



All Ears English Episode 195: Four Ways to Instantly Sound More American in English

Lindsay: This is an All Ears English Podcast, Episode 195: “Four Ways to Instantly Sound More American in English.”

[Instrumental]

Gabby: Welcome to the All Ears English Podcast, where you’ll finally get real, native English conversation with your hosts, Lindsay McMahon, the ‘English Adventurer’ and Gabby Wallace, the ‘Language Angel’, from Boston, USA.

[Instrumental]

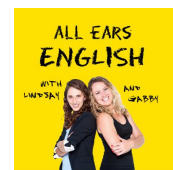
Gabby: Hey guys. Do you feel like your English is a little stiff? Do you wanna (want to) sound more like a native English speaker? In this episode, we’re going to share four ways for you to sound more American right now.

[Instrumental]

Gabby: Lindsay, how do you do?

Lindsay: Gabby. Why are you using that old school English? It sounds like you need to learn some common, real English.

Gabby: Oh, my!



Lindsay: Gabby, seriously. You need help and I know the perfect place you can go. You can go to AllEarsEnglish.com/100 to get the 100 Most Common Phrases in (Everyday) English, real English.

Gabby: Goodness.

[Instrumental]

Lindsay: Hey, Gabby.

Gabby: Hey, Lindsay.

Lindsay: What's going on?

Gabby: Nothing much. You seem like you're in a good mood today. How are you doing?

Lindsay: Well, I'm, I'm good. Hey, it's Wednesday. No, it's Thursday. Today is Thursday and...

Gabby: Yep.

Lindsay: ...I'm feeling good because the weekend's coming.

Gabby: Yeah, the weekend's coming. First weekend in October. Coming into the fall strong.

Lindsay: Yeah.

Gabby: So, yeah. (Um), (you know), one thing – I've got to start wearing my jacket pretty soon...

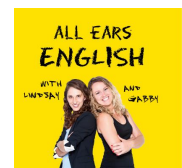
Lindsay: (Uh-hm).

Gabby: ...cause (because) it's getting colder here in Japan.

Lindsay: (Wha-)...?

Gabby: Are you gonna (going to) wear your coat soon in Boston?

Lindsay: I don't know. I think it's more hoody weather here. I'm gonna (going to) wear...



Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: ...my hoodie. I like hoodies. (You know), (like), when you guys think of hoodie, you maybe think of Mark Zuckerberg, (right). He wears his hoodie. He's famous for the hoodie. What's a hoodie Gabby?

Gabby: A hoodie is a zip-up sweater with a...

Lindsay: Sweatshirt.

Gabby: ...hood. Yeah, sweatshirt. Sorry.

Lindsay: (Mm-hm).

Gabby: (Um), and it has (like) a hood that covers your head.

Lindsay: Yeah, I'm wearing one now. I'm wearing my hoodie. So...

Gabby: Nice.

Lindsay: ...I like to wear hoodies in the fall. It feels great- comfortable, casual, jeans and a hoodie. Gotta (got to) love it.

Gabby: I wanna (want to) wear my new coat. I got a new North Face...

Lindsay: Oh.

Gabby: ...down...

Lindsay: That's so Boston, Gabby.

Gabby: ...coat.

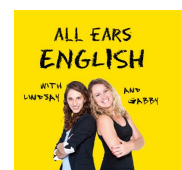
Lindsay: North Face is so Boston.

Gabby: Oh, whatever. Whatever.

Lindsay: Bostonians...

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: ...are famous for that, that brand.



Gabby: Well, it's funny because I brought this jacket, or this coat right before I left Boston, but I shoulda (should've/should have) bought it (like) ten years ago when I first moved to Boston.

Lindsay: Well, and now you wanna (want to) wear it. You wanna (want to).

Gabby: Now, I wanna (want to) wear it.

Lindsay: Right, you really wanna (want to) wear it.

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: But Gabby, it's October. (I mean), it's not – (you know), when I was teaching English in Tokyo back in 2005, I had some great friends who were my colleagues, but they were from Australia.

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: And as soon as we hit, (like), October 1, they had their down jackets on because they're from Sydney. (I mean), they're not used to cold. But I was laughing. I was like, "Man, you don't need that until January," but you wanna (want to) wear it. So fine.

Gabby: That's right. I wanna (want to) wear mine.

Lindsay: Wear it.

Gabby: Yeah.

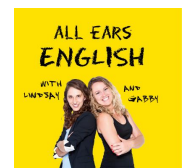
Lindsay: If they're...

Gabby: So...

Lindsay: ...gonna (going to) do it, they're gonna (going to) do it.

