (use caution with joint in America)
Jumble sale ↔ Yard sale, Garage sale
Jumper ↔ Sweater

K

Keeper ↔ Curator
Kerb ↔ Curb

L

Labour, ↔ Labor
Lad ↔ Boy
Ladies' ↔ Lady's room
Ladybird ↔ Ladybug
Lamps ↔ Lights, eg. headlights, tail lights, &c. (in the context of cars)
Lead ↔ Cord (household electrical wire)
Leader page ↔ Editorial page
licence ↔ license
Lift ↔ Elevator
Limited, Ltd ↔ Incorporated, Llc
Loo ↔ Bathroom
Lorry ↔ Truck
Lounge ↔ Living Room

M

Mackintosh (Mac) ↔ Raincoat
Majored in ↔ Majored in (Am Universities only)
Mange tout ↔ Snow peas
Manoeuvre ↔ Maneuver
Match ↔ Game

Mean ↔ Stingy
Carousel ↔ Merry-go-around
Metre ↔ Meter (Br: meter for a device and "metre" for length)
Mince ↔ Ground beef
Minder ↔ Babysitter or Bodyguard ?
Motorway ↔ Highway, Freeway

N

Nail varnish ↔ Nail polish
Nappy ↔ Diaper
Natter (noun or verb) ↔ Chat
Naturist ↔ Nudist
Naughts and crosses ↔ Tic-Tac-Toe
Nick ↔ Steal (verb), prison (noun)
No mean task ↔ No easy task
Note ↔ Bill (money)
Nought ↔ Naught
Number plate ↔ License Plate
Nursery ↔ Kindergarten (Am nursery is for infants)

O

Off license ↔ Liquor store, Package (or State store)
Old age pensioner ↔ Senior citizen
On holiday ↔ On vacation
Once ↔ After (Am: one time) ?
Over the moon ↔ Elated
Over the top ↔ Carried away

P

Pack ↔ Deck (of playing cards)
Panda car ↔ Police car
Paraffin ↔ Kerosene
Parting ↔ Part
Pavement ↔ Sidewalk
Pay slip ↔ Paycheck
Per cent ↔ Percent
Petrol ↔ Gas (as gasoline, Am, gas has other uses)
Petrol pumps ↔ Gas pumps
Pickle ↔ Relish ?
Pilchards ↔ Sardines
Pinch ↔ Steal
Pitch ↔ Playing field

Plait ↔ Braid
Plimsolls ↔ Sneakers
Plough ↔ Plow
Porridge ↔ Oatmeal
Post (noun or verb) ↔ Mail
Postal code ↔ Zip code
Postman ↔ Mail man/letter carrier
Power point ↔ Electrical outlet
Power up ↔ Turn on
Pram/perambulator ↔ Baby carriage, stroller
Presenter ↔ Newscaster
Press up ↔ Push up
Programme ↔ program
Property ↔ Real estate
Pub ↔ Bar
Pulses ↔ Beans
Pumps ↔ Sneakers ?
Put paid to ↔ Put an end to
Pvt. Ltd. Inc, ↔ Co., Corp.

Q

Query ↔ Question, ask (Am: Query is used only in a technical context)
Queue ↔ Line, (as in Wait in line)
Raise bills ↔ Prepare invoices
Redundant ↔ Unemployed
Reel ↔ Spool
Removal ↔ Moving ?
Removal man ↔ Mover
Removal van ↔ Moving van
Return ↔ Round-trip ?
Reverse charge call ↔ Collect call
Ring ↔ Call
Roundabout ↔ Traffic circle
Row ↔ Quarrel, argument?
Rubber ↔ Eraser
Rubbish Garbage (waste food), Trash
Rucksack ↔ Backpack

