

Easily Confused Words

Some words have the same or very similar pronunciations, so it can be difficult to tell them apart. Here are some common examples of this. If you need additional help, using a physical or digital dictionary to search for words can be useful.

Words Often Confused

Affect and Effect

Affect (verb): To change something or someone.

- *My midterm score will **affect** my final grade.*

Effect (noun or verb): The result or outcome of the change, or to bring about.

- *My midterm score will have a positive **effect** on my final grade.*
- *These policies will **effect** positive change in our schools.*

Lose and Loose

Lose (verb): Being unable to find, have, or achieve something or someone.

- *I hope my favorite soccer team does not **lose** the game.*

Loose (adjective): Something or someone that is free from restraints or not tightly fitted.

- *The sweater I'm wearing is a little too big and **loose**.*

To, Two, and Too

To (preposition): To approach a location or condition or can be used as a preposition.

- *He's going **to** be happy because he must go **to** a family reunion.*

Two (number): The number two.

- *I need to take **two** pictures for my photography class.*

Too (adverb): Doing something excessively or additionally.

- *I had way **too** much homework over the weekend **too**.*

Accept and Except

Accept (verb): To receive something or recognize a statement.

- *I **accept** the invitation to your birthday party.*

Except (preposition or conjunction): Not including; used before a statement that forms an exception to one just made.

- *All the cats **except** for the kitten rushed to the kitchen for dinner.*

Then and Than

Then (adverb or adjective): At that time; soon after that.

- *I finished my homework and **then** played video games for a while. #*

Than (preposition or conjunction): An exception or used to introduce the second element of a comparison.

- *She doesn't like any subject other **than** biology and prefers in person classes rather **than** online classes.*

Advice and Advise

Advice (noun): An opinion or recommendation offered as guidance.

- *I gave her some **advice** on how to improve her painting skills.*

Advise (verb): To recommend or give information.

- *I will **advise** him to speak with a tutor before submitting his essay.*

Contractions and Their Homophones

Contractions are a shortened form of a word or group of words, usually with an apostrophe. Some contractions may sound like other words, but they're spelled differently (homophones).

They're and Their

They're: A contraction of *They are*.

- ***They're** going to the mall to buy new clothes.*

Their: Belonging to or associated with something or someone.

- *That diamond ring belongs to **their** famous jewelry collection.*

You're and Your

You're: A contraction of *You are*.

- **You're** my favorite person to talk to.

Your: Belonging to or associated with someone.

- You left **your** glasses on the table.

Here's and Hears

Here's: A contraction of *Here is*.

- **Here's** the pack of colored pencils I borrowed from you earlier.

Hears: To perceive something or someone with sound or to be informed.

- She **hears** the pitter-patter of rain on her window.

Who's and Whose

Who's: A contraction of *Who is*.

- **Who's** the other person you invited to the party?

Whose: Belonging to or associated with someone.

- **Whose** jacket is this?

It's and Its

It's: A contraction of *It is*.

- **It's** a button pin you can decorate your backpack with.

Its: Belonging to or relating to something.

- The dog is wagging **its** tail.

Let's and Lets

Let's: A contraction of *Let us*.

- **Let's** find a peaceful place in the park to have a picnic.

Lets: To allow.

- She **lets** her cat roam around in the park sometimes.