# American content creator shares three culture shocks after moving to the UK



An American content creator has shared his experiences encountering cultural differences after moving to the United Kingdom, highlighting three notable culture shocks he faced upon relocating. Kalani Ghost Hunter, whose real name is Kalani Smith and who hails from Tennessee, spoke openly about the contrasts in portion sizes, tipping customs, and humour between the US and the UK.

One of the initial surprises for Kalani was the markedly smaller portion sizes in the UK compared to what he was accustomed to in America. He recounted how, upon ordering what he thought was a large drink, he was actually given a small one. He explained to his TikTok audience, which numbers over three million followers, "My mind was like 'This is a small'. If you're not familiar with drink sizes in the US, you can get a small state-sized cup for like a dollar 50. It's absolutely mind-blowing." He observed that the large servings common in the US are not the norm elsewhere, saying, "When you travel out of the US, you realise that it's not the norm."

Additionally, Kalani discussed the tipping culture in the UK, which differed significantly from that in the US. He noted that in Britain, it is not customary to tip waitstaff, contrasting this with the US where a tip of around 20 per cent is generally expected. "When you get your check at the end of dinner, and they don't ask for a tip, and they don't even give you an option to tip, it's really weird," he said. Although he sometimes still leaves tips in the UK, the social media star stated that he no longer feels the pressure to do so as he did in America.

The third cultural adjustment Kalani had to navigate was British humour, which he characterised as "very dry, very dark and very passive aggressive." Initially, he found the sarcasm difficult to understand but grew to appreciate it over time, commenting, "They have so many different ways to insult you and so many different ways to say things that it's almost like translating another language at times." He also described British comedy as "elite" and shared that he was first introduced to it through reading comments on his social media posts. One example of his newfound appreciation is his use of the term "melts" — a British slang word describing someone acting in a pathetic or wimp-like manner.

Kalani's TikTok video about his cultural observations garnered nearly 800,000 views and sparked a lively discussion. Many British viewers responded by discussing the differences in tipping etiquette, with one noting, "The reason you're not expected to tip in the UK is because service staff actually get paid a wage and tips are extra, not like in the US where servers only survive on tips." Others expressed frustration about tipping during their visits to the US, and some praised British banter and humour.

The Daily Mail is reporting on Kalani’s reflections on his transition from the US to the UK, offering an insightful view into how everyday social customs and cultural norms can vary significantly between the two countries.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.businessinsider.com/fast-food-portion-sizes-us-vs-uk-mcdonalds-kfc-dominos-starbucks-2023-1> - This article highlights the significant differences in portion sizes between the US and UK, noting that US large fries are 46% bigger than their UK counterparts, and the largest iced coffee sizes are 50% larger in the US compared to the UK.
2. <https://www.businessinsider.com/fast-food-portion-size-comparison-us-vs-uk-vs-canada-vs-australia-2021-2> - This comparison shows that US portion sizes are generally larger than those in the UK, with US large fries weighing 154g compared to 125g in the UK, and US large drinks being 89% bigger than their UK equivalents.
3. <https://www.ft.com/content/33d60b47-9f78-47ba-83b4-d5684fcb4d81> - This column explores the stark differences between US and UK tipping cultures, noting that in the UK, a service charge is typically incorporated into menu prices, reducing the need for additional tipping.
4. <https://www.ft.com/content/1bd128a7-c321-4eac-ae67-38fedb8ef8f2> - This article discusses the tipping culture in the US, highlighting that tips have become almost mandatory, rising to about 25%, contrasting with the UK's tipping culture where tipping remains largely optional, usually around 13%.
5. <https://www.ft.com/content/3ed3da35-8d02-4d20-968a-7f0a78c64a92> - This piece examines the US tipping system, noting that it relies heavily on customer tips to ensure service workers earn a decent living, leading to 'tip fatigue' among customers due to the pressure to tip generously.
6. <https://www.zavamed.com/uk/portion-size-compared.html> - This study compares portion sizes in the UK and the US, illustrating that meals in the US often have larger portions compared to those in the UK, such as the US version of fish and chips being laden with more carbs and having a larger serving of fish.
7. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-14655497/American-living-UK-biggest-culture-shocks-experienced-moving.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data