S

Sack (verb) ↔ Fire (from a job)
Saloon car ↔ Sedan

Savory biscuit ↔ Cracker
Scatty ↔ Scatter-brained
Sceptic ↔ Skeptic
Scheme Plan
Serviette ↔ Napkin
Share broker ↔ stock broker
Shop assistant ↔ Sales clerk
Shopping centre ↔ Mall
Short dress ↔ Jumper, mini-skirt (Br jumper means a sweater)
MufflerSilencer Silencer (guns?)
Single ↔ One-way ?
Snooker ↔ Billiards
Socket ↔ Outlet
Sod ↔ Unpleasant person
Solicitor, lawyer, barrister ↔ Lawyer, attorney
Sort code ↔ Routing number (in banking)
Spanner ↔ Wrench
Speciality ↔ Specialty
Spot ↔ Pimple ?
Spot on ↔ Perfect
Squash ↔ Juice concentrate
State ↔ Explain, describe
State school ↔ Public school
Stipulation ↔ Rule, law
Stock ↔ Inventory
Stone ↔ Fourteen pounds (weight)
Brook ↔ Stream
Creek ↔ Inlet (bay)
Subway ↔ Pedestrian crossing ?
Surgery ↔ Examination room (Doctor's)
Sweets ↔ Candy
Swimming costume ↔ Bathing suit

T

Tap Faucet
Tarmac ↔ Asphalt, Black-top
Telly ↔ TV
Terrace ↔ Bleachers
Theatre ↔ Theater
Timber ↔ Lumber (Am: Timber is forest, Lumber is cut)

Timetable ↔ Schedule
ITin ↔ [Tin-] Can
Tissues ↔ Kleenex
Torch ↔ Flashlight
Tout ↔ Broker ?
Tower block ↔ High-rise
township ↔ town
Traffic signals ↔ Traffic lights
Trainers ↔ Sneakers
Tram ↔ Streetcar
transport ↔ Transportation
Transport cafe ↔ Truck stop
Treacle ↔ Molasses
Trunk-call ↔ Long-distance call
Tuition ↔ Instruction
Tyre ↔ Tire

U

Underground ↔ Subway
Updation ↔ Update
Upmarket ↔ Classy
Upwards ↔ Upward

V

Van ↔ Delivery truck ?
Vicar, minister, rector. ↔ Pastor, minister, preacher

W

Wardrobe ↔ Closet ?
Water closet ↔ Bathroom
Wellingtons Gumboots ↔ Boots, galoshes ?
Wholefood ↔ Healthfood
Windscreen ↔ Windshield
Wish ↔ Want ?
Wonky ↔ Unstable
Way out ↔ Exit

Z

Zebra Crossing ↔ Pedestrian Crossing
Zed ↔ Zee (the letter)
Zip ↔ Zipper

The differences between English and American English are considerable.
They span areas such as spelling, grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, usage and idioms.
There are various dialects of American English, these have been generalized together here.
Sentence Structure
American English has simpler sentence structures than English. At its best, American English is more direct and vivid than its counterpart.
English: lay off is a preferable American expression to Br make redundant.
English: As well as going shopping, we went to the park.
American English: We went to the park and also went shopping.
English: Britons go to hospital or in hospital.
American English: Americans go to the hospital or in the hospital.
English chooses between one or other thing.
American English chooses between one thing or the other
English takes a decision.
American English makes a decision.
Please could English have the menu? (Please may introduce or end a request in ↔ English)
Can American English have the menu, please? (Please always ends a request in American English)
English appeals against a legal decision or sentence.
American English appeals a legal decision or sentence.English has got a new car.
American English has a new car.
English has a bath. (Have, have got and has are more common in ↔ English.)
American English takes a bath. (Take and took are more common in American English.)
English went for a swim.
American English took a swim.
English looks forward to future.
American English looks forward to the future.
English: Have you got her address?
American English: Do you have her address?
English is rich enough to retire.
American English is rich enough that he/she/they can retire.
English: Go and see what you have done.
American English: Go see what you did.
English is in jubilant mood.
American English is in a jubilant mood.
Spelling

American English is more phonetic than English. The main spelling differences are listed below:

• -eable/-able

The silent e in some adjectives is often omitted in American English. For example, likable is used instead of likeable and unshakeable becomes unshakable.

