

SPELLING, VOCABULARY AND CONFUSING WORDS

a or an	<p>Use a when the first letter of the word following has the sound of a consonant. Keep in mind that some vowels sound like consonants when they're sounded out as individual letters.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>a finger</i> ▪ <i>a hotel</i> ▪ <i>a U-turn (pronounced You-turn)</i> ▪ <i>a HUD program</i>
a or an	<p>Use an when the first letter of the word following has the sound of a vowel. Remember that some consonants sound like vowels when they're spoken as individual letters.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>an FBI case (F is pronounced ef here)</i> ▪ <i>an honour (H is silent here)</i> ▪ <i>an unusual idea</i> ▪ <i>an HMO plan (H is pronounced aitch here)</i> ▪ <i>an NAACP convention (N is pronounced en here)</i> <p>Deciding whether to use a or an before abbreviations can be tricky. The abbreviation for Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) causes confusion because it can be pronounced as a word (fak) or one letter at a time (F-A-Q). Using the guidelines above, one would say a FAQ when it is pronounced as one word and an FAQ when it is pronounced one letter at a time.</p>
accept except	<p>to agree; to receive</p> <p>but, with the exception that</p>
adverse averse	<p>Unfortunate; strongly opposed (refers to things, not people)</p> <p>Examples: <i>an adverse reaction to the medication; adverse weather conditions</i></p> <p>Having repugnance (refers to people)</p> <p>Example: <i>He is averse to a military draft.</i></p>
advice (noun) advise (verb)	<p>recommendation</p> <p>the act of giving a recommendation</p>
affect effect	<p>Rule 1. Use effect when you mean bring about or brought about, cause or caused. Example: <i>He effected a commotion in the crowd.</i> Meaning: He caused a commotion in the crowd.</p> <p>Rule 2. Use effect when you mean result. Example: <i>What effect did that speech have?</i></p> <p>Rule 3. Also use effect whenever any of these words precede it: <i>a, an, any, the, take, into, no</i>. These words may be separated from effect by an adjective.</p>

	<p>Examples: <i>That book had a long-lasting effect on my thinking.</i> Has the medicine produced any noticeable effects?</p> <p>Rule 4. Use the verb affect when you mean to <i>influence</i> rather than <i>to cause</i>. Example: How do the budget cuts affect your staffing?</p> <p>Rule 5. Affect is used as a noun to mean <i>emotional expression</i>. Example: <i>She showed little affect when told she had won the lottery.</i></p>
ail ale	to be ill; to cause pain or distress malt beverage more bitter than beer
aisle I'll isle	passageway contraction for <i>I will</i> a small island
all awl	entire, everything a tool
allot a lot	to parcel out always two words, meaning <i>many</i>
allowed aloud	gave permission to said out loud; spoken
all ready already	means all are ready Example: We are all ready to go. refers to time Example: Is it summer already?
all together altogether	refers to a group; all of us or all of them together Example: It is wonderful to be all together at dinner. entirely Example: <i>It is not altogether his fault.</i>
altar alter	pedestal, usually religious Example: <i>They exchanged wedding vows at the altar of the church.</i> to modify Example: <i>Please don't alter your plans until we have the final schedule approved</i>
allude elude	to refer indirectly Example: <i>He alluded to his past as a spy.</i> avoid capture Example: <i>The fugitive eluded the police for a month.</i> <i>Mislead</i>

allusion	an indirect mention of something
illusion	false perception
ante	a bet placed before playing
auntie	affectionate term for a parent's sister
anxious	to have anxiety or worry <i>Example: She is anxious about taking the test.</i>
eager	excited <i>Example: She is eager to get a puppy.</i>
any more	something additional or further <i>Example: It didn't rain any more this year than last year.</i>
anymore	any longer, nowadays <i>Example: Harry doesn't travel anymore.</i>
appraise	to put a value on something
apprise	to notify
arc	arch, crescent, half moon
ark	a vessel or a refuge
ascent (noun)	movement upward
assent (noun or verb)	enthusiastic agreement; to agree
assistance (noun)	help
assistants (noun)	people who help
ensure	to make sure something will/won't happen
insure	to issue an insurance policy
ate	past tense of <i>eat</i>
eight	the number after <i>seven</i>
aural	having to do with hearing
oral	having to do with the mouth
awed	in a state of amazement
odd	unusual; opposite of <i>even</i> when referring to numbers
bald	having no hair
bawled	cried

