

COMMONLY CONFUSED & MISUSED WORDS

a	singular noun marker used before a consonant - <i>a book</i> - or consonant sound - <i>a uniform</i>
an	singular noun marker used before a vowel - <i>an apple</i> - or vowel sound - <i>an hour</i>
accept	an action (verb) meaning to receive or agree: <i>I accept your apology.</i>
except	a preposition meaning excluding: <i>everyone except me</i>
alright	nonstandard form for <i>all right</i> ; do not use in formal writing
all right	standard form meaning okay
advise	a noun meaning the counsel given (c pronounced like s): <i>I took his advice.</i>
advise	an action (verb) meaning to give counsel (s pronounced like z): <i>Please advise me what to do.</i>
affect	an action (verb) meaning to have an influence on: <i>Studying affects your grades.</i>
effect	a noun meaning the influence something has: <i>Studying has an effect on your grades.</i>
already	an adverb referring to previous time: <i>She already left.</i>
all ready	adjective phrase meaning completely prepared: <i>They were all ready to go.</i>
brake	a noun meaning the device to slow or stop a vehicle: <i>My car needed new brakes.</i>
break	an action (verb) meaning to cause something to be broken: <i>Be careful not to break the glass.</i>
buy	a verb meaning to purchase: <i>I need to buy my books for class.</i>
by	a preposition with several meanings: near - <i>Sit by me</i> ; not later than - <i>by next week</i> ; past a place - <i>he drove by my house</i>
complement	verb meaning <i>to complete</i> (remember the <i>e</i> in <i>complete</i>): <i>That jacket complements the outfit.</i>
compliment	verb meaning <i>to praise</i> : <i>The teacher complimented my writing.</i> noun meaning <i>praise</i> : <i>The teacher gave my paper a compliment.</i>
coarse	an adjective meaning <i>rough</i> : <i>The coarse fabric irritated her skin.</i>
course	a noun meaning <i>subject</i> - <i>What courses did you take?</i> ; or <i>direction</i> - <i>He changed course in midstream.</i>
good	adjective describing the quality of a person or thing: <i>He is a good writer.</i>
well	adverb telling how an action is performed: <i>He writes well.</i> can also be an adjective referring to a person's health; meaning literally not sick: <i>I don't feel well today.</i>
hear	a verb referring to the action of taking in sound: <i>Can you hear me?</i>
here	an adverb referring to location: <i>The books are not here.</i>
hole	a noun referring to an empty space: <i>That sweater has a hole in it.</i>
whole	an adjective meaning complete: <i>Did you read the whole book?</i>
its	a possessive pronoun meaning <i>belonging to it</i> : <i>The dog buried its bone.</i>
it's	a contraction for <i>it is</i> or <i>it has</i> : <i>It's [it is] going to rain. It's [it has] only been two weeks.</i>
lay	a verb meaning <i>to put</i> [must have an object]: <i>Please lay your books down.</i> (past is <i>laid</i> : <i>He laid the books down.</i>)
lie	a verb meaning <i>to recline</i> [does not take an object]: <i>I need to lie down.</i> (past is <i>lay</i> : <i>Yesterday I lay down.</i>)
loose	(rhymes with <i>goose</i>) an adjective meaning <i>not tight</i> : <i>That shirt is too loose.</i> an adjective meaning <i>free from restraint</i> : <i>The dog got loose.</i>
lose	(s sounds like z) a verb meaning <i>to misplace</i> : <i>Don't lose your syllabus.</i> a verb referring to the opposite of <i>win</i> : <i>Did they lose the game?</i>
past	a noun referring to the time before now: <i>That incident took place in the past.</i> an adjective referring to something happening earlier: <i>I regret some of my past actions.</i> a preposition meaning beyond time or place: <i>We drove past the school. He worked past midnight.</i>
passed	past tense of the verb <i>pass</i> : <i>Have you passed the Exit Exam yet?</i>
peace	a noun referring to quiet or calm: <i>The twins' mother needed peace and quiet.</i>
piece	a noun referring to a part of something: <i>May I have a piece of pie?</i>

precede	a verb meaning <i>to go before</i> : <i>Whose speech will precede mine?</i>
proceed	a verb meaning <i>to go forward</i> or <i>continue</i> : <i>You may proceed with your plans.</i>
principal	a noun meaning the person in charge: <i>Mr. Moore was the principal of my high school.</i> an adjective meaning main or most important: <i>What is your principal reason for being here?</i>
principle	a noun meaning a fundamental truth or rule: <i>Honesty is one of the principles he lives by.</i>
quit	a verb meaning <i>to stop</i> : <i>He quit the race before the finish line.</i>
quite	an adverb meaning <i>very</i> or <i>entirely</i> : <i>That course is quite difficult.</i>
quiet	an adjective meaning <i>not loud</i> : <i>The twins' mother became nervous when it was too quiet.</i>
right	an adjective meaning <i>correct</i> : <i>That was not the right answer.</i>
write	a verb referring to the action of making marks on a surface: <i>Please write clearly.</i>
set	verb meaning <i>to put</i> something (takes an object: <i>to set the table</i>)
sit	verb meaning <i>to sit down</i> (does not take an object)
stationary	an adjective referring to staying in the same spot: <i>She exercised on a stationary bike.</i>
stationery	a noun referring to paper that is written on: <i>She ordered personalized stationery from Office Depot.</i>
suppose	a verb meaning to assume or think: <i>I suppose we should leave now.</i>
supposed to	followed by the word "to," means <i>expected to</i> : <i>You are supposed to know that.</i>
their	possessive pronoun referring to what belongs to them: <i>What is their opinion?</i>
there	an adverb referring to location: <i>Put the books there.</i> a word used with a form of <i>to be</i> to begin a thought: <i>There will be no one here today.</i>
they're	contraction for <i>they are</i> : <i>They're [they are] always late.</i>
then	an adverb referring to time: <i>After I finish my homework, then I will have dinner.</i>
than	a word used for comparison: <i>Your test scores are higher than mine.</i>
threw	the past tense of the verb <i>throw</i> : <i>He threw a wild ball that broke the window.</i>
through	preposition showing direction: <i>He threw the ball through the window.</i>
to	used with a verb (not the verb of the sentence) to make an infinitive: <i>I am in a hurry to finish my courses.</i> a preposition meaning in the direction of: <i>He took the bus to school today.</i>
too	also: <i>Can I come to the party too?</i> overly: <i>The salsa was too spicy.</i>
whose	possessive pronoun: <i>Whose book is this?</i>
who's	contraction for <i>who is</i> : <i>Who's going with us?</i>
use	a verb meaning <i>to make use of</i> : <i>Can you use my textbook from last term?</i>
used	past tense of the verb <i>use</i> : <i>I used the same book.</i> an adjective meaning not new: <i>He bought a used book.</i>
used to	accustomed to - <i>I'm used to doing it this way.</i> - or in the past - <i>I used to know her.</i>
weather	a noun referring to the condition of the atmosphere: <i>South Florida's weather is normally nice.</i>
whether	a conditional word meaning <i>if</i> : <i>I need to know whether or not you will be attending the meeting.</i>
we're	contraction for <i>we are</i> : <i>We're [we are] all going in the same car.</i>
were	the past of <i>is/are</i> : <i>Were you at the meeting last night?</i>
where	a question word referring to location: <i>Where are you going?</i>
your	a possessive pronoun meaning <i>belonging to you</i> : <i>Is that your book bag?</i>
you're	a contraction for <i>you are</i> : <i>You're [you are] not going to pass if you don't study more.</i>