

I surveyed 175 people, quizzing them on their knowledge of 82 “Canadianisms.” The results are in, including 42 words with which you are probably unfamiliar, unless you are Canadian.

All of the words included on this survey were the result of at least one American being baffled over my Canadian English. Many times, I have felt as if we were two people separated by a common language. These words have either been used during one of my many trips to the United States -- I have travelled to Washington, California, Idaho, Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, New York, Maryland, DC, and Virginia -- or have been the source of confusion when speaking with my American partner, or talking with my American pals who are spread throughout the country.

The breakdown includes 42 unfamiliar words, 10 questionable results, and three honourable mentions, plus 16 "familiar but not used," and 11 “familiar and used” words.

The geographical breakdown includes: 104 Americans, 52 Canadians, and 19 people from the following commonwealth countries: New Zealand, Australia, Scotland, England, and Wales.

The method of this completely non-scientific, yet still extremely fascination survey was pretty simply. I presented respondents with a word, a short definition, and four answers from which to choose.

When giving a definition, intentionally, I gave minimal information. My thinking was, either the people responding to the survey knew the words without giving a context and definition, or they didn't. In retrospect, I should have been more concise with a couple of the words, as many of the Americans who responded to some of the words were confused as to their meaning, or my intention. This was even more prevalent when I gave an example of how the word is seldom used in Canada, which caused the respondent to give conflicting responses in the “other” field. These words are included in this post, even if over 50% of Americans said they were familiar with the word, but didn't use it.

After reading the word and the short definition, respondents were presented with the following choices:

- I am unfamiliar with this term;
- I am familiar with this term, but I never used it or have I heard it used in my area;
- I am familiar with this word and I use it regularly, or it is used in my area;
- Plus, “other” to elaborate and enter the word most commonly used by that person.

Contained within these results are a number of terms that are [sociolects](#): words we tend to use only when among certain social groups, and our geographic location does not determine the extent to which Canadians have knowledge of the word, or use it. With the exception of a couple of regional words, most Canadians were familiar with all the words, even if they didn't use them. Regional dialects are very rare in Canada, but we do have many sociolects. Because of Canada's emphasis on being multi-cultural, we tend to be very familiar with each other's word choices, which sometimes can give the appearance that we are a “melting pot,” when we are not.

It is also interesting to note that in cases where the word was not clearly “Canadian,” it was the result of people in, and around, the greater Toronto area not making use of the word. It almost adds to the joke that there is Canada, and then there is Toronto, Ontario. Canada vs. Toronto is the source of many jokes and stereotypes; some of which are not always nice, even if they may have a lot of truth in them. And, in

a couple of cases, Albertans were the exception to the rule, which also plays into some Canadian-grown stereotypes.

Without further ado, the results!

Unfamiliar



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1. **Tuque** – A knitted cap/hat, referred to as a beanie in the United States. A beanie is a completely different type of hat in Canada. **100% Canadian.**

In the United States, the most common alternatives were: beanie, knitted cap, ski hat, and stocking cap. In the commonwealth countries, the most common alternative was “beanie.”

It may be interesting to note that very recently, the CBC did an article about the spelling of “tuque,” while calling all of us “hosers.” Tuque is the proper spelling, though many Anglophones spell it either “toque” or “touque.” Growing up in French immersion, it was always “tuque,” with “toque” meanings something else. You can [read what the CBC has to say about this very topic](#), including a reference to their style guide.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	53%	84%	0%
Familiar but not used	35%	0%	0%
Familiar and used	12%	16%	100%



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2. Runners – Referred to as sneakers or tennis shoes in the United States. **85% Canadian.**

In the United States, the most common alternatives were: sneakers, tennis shoes, Nikes, running shoes, walking shoes, and walkers. Across the commonwealth countries, the most common alternative was “trainers.”

One American noted the following, “Runners are a piece of table linen which runs the length of the table under the centerpiece and dangles over the edge.”

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	60%	37%	4%
Familiar but not used	32%	58%	11%
Familiar and used	7%	5% - 1 person	85%



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3. Parkade – A multi-level parking structure. 71% Canadian

In the United States, the most common alternatives were: parking garage, and parking deck. Across the commonwealth countries they were: car park and parking garage.

Out of the American who knew and used the term “parkade,” one left the following comment, “City owned parking in Eugene is usually named "Location Parkade.”

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	85%	100%	4%
Familiar but not used	11%	0%	25%
Familiar and used	4%	0%	71%



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4. ABM – Automatic Banking Machine. 38% Canadian or maybe it’s becoming a sociolect.

The thing I found most interesting about these responses comes from the Canadians. Despite automatic banking machines being labelled “ABM,” and the terms “[automatic banking machine](#)” and “ABM” being used in most bank service agreements, Canadians are starting to move towards the American “ATM.” Personally, I still use ABM, or just “bank machine.”

Perhaps the term “ABM” is starting to turn into a sociolect, as the 38% of Canadians who still primarily use “ABM” are from across all regions of Canada.

In the commonwealth countries, the most common alternatives were: hole-in-the-wall, cash machine, cashpoint, and ATM. In the United States, the alternative is “ATM.”

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	95%	100%	8%
Familiar but not used	5%	0%	54%
Familiar and used	0%	0%	38%



Image via Wikimedia Commons

5. Eavestroughs – A trough that runs along the eaves and catches rain/leaves. **90% Canadian**

The most common alternative given by both Americans and people living in commonwealth countries was “gutters.” I found the percentage to which commonwealth respondents were unfamiliar with the word to be very surprising.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	80%	89%	2% (1 person)
Familiar but not used	7%	0%	8%
Familiar and used	13%	11%	90%



Image via Wikimedia Commons

6. Garburator – A mechanical device that “eats” garbage in your kitchen sink’s drain. **62% Canadian.**

Disposal is a propriety name in the United States. Garburator is a propriety name in Canada for a garbage disposal. I’m not sure what is different about them, but they must be different enough to have different propriety names. And that is about all the insight I can give you on “Garburator.”

The most common alternative given by everyone, regardless of location, was “garbage disposal.” Many Americans commented that “Disposal” is a brand name.

Most of the Canadian who were unfamiliar with the word, or don’t use it despite being familiar with it, were from Ontario.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	91%	100%	12%
Familiar but not used	7%	0%	30%
Familiar and used	2%	0%	62%



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7. **Wicket** – You stand at a wicket when speaking to agents in government offices, bank tellers, etc. **Sociolect, with most who don't use it despite being familiar with it, living in Ontario.**

The most common American alternative was “window?” or “counter.” There were a couple of people who said they were totally lost. A couple Americans noted that “wicket” was for cricket, with most commonwealth respondents making the same comment.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	91%	84%	15%
Familiar but not used	9%	11%	62%
Familiar and used	0%	5%	23%



Island Farms is one of the leading dairy producers in British Columbia. Some rights reserved by [scazon via Flickr](#)

8. **Homo Milk** – Milk with 3.25% milk fat. Not to be confused with Canadian “whole milk,” which is milk that separates when left sitting. **92% Canadian.**

