

English

English

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English is a West Germanic language that emerged in early medieval England and has since become a global lingua franca. The namesake of the language is the Angles, one of the Germanic peoples that migrated to Britain after its Roman occupiers left. English is the most spoken language in the world, primarily due to the global influences of the former British Empire (succeeded by the Commonwealth of Nations) and the United States. It is the most widely learned second language in the world, with more second-language speakers than native speakers. However, English is only the third-most spoken native language, after Mandarin Chinese and Spanish.

English is either the official language, or one of the official languages, in 57 sovereign states and 30 dependent territories, making it the most geographically widespread language in the world. In the United Kingdom, the United States, Australia, and New Zealand, it is the dominant language for historical reasons without being explicitly defined by law. It is a co-official language of the United Nations, the European Union, and many other international and regional organisations. It has also become the de facto lingua franca of diplomacy, science, technology, international trade, logistics, tourism, aviation, entertainment, and the Internet. English accounts for at least 70 percent of total native speakers of the Germanic languages, and Ethnologue estimated that there were over 1.4 billion speakers worldwide as of 2021.

Old English emerged from a group of West Germanic dialects spoken by the Anglo-Saxons. Late Old English borrowed some grammar and core vocabulary from Old Norse, a North Germanic language. Then, Middle English borrowed vocabulary extensively from French dialects, which are the source of approximately 28 percent of Modern English words, and from Latin, which is the source of an additional 28 percent. While Latin and the Romance languages are thus the source for a majority of its lexicon taken as a whole, English grammar and phonology retain a family resemblance with the Germanic languages, and most of its basic everyday vocabulary remains Germanic in origin. English exists on a dialect continuum with Scots; it is next-most closely related to Low Saxon and Frisian.

English units

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English units were the units of measurement used in England up to 1826 (when they were replaced by Imperial units), which evolved as a combination of the Anglo-Saxon and Roman systems of units. Various standards have applied to English units at different times, in different places, and for different applications.

Use of the term "English units" can be ambiguous, as, in addition to the meaning used in this article, it is sometimes used to refer to the units of the descendant Imperial system as well to those of the descendant system of United States customary units.

The two main sets of English units were the Winchester Units, used from 1495 to 1587, as affirmed by King Henry VII, and the Exchequer Standards, in use from 1588 to 1825, as defined by Queen Elizabeth I.

In England (and the British Empire), English units were replaced by Imperial units in 1824 (effective as of 1 January 1826) by a Weights and Measures Act, which retained many though not all of the unit names and redefined (standardised) many of the definitions. In the US, being independent from the British Empire decades before the 1824 reforms, English units were standardized and adopted (as "US Customary Units") in 1832.

English Wikipedia

The English Wikipedia is the primary English-language edition of Wikipedia, an online encyclopedia. It was created by Jimmy Wales and Larry Sanger on 15

The English Wikipedia is the primary English-language edition of Wikipedia, an online encyclopedia. It was created by Jimmy Wales and Larry Sanger on 15 January 2001, as Wikipedia's first edition.

English Wikipedia is hosted alongside other language editions by the Wikimedia Foundation, an American nonprofit organization. Its content, written independently of other editions by volunteer editors known as Wikipedians, is in various varieties of English while aiming to stay consistent within articles. Its internal newspaper is The Signpost.

English Wikipedia is the most read version of Wikipedia, accounting for 48% of Wikipedia's cumulative traffic, with the remaining percentage split among the other languages. The English Wikipedia has the most articles of any edition, at 7,045,313 as of August 2025. It contains 10.8% of articles in all Wikipedias, although it lacks millions of articles found in other editions. The edition's one-billionth edit was made on 13 January 2021 by editor Steven Pruitt.

English Wikipedia, often as a stand-in for Wikipedia overall, has been praised for its enablement of the democratization of knowledge, extent of coverage, unique structure, culture, and reduced degree of commercial bias. It has been criticized for exhibiting systemic bias, particularly gender bias against women and ideological bias. While its reliability was frequently criticized in the 2000s, it has improved over time, receiving greater praise in the late 2010s and early 2020s, having become an important fact-checking site. English Wikipedia has been characterized as having less cultural bias than other language editions due to its broader editor base.

British English

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British English is the set of varieties of the English language native to the United Kingdom, especially Great Britain. More narrowly, it can refer specifically to the English language in England, or, more broadly, to the collective dialects of English throughout the United Kingdom taken as a single umbrella variety, for instance additionally incorporating Scottish English, Welsh English, and Northern Irish English. Tom McArthur in the Oxford Guide to World English acknowledges that British English shares "all the ambiguities and tensions

[with] the word 'British' and as a result can be used and interpreted in two ways, more broadly or more narrowly, within a range of blurring and ambiguity".