ball	a sphere
bawl	to cry or wail loudly
band	a group, sometimes a group of musicians
banned	forbidden
base	the bottom; vulgar; headquarters (singular)
bass	low vocal or instrumental range (pronounced like <i>lace</i>); a type of fish (pronounced like <i>lass</i>)
based	be dependent or supported
baste	to moisten; to criticize or lash out at
bases (noun, verb)	headquarters (plural of <i>base</i>); builds on
basis (noun)	foundation; belief
beach	sandy area with water
beech	type of tree with smooth, grey bark
beau	boyfriend (pronounced like <i>owe</i>)
bough (noun)	branch of a tree (pronounced like <i>cow</i>)
bow (noun)	part of a set with arrows (pronounced like <i>owe</i>)
bow (noun, verb)	boat front, a male's form of curtsy, bending at the waist; comply (pronounced like <i>cow</i>)
bell	chime or alarm; a signal
belle	beautiful or charming woman
berth	a boat dock; bedroom or bed
birth	being born; beginning
better	of higher quality
bettor	someone who places bets
biannual	twice a year
biennial	every two years
bite	to use one's teeth to tear food
byte	computer term for eight bits of information
billed	charged a fee
build	construct
billed	charged a fee
build	construct

bloc block	a group united for a particular purpose city street; a cube-shaped object
boar bore	male pig someone or something not interesting
boarder border	someone who pays for room and food perimeter; boundary
bode bowed	predict bent (pronounced like <i>owed</i>)
brake break	stop separate into pieces
cache cash	hidden stash money
calendar colander	chart of days and months sieve to drain off liquids
cannon canon	large, mounted gun rule, commandment
canvas canvass	awning cloth, tarp to poll; a poll
capital capitol	assets; essential; main city statehouse
carat caret carrot karat	unit of weight in gemstones a proofreading mark to show insertion (^) edible root a unit for measuring the fineness of gold
cast (noun, verb) caste	group of actors; to throw a social class, a rigid system of social distinctions
cay key quay	a small, low island (also spelled key) a small, low island; instrument for opening locks (pronounced key) wharf, dock, pier

cede	to surrender
seed	reproductive germ
cell	prison room; basic structural unit of an organism
sell	to exchange for money
censor (verb/noun)	disallow; person who disallows <i>Example: The soldier's letters were censored before mailing.</i>
censure	to disapprove of; criticize strongly <i>Example: The principal censured the children.</i>
sensor	a device that measures heat, light, etc. and transmits a signal to a control or measuring instrument
chased	went after
chaste	pure, virginal
Chile	a country in South America
chilli	a type of pepper; a dish with peppers in it
chilly	cold, brisk
choral	a cappella, singing without instruments
coral	material that makes up reefs; orange color
chorale	a hymn, a choir
corral	horse pen
chord	three or more musical tones sounded simultaneously; line segment joining two points on a curve
cord	a rope or strand of flexible material
cored	removed the center of something
chute	an inclined shaft
shoot (verb, noun)	to discharge from a weapon; a stem
cite	to assert; to quote from; to subpoena
sight	vision, the power to see
site	a location or position
clause	in grammar, a group of words containing a subject and verb; part of a contract
claws	an animal's nails
click	a sound
clique	a group

climactic climatic	having to do with the climax having to do with the climate
coarse course	rough, lacking in fineness of texture; crude a class; a path
colonel kernel	an officer in the military a seed
complement compliment	completing part of an order praise
confidant confident	someone confided in certain, sure
connote denote	to suggest, imply <i>Example: A growling dog connotes danger.</i> to be a sign of <i>Example: Certain clouds denote rain on the way.</i>
core corps corpse	center or crucial part trained group dead body
co-sign cosine	to sign along with a trigonometry term
council counsel (verb, noun)	a group of people meeting for a purpose advise; advice, an attorney
creak creek	a sound a stream
crews cruise	many groups a trip or vacation by sea
criteria criterion	plural of <i>criterion</i> a standard for evaluating or testing something
cue queue	a hint; a stimulus a line of people waiting