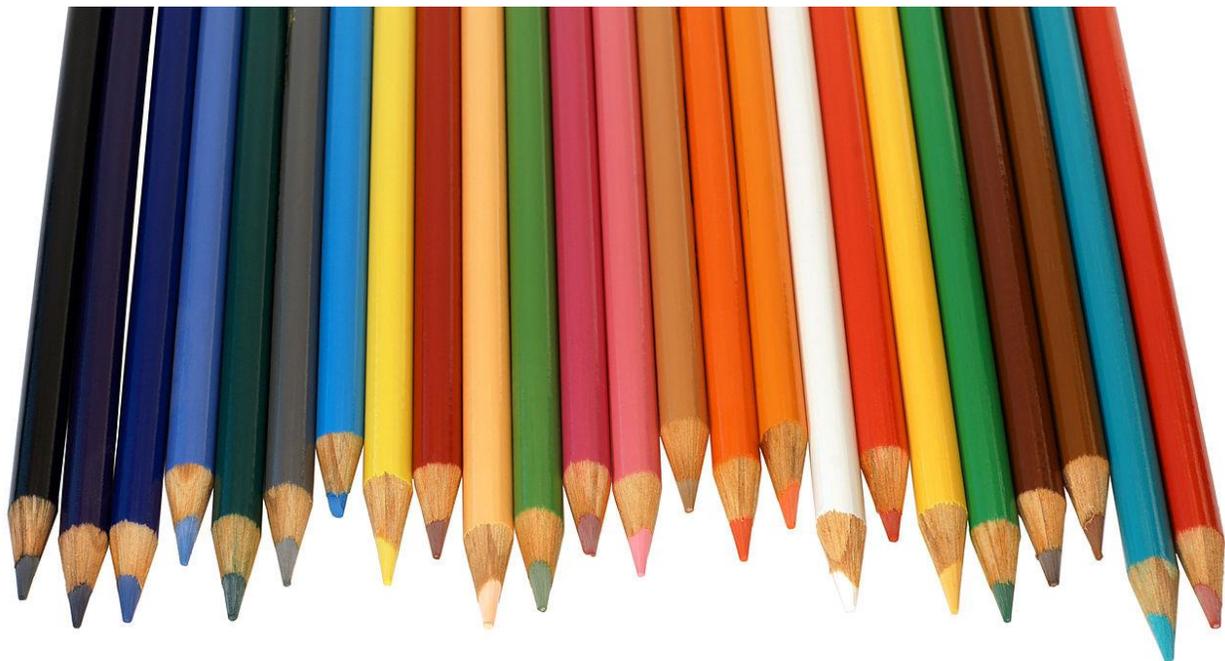
A couple of Americans commented that they were offended by this term because, in the U.S., it is a derogatory reference to a homosexual person. In Canada, it is difficult for that word to be a slur when it is plastered all over stores and on milk containers in reference to a specific type of milk. Canada has different derogatory terms. Calling someone a “homo” is laughable to most of us because that would be calling someone “milk.”

Swears and derogatory words differ a lot between cultures. It is one reason why I can include words like “bugger” and “bloody,” or use the word “merde” when writing for a U.S.-based site, and most readers won’t know why it will be, at the very least, quite rude and offensive for other readers.

The common American alternative given was “homogenized milk,” which is a little odd, as all of Canada’s milk is homogenized. Other forms of homogenized milk include: skim milk, 1%, 2%, buttermilk, plus various types of cream. One person in N.E. Ohio commented that they have never seen 3.25% milk.

Out of the four Canadians who said they don’t use the term, I’m very curious to know what they use, instead. They didn’t give an alternative.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	81%	79%	0%
Familiar but not used	16%	16%	8%
Familiar and used	3%	5%	92%



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9. Pencil Crayon – Pencils used for colouring. 96% Canadian.

I’m really not sure why we call them “pencil crayons.” Maybe it is a result of us mashing the English “coloured pencils” with the French “crayon de couleur,” and the middle of packaging reading, “pencil crayon,” as a result. Even our [school supply lists](#) read “pencil crayons.”

The American alternative is “colored pencil.” The commonwealth alternative is “colouring pencil.”

The two Canadians who said they were familiar with the term, but don't use it, were from Nova Scotia. The rest of the respondents from Nova Scotia all use the term.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	85%	47%	0%
Familiar but not used	9%	16%	4%
Familiar and used	6%	37%	96%



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10. Bachelor Apartment – A flat that has no bedroom. **92% Canadian.**

The most common American equivalents given were “studio apartment” and “efficiency.”

The most common commonwealth equivalents were: bedsit, studio flat, and bachelor pad.

Until this survey, I had never heard the word “efficiency,” and I was unsure as to the meaning of “studio apartment” whenever I would hear it.

Among the Canadians who do not use the words, three are from Alberta, and one from Saskatchewan.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	71%	63%	0%
Familiar but not used	20%	26%	8%
Familiar and used	9%	11%	92%



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11. Gas Bar – A filling station. **Sociolect with 44% of Canadians using it regularly.**

The most common American word is “gas station.”

The most common words used in the commonwealth countries are “petrol station” and “garage.”

The difference between the Canadians who know the word but don’t use it regularly and those who do use it regularly was two people. The alternative word given was “gas station.” 75% of the respondents who were not familiar with “gas bar” were from Toronto.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	98%	100%	8%
Familiar but not used	2%	0%	48%
Familiar and used	0%	0%	44%



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12. Donair – A pita containing spiced meat and a sauce made from sugar, vinegar, milk, and garlic.
71% Canadian.

Part of me thinks I should correct the above to, “100% Canadian,” as it a [donair is Canadian-invented food item](#), and is as Canadian as poutine, Nanaimo bars, butter tarts, and split-pea soup. All of the Canadians who said they were unfamiliar with this term were from Ontario, with six out of nine being from Toronto. If you live in Toronto and have no idea what a donair is, I’m not sure there is an excuse, as Toronto is a food haven!

The closest thing America has to a donair is the gyro. In the commonwealth countries, it is similar to what they call a kebab, but different from what Canadians refer to as a kabob. Unlike a “doner” it doesn’t contain lamb, and the sauce is quite different.

The four Americans who say they are use the word, or it is common in their area, especially the one from Seattle, I’d like to know where? I’ve travelled to Seattle many times, and have yet to find a donair. Poutine is finally making its way into the U.S. Hopefully, the donair will be soon to follow.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	86%	84%	17%
Familiar but not used	10%	16%	12%
Familiar and used	4%	0%	71%



Image by Evelyn Clark Weddings

13. Icing Sugar – A type of finely granulated sugar used in making icings and glazes. **96% Canadian.**

The first time I was made aware that Americans do not have “icing sugar” per se, I was very surprised. It was awhile before I would learn the alternative, which is either “powdered sugar” or “confectioner’s sugar.”

There is one Canadian who is unfamiliar with this term. I can only surmise that they don’t do any baking.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	56%	0%	2%
Familiar but not used	32%	0%	2%
Familiar and used	12%	100%	96%



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14. Whitener – A powder or liquid used to whiten tea or coffee, not made from dairy. **81% Canadian.**

The most common American alternatives are “creamer” and “non-dairy creamer.” In the commonwealth countries, the most common alternative is “non-dairy whitener.”

Two Canadians were unfamiliar with the term: one from Nova Scotia and one from Ontario. Out of the eight people who are familiar with the term but don’t use it, 50% were from Ontario, while 25% were from Alberta, and 25% from British Columbia.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	69%	26%	4%
Familiar but not used	23%	16%	15%
Familiar and used	8%	58%	81%



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15. Fire Hall – Where firefighters work. 92% Canadian

“Firehouse” and “fire station” were the alternatives used by Americans, with “fire station” used among those who responded from the commonwealth countries.