Gabby: They're... Yeah, that's right. And, (you know), it's the season, so I'm gonna (going to) do it.

Lindsay: You're gonna (going to) do it. Well, I don't know. Maybe – (uh), it just seems crazy to me because here, (you know), in Boston, the weather is cold in the winter, but now it's not time for a down jacket here.



Gabby: Really? Not yet. I feel like you've gotta (got to) start wearing a coat there in Boston definitely by the end of October.

Lindsay: (I mean) a coat, but not a down jacket. To me down jackets are like mid-winter like, (you know), heavy mountain climbing stuff.

Gabby: Well, maybe I will go mountain climbing. I don't know. All right. So we used a few different words there that we wanna (want to) share with you guys because today's episode is all about four easy tips, four ways that you can instantly sound more American.

Lindsay: Yeah, these are...

Gabby: So...

Lindsay: ...quick fixes, quick changes you guys can make to your English in a few minutes.

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: And you can sound more natural.

Gabby: Americans do something funny with English. (Um), well, we do a lot of funny things. But one thing that's very typical of American English is to combine words together. And Lindsay, you had a few examples that you just shared with me. What are, what are those?

Lindsay: So I said, "Oh, so Gabby, do you, (you know), you wanna (want to)..."

Gabby: (Uh-huh).

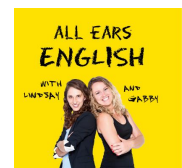
Lindsay: "...you want to, you wanna (want to) wear your down vest, but it's too early," right. So instead of saying...

Gabby: Yeah, you wouldn't say, "You want to..."

Lindsay: Right, it's...

Gabby: "...wear your..."

Lindsay: ...it's boring and it's too slow...



Gabby: (Mm).

Lindsay: ...to say it that way.

Gabby: Yeah, yeah, yeah. It sounds very dramatic too. (Um), so what happens? (I mean), you, you drop the 't' sound.

Lindsay: I drop the 't'.

Gabby: 'Want to' no longer has the 't', that nice crisp 't', 't'...

Lindsay: Right.

Gabby: ...'t', 't', 't', 't'.

Lindsay: Right, right, right. Exactly. Exactly. So, and we just bridge between the verb and the preposition and say "I wanna," right.

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: Not, "I want to." We say, "I wanna, I wanna wear my down vest."

Gabby: That's a good point because I've also heard (sort of) this weird half linking that some people do, and it sounds like "I wan-ta."

Lindsay: Okay.

Gabby: And that's not quite right. (Like), you're almost there, but you really have to completely get rid of the 't's'. So take...

Lindsay: Drop that 't'.

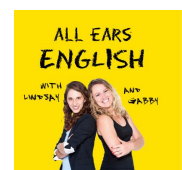
Gabby: ...take both 't's' out so no 't' on the end of 'want' and no 't' on the beginning of 'to.' So wan-a. Wanna.

Lindsay: Wanna. Gabby what do you...?

Gabby: So, 'to'...

Lindsay: Yeah. Sorry go ahead.

Gabby: So, 'to' just becomes 'a'.



Lindsay: So what do you wanna (want to) do this afternoon or tomorrow. I guess for you right now it's (like) late. "What do you wanna (want to) do tomorrow?"

Gabby: "(Um), tomorrow, I wanna (want to) take a Japanese lesson."

Lindsay: Ooh, very cool.

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: Very cool. Yeah.

Gabby: I'm gonna (going to) speak Japanese all morning.

Lindsay: Wow.

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: Well, I'm gonna (I'm going to) be out socializing. Tomorrow night, I wanna (want to) go out. I wanna (want to) go out...

Gabby: Oh.

Lindsay: ...and meet new people. So...

Gabby: Cool.

Lindsay: ...you can go out and learn Japanese and I'll go out and have fun.

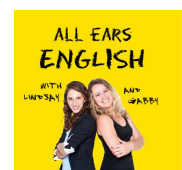
Gabby: Yeah. Well, I shoulda (should've/should have) learned Japanese ten years ago, but I'm still working on it.

Lindsay: Ah, but you didn't. So what did we do there? So there we combined I should have, right?

Gabby: (Uhn), (uhn), (uhn). Yeah, yeah. So...

Lindsay: In that case, we're talking about regrets, right?

Gabby: Right.



Lindsay: Things that we regret. "I shoulda (should've/should have) done this, I shoulda (should've/should have) done that.

Gabby: Oh, my gosh, I should have brought more clothes with me in my suitcase because I'm running low on things to wear.

Lindsay: And so now, maybe that's why you're talking about wearing your down coat from (like)...

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: ...October to August.