Variations exist in formal (both written and spoken) English in the United Kingdom. For example, the adjective *wee* is almost exclusively used in parts of Scotland, north-east England, Northern Ireland, Ireland, and occasionally Yorkshire, whereas the adjective *little* is predominant elsewhere. Nevertheless, there is a meaningful degree of uniformity in written English within the United Kingdom, and this could be described by the term British English. The forms of spoken English, however, vary considerably more than in most other areas of the world where English is spoken and so a uniform concept of British English is more difficult to apply to the spoken language.

Globally, countries that are former British colonies or members of the Commonwealth tend to follow British English, as is the case for English used by European Union institutions. The United Nations also uses British English with Oxford spelling. In China, both British English and American English are taught. The UK government actively teaches and promotes English around the world and operates in over 100 countries.

American English

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American English, sometimes called United States English or U.S. English, is the set of varieties of the English language native to the United States. English is the most widely spoken language in the U.S. and is an official language in 32 of the 50 U.S. states and the de facto common language used in government, education, and commerce in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and in all territories except Puerto Rico. While there is no law designating English as the official language of the U.S., Executive Order 14224 of 2025 declares it to be. Since the late 20th century, American English has become the most influential form of English worldwide.

Varieties of American English include many patterns of pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and particularly spelling that are unified nationwide but distinct from other forms of English around the world. Any American or Canadian accent perceived as lacking noticeably local, ethnic, or cultural markers is known in linguistics as General American; it covers a fairly uniform accent continuum native to certain regions of the U.S. but especially associated with broadcast mass media and highly educated speech. However, historical and present linguistic evidence does not support the notion of there being one single mainstream American accent. The sound of American English continues to evolve, with some local accents disappearing, but several larger regional accents having emerged in the 20th century.

English alphabet

Modern English is written with a Latin-script alphabet consisting of 26 letters, with each having both uppercase and lowercase forms. The word alphabet

Modern English is written with a Latin-script alphabet consisting of 26 letters, with each having both uppercase and lowercase forms. The word *alphabet* is a compound of *alpha* and *beta*, the names of the first two letters in the Greek alphabet. The earliest Old English writing during the 5th century used a runic alphabet known as the *futhorc*. The Old English Latin alphabet was adopted from the 7th century onward—and over the following centuries, various letters entered and fell out of use. By the 16th century, the present set of 26 letters had largely stabilised:

There are 5 vowel letters and 19 consonant letters—as well as *Y* and *W*, which may function as either type.

Written English has a large number of digraphs, such as *ch*, *ea*, *oo*, *sh*, and *th*. Diacritics are generally not used to write native English words, which is unusual among orthographies used to write the

languages of Europe.

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English people

The English people are an ethnic group and nation native to England, who speak the English language, a West Germanic language, and share a common ancestry

The English people are an ethnic group and nation native to England, who speak the English language, a West Germanic language, and share a common ancestry, history, and culture. The English identity began with the Anglo-Saxons, when they were known as the Angelcynn, meaning "Angle kin" or "English people". Their ethnonym is derived from the Angles, one of the Germanic peoples who invaded Britain around the 5th century AD.

The English largely descend from two main historical population groups: the West Germanic tribes, including the Angles, Saxons, and Jutes who settled in Southern Britain following the withdrawal of the Romans, and the partially Romanised Celtic Britons who already lived there. Collectively known as the Anglo-Saxons, they founded what was to become the Kingdom of England by the 10th century, in response to the invasion and extensive settlement of Danes and other Norsemen that began in the late 9th century. This was followed by the Norman Conquest and limited settlement of Normans in England in the late 11th century and a sizeable number of French Protestants who emigrated between the 16th and 18th centuries. Some definitions of English people include, while others exclude, people descended from later migration into England.

England is the largest and most populous country of the United Kingdom. The majority of people living in England are British citizens. In the Acts of Union 1707, the Kingdom of England and the Kingdom of Scotland merged to become the Kingdom of Great Britain. Over the years, English customs and identity have become fairly closely aligned with British customs and identity in general. The demonyms for men and women from England are Englishman and Englishwoman.

List of Greek and Latin roots in English

The English language uses many Greek and Latin roots, stems, and prefixes. These roots are listed alphabetically on three pages: Greek and Latin roots

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Greek and Latin roots from A to G

Greek and Latin roots from H to O

Greek and Latin roots from P to Z.

Some of those used in medicine and medical technology are listed in the List of medical roots, suffixes and prefixes.

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