The one Canadian who said they were unfamiliar with the term is from Toronto. Among the three people who responded “familiar but not used,” two were from Toronto, and one from Hamilton, Ontario.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	72%	89%	2%
Familiar but not used	19%	0%	6%
Familiar and used	9%	11%	92%



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16. Robertson Screws/Screwdriver – A type of screw with a square hole. **92% Canadian.**

This is another word that, despite results, is 100% Canadian. The [Robertson screw/screwdriver is named after its Canadian inventor](#). The reason why it isn't popular in the United States is because of a dispute involving Henry Ford.

In the U.S., those who are familiar with this type of screwdriver call it a "square head."

The following comment was left by one of the commonwealth respondents, "Note - only familiar through professional use, very uncommon fixing in UK, generally in applications that require tamper-resistant fixing as tools are uncommon."

Among the Canadians who are unfamiliar or don't use the word, I can only assume they aren't familiar with tools, in general.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	86%	79%	2%
Familiar but not used	9%	5%	6%
Familiar and used	5%	16%	92%

Keener

17. Keener – A brown-noser. 77% Canadian.

Brown-noser, suck-up, and kiss-ass were the most common alternatives given.

Out of the 11.5 % of Canadians unfamiliar with the term, 66% were from Ontario. Out of the 11.5% of Canadians who were familiar but didn't use the term. 50% were from Ontario.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	95%	90%	11.5%
Familiar but not used	5%	5%	11.5%
Familiar and used	0%	5%	77%



Image by Jiffco

18. Jiffy Marker – A generic term for permanent markers, similar to how people use “Q-tip” for all cotton swabs, or “Kleenex” for all paper tissue. **Regional with 31% of Canadians who regularly use the term.**

This was one of few responses that were answered in the way I had expected. I expected many more words to be regional dialects, and not be the result of sociolects, as was demonstrated. A Jiffy marker is a brand name for an [amazing type of marker created by a Vancouver-based company](#). When I was in school, all permanent markers in the classroom were Jiffy markers.

When it comes to breakdown, it worked out as British Columbia, Alberta, and Saskatchewan versus Manitoba through the Maritimes.

The most common alternatives in the United States are “Sharpie” and “magic marker.” In the commonwealth countries, “felt-tip pen.” Among the Canadians who are not familiar with the awesome that is the Jiffy marker, “Sharpie” was the most common alternative.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	96%	89%	50%
Familiar but not used	3%	11%	19%
Familiar and used	1%	0%	31%



19. Hooped – Similar to FUBAR, if something is hooped, it is screwed up so badly that it probably can’t be fixed. **54% Canadian.**

Hooped is one of my favourite words. I’ll also never forget the “what the what?!” face that greeted me the first time I used it when saying something to my partner.

The most common American alternatives given were: hopeless, royally screwed and FUBAR.

FUBAR was the most common alternative given by those who live in the commonwealth countries.

Canadians gave “borked” as their favourite alternative.

Among the 36% of Canadians who were unfamiliar with this term, 74% of them were from Ontario.

Among the 10% who said they were familiar but didn’t use the word, 80% were from Ontario.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	90%	95%	36%
Familiar but not used	10%	5%	10%
Familiar and used	0%	0%	54%



Product shot via BC Liquor Stores

20. Mickey – A measurement of alcohol, usually 13 ounces (375 millilitres). **88% Canadian.**

After reading some of the American responses, a couple of American movies and television shows finally made sense. I once wondered to myself, “Why is slipping someone a micky a bad thing? People would slip me mickeys all the time when I was in high school.” Then, I learned that “mickey” is used how Canadians use “roofie.” Light bulb = DING! And a bunch of conversations with Americans also finally made sense.

While many Americans weren’t sure if there is an alternative, some suggested: jigger, pony, and mouse. Both “pony” and “mouse” have me confused. But, after reading the responses, I’m sure “mickey” confuses some Americans.

Canadians travelling to the United States: Do not ask someone to give you or buy you a mickey, or ask where you can get one.

Commonwealth respondents were stumped to come up with an equivalent.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	69%	89%	2%
Familiar but not used	27%	11%	10%
Familiar and used	4%	0%	88%



Image via BC Liquor Stores

21. Two-Four or Flat – A case of twenty-four cans of beer. 90% Canadian.

Some Americans said that the alternative word is “case.” In Canada, a “case” is commonly reserved for 12 beer, while a half-sack is what we call it when you purchase a case of six beer. I nearly included our definition of “case” and “half-sack” in the list, but I already had a lot of alcohol-related terms.

In the UK, beer is purchased in different quantities.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	86%	95%	4%
Familiar but not used	10%	5%	6%
Familiar and used	4%	0%	90%



Image via BC Liquor Stores

22. Twenty-Sixer or Twixer – A bottle of alcohol containing 750 millilitres (just over 25 ounces). **64% Canadian.**

The most common American alternatives given were “bottle” and “fifth.” I have two questions. The first question: A fifth of what? The second question: When sending someone to the liquor store, how do they know what size to get if you don’t have different names?

“Bottle” was also the alternative given by the commonwealth respondents. My second question, I also ask of them.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	98%	100%	17%
Familiar but not used	2%	0%	19%
Familiar and used	0%	0%	64%



Image via BC Liquor Stores

23. Forty-Pounder – A bottle of alcohol containing 40 ounces (1.14 litres). **60% Canadian**

The American alternatives given were “40” and “40-ouncer.” Again, no commonwealth alternative.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	93%	100%	27%
Familiar but not used	6%	0%	13%
Familiar and used	1%	0%	60%



Image via BC Liquor Stores

24. Sixty-Pounder – A bottle of alcohol containing 66 ounces (1.75 litres). **Sociolect, with 39% of Canadians using this term.**

Many Americans commented, “not sure this quantity even exists.” While, one American said, “You guys are clearly way more serious about your drinking.” To which I have to say, “Yes, we are <insert joke about our first prime minister being an alcoholic here>.”

Once again, no alternative in the commonwealth countries.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	97%	100%	42%
Familiar but not used	3%	0%	19%
Familiar and used	0%	0%	39%



Image via Liquor Connect

25. Texas Mickey – A bottle of alcohol containing 3 litres (101 ounces). **Sociolect, with 46% of Canadians using this term.**

One American commented, “They make those?! Jesus Christ, Seriously?!” Yes, seriously.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	99%	100%	33%
Familiar but not used	0%	0%	21%
Familiar and used	1%	0%	46%



Pablum cereal carton (center), circa 1935. Public domain via Wikimedia Commons

26. Pabum – A type of infant food. 71% Canadian

Despite the results, this word is 100% Canadian. [Invented by a Canadian pediatrician, Pablum](#) was the recommended first food for infants, no sooner than six-months of age, followed by the introduction of sweet potatoes and squash. In 2012, the [Canadian guidelines changed to meat at six months](#), in addition to Pablum, followed by root vegetables. Fruit is always the last recommended food to introduce to your baby.

The other less-used word for Pablum is “infant cereal.”

The words really stumped everyone who was not Canadian, with suggestions ranging from “Gerber” (which would cause me to assume you mean jarred meat, vegetables, and fruit), and “baby food” (which would lead me to assume the same about jarred food) from Americans, and “rusk” from those in the commonwealth countries.

It also made me wonder to what extent to we feed our babies differently.

As for the Canadians who are unfamiliar with the term, I can only wonder about their family status.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	62%	100%	10%
Familiar but not used	27%	0%	19%
Familiar and used	11%	0%	71%



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27. Chip Truck – A type of food truck that typically serves chips (French fries, hotdogs, hamburgers, fish and chips, etc. **Sociolect, with 50% of Canadians using this term.**

The number one alternative Americans gave was “food truck”, with “burger truck” being the number one alternative among commonwealth respondents.

