

Verbal Misunderstanding

Some American words are simply unknown on the other side of the Atlantic, and vice versa. But a lot of words exist in both variants, and these can cause trouble.

What shall we wear?

- » British American
- » Trousers Pants
- » Pants underwear
- » Jumper sweater
- » Trainers sneakers
- » Dressing gown bathrobe
- » Tights pantyhose.

The opposites

The misunderstanding is worse when a word means the opposite in the two variants. One American author was distressed when his British publisher told him on the telephone that his latest book was a bomb in Britain. In America to ‘bomb’ – it is not normally used as a noun – is to flop.

Understatement and realism.

- | • English statement | American realism |
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| • I suppose this meat could perhaps be a little more tender. | This meat is as tough as old boots |
| • Our hotel room was not exactly the Ritz | The room was awful. |
| • His speech could have been a little more interesting | The was the dullest speech I've ever heard. |

Harry Potter dictionary

When the Harry Potter books were edited for American readers some changes were made in J.K. Rowling's original text. Here are some of them.

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| • British edition | American edition |
| • Philosopher's Stone | Sorcerer's Stone |
| • Toilet | Bathroom |
| • Wardrobe | Closet |
| • Cooker | Stove |
| • Motorbike | Motorcycle |
| • Cine-camera | Video camera |
| • Football | Soccer |
| • Sherbet lemon | Lemon drop |
| • Ice lolly | Ice pop |
| • Jacket potato | Baked potato |
| • Sweets | Candy |
| • Puddings | Desserts |
| • Biscuits | Cookies |
| • Holiday | Vacation |
| • Post | Mail |
| • Mad | Crazy |