### British vs. American Military: A Comparison

**British Advantages**
- British forces superior to American forces in experience, training, equipment, and organization.
- At the beginning of the war, British forces outnumbered Continental forces; for example, British general William Howe’s expeditionary force in 1776 numbered 32,000, compared to American general George Washington’s force of less than 20,000.
- Britain’s navy was the biggest and strongest in the world.
- Abundance of funding allowed for long-term war planning and the hiring of foreign mercenaries for reinforcements.
- Britain had key alliance with Iroquois and other Native American peoples.
- British bases in Canada provided a stable base of attack.
- Almost a third of colonists were still loyal to King George III.
- Splintered families, with brother fighting against brother, undermined American unity.
- A weak central governing authority placed the Continentals at a disadvantage.
- Britain’s total population was three times that of colonies, providing a larger pool of potential recruits.

**American Advantages**
- Patriot zeal for independence, in contrast to lower motivation among opposing troops, especially Hessian mercenaries.
- Superior knowledge of home ground coupled with effective guerrilla warfare tactics, such as attacking from the rear and adopting enemy uniforms as a disguise.
- Financial and military aid from France and Spain.
- Whereas Britain changed its commander in chief in the middle of the war, American commander in chief George Washington saw the war through from beginning to end.
- Though improperly trained in warfare compared with the British, Continentals were familiar with guns and had gained experience and skills fighting Native Americans.
- Poor decision-making on the part of the British, including over-cautiousness and delays in moving troops, helped the Patriots win.
- Though some colonists were Loyalists, they were not as well-organized as the Patriots; many Loyalists feared harassment and therefore kept their sympathies private.
- The British public was divided and tentative in its support of the war.
- The Continentals supported themselves from a sympathetic surrounding population, whereas the British had to supply themselves from thousands of miles away.