One American commented, “Chip truck is a semi hauling wood chips.”

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	83%	79%	29%
Familiar but not used	17%	21%	21%
Familiar and used	0%	0%	50%

Give'r

28. Give'r – To put in an enormous amount of effort. **71% Canadian.**

Or, in other words, “to give it all you’ve got.” Some Americans added, “The good old college try,” or “elbow grease,” thought, I’m not sure the latter is synonymous. When you tell someone to “give'r,” you’re telling them to give so much effort that they bleed, and perhaps, even die. A few people said, “Give it a 110%,” while adding, “We’re bad at math.” “Give it a 110%” would probably be the most accurate equivalent.

Out of the three Canadians who were unfamiliar with this term, 66% were from Ontario. Of the 23% of Canadians who were familiar, but don’t use the term, 58% were from Ontario.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	87%	100%	6%
Familiar but not used	10%	0%	23%
Familiar and used	3%	0%	71%



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29. All-Dressed – A type of potato chip. Or, if you are having an “all-dressed” hotdog or hamburger, you are having it with all the fixins. Also, pizza with pepperoni, green peppers, and mushroom. **94% Canadian.**

This term I fully expected no-one outside of Canada to know. The United States has waffle and chicken chips. Canada has all-dressed, and ketchup chips. I suppose you can say all-dressed chips are as Canadian as poutine and maple syrup.

As for the definition in regards to hotdogs and hamburgers, “the works” and “everything” is the U.S. equivalents, while people in the commonwealth countries noting that they ask for dressing individually.

The two Canadians who were unfamiliar with the term were both from Ontario.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	89%	100%	4%
Familiar but not used	9%	0%	2%
Familiar and used	2%	0%	94%

Take off

30. “Take off!” – “Are you serious?” “Are you kidding?” “No way!” **Sociolect, 35% of Canadians using this term.**

Of the Americans who said they were familiar with this term, even if they don’t use it, they attributed their knowledge to the movie *Strange Brew*. Some Canadians remarked that, even though they are familiar with the word, they haven’t used it since the days of “hoser,” and said it is outdated. I’m not sure if it is outdated, as the difference between people who know the word but don’t use it, and those who do use it was four people. Or, maybe, those of us who do use are just getting old.

Out of the 23% of Canadians who were unfamiliar with this word, 46% were from Ontario, and just over 50% of those who know the term, but don't use it, were also from Ontario.

The most common alternatives given were: "Get out!" "Seriously?!" "For real?" "Shut up!" "You've got to be kidding me!"

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	61%	90%	23%
Familiar but not used	32%	5%	42%
Familiar and used	7%	5%	35%



Image copyright BFI Canada

31. BFI Bin – A dumpster. This word appears to have gone the way of the dinosaur.

Pronounced "biffy," in the olden times, when I was a wee lad, we would call the bin or dumpster "biffy" after the company.

Among Americans, the common alternative is "dumpster." For those who reside within the commonwealth countries, the alternatives are "bin" and "skip." Canadians have moved to an equal mix of American and UK English, with an equal number of Canadians saying they usually use "bin" or "dumpster."

The following comments were left by Americans:

- I learned it from Canadians
- "Biffy"
- We just say dumpster, though we have BFI down here, too, in some areas (person living in Arizona)
- When we had BFI in our community, I'd hear that term, but I haven't seen that since I was a kid (person living in Colorado)

One Canadian from Alberta said, "Yes, BFI is the company, but not heard anyone refer to the bins as BFIs."

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	95%	100%	78%
Familiar but not used	5%	0%	10%
Familiar and used	0%	0%	12%



32. Kangaroo Jacket – This term is now only among se with us “old” people. Among the younger people, they refer to it as a “hoodie.” **Regional Western Canadian word.**

I think this one is pretty self-explanatory. I should note, that “kangaroo jacket” tends to be reserved for the type of hooded sweatshirt that doesn’t have a zipper and has pockets in the front. People in the Prairie Provinces also refer to it as a “bunny hug.”

One American remarked, “Only used jokingly and rarely by the people now 70+.”

One person from the UK remarked, “I see where the older term is going with the pocket on the front), hoodie also used disparagingly to refer to youth hanging about, possibly from dissatisfaction/ disenfranchisement, perceived potential for juvenile crimes in commission/conspiracy.”

Out of the 17% of Canadians who are familiar with this term, but don't use it, 60% are from the western provinces. Among the 31% who do use the term, 81% are from British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	94%	100%	52%
Familiar but not used	6%	0%	17%
Familiar and used	0%	0%	31%



Image copyright Kisko Freezies

33. Freezies – Frozen flavoured sugar water that comes in a tube. **98% Canadian.**

I had to look up one of the American equivalents: Otter Pops. Yes, that is exactly what these are, but in Canada, they are Mr. Freeze Freezies. The other alternatives given, such as “popsicle” and “frosties” are not at all the same thing. At least, they would mean something entirely different in Canada.

One American noted that their only reason they were familiar with “freezies” was because of [@mrwordsworth](https://twitter.com/mrwordsworth).

As for the commonwealth equivalent of “ice pole,” I’m going to have to guess and say that they are the same thing.

The one Canadian who doesn’t use this word is from Ontario.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	73%	89%	0%
Familiar but not used	15%	11%	2%
Familiar and used	12%	0%	98%



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34. Stagette – A female-only bachelor party. 75% Canadian

The most common alternative among American respondents was “bachelorette” and “hen party.”
“Among commonwealth individuals, the equivalent is “hen party.”

I’m not sure how well “hen party” would go over for some people in Canada. Calling a female a “hen” or a “cow” isn’t acceptable to many. For some, it is worse than calling them the b-word.

Out of the 10% of Canadians unfamiliar with the term, 80% were from Ontario. Is that the result of a micro-sociolect?

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	77%	95%	10%
Familiar but not used	19%	5%	15%
Familiar and used	4%	0%	75%

Turfed out

35. Turfed Out – When someone is evicted from their home, thrown out of a bar, or when you throw something away. **Sociolect, with 37% of Canadians using this term.**

This was one of the closest scoring sociolects, with 17 unfamiliar, 16 familiar but not using it, and 19 familiar and using it.

The most common alternatives among Americans were “thrown out” and “evicted.”

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	87%	5%	32%
Familiar but not used	10%	11%	31%
Familiar and used	3%	84%	37%



Walmart product image

36. Gotch – Men’s underpants, usually of the brief variety. Sociolect, with 27% of Canadians using this term, or the equally acceptable “ginch” and “gonch.”

Americans call them “briefs” or tighty-whities.” In the commonwealth countries, they are “pants.” Admittedly, for some Canadians, myself included, they are also called “pants.” One Canadian from remarked, “Underpants is a much more hilarious word now.” If Canadians are not calling them “pants,” then they are calling them by the more common “underwear.” The one American who said they use this word also remarked that their husband is Canadian.

Out of the 44% of Canadians who were unfamiliar with this sociolect, 52% of them were from Ontario. The difference been “familiar and not used” and “familiar and used” was one person.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	97%	100%	44%
Familiar but not used	2%	0%	29%
Familiar and used	1%	0%	27%



BC Hydro's Ruskin Generating Station, in Ruskin, British Columbia. Licenced under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic via Wikimedia Commons

37. Hydro – Electrical power and heating. 69% Canadian.

In British Columbia, and many provinces across Canada, [our main source of electricity and heat is from hydro power](#). In fact, Canada is one of the top producer of hydroelectricity in the world, accounting for 58% of all electric generation in 2007. Many of our provincial hydro providers use the word “hydro” in their name: BC Hydro, Manitoba Hydro, Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro, Hydro One, etc. Prince Edward Island is the only province that does not have a hydroelectric power station.