Gabby: It's the only thing I have.

Lindsay: You've got problems.

Gabby: You wanna (want to) send me some clothes?

Lindsay: Oh, man. Well, I suppose I could, I could send something across the ocean. I'll send you an All Ears English t-shirt. How about that?

Gabby: Oh, are we gonna (going to) make t-shirts?

Lindsay: Well, yeah.

Gabby: We should totally make t-shirts.

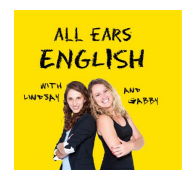
Lindsay: Of course we're gonna (going to) make t-shirts.

Gabby: Okay.

Lindsay: We're always gonna (going to) make t-shirts.

Gabby: Yeah. Hey, actually if you're listening and you would like an All Ears English t-shirt, could you just leave us a comment and say, "Yeah, I want a t-shirt." Let us know." (Um), I would wear an All Ears English t-shirt, especially with my face on it.

Lindsay: We don't want your face on an All Ears English t-shirt.



Gabby: Wouldn't that be funny though if I had a t-shirt with my own face on it? I think that would be...

Lindsay: Yeah, it would be funny to you.

Gabby: Too much.

Lindsay: Only to you.

Gabby: Okay.

Lindsay: So we are gonna (going to) make t-shirts, but we're not gonna (going to) put Gabby's face on the t-shirt.

Gabby: What?

Lindsay: Only my face on the t-shirt. Gonna (going to). So when we, when we say gonna (going to), what are we saying Gabby?

Gabby: Going to. Are we *going to* make t-shirts?

Lindsay: Oh, my god. That sounds so formal if you say...

Gabby: I know.

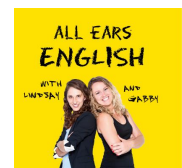
Lindsay: ...'going to' and it's too slow. It takes too long to say that...

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: ...first of all. No, we're gonna make t-shirts. We're not going to make t-shirts. We're gonna (going to) make t-shirts, Gabby."

Gabby: (Um-hm). Great. Yeah, so, you can see, you can hear there are sounds removed and it's, it's very – imagine that your mouth is lazy. Imagine that, (you know), you wanna (want to) do the least possible movement with your mouth here. (Um), so 'going to,' you take out the '-ing', you take out the 't'. So, it's, it really changes. Honestly, it's hard to even describe because it's, it's from 'going to' to 'go-na.' It's completely different.

Lindsay: Yeah, it's kinda (kind of) strange. It's weird, it's weird, isn't it?



Gabby: So, we're removing sounds, but then when we put the, the, the words back together, (you know), after having removed the '-ing' and the 't', these words change even more. So, (you know), you just have to remember that 'going to' is 'gonna.'

Lindsay: Right. And then the last one we haven't talked about yet is gotta (got to), (right). "Ah, I gotta (got to) study Spanish more because I'm losing my Spanish."

Gabby: And...

Lindsay: "I gotta (got to) study more."

Gabby: ...well, this is interesting too because I don't think you learn "I've got to" in your typical English class. It's not in the textbook. Usually, you'd learn "I have to" or "I want to" or, "I should."

Lindsay: Right.

Gabby: Those are all different ways, more formal, traditional ways of saying, "I've got to." But honestly, "I've got to" is used 90% of the time and...

Lindsay: Oh, my god. This is so common.

Gabby: ...the other ways that I just mentioned are not used nearly as much. Maybe 10% of the time.

Lindsay: Yeah.

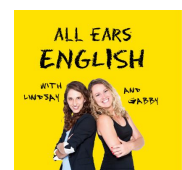
Gabby: So...

Lindsay: This is so common. So what's something that you, that you gotta (got to) do this fall, Gabby? Whadda (what do) you...?

Gabby: Oh, I've gotta (got to) go hiking.

Lindsay: You-you've gotta (got to) go hiking or you gotta (got to) go hiking. Right, I gotta (got to), I gotta (got to) start running more, (right), because...

Gabby: (Um).



Lindsay: ...I'm getting out of shape. I gotta (got to) start running.

Gabby: Okay. Cool. Yeah.

Lindsay: (Mm-hm).

Gabby: (Um), I would say, also, I've gotta (got to) study some Japanese.

Lindsay: (Mm-hm).

Gabby: So, (I mean), you could say, (you know), something that you want to do like "I've got to go hiking," or something that you should do like study, (you know). So, (it's) just a different meaning.

Lindsay: Just one thing.

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: Just to clarify. So we're saying this two ways. We're saying 'I've gotta, we're also saying, "I gotta (got to)."

Gabby: (Mm).

