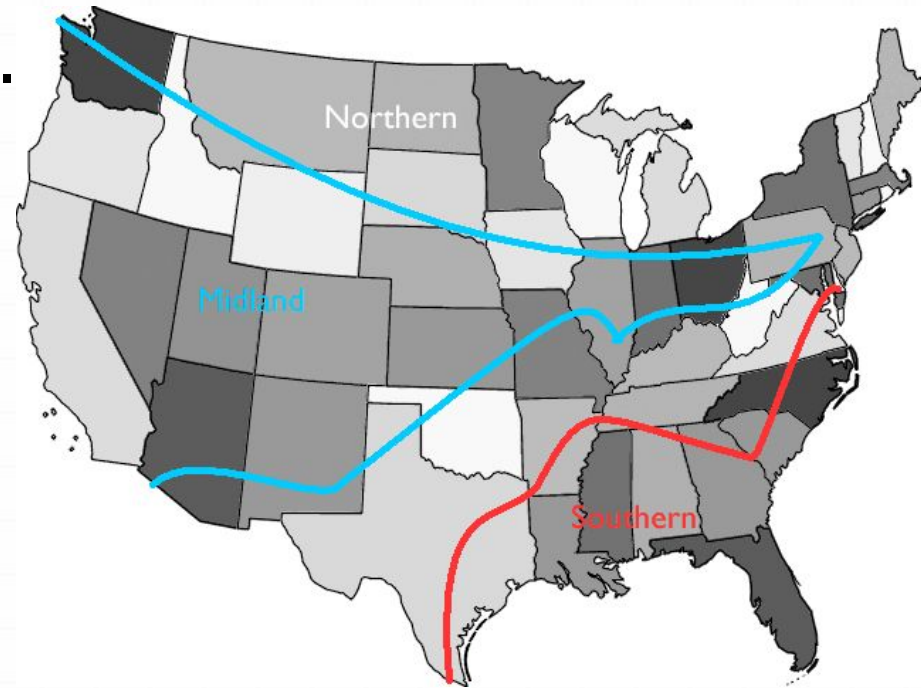




National
Varieties of
English

General American

0 American English, variety of the English language spoken in the United States. Although all Americans do not speak the same way, their speech has enough in common that American English can be recognized as a variety of English distinct from British English, Australian English, and other national varieties.



Vowels

- 0 There is no strict division of vowels into long and short in GA.
- 0 One more peculiar feature of pronunciation of vowels in American English is their nasalization, when they are preceded or followed by a nasal consonant (e.g. in such words as take, small, name, etc.).
- 0 GA front vowels are somewhat different from RP. Vowels [i:], [i] are distributed differently in GA and RP.

- 0 There are four mixed or central vowels in GA: [ɜ], [ə], [ʌ], [ɑ]. They differ markedly from RP vowels in articulation and distribution.
- 0 The three RP vowels [ɔ], [æ], [ɑ:] correspond to only two vowels in GA – [a] and [æ]. This combined with the articulatory differences between RP [ɔ] and GA [ɑ:].
- 0 Besides, word distribution of [ɔ:], [ɔ] in RP and GA is completely different.

Consonants

- 0 The retroflex pronunciation of [r] is perhaps one of the most characteristic features of GA.
- 0 The pronunciation of [t] is highly variable in GA and there are also some major allophonic variations in the pronunciation of it.
- 0 **Yod dropping:** [j] is not pronounced in the combination of [j] + [U:] after t, s, d, e.g. tube, suit, student, news.
- 0 **Nasal twang:** nasality is limited to vowels adjacent to [m], [n], [ŋ].

General Australian

0 General Australian is the most characteristic type of AuE pronunciation. It is, so to speak, the language of communication. According to A. Mitchell, GAuE is used by "people of good education and high standing in the community (at least by 55 percent of the Australians)". It is the type of accent heard on TV and the radio, in other public institutions.



Vowels

- 0 RP [i:] and [u:] (as in see, do) are heard as diphthongs, e.g. [i] = [əi], [u:] = [əu], tea = [təi], too = [təu].
- 0 Centring diphthongs are pronounced in GAuE with the final element hardly heard. The effect is almost a pure vowel, e.g. here = [hi:], fair = [fɛ:], poor = [pu:].
- 0 GAuE speakers show a general tendency to avoid the pure [a:].
- 0 GAuE vowels [i], [e], [æ] are noticeably closer than their counterparts in RP. The sound [U] is more advanced in GAuE and has lip rounding.

Consonants

- 0 The omission of some consonants, especially [k], [t], [g], [h], e.g. facts = [fæks], half past two = ['a:pa:stu:], recognize = ['rekənaiz].
- 0 The substitution and insertion of consonants in certain words, morning = ['mɔ:nən], suggest = [səg'dʒəst].
- 0 There are no glottal stops (in spite of all the similarities of AuE to Cockney).
- 0 Some Australians, maybe due to Irish influx, produce rhotic words.

Canadian English

0 Canadian English (CnE) is used by some 14 million English-speaking Canadians. A typical Canadian accent agrees with GenAm rather than with RP at almost every point where these reference accents differ from one another. Amongst other things, it is rhotic,, that is why the British usually take English speaking Canadians for Americans.



Main Peculiarities

- 0 CnE is rhotic, with [æ] in bath, etc., and [t] voicing, that is why the British usually take English speaking Canadians for Americans.
- 0 "**Canadian raising**": the diphthongs [ai] and [au] in CnE have a mid-central nucleus, but not the low one as in RP, before the following voiceless consonant, so [ai] = [əi] and [au] = [ʌu] as in price, mouth, and pipe, while, like, life, nice, out, south, couch, etc.
- 0 There is no opposition [e]-[æ]-[ɛə] in words like merry – marry – Mary, where in all these cases [ɛ] is used.

- 0 Most Canadians use the retroflex [r] in all positions.
- 0 In words like tune, duke, new, **YOD DROPPING** is widespread, although the pronunciation with [j] enjoys higher prestige.
- 0 In both Canadian and American English, flapping of the alveolar sounds [t], [d] can occur between the two vowels, if the second is not stressed.
- 0 In cases of phoneme lexical selection/incidence, the general trend is for an increase in the use of 'American' variants at the expense of the 'British' ones.