The one respondent from Scotland noted that they do the same as the result of “Scottish Hydro Electric,” who supply power to Perth, and area.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	60%	37%	0%
Familiar but not used	30%	47%	31%
Familiar and used	10%	16%	69%

SKOOKUM

38. Skookum – Mainly heard in British Columbia, it means: strong, awesome, great, good, best, etc.
Regional, with all of the 10% who use this term living in British Columbia.

For the complete definition of this term, [based on Chinook Jargon, head on over to Wikipedia.](#)

I was actually surprised by the number on non-British Columbian who are familiar with this term. Then, I remembers that “Skookum” has been used on SCTV and other Canadian television shows.

Of the three Americans who used this word, two of them live in the Pacific Northwest (Oregon and Washington), and one person from Minnesota.

The one person living in England who is familiar with this term, even though they don’t use it, noted that it was the result of seeing me use it.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	90%	95%	61%
Familiar but not used	7%	5%	29%
Familiar and used	3%	0%	10%

Fill your boots

39. “Fill Your Boots!” – “Whatever floats your boat!” “Whatever creams your coffee!” “Do it if it makes you happy!” **Sociolect, with 33% of Canadians using this term.**

In the United States, “Whatever floats your boat” and “Whatever trips your trigger” were the most common alternatives, with “Whatever floats your boat” being the most common throughout the commonwealth countries.

Out of the 55% of Canadians who said they were unfamiliar with this phrase, 55% were from the Toronto area, and 24% were from Alberta.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	93%	11%	55%
Familiar but not used	7%	26%	12%
Familiar and used	0%	63%	33%

BUGGER THE DOG

40. “Bugger The Dog” – If someone is “buggering the dog,” they are being lazy, or doing a job very slowly, taking their time. **Sociolect, with 21% of Canadians using this term.**

Yes, the regular term is a bit ruder, but it can’t be used on GeekMom, hence the use of the word “bugger.” “Bugger” is equally rude, but would get by U.S. censors because of the lack of profane meaning in the United States. It’s like the time Captain Picard got away with swearing because he said “merde.”

I wonder how much the Canadian results would have changed if I used the slightly less-polite wording.

“Bugger the dog” is not to be confused with “screw the pooch.” They have two completely different meaning.

“Lollygag” is kind of similar, but not really.

One of the commonwealth respondents said they were familiar with the term thanks to its mention in the [September 18, 2013 episode of QJ](#), when a Canadian guest made mention of it.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	89%	100%	61%
Familiar but not used	11%	0%	17%
Familiar and used	0%	0%	21%

Pogey

41. Pogey – Employment Insurance (Unemployment Insurance in the United States). **Sociolect, with 44% of Canadians using this term.**

A couple of Americans noted that they only refer to it as “unemployment.” In Canada, the full term is “Employment Insurance,” but most people simply refer to it as “EI.”

Once upon a time, it was called “Unemployment Insurance” or “UI,” but that changed because the “unemployment” part of it is deceptive. In Canada, not only do you [receive EI](#) if you are laid off from your job, but you also receive it for extended medical leaves, the birth or adoption of a child, if your child dies, if you have to take care of a family member with a terminal illness, such as cancer, and more. When you are on EI, your employer must hold your job, filling it as a temporary position, while you are on leave.

The most common alternative noted by both Americans and those living in the commonwealth countries was “dole.” In Canada, “dole” would mean welfare/income assistance.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	95%	95%	21%
Familiar but not used	5%	5%	35%
Familiar and used	0%	0%	44%



Walmart product shot

42. Serviette – Commonly called a “napkin” in the United States. **58% Canadian.**

Some Canadians commented that they only use “serviette” for the paper type, and that “napkin” is reserved for the cloth type. Others said they use “serviette” for both the paper and the cloth types. And, others said they use both terms interchangeably with equal frequency.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	50%	0%	0%
Familiar but not used	42%	5%	42%
Familiar and used	8%	95%	58%

Questionable Results



Snickers chocolate bar cut in half. Made available under the Creative Commons CC0 1.0 Universal Public Domain Dedication via Wikimedia Commons

1. Chocolate Bar – Commonly called a candy bar in the United States. **100% Canadian.**

The reason why this word is on the questionable results list is because many Americans responded with, “But only if 100% chocolate,” or something similar in nature. In Canada, the term “chocolate bar” is used for all bars that contain any amount of chocolate, even if it is a bar of candy covered in chocolate. Skor, as one example. This term isn’t reserved for bars that are solely of chocolate.

The most common American alternative was “Hershey bar.”

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	2%	0%	0%
Familiar but not used	35.5%	0%	0%
Familiar and used	62.5%	100%	100%



Hard Candy Piped Skinny Track Pants Walmart product shot

2. Track Pants – Jogging pants or sweat pants in other places. **81% Canadian.**

The reason why this word is on the questionable list is because a large number of Americans responded with, “I am familiar with this term, but I never used it or have I heard it used in my area “ and “I am familiar with this word and I use it regularly, or it is used in my area,” but then went on to say, “Not the same as sweat pants,” or they added a description for “track pants” as something other than fleece pants, when I mean them to be synonymous with sweat pants.

The most common commonwealth alternative was “jogging pants.”

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	20%	21%	0%
Familiar but not used	50%	63%	19%
Familiar and used	30%	16%	81%



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3. Rubber – Found at the end of a pencil, or sold individually, to erase pencil. Sometimes used as slang for a condom. **In Canada, the use of the word “rubber” to mean “eraser” is a sociolect.**

The conflicting results for this word could be the result of me adding, “Sometimes used as a slang for a condom.” Most American respondents focused on the “condom” use and not the “eraser” use, as intended. The majority of the 68% in the “familiar but not used” category stated, “But only used as slang for condom.”

By comparison, Canadians specifically left comments stating that “rubber” is a very old slang word for condom, noting that “rubber” is most commonly known to be an “eraser,” even if they don’t use the term themselves. The difference between “familiar but not used” and “familiar and used” was six people.

In the commonwealth, people left notes that “rubber Johnie” is the sometimes used slang for “condom.”

The takeaway for Canadians: Yes, Americans may know the word “rubber,” but not in terms of “eraser.” If you want to avoid confusion, you may want to remember to not use this word, like I have, quite often, while in the United States. No wonder people were confused, and, sometimes, shocked.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	21%	0%	8%
Familiar but not used	68%	0%	52%
Familiar and used	12%	100%	40%



Public domain via Wikimedia Commons

4. Thongs – A type of shoe. Though, sometimes also used to refer to g-string underpants. **75% Canadian.**

This is another word that I question for the same reasons as “rubber.” I cannot help but to wonder how different the results would have been if I out the “sometimes” part. Again, for the same reasons as above, with many Americans stating they use it often, but then added, “But only for the g-string” in the “other” box, adding that they no longer hear it in reference the shoe.

Given how Americans responded, I’m not sure I feel confident re-starting using the term “thongs” for the shoe when I’m down there.

The most common alternative given was “flip flops.”