• -ae/-oe

In American English, the composite vowel is replaced by a single e. For example, medieval instead of mediaeval; anesthetic instead of anaesthetic; gynecology instead of gynaecology; diarrhoea instead of diarrhea.

• -se/-ze

Some words that are spelled with s in English end with z in American English. For example, organise and organize; civilise and civilize; analyse and analyze; paralyse and paralyze.

• -ce/-se

In English, the verb that relates to a noun ending in –ce is sometimes given the ending –se. For example, advice (noun) and advise (verb); device (noun) and devise (verb); practice (noun) and practise (verb). American spelling follows the same distinction between advice/advise and device/devise because the spelling change is accompanied by a slight change in the sound of the word. When the noun and the verb are pronounced in the same way such as practice/practise, American English spelling reflects only the –ce form, that is practice. However, American English extends the use of –se to other nouns that are spelt with –ce in ↔ English. For example, defense instead of defence; offense instead of offence; pretense instead of pretence.

• -e/-ue

The final silent e or ue of several words is omitted in American English but retained in ↔ English. For example, analog instead of analogue; catalog instead of catalogue; dialog instead of dialogue.

• -our/-or

Words such as candour, colour, demeanour, favour, valour, and behaviour lose the u in American English. For example, candor, color, demeanor, favor, valor, and behavior.

• -re/-er

Some words ending in re in ↔ English end in er in American English. For example, centre, fibre, sombre, and metre become center, fiber, somber, and meter in American English. However, there are exceptions such as cadre, lucre, massacre, ogre, etc.• -t/-ed

English uses -t in words such as spelt, learnt, dreamt, burnt. American English uses -ed. For example, spelled, learned, dreamed, and burned.

• -oul/-ol

Some words spelled with oul in English are spelled with ol in American English.
For example, mould and smoulder become mold and smolder in American English.
• Some items are written as two words in English and as one word in American English.
For example, any more, de luxe and per cent become anymore, deluxe, and percent in American English.
Grammar
• Shall/will
Shall (including its variants such as shan't) is more common in English. For example, Shall you be at the embassy? No, I am afraid I shan't.
Will is more common in American English. It is also used as a rough equivalent of must. For example, That will be my brother at the door.
• Should/would
Should is mostly used in English, particularly in advice-giving formulas, in polite first-person statements and in its putative use. It is rarely used in American English.
English We should be happy to comply with your request.
I should dress warmly if I were you.
It is astonishing that they should leave without informing me.
I demanded that he should leave.
That would be the postman at the door.
American English, I demanded that he leave.
It is astonishing that they left without informing me.
Would in American English is used as an equivalent for used to.
When I was young, I would get up early.
• Can/may
Both are used freely on both sides of the Atlantic for ability as well as permission.
• Can't/mustn't
Can't is generally used in ↔ English rather than in American English. For example, You can't go out in the rain.
Mustn't is popular in American English. For example, You mustn't go out in the rain.
• Must/have (got) to
Have (got) is more common in English.
For example,
This must have been the best novel this year.
Have you eaten yet?
They have already left
Must is more common in American English.
For example,

This must be the best novel this year.
Did you eat yet?
They left already
• Had got/had
Had got is typically used in English. For example, She left because she'd got a lot to do would be written as She left because she had a lot to do in American English.Hyphenation
In American English, most nouns with prefixes such as anti, pre, sub, re, and co are spelled as a single word. For example, antisocial, cooperation, preempt, and subcommittee.
In English, these words are hyphenated. For example, anti-social, co-operation, pre-empt, sub-committee.
Punctuation
• Full Stop
In English, the punctuation mark used at the end of a sentence is called a full stop. In American English, it is called a period.
• Exclamation mark
In English, the punctuation mark (!) used at the end of an exclamation is called an exclamation mark. In American English, it is called an exclamation point.
• Quotation marks
Single quotation marks or inverted commas are generally used in English.
For example, 'Why did they do that?'
Double quotation marks are used in American English. Single quotation marks are used for quotes within quotes. All periods and commas precede the closing quotation marks unless the period ends the sentence the quote is within.
For example
"You are eating too much," she said.
"I liked her 'sense and sensibility' comment regarding Generation X," he said.
Measurements
In Britain, two systems of measurement are used, the metric system (that is, use of decimal numbers---e.g. 4.8 kilograms) and the imperial system (that is, use of fractions---e.g. one and a half tons of wheat). The metric system is now commonly used for most purposes.
In America, the metric system is not commonly used, except for military, medical, and scientific purposes. Some common measurement values are inches, miles, feet, gallons, and pounds.
American
Kilometres, Metres (meter in Am.) Miles (n.b. not the same distance)
litres (liter in Am.) ↔ Quarts (n.b. not the same quantity)
Kilograms Pounds

