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Unusual Pronunciations (Level: Intermediate)

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Introduction



Most of the following words are pronounced the same in Canada and the US, but occasionally Canada is slightly different.

British pronunciations of many of these words are very different, and Canadians sometimes (especially historically) use the British pronunciation.

advanced, after, banana, can't... – ‘ae’ sound

advertisement – ‘taiz’

again – short ‘i’

albino – ‘ai’

a lot, cot, God – US: ‘aa,’ Canada: ‘aw’

amazon, Lebanon, pentagon – ‘aa’

amen, tomato, vase – ‘ay’

around, about, bike, house, out – US: ‘ow,’ Canada: raised



bin – short ‘i’

battery, bottle, literally, water – middle ‘t’ = d

butcher, catcher, Fletcher – silent ‘t’

carry, marry – US: ‘ai,’ Canada: sometimes ‘ae’

choir – ‘kwair’

colonel – ‘kernel’

colon – ‘kolin’

concert – ‘kaansert’



depot, leisure, zebra – ‘ee’

direct – short ‘i’

disposal – ‘dis-pO-sal’ or ‘dis-pOs-all’

donate, protest, research, spectator, weekend – emphasis on first syllable (in British, it’s on the second syllable)

envelope – US: ‘aanvelope’ or ‘invelope,’ Canada: ‘aanvelope’

evolution, levers, Los Angeles – soft ‘e’

genuine – ‘jin-u-in’

governor – ‘guv-er-ner’



herb – silent ‘h’

history, laboratory, observatory – ‘oree’

hurricane – ‘her-i-kayn’

idiot, injurious, issue, jaguar, lure, news, schedule – no ‘y’
sound before the ‘i,’ ‘e,’ or ‘u’ (unlike British)

language – ‘laeng-gwidj’

mall – ‘maal’

medicine – ‘me-di-sin’

military – ‘mi-li-taer-ee’

mortgage – ‘mor-gidj’

missile, mobile, sterile – ‘mi-sal,’ ‘mo-bal,’ ‘ste-ral’





neanderthal – ‘nee-aen-der-thaal’

negotiate – ‘ne-go-shee-ayt’

[n]either – ‘[n]ee-ther’

nonsense – ‘naan-sens’

oregano – ‘O-re-gaen-O’

pasta – ‘paa-sta’

patent – ‘pae-tent’

pecan – US: ‘pi-kaan,’ ‘pee-kaan,’ or ‘pee-kaen;’ Canada: usually ‘pee-kaen’

prestigious – ‘pre-stee-jous’

**privacy, simultaneous – ‘ai’
process, progress – ‘aa’**

route – US: ‘ow;’ Canada: ‘oo’

scone, shown – US: ‘O,’ Canada: ‘aa’

squirrel – ‘skwir-ral’

syrup – US: ‘si-rup’ or ‘seerup,’ Canada: ‘see-rup’

tomorrow, sorry – US: ‘aa,’ Canada: ‘O’

yogurt/yoghurt – ‘yO-gert’



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