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	13%	26.3%	4%
Familiar but not used	25%	47.3%	21%

Familiar and used	62%	26.3%	75%
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Camosun College image by the Province of British Columbia

- 5. College** – A post-secondary institution where one goes to learn a trade, get a 1-year certificate, Health care fields (LPN, RCA, medical support staff, dental hygienist, etc.), office support staff, or 2-year diploma, or take university prep courses/upgrading. **92% Canadian.**

The reason why this word is on the “questionable” list is because most Americans said it can be used interchangeably with “university,” [when in Canada, they cannot](#). They are two entirely different types of schools. You cannot get a 4-year, or more, degree at a college. Some Canadian universities have colleges inside of them, but they offer different programmes, with very different “pieces of paper” and qualifications when you are finished. Also, there was one person who called a 2-year diploma a “degree.” Here, a “degree” requires a minimum of four years, or equivalent credit hours.

The most common alternative words in the United States are: trade or vocational school, junior college, community college (which, again, is a whole other kettle of fish in Canada), and technical institute.

One person from New Zealand remarked that “college” means “secondary school” in their location.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	25%	5%	0%
Familiar but not used	21%	5%	8%
Familiar and used	53%	90%	92%



Customers waiting in line to check out at the Whole Foods on Houston Street in New York City's East Village. Image by David Shankbone licenced under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported via Wikimedia Commons

6. Lineup or Queue – You stand in a lineup or queue when going to see a movie, or waiting to pay for your groceries, etc. **98% Canadian.**

The reason why this word is in the “questionable” category is because even though 58% of Americans said they were familiar with this term, even if they don’t use it, most of them also commented that they are only familiar with “queue” and not the more common “lineup,” further stating that they use “in line.”

I also question the commonwealth results, as some people also commented that they are not familiar with “lineup.”

The one Torontonion who responded with “unfamiliar” used the American “in line.”

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	6%	5%	2%
Familiar but not used	58%	16%	0%
Familiar and used	37%	79%	98%



Thrifty Foods product shot

- 7. Brown Bread** – Bread that is brown in colour, made with various percentages of whole wheat. When ordering toast in a restaurant, they will ask, “Do you want your toast white or brown?”
98% Canadian.

This is included in this category because too many Americans responded with “familiar and used,” but then stated that it referred to a specific type of bread.

The American alternatives were “whole wheat” and “wheat bread.”

Some comments of note include:

- Usually used for a high molasses content bread, possibly not containing any whole wheat
- Only Boston Brown Bread, which is baked in a can.
- What do you guys call pumpernickel or dark rye, then? That's what I mean when I say brown bread.

To answer the question, we call it by the type of bread: “pumpernickel” or “dark rye” or “sourdough” (though sourdough is a white bread), etc.

The one Canadian who responded with “familiar but not used,” was from Toronto.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	44%	0%	2%
Familiar but not used	40%	0%	0%
Familiar and used	16%	100%	98%



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8. Pissed – When used alone, it means “drunk.” Denotes anger when used as “pissed off.” **94% Canadian.**

The reason why this word is in the “questionable” list is because over half the people who said they used “pissed” also said, “It doesn’t mean drunk.” My intent was specifically to ask about the singular “pissed.” The qualifier was so that people wouldn’t confuse it with “pissed off.” I’m probably at fault here for being vague.

A couple of Canadians mentioned that, in a few instances, “pissed” can be used to denote anger, depending on context. If you were to say to me, “He was so pissed,” I would assume you are talking about his extreme level of intoxication, as that sentence on its own is without context. Though, I only use “pissed off” to denote anger, and never the singular “pissed,” within context, yes, I would know you meant a level of anger.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	10%	0%	0%
Familiar but not used	28%	0%	6%
Familiar and used	62%	100%	94%



Excello Windowpane Combo Dish Cloth White and Black

9. Dish Cloth – A type of cloth used to wash the dishes. Sometimes, the more general term “washcloth” is used, though rarely. **96% Canadian.**

For similar reasons stated above, the reason this word is on this list is because of the large number (over 50%) of Americans who selected “familiar and used” this term in the context described above, but then stated in the “other” box, “Used to dry dishes,” or comments very similar. Others commented that the alternative is “dish towel,” which, again, is an item used to dry dishes, and not wash them.

The other American alternatives were: washcloth, sponge, and dish rag.

The other alternative given by both Canadians and other commonwealth respondents was “dish rag.”

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	9%	0%	0%
Familiar but not used	11%	11%	4%
Familiar and used	80%	89%	96%



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10. Housecoat – A type of robe generally worn by men. **88% Canadian.**

Again, for similar reasons. A majority of Americans said they are familiar with the term, but then added, “Only used in reference to women.” A small sampling of these comments include:

- A housecoat is typically a woman's garb where I come from.
- Housecoat would be considered effeminate. A man's robe would just be a robe, or bathrobe.

- I don't use it but my grandmother did (a few of these comments).
- Who wears coats in the house?
- Women can use housecoats just as much as men

Bathrobe was the number one alternative given by Americans. A bathrobe is a different type of garment. Bathrobe are made of terry cloth. Housecoats are not. Others said "robe."

"Dressing gown" was the alternative given by those in the commonwealth countries, and by a couple of Canadians.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	33%	21%	0%
Familiar but not used	54%	53%	12%
Familiar and used	13%	26%	88%

Honourable Mention

- 1. Two-Way Ticket** – Referred to as "round trip" or "return trip" in other places. **Sociolect, with 37% of Canadians using this term.**

If three people had answered "unfamiliar" instead of "familiar but not used," this word would have made its way on the list of words for Canadians to avoid whilst in America.

In the United States, the most common alternative was "round-trip."

In the commonwealth countries, the most common alternative was "return ticket."

Among Canadians, the alternatives were "return ticket" and "round-trip." The difference between "familiar but not used" and "familiar and used" was six people.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	48%	37%	15%
Familiar but not used	37%	42%	48%
Familiar and used	15%	21%	37%

- 2. No-See-Ums** – A small biting insect. **Sociolect, with 50% of Canadians using this term.**

A no-see-um isn't the name for an actual insect. It's just what some of call any of those annoying, small, biting insects, that you bite you yet are unseen. You hear them. You feel them. But those bloody things... you just no-see-um. I suppose some of these no-see-ums would be gnats or chiggers or midges, if we could actually lay our eyes upon them.

One American added the following to their "familiar and used" response, "Almost exclusively preceded by an expletive." To which I say, "Yes!"

Out of the 33% of Canadians who were unfamiliar with the term, 53% were from Ontario. Out of the 17% who were familiar with the word, but don't use it, 33.3% were from Ontario and 66.6% were from Alberta.

Just like with "two-way ticket," this could have easily gone into the "unfamiliar" category.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	46%	95%	33%
Familiar but not used	17%	5%	17%
Familiar and used	37%	0%	50%

3. Chesterfield – A couch or a sofa. **Sociolect, with 54% of Canadians using this term.**

Despite the Barenaked Ladies gaining popularity in the United States, there are still nearly 50% of Americans who are unfamiliar with this term. As with the other two honourable mentions, this could have easily gone into the "unfamiliar" category, if a couple of people gave different answers.

A couple of respondents from the commonwealth countries said that "chesterfield" is reserved only for leather couches.

Of the 46% of Canadians who are familiar with the term, but don't use it, 58% of them were from Ontario.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	47%	32%	0%
Familiar but not used	50%	36%	46%
Familiar and used	3%	32%	54%

Familiar, But Have Never Used It or Have Heard It Used

1. Tea Towel – A type of towel used to dry dishes. **84% Canadian.**

The most common American alternative word was "dish towel."

