

How British is your English? - A test of where your English comes from

What do **you** call ...? *(Please write the word you most often use in English. Don't worry about the spelling)*

1. A train system that travels under the street
2. The fuel that you put in your car
3. Small sweet things that children often buy, keep in the pockets and eat
4. The covering of your car's engine that you must open to check the water and oil
5. The place where you need to go after drinking a lot of water
6. A portable light that you can use to find your way in the dark
7. A thing that a woman carries her possessions around in, often made from leather
8. The time when your tyres lose all their air
9. A time when you don't have to work, e.g. Xmas _____
10. Clothes that men and women wear on the bottom half of their body, e.g. jeans
11. Small, hard, sweet snacks that are usually circular and are often eaten with a cup of tea or coffee
12. A person who delivers your letters.
13. A thing that a man puts his money in.
14. The place where the train times are written.

If you are not sure which words to use, please look at Part Two.

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Grammar Practice

1. A train system _____ travels under the street
2. The fuel _____ you put in your car
3. Sweet things _____ children often buy and eat
4. The covering of your car's engine _____ you must open to check the water and oil
5. The place _____ you need to go after drinking a lot of water
6. A portable light _____ you can use to find your way in the dark
7. A thing _____ a woman carries all her things around in, often made from leather
8. The time _____ your tyres lose all their air
9. A time _____ you don't have to work.
10. Clothes _____ men and women wear on the bottom half of their body, e.g. jeans
11. Small, hard, sweet snacks _____ are usually circular and are often eaten with a cup of tea or coffee
12. A person _____ delivers your letters.
13. The thing _____ a man puts his money in
14. The place _____ the train times are written

If you are not sure which words to use, please look at Part Two.

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- Part Two (with clues)

What do **you** call ...? *(Please circle the word **you** most often use in English. Don't worry about any differences between the words)*

1. A train system that travels under the street
 - a) The underground
 - b) The subway
 - c) The tube

2. The fuel you put in your car
 - a) Petrol
 - b) Gasoline
 - c) Gas

3. Small sweet things that children often buy, keep in the pockets and eat
 - a) Candy
 - b) Sweets

4. The covering of your car's engine that you must open to check the water and oil
 - a) The bonnet
 - b) The hood

5. The place where you need to go after drinking a lot of water
 - a) The toilet
 - b) The loo
 - c) The bathroom
 - d) The john
 - e) The restroom

6. A portable light that you can use to find your way in the dark
 - a) A flashlight
 - b) A torch

7. A thing that a woman carries her possessions around in, often made from leather
 - a) A purse
 - b) A handbag

8. The time when your tyres lose all their air
 - a) A flat
 - b) A puncture

9. A time when you don't have to work, e.g. at Xmas
 - a) A holiday
 - b) A vacation

10. Clothes that men and women wear on the bottom half of their body, e.g. jeans
 - a) Pants
 - b) Trousers
 - c) Slacks

11. Small, hard, sweet snacks, that are usually circular and are eaten with a cup of tea or coffee
 - a) Cookies
 - b) Biscuits

12. A person who delivers your letters.
 - a) A mailman
 - b) A postman

13. The thing that a man puts his money in
 - a) A wallet
 - b) A billfold

14. The place where all the train times are written
 - a) The timetable
 - b) The schedule

To find out how English (that is, not American) your English is, score one “British English point” for each of the following answers:

1. a) or c)
2. a)
3. b)
4. a)
5. a) or b)
6. b)
7. b)
8. b)
9. a)
10. b)
11. b)
12. b)
13. a)
14. a)

Score 1 “American English point” for each of the other answers you circled.

Total score

	Points	Percentage
American English		
British English		

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- Part Three (Speaking task)

Student A

Now explain the words below to your partner (see example 1 below) and circle which word they usually use. If they can't guess the word from your explanation, read them the two options below and ask them which one they prefer (**not** which one they think is British English).

1. **curtains**/ drapes ("What do you call things that hang inside your window and you close every night?")
2. **the accelerator**/ the gas pedal ("What do you call the thing in your car that...?")
3. an elevator/ **a lift**
4. **a jumper**/ a sweater/ a pullover
5. a store/ **a shop**
6. **a frying pan**/ a fry pan
7. a zipper/ **a zip**
8. **a (winter/ woollen) scarf**/ a muffler
9. soda/ **a fizzy drink**/ pop
10. **a lorry**/ a truck
11. a cellular phone/ a cell phone/ a cell/ **a mobile/ a mobile phone**
12. a highway/ **a motorway**/ an expressway
13. **a flat**/ an apartment/ a condo
14. **the town centre/ the city centre**/ downtown
15. **a jam sandwich**/ a jelly sandwich
16. **a roundabout**/ a traffic circle
17. the sidewalk/ **the pavement**
18. **a car park**/ a parking lot
19. an intersection/ **a crossroads**
20. **a postcode**/ a zip code

Give one "British English point" for each word they used that is written in **bold** above (e.g. **curtains**), and one "American English point" for each word they used that is not written in bold (e.g. the gas pedal).

Total score

	Points	Percentage
American English		
British English		

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- Part Three (Speaking task)

Student B

Now explain the words below to your partner (see example 1 below.) and circle which word they usually use. If they can't guess the word from your explanation, read them the two options below and ask them which one they prefer (**not** which one they think is British English).

1. **a film**/ a movie (“What do you call a thing that you watch at the cinema?”)
2. **jelly**/ Jell-O (“What do you call a food that...?”)
3. a station wagon/ **an estate (car)**
4. fall/ **autumn**
5. **a chemist's**/ a drugstore/ a pharmacy
6. corn/ **sweet corn**
7. pudding/ **crème caramel**
8. **a police car**/ a patrol car
9. **a (sticky) plaster**/ a band aid
10. **the till**/ a (cash) register
11. garbage/ trash/ **rubbish**
12. a line/ **a queue**
13. **a spanner**/ a wrench
14. **the boot**/ the trunk
15. the gear shift/ **the gear lever**
16. **a jug**/ a pitcher
17. fries/ French fries/ **chips**
18. **the gear box**/ the transmission
19. a packet of chips/ **a packet of crisps**

Give one “British English point” for each word they used that is written in **bold** above (e.g. **a film**), and one “American English point” for each word they used that is not written in bold (e.g. Jell-O).

Total score

	Points	Percentage
American English		
British English		

What your score means:

100% British English- You are as British as a bowler hat and a pin-stripe suit. In other words, you are more British than most young British people!

90% British English- You might think you can pass as British, but not quite! Your English is something like Gwyneth Paltrow or Renee Zelleger playing a British character.

About 70% British- Are you Australian? If not, you must be a Kiwi.

50/50- You are very confused

About 70% American- Do you also like maple syrup? You must be Canadian

90% American- You are as American as apple pie (they also have apple pie in England, they just don't make such a big thing about it)

100% American- You are as American as a Texan cowboy