American English and English also differ in the measurement units of distance, speed, and weight. In addition, U.S. pints, quarts, and gallons are different from British ones.
For example,
1 UK gallon = 4 1/2 liters
1 US gallon = 3 1/2 liters
Dates
The date format followed in American English is the MM-DD-YY format. The DD-MM-YY format is used in English. However, the former style is becoming popular in English too.
In addition, in English, April 20 will be stated as ‘April the twentieth.” Britons use “the” in front of the number.
In American English, it is stated as “April twentieth.”
Time
• In English, "past" or "to" is used to refer to time.
For example,
The time is twenty past seven.
He returned at quarter to eight.
In American English, 'after" is used instead of "past," and "of" instead of "to".
For example,
It was twenty after eight.
At a quarter of eight, he called her.
• In English, a full stop is used after the hour when time is stated in numerals.
For example,
The train leaves at 7.30.
In American English, a colon is used instead of a full stop after the hour.
The train leaves at 7:30.
Prepositions
• Sentences can end with a preposition in English.
For example: It was appropriate for the situation it was used in.
However, it is American English prefers not to end a sentence with a preposition unless necessary.
For example: It was appropriate for the situation in which it was used.
• Other Examples regarding the use of prepositions:
English lives in a street.
American English lives on a street.
English works in a company.
American English works for a company
English schedules for a meeting.
American English schedules a meeting.

English does something at the weekend.
American English does something on the weekend.
English is in two minds about something.
American English is of two minds about something.
The girl was named after her mother.
The American girl was named for her mother.
English can leave on Monday.
American English can leave Monday.
The Britons on the course had a distinct advantage.
The Americans in the course had a distinct advantage.
It provided English with an excuse.
It provided American English an excuse.
English: That approximates to the truth.
American English: That approximates the truth.
English: Monday to Friday inclusive
American English: Monday through Friday
English: Can you come on Tuesday?
American English: Can you come Tuesday?
English consults its doctor.
American English consults with its doctor.
English is different to (or different from) American English. Different than is not used in English.
American English is different from or different than ↔ English.
Currency
Isolated references to amounts of money in United States currency are spelled out or expressed in numerals. Large round numbers that are cumbersome to express in numbers can be spelled out in units of millions or billions, accompanied by numerals and a dollar sigh.
For example
He paid five dollars to attend the event.
The committee raised a total of $350. (No space between the dollar sign and the number)
Both firms agreed upon a price of $3 million.
In usage, a billion is equal to a million million. In American English, a billion is equal to a thousand million.
Titles
In English, titles such as Mr and Mrs do not end with a period. In American English, these titles end with a period.
Idioms
English and American English have slightly different idioms.

For example,

- A home from home ↔ A home away from home
- Leave well enough ↔ Leave well enough alone
- A storm in a teacup ↔ A tempest in a teacup/teapot
- Sweep under the carpet ↔ Sweep under the rug
- Blow one's own trumpet ↔ Blow one's own horn

General Usage

- Just

English uses the present perfect tense with just. For example, I have just arrived.
American English uses the simple past tense. For example, I just arrived.

- Term

At a school and college or university, each year is divided into three terms. It is divided into four terms at an American school.
At an American college or university, each year is divided into two semesters or three trimesters.