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	21%	0%	4% (2 people)
Familiar but not used	50%	0%	12% (6 people)
Familiar and used	29%	100%	84%

2. Knapsack – Referred to as a backpack in some places. **81% Canadian.**

Aside from backpack, both Americans and people from commonwealth countries gave "rucksack" as an alternative. If someone were to use that word with me, I would think of a type of backpack specific for hiking, camping, and military use, and not the type of bag you use at school, work, and leisure.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
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Unfamiliar	0%	0%	0%
Familiar but not used	56%	68%	19%
Familiar and used	44%	32%	81%

3. Elastic – A band made out of elastic rubber. **98% Canadian.**

The most common American alternative words were: rubber bands, hair ties, and hair bands. In the commonwealth countries, the most common alternative was “rubber band.”

Despite “elastic” making it into the “probably safe to use while in America” category, because the results are so close together, it may be smart to err on the side of caution and use “rubber band.”

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	29%	21%	2% (1 person)
Familiar but not used	38%	21%	0%
Familiar and used	33%	58%	98%

4. Holiday – Not only a day, or days off, but also something you on when you have time off.
 “Remembrance Day is a holiday.” “During the summer holiday, I went on holiday to San Fran.”
96% Canadian.

While most Americans said they were familiar with the word “holiday” both being a day and something you go on, most commented that “on vacation” or “summer vacation” is used for periods of time-off, or when going on a trip. So, while they may understand what we Canadians are saying, they don’t use it.

The two Canadians who said they were familiar but don’t use it “holiday/ on holiday” stated that they use the American “on vacation.”

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	3%	0%	0%
Familiar but not used	65%	5%	4%
Familiar and used	32%	95%	96%

5. Canteen – A place to purchase food or snacks. Typically found in schools and theatres.
Sociolect, with 52% of Canadians using it regularly.

In the United States, the most common alternatives given are: cafeteria, concession, and snack bar.

A couple interesting comments were left:

- In my area this is a flask you drink from, never a store. NYC SUBURB
- Canteens are found in makeshift medical establishments (I have cookies & juice at the canteen after giving blood at my work's blood drive) SAN FRAN

Among the commonwealth countries, the most common alternatives were “dining hall refectory” and other names when used for schools. Canteen is most commonly only reserved for the workplace.

In Canada, the alternatives are: cafeteria, snack bar, and concession. 41% of the Canadians who are familiar with the term, but do not use it are from Ontario.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	14%	0%	6%
Familiar but not used	60%	5%	42%
Familiar and used	26%	95%	52%

6. Hoser – Derogatory term for “idiot,” “loser,” “foolish. **Sociolect with 42% using it regularly.**

Thanks to *Strange Brew*, many American are familiar with this term, even if they don’t use it. One American noted that they use it affectionately in regards to Canadians, which is a little bizarre as, to us, it is a derogatory term.

The most common American alternatives were: tool, dweeb, loser, dummy, and jerk.

The most common commonwealth alternatives were “numpty” and “eejit.”

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	27%	84%	6%
Familiar but not used	54%	11%	52%
Familiar and used	19%	5%	42%

7. Tin – You purchase fish in tins, and beans and soups in cans. A tin is a container that is wider than it is tall. A can is a container that is taller than it is wide. **Sociolect with 58% using it regularly.**

Most Americans said that “can” is the word used for all metal containers.

In the commonwealth, the alternatives given were: tins, can, and tin can.

Some Canadians said “tin” and “can” can be used interchangeable, though they recognize “tin” as the specific size of can. Most of the Canadians in the “familiar but not used” category were from Alberta.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	20%	5%	8%
Familiar but not used	59%	11%	34%
Familiar and used	21%	84%	58%

8. Candy Floss – Known in some places as cotton candy. **Sociolect, with 42% of Canadians using it regularly.**

“Cotton candy” was the alternative given by all those who gave another word.

The different between Canadian who know the word and don’t use it regularly, and those who do use it regularly was two people.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
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Unfamiliar	36%	0%	12%
Familiar but not used	61%	0%	46%
Familiar and used	3%	100%	42%

9. In Hospital/ In University – When one is in the ER or has been admitted to the hospital, they are “in hospital.” Someone who is attending university will say they are in university. **81% Canadian.**

The most common American equivalents were: in the hospital, in college but attending university, to college, and attending college.

One person added the following, “The US equivalent to “in university” is “in college.” I’ve only seen “in university” from non-US Internet posters.”

The commonwealth responses can’t be divided quite as easily. While 100% responded with saying they use “in hospital,” 16% clarified to say they use “at university,” while 84% said “in university.”

Out of the 8% of Canadians who said they were unfamiliar with the term, 50% were from Ontario. Out of the 11% who said they were familiar but it’s not used, 50% were from Toronto.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	32%	0%	8%
Familiar but not used	60%	0%/ 16% for uni	11%
Familiar and used	8%	100%/ 84% for uni	81%

10. Marking – A verb used by teachers, educators, etc., when they are going over a student’s test or assignments. **100% Canadian.**

Even though this word is in the “familiar but not used” category, just like with “elastic” it probably isn’t safe to use, as the results are so extremely close.

The American equivalent is “grading.”

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	23%	0%	0%
Familiar but not used	37%	0%	0%
Familiar and used	40%	100%	100%

11. Clicks – Terms used instead of kilometres. **85% Canadian.**

Some Canadians had commented, “Isn’t it spelled, “klicks?” Click is actually the correct spelling, though like the whole tuque/toque/touque debate, clicks vs. klicks will probably be also debated until the end of time.

The majority of Americans who responded noted that they were only familiar with the term “clicks” in reference to military jargon, otherwise they use miles.

Out of the eight Canadians who said they were familiar with the term, but don’t use it, 75% were from Ontario, with 50% of those people from Toronto.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	15%	53%	0%
Familiar but not used	70%	21%	15%
Familiar and used	15%	26%	85%

12. Frosh – First-year university student. At many university across Canada, “Frosh week” is a week filled with special activities for first-year students. **83% Canadian.**

The American equivalent is “freshman.” The commonwealth equivalent is “fresher.” One American added a comment about “We probably have a derogatory equivalent to Frosh.” I’m not sure if they think “frosh” is a derogatory term, because it isn’t.

I was also surprised by the number of American who not only are familiar with the term, even if they don’t use it, but also use the term. When I was in school, I don’t remember the word getting used. It wasn’t until the latest incarnation of *Degrassi* that I became aware of its existence. Maybe there are a lot of American *Degrassi* viewers.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	29%	95%	6%
Familiar but not used	40%	5%	11%
Familiar and used	31%	0%	83%

13. Knackered – Very tired, exhausted, dead on your feet. **Sociolect, with 35% of Canadians using this term.**

The most common American equivalent was “dog tired.”

Of the 17% of Canadians who were unfamiliar with this term, an equal majority were from Alberta and Ontario. This is also true for the 48% of Canadians who said they were familiar with the term but don’t use it. The difference between those who said they were familiar but don’t use it, and those who do use it was seven people.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	14%	0%	17%
Familiar but not used	56%	5%	48%
Familiar and used	30%	95%	35%

14. Face Cloth – A type of cloth used to wash the face and body. Sometimes, the more general term “washcloth” is used, though rarely. **94% Canadian.**

While “washcloth” is rarely used in Canada, that is the common term in the United States. In the commonwealth countries, “flannel” was the alternative given.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	19%	5%	0%
Familiar but not used	51%	32%	6%
Familiar and used	30%	63%	94%



15. Dressing Gown – A type of robe worn by women, similar to the type worn by Mrs. Roper.
Perhaps becoming regional.

Despite the majority of Canadians being familiar with this word, only 19% still use it in this context. Most of those 19% were from British Columbia and Alberta.