curser	someone who swears or wishes misfortune on another
cursor	a blinking symbol indicating position on a computer screen
dam	a barrier obstructing the flow of liquid
damn	a swear word or curse
dammed	blocked from flowing
damned	doomed
desert (noun, verb)	a desolate area; to abandon
dessert	extra s for sugary treat
desperate	lost all hope, in despair
disparate	entirely dissimilar
device (noun)	an invention
devise (verb)	to invent
discreet	careful, confidential
discrete	individual, distinct
dual	two-fold
duel	fight
elicit	evoke, extract, draw out
illicit	illegal
elusive	difficult to describe, evasive Example: <i>The point of the novel is elusive to me.</i>
illusive	plausible or possible; deceptive Example: <i>She had the illusive dream of finding happiness by traveling. (plausible, possible)</i> Example: <i>She had an illusive idea that she was qualified for the job. (deceptive, delusional)</i>
emigrate	to exit one country in order to live in another country
immigrate	to enter a new country to live
epic	saga
epoch	a period of time, an age
every day	each day Example: <i>I learn something new every day.</i>
everyday	ordinary Example: <i>These are my everyday clothes.</i>

facts fax	objective data short for <i>facsimile</i> ; technology that sends images by phone
faint feint	to go unconscious pretence
fair (adjective, noun) fare	impartial; an exhibition payment or expense for travel
fairy ferry	imaginary being possessing magical powers type of boat
farther further	refers to physical distance only Example: <i>We had to walk farther than the map indicated.</i> refers to physical distance like farther; moreover; in addition; to a greater extent Examples: <i>We need to discuss this further; Nothing could be further from the truth; We had to walk further.</i>
faux foe	fake, imitation enemy, opponent
faze phase	to perturb or fluster a period or situation
feat feet	an extraordinary act or accomplishment twelve-inch increments; appendages at end of legs
feted fetid	celebrated, honoured noxious, gross
flair flare	style erupt
flea flee	insect to run away
flew flu flue	past tense of <i>fly</i> , to have moved through the air with wings a virus part of a chimney
floe flow	sheet of floating ice pour, proceed, spew

for	preposition
fore	ahead
forego	to go in front of, precede
forgo	to do without
foreword	introduction to a book written by someone other than the author
forward	opposite of <i>backward</i>
fort	a military fortification
forte	someone's strong point, talent
forth	forward
fourth	number after <i>third</i>
foul	offensive, disgusting
fowl	certain birds
gait	a manner of walking or stepping, stride Examples: <i>trotting, galloping, limping</i>
gate	barrier
gorilla	largest of the apes
guerrilla	soldier using surprise raids; irregular tactics
grate	a cover or partition of parallel or crossed bars
great	excellent
grill	method of cooking; barbecuing
grille	an openwork barrier for a gate
hangar	shed or shelter for housing airplanes
hanger	something to hang a garment on in the closet
haut/haute	high-class, fancy as in haute couture (pronounced <i>oh</i> or <i>oht</i>)
hoe	flat-bladed gardening tool
have vs. of	<i>Should've, could've, and would've</i> are contractions for <i>should have, could have, and would have</i> . No such wording as <i>should of, could of, would of</i> .
heroin	a narcotic derived from morphine
heroine	female admired for courage or ability