- Lawyer

In English, a barrister is a lawyer who speaks in the higher courts of law on behalf of either the prosecution or the defence. A solicitor is a lawyer who gives legal advice to clients, prepares legal documents, and may also, in certain circumstances, represent a client in court.
In American English, an attorney is a lawyer who acts for someone in a legal matter and is qualified to represent clients in court.

- Ground floor

In English, the floor of a building that is in level with the ground is called the ground floor. The floor above it is called the first floor, the floor above that is the second floor, and so on.
In American English, the floor that is in level with the ground is called the first floor, the floor above it is called the second floor, and so on.

- Bill

In English, a bill is a piece of paper showing how much money you owe for a meal in a restaurant. For example, Two women at the next table paid their bill and walked out.
In American English, a piece of paper like this is called a check. A bill in American English is a piece of paper money.

- Banknote

In English, paper money is referred to as banknotes or simply notes.
For example, some of the banknotes were unbelievably dirty.
He handed me a ten-pound note.
In American English, a banknote is referred to as a bill.
For example, He took a five-dollar bill.

• Chemist
In English, a chemist is a person who is qualified to prepare and sell drugs and medicines.
For example, He took the pills that the chemist had given him.
In American English, such a person is called a pharmacist.
For example, He was training to become a pharmacist.
However, in both and American English, a chemist is also a person who conducts chemical research. For example, He was a research chemist.
• Chemist's
In Britain, a chemist's is a shop where you can buy medicine, cosmetics, and some household items.
In American English, a shop where you can buy medicines and cosmetics is called a drugstore. You can also buy simple meals and snacks in a drugstore.
• Shop
In English, a building or part of a building where goods are sold is usually called a shop.
In American English, it is called a store, unless it is very small and has just one type of goods, in which case it is called a shop.
In English, very large shops are sometimes called stores.
In both and American English, a large shop that has separate departments selling different types of goods is called a department store.
• School
In English, a school refers to only schools, not universities.
For example, The children are at school.
She is at university.
In American English, school (without "a" or "the") is used to refer to both schools and universities. For example, The children were in school.
She is doing well in school.
• Homework
In ↔ English, a piece of academic work given to students to do at home is called homework.
In American English, it can also be called an assignment.
• Shopping center
The obsolescent usage "shopping arcade" means a group of shops fronting on to a covered pedestrian way. "Shopping centre" usually implies covered access in usage whereas American usage uses "mall" to imply covered access and "center" to imply non-covered access. A "parade of shops" in usage refers to a row of shops fronting on to a road, this usage is largely confined to Southern England. Americans call this a “strip-center”. "Mall" can also mean a large public park-like area such as Independence Mall in Philadelphia.

• Class

In many schools and in some American private schools, form is used instead of class. Form is used especially with a number to refer to a particular class or age group.

For example, she is the fifth form.

He is in Form 3.

In American schools, grade is used to refer to a form.

For example He is in the second grade.

• Holiday

In English, you refer to a period of time you are allowed to spend away from work or school as the holiday or holidays.

For example, We went away during the Christmas holidays.

I went to Paris for a holiday.

Remember to turn off the gas when you go on holiday.

In American English, a holiday is a single day when people do not work. It is often to commemorate an important event, also called a “bank holiday” or a “federal holiday”.

In English, such a day is called a bank holiday.

The usual American word for a longer period of time spent away from work or school, or for a period of time spent away from home enjoying yourself is vacation.

For example, She used to take a vacation at that time.

In English, a vacation is one of the periods of several weeks when the university or college is officially closed for teaching.

For example, I did a lot of reading over the vacation.

• Homely

In American English, if you say that a person is homely, you mean that they are not attractive to look at.

For example, A broad grin spread across his homely features.

In English, an unattractive person is called plain. Homely in English refers to a simple, kind, and unsophisticated attitude.

• Cinema

Films in Britain are referred to as cinema or pictures. A building where films are shown is called a cinema theatre or cinema hall.

For example,

Everyone has gone to the cinema.