American alternatives were: house dress, robe, nightgown, and bathrobe. When I hear “nightgown,” I think of attire one would wear to sleep. A “dressing gown” doesn’t get worn to bed. Bathrobe, again, is an entirely different type of robe.

One American said, “It’s like a smoking jacket.” A “smoking jacket” would be a housecoat.

In the commonwealth countries, most commented that “dressing gown” was used for both sexes.

Canadian respondents who said they were familiar with this term, but don’t use it, said they are now using “housecoat” in reference to both styles of robe.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	17%	11%	6%
Familiar but not used	72%	0%	75%
Familiar and used	11%	89%	19%

16. Washroom – A washroom is a public facility with sinks and toilets, which is different than a bathroom. A bathroom is a room in which you bathe or shower. **100% Canadian.**

In the United States, “rest room” is the most common used equivalent. One American called it a “powder room.” For a public toilet? Maybe adding the qualifier confused some people, as I was only after the “washroom” and was using “bathroom” of an example of what it is not. Washroom = public. Bathroom = private. I probably should have added the word “private” into the definition.

Some Canadians said they used “washroom” and “bathroom” interchangeably. I wish I could ask them if they meant in reference to the private facility or the public one. I’ll use “washroom” for “bathroom” when I’m at home, but I would never call a public toilet a “bathroom,” as you cannot bathe in it; you can only wash up.

In the commonwealth countries, “toilet” was the equivalent.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	6%	5%	0%
Familiar but not used	60%	84%	0%
Familiar and used	34%	11%	100%

Familiar and Use It Regularly or Used In Area

1. **Pop** - Regionally, in the United States, this varies. Also, recently I learned that in some places, if you order a Coke and all they have is Pepsi, they'll serve you Pepsi without telling you. In British Columbia, if you ask for a Coke, and they only serve Pepsi, (or vice versa) they tell you. Serving you a Pepsi when you asked for Coke would be illegal. **98% Canadian.**

Across the commonwealth countries, the most common alternative was “soft drink.”

There were a number of interesting comments left by American respondents. Some of these include:

- Tricky, turns out coke, pop, and soda are equally used around here.
- I am familiar with this term, but have never used it or have I heard it used in my area, very regional in the US, pop (Midwest, east), soda (west), coke (south), etc., and all kinds of variations in between.
- I am familiar with this and use it but only to be funny because here everyone calls pop “coke” regardless of brand.
- I am familiar with this word and I use it regularly, or it is used in my area., every caffeinated soda is pop in my area - Fanta and Sprite not being pop because they're not caffeinated, even though they're soda.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	1% (1 person)	5% (1 person)	0%
Familiar but not used	42%	27%	2% (1 in Regina, SK)
Familiar and used	57%	68%	98%

2. **Corner Store** – A neighbourhood store that isn't as big as a market, sometimes with a gas station attached. **94% Canadian**

In the United States, the most common alternatives were: convenience store and corner shop.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	5%	21%	0%
Familiar but not used	34%	47%	6%
Familiar and used	61%	32%	94%

3. **Glove Box** – A compartment in the dashboard of a vehicle, often containing car insurance paper, emergency kit, and other items. **100% Canadian.**

I found the American responses to be very surprising. Any time I have used “glove box” while in the United States, I've always been greeted with something to the effect of, “Don't you mean glove compartment,” yet 89% of Americans say they are familiar with it and it is used often, with about half of these saying the terms are used interchangeably.

Out of the commonwealth people, only one person mentioned “glove compartment” as an alternative, and not a single Canadian gave an alternative.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	8%	5%	0%
Familiar but not used	3%	5%	0%
Familiar and used	89%	90%	100%

4. Glaze – A liquid-sugar topping used on meats, cakes, doughnuts, and other baked sweets. **92% Canadian.**

Even though the number of people who did not know this term or do not use the term is rather small, I am very curious as to what they would say instead of “glazed doughnut,” as an example. No-one left an alternative. Though, in the “icing” question, one commonwealth person said they used the term “icing” to mean “glaze.”

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	0%	5%	0%
Familiar but not used	4%	11%	8%
Familiar and used	96%	84%	92%

5. Icing – A thick topping, made with cream cheese, or icing sugar and butter, or fondant, on baked goods. **100% Canadian.**

While most Americans said they use the term “icing,” seven of them qualified their response by saying, “Frosting is creamier than icing.” If I were to adjust the “familiar and used” number, eliminating those seven people left those qualifiers, the number of Americans who use “icing” for all forms of icing would be 88%.

In the United States, “frosting” was the most common alternative, with many people using “frosting” and “icing” interchangeably. One person in the commonwealth said that they use the term “icing” to mean “glaze,” and “frosting for icing.”

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	1%	0%	0%
Familiar but not used	4%	5%	0%
Familiar and used	95%	95%	100%

6. University – A post-secondary institution where one gets a degree (undergrad and postgrad). **98% Canadian.**

Again, most Americans noted that it can be used interchangeably with college. Though, unlike the word “college,” if a Canadian were to say “university,” in the United States, there would be no confusion as to meaning.

One American noted that they think people in the U.S. just simply choose to ignore the difference in meaning between “college” and “university.” Another noted that a university is normally a more posh environment. And another noted that a university is a collection of colleges on one campus.

Only one Canadian did not use the word, despite being familiar with it.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	1%	0%	0%
Familiar but not used	14%	0%	2%
Familiar and used	85%	100%	98%

7. Cutlery – Spoon, fork, knife, etc. 100% Canadian.

The most common American alternatives were: utensils, silverware, and flatware.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	2%	0%	0%
Familiar but not used	16%	0%	0%
Familiar and used	82%	100%	100%

8. Arena – Where one goes to play/watch hockey and skating. 98% Canadian.

Some people in the United States said that arena and stadium can be used interchangeably.

In Canada, a stadium is reserved for building that are not capable of being turned into an ice rink. Concerts can be held in both arenas and stadiums, but you can't play hockey or figure skate in a stadium, but you can play football in a stadium.

In the commonwealth countries, people stated, "arena for shows, stadium for sports."

One Canadian said they only refer to it is a rink.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	3%	5%	2%
Familiar but not used	15%	32%	0%
Familiar and used	82%	63%	98%

9. Tap – Water comes out of it. 100% Canadian.

I found this to be another very interesting result, as I've only heard Americans call it a "faucet." Yet, despite my experiences, 75% of Americans say they use "tap."

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	0%	0%	0%
Familiar but not used	25%	0%	0%
Familiar and used	75%	100%	100%

10. Blinds – A type of window dressing not made with cloth. 100% Canadian.

This is another result that I found rather fascinating, as I always here Americans refer to "curtains" as "blinds," when they are two different things.

The UK alternative given was "window coverings."

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	1%	0%	0%
Familiar but not used	2%	5%	0%
Familiar and used	97%	95%	100%

11. Dinged – Financially hit. “I was dinged an extra \$50 on my hydro bill.” 92% Canadian.

“Over charged” was the most common alternative given by Americans. I’m not sure that is entirely accurate, as in my mind “over charged” means that the charge is not valid or erroneous. “Dinged” means the charge was not made in error, it was just an unexpected extra.

	United States	Commonwealth	Canada
Unfamiliar	16%	53%	2%
Familiar but not used	25%	16%	6%
Familiar and used	59%	21%	92%