Lindsay: Because people also say, 'I' instead of 'I've'. Right?

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: People often – in a casual, American style...

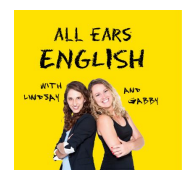
Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: ...we sometimes drop the 'I've' and we just say "I gotta (got to)".

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: Right. Do you? You don't? You don't say it?

Gabby: No, I do. (Um), I'm – absolutely, you're right, you're right Lindsay. I'm just laughing because we keep taking sounds out of our spoken English and it just makes me wonder at some point are we just gonna (going to) say, for example, joggin' (jogging). Me, joggin' (jogging).



Lindsay: Caveman English.

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: So the point is if you want to speak more like an American, you have to be lazy.

Gabby: Yes.

Lindsay: Americans...

Gabby: Yes.

Lindsay: ...are a little lazy when it comes to speaking. We like to bridge words, we like to say it as quickly...

Gabby: Well...

Lindsay: ...as easily as possible.

Gabby: ...hang, hang on now. (I mean), you're right, but I think this happens in every language. I don't think it's only Americans. I think that in your native language, whatever it may be, I would bet that you have some version...

Lindsay: (Uhn).

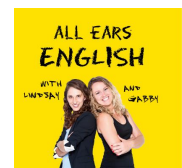
Gabby: ...of lazy whatever your language is, lazy Spanish, lazy Japanese, whatever. (I mean), we wouldn't call it lazy Japanese, but you get the idea. Something that is, (you know), an, an easy, casual way of speaking and that's what's happening here in American English. (You know), this is...

Lindsay: (Uh-huh).

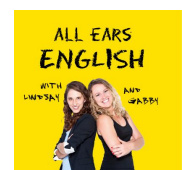
Gabby: ...how we become comfortable with the language and so we can still communicate very clearly. We know exactly what we're trying to say, (uh), but we don't need all of those formal words.

Lindsay: Yeah, that's right. So just shorten it up and try to mirror what you hear other people saying.

Gabby: Yeah.



- Lindsay:** (You know), spend time with native speakers. (You know), repeat in your mind what you hear other native speakers saying and it'll become more natural for you.
- Gabby:** Yeah, and sorry, just one last thing because I did mention formal words. I'd like to say that using gonna (going to), wanna (want to), gotta (got to), shoulda (should've/should have) is more casual. If, if I'm in a formal situation, if I'm in an interview or I wanna (want to) make a good impression, I wanna (want to) be professional, I'm actually gonna (going to) avoid these phrases. (I mean), it's okay to use them a little bit, but, (uh), it depends. I would say if you want to be professional and show a lot of respect or you, you're giving a public, (uh), talk or, or, (you know), very formal occasion, it's actually appropriate to clearly enunciate each word. That's my opinion.
- Lindsay:** Yeah. Or, for example, instead of saying 'wanna' if you're in a job interview, you could say, "I would like to," (right). Instead of saying...
- Gabby:** Yeah.
- Lindsay:** ..."I wanna (want to) increase my experience in marketing"...
- Gabby:** Right.
- Lindsay:** ..."I would like to improve my experience in marketing" or "...build experience in marketing." (Um), going to instead of gonna', we could say...
- Gabby:** (Uh-hm).
- Lindsay:** ...um, "I plan to," "I hope to."
- Gabby:** Right. So there's a whole different set of formal, professional, appropriate vocabulary for those situations. And you might use completely different words like Lindsay was just saying like, "I plan to" or "my goal is to."
- Lindsay:** Yeah. And you might also let your body language (kind of) mirror the new register that you're using when you're in an interview, right. So, you're gonna (going to)...



Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: ...put your shoulders back, you're gonna stand up straight and you're gonna (going to) say...

Gabby: Yeah.

Lindsay: ...“I would like to” instead of “I wanna (want to)” when you're talking with friends. So your body language can mirror the new way of speaking in a professional situation.

Gabby: Yeah, and (you know), I think that's a whole nother episode we could get into English for a great interview, but for this episode, we just wanted to share the four ways of starting to talk more like an American, more like a native English speaker, and again, those were – instead of 'want to,' say 'wanna'. Instead of 'got to,' say 'gotta,' and Lindsay, share the rest.

Lindsay: Yeah. Instead of 'going to,' 'gonna' and instead of 'should have,' we could say, 'shoulda.'

Gabby: Awesome. Thanks Lindsay.

Lindsay: Yep.

[Instrumental]

Lindsay: If you wanna (want to) put your ears into English more often, be sure to subscribe to our podcast in iTunes on your computer or on your smartphone. Thanks so much for listening and see you next time.