She went twice a week to the pictures.

In America, films are often called movies. A building where films are shown is called a movie theater.

For example,
I was driving home from the movies.
• Sorry? In English, Sorry?, I'm sorry, and Pardon? are expressions of apologies or comments made when you did not hear or understand what somebody said and want them to repeat it. For example, ‘Pardon, could you say that again?’
In American English, you say "Pardon me (or Excuse me), I didn’t see you there" as apologies.
"Pardon me?" and "Excuse me?" are used when you did not hear or understand what somebody said and want them to repeat it.
• Professor
In a university, a professor is the most senior teacher in a department.
In an American or Canadian university, a professor is a senior teacher. He or she is not necessarily the most senior teacher in a department.
• Shop Assistant
In English, a person selling goods to customers in a shop is called a shop assistant.
In American English, such a person is called a sales clerk.
• Pub
In English, a place where you can buy and drink alcoholic drinks is called a pub.
Such a place is called a bar in American English.
• Parcel
There is very little difference between parcel and package in ↔ English. A packet is a small container in which a quantity of something is solid. For example, a cigarette packet.
Package is more common in American English than parcel. Packets are called packs or packages in American English.
For example, I am taking this package to the post office.
• Fortnight
In English, the common term for two weeks is fortnight.
For example
He borrowed it for a fortnight.
American speakers do not usually use this word. They use “two weeks” instead.• Fair
In English, a fair is an amusement event held in a park or field. In American English, an event like this is called a carnival.
In English, a carnival is an outdoor public festival, which is held every year in a particular place.
• Match
In Britain, two teams play a match. In America, they play a game.
• Round
The American English equivalent for round is around.

• Enquire
The American English term for enquire is inquire.
• Lonely
In English, someone who is lonely is unhappy because they are alone.
For example, Since he left India, he had been lonely and homesick.
American speakers usually say lonesome instead of lonely.
For example
I bet you told her how lonesome you were.

AMERICANIZATION of English.

The telephone is never "engaged", it's always "busy".
You don't "disconnect" a phone, you simply "hang-up".
You never "mess-up" things, you only "screw them up".
You never have a "residence" tel. no., you have a "home" no.
You don't halt at the "signals", but stop at the "lights".
Your tire never "punctures", you may have a "flat".
The trains have "coaches" or "boggies' no more but "carriages" or "box-cars".
There are no "petrol pumps", but "gas stations".
"I don't know nothing", 2 negatives don't make a positive here (and is nor good grammar in either).
You no longer meet a "wonderful" person, you meet a "cool" guy
No one stays "a stone's throw away", but "a few blocks away".
There's no "Town Side", it's "Down Town".
There are no "soft drinks", only "sodas".
Life's no longer "miserable" it "stinks" or “sucks”.
Never "post" a letter, always "mail" it.
You no longer live in "flats" or "blocks", but an "apartment [building]".
You don't stand in a "queue", you are in a "line".
"#" is not "hash", it's "pound" or “number-bar”.
You never ask for a pencil "rubber" you ask for an eraser; a rubber is a condom
You don't try to find a lift, you find an elevator.
You don't ask somebody "How are you ?", you say "What's up?"
There's no FULL STOP after a statement, there's a PERIOD.
You don't say "How do you do", you say "How are you".

INDIAN English

The following represents a typical usage of English in India.

• Interrogative construction without subject/object inversion.

For example, What you would like to buy?

• Missing definite article

For example, Office is closed today.

• One used instead of an indefinite article

He gave me one book.

• Use of the gerund form with the verb

For example,

Geetha is having two brothers.

You must be knowing my cousin.

• Repetition for emphasis

I bought some small small things.

• Use of Yes and No as question tags

She was helping you, no?

He is coming, yes?

• Use of Isn’t it as a generalized tag

They are coming tomorrow, isn’t it?

You are liking it here, isn’t it?

• Only used for emphasis

They live like that only (instead of That’s how they live)

• Use of present perfect instead of simple past

I have bought the book yesterday.