hoard horde	stockpile, amass a large group, crowd
holy wholly	religious entirely, completely
idle idol idyll	not active; unemployed someone admired interlude, breathing space; romance, fairy tale
incite insight	to prompt to action understanding, comprehension
ingenious ingenuous	clever naive or simple
innocence innocents	to be without guilt people who are without guilt
it's its	contraction for <i>it is</i> or <i>it has</i> Example: <i>It's for a good cause.</i> possessive pronoun Example: <i>The cat hurt its paw.</i>
lacks lax	is deficient in slack, easy-going
lead led	a metal element (pronounced like red); present tense of <i>led</i> (pronounced like <i>seed</i>) guided, past tense of to <i>lead</i>
lean (adjective, verb) lien	not fatty; to incline a claim on property to secure debt payment
lessen lesson	to make less a unit to be learned or studied
lie lye	a falsehood; present tense of lie down (see <i>lay</i> vs. <i>lie</i> chart above) a caustic substance
lightening lightning	to make lighter a brilliant electric spark in the sky

loose lose	opposite of <i>tight</i> opposite of <i>win</i> ; misplace
main mane	primary, chief, leading long hair on the back of a horse or lion
maize maze	corn labyrinth
manner manor	behaviour palatial residence
marquee marquis	canopy, shelter; projection over a theatre entrance aristocrat, nobleman
marshal (verb, noun) martial	assemble; a judge militant, aggressive
meat meet (verb, noun) mete	animal flesh used for food to connect, touch; an event administer, allot
medal meddle	decoration, badge to interfere in an unwanted manner
metal mettle	earth element boldness
miner minor (noun, adjective)	one who excavates to extract ores someone under legal age; small
moose mousse	an animal type of dessert
muscle mussel	fibrous tissue edible marine bivalve
naval navel	pertaining to ships belly button, umbilicus
ordinance ordnance	a law military weapons and ammunition

overdo overdue	to do to excess past due
packed pact	past tense of <i>pack</i> an agreement or treaty
pain pane	physical or emotional suffering a plate of glass or panel
palate pallet palette	roof of the mouth; taste a low, portable platform a range of colors; a board to hold and mix colors
passed past	past tense of <i>pass</i> the time before the present
peak peek perch	top of a mountain glance furtively to wound someone's pride or to excite interest
pealed peeled	rang bells removed a layer
pedal peddle	foot-operated lever to sell, hawk, or dispense
peer perch	person who is an equal a structure extending out over water
pi pie	3.1416, the ratio of the circumference of a circle to its diameter baked food filled with fruit or meat
pistil pistol	female organ of a flower type of gun
pole poll	a long, cylindrical piece of wood or metal a collection of opinions; survey
pore pour	small hole to send liquid flowing
praise prays preys	express approval makes requests to God hunts for food; victimizes

precedence precedents presidents	priority examples, criteria chief executives
principal (noun, adjective) principle	head of school; chief; of first importance fundamental belief
quarts quartz	units of liquid measure (four quarts to a gallon) a mineral
raise raze	lift up flatten, tear down completely
rap (noun, verb) wrap	a type of music; to strike sharply to enclose in a covering
rapped rapt wrapped	struck sharply fascinated enclosed in a covering
reek wreak	to smell bad to cause trouble <i>wreak havoc</i>
rest wrest	relax take from
retch wretch	vomit lowly being, scoundrel
review revue	survey a satirical show
right rite write	correct; opposite of <i>left</i> ritual, ceremony to compose letters or words
role roll (noun, verb)	part in a play or film a bun; to rotate
root rout route	base of a plant defeat (pronounced <i>rowt</i>) path (pronounced like <i>root</i>)

rot wrought	decay, decompose accomplished
rote wrote	by memory, formula past tense of <i>write</i>
rude rued	impolite, unmannerly regretted, repented
rye wry	seed from a grain mocking, ironic, droll
sacks sax	large bags saxophone
saver savour	one who saves to appreciate a taste
seam seem	line formed by pieces of fabric sewn together appear
sear seer sere	scorch, burn, or char one who sees (as in the future) withered, dry
serf surf (noun, verb)	slave breaking waves; to ride a surfboard
sewer suer	a conduit for carrying off waste one who sues
shear sheer	to cut transparent
shoe shoo	foot attire interjection used to scare away an animal
sic sick	a Latin term used to indicate that something written is intentionally left in the original form, which may be incorrect. Example: <i>She wrote, "They made there [sic] beds."</i> ill
sign sine	an indication a trