

Easily confused words

Computer spell-checkers will *not* help you tell these words apart—you just have to learn them!

<p>Accept/except</p> <p>Accept is a verb and means <i>to receive, agree, or believe</i>: <i>I generally accept the truth.</i></p> <p>Except is a preposition which means <i>but not or other than</i>: <i>He is a great guy, except when he gets angry.</i></p>	<p>Affect/effect</p> <p>Affect is a verb meaning <i>to influence or act on</i>: <i>How did the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi affect others?</i></p> <p>Effect is usually a noun meaning <i>result</i>: <i>The medicine had a positive effect.</i></p> <p>(Note: a less-common use of effect is as a verb meaning <i>bring about</i>: <i>Widespread criticism finally effected a change in procedures.</i>)</p>
<p>All right/alright</p> <p>All right is the only correct choice. Alright is not a word (maybe you're thinking of <i>already</i>): <i>It turned out all right in the end.</i> <i>All right, we'll go with you.</i></p>	<p>Break/brake</p> <p>Break means to <i>separate into parts</i>, especially by force: <i>I hope you didn't break my phone when you dropped it.</i></p> <p>Brake means to <i>slow or stop</i>: <i>If you brake slowly you have more control over your car.</i></p>
<p>Cite/site/sight</p> <p>Cite is a verb that means <i>tell where you learned something</i>: <i>My instructor told me to cite my sources.</i></p> <p>Site is a noun that means <i>place or location</i>, including online locations: <i>The construction site is marked with a sign.</i> <i>That website (or site) will be a good resource for your paper.</i></p> <p>Sight is the ability to see: <i>You can protect your sight by wearing sunglasses.</i></p>	<p>Principal/principle</p> <p>Principal is an adjective meaning <i>primary</i> or a noun meaning <i>chief administrator</i>: <i>Their principal export is electronics.</i> <i>The principal spoke to the student assembly about drinking and driving.</i></p> <p>Principle is a noun. It means a <i>rule, idea, or general law</i>: <i>The unions fought for the principle of collective bargaining.</i></p>
<p>Than/then</p> <p>Than means <i>when compared to</i>: <i>Your purse is heavier than my backpack.</i></p> <p>Then means <i>next, at that time or in that case</i>: <i>We had dinner; then we went to the movies.</i> <i>If the car isn't running, then we should take the bus.</i></p>	<p>There/their/they're</p> <p>There is an adverb meaning <i>in or at that place</i>: <i>The cookie is there on the plate.</i></p> <p>Their means <i>belonging to them</i>: <i>The students presented their views on the issue.</i></p> <p>They're is a contraction of <i>they are</i>: <i>They're a great inspiration for the rest of us.</i></p>

<p>threw/through</p> <p>Threw is the past tense of throw—to <i>make something fly quickly through the air using your arm</i>: <i>He threw the Frisbee downfield.</i></p> <p>Through shows <i>movement in space</i>, from one end of something to another. It also means <i>because of</i>: <i>We searched through the shelves but never found the book.</i> <i>I'm graduating early through the support of my family.</i></p>	<p>to/too/two</p> <p>To shows <i>location, direction</i>, and other relationships in a prepositional phrase; with a verb it marks an infinitive: <i>We'll be going to the movies tomorrow. We want to go early.</i></p> <p>Too means <i>also or in excess</i>: <i>I would go, too, but it costs too much money.</i></p> <p>Two means 2: <i>She lives only two miles from campus.</i></p>
<p>Weather/Whether</p> <p>Weather is a noun; it is the <i>conditions of the atmosphere such as temperature, clouds, wind, or rain</i>: <i>The weather is expected to be warm on Saturday.</i></p> <p>Whether indicates choices, alternatives, or possibilities: <i>I don't know yet whether I got in the class.</i> <i>He didn't say whether he wanted to go or stay.</i></p>	<p>Where/were</p> <p>Where is an adverb meaning <i>in what place</i>: <i>He didn't say where he put the keys.</i></p> <p>Were is a past tense of <i>is</i>: <i>They were afraid to stay any later than ten o'clock.</i></p>
<p>Which/witch/sandwich</p> <p>Which means <i>what particular one out a group</i>. It also replaces the name of something previously mentioned: <i>Which sunglasses do you think look better on me?</i> <i>I bought the black sunglasses, which look better on me.</i></p> <p>Witch refers to a <i>woman with magic powers or an unpleasant woman</i>: <i>She says she is a witch in the Wiccan church.</i> <i>My neighbor can act like a real witch when my dog goes in her yard.</i></p> <p>Sandwich, on the other hand, is just w-i-c-h!</p>	<p>Who's/whose</p> <p>Who's is a contraction of <i>who is</i>: <i>Who's there?</i></p> <p>Whose means <i>belonging to someone or belonging to something</i>. It is a possessive form of <i>who</i> or <i>which</i>: <i>I met a woman whose husband is a rocket scientist.</i> <i>The desk whose inbox is full belongs to me.</i></p>
<p>You're/your</p> <p>You're is a contraction of <i>you are</i>: <i>You're supposed to keep the promises that you make.</i></p> <p>Your means <i>belonging to you</i>: <i>That is your decision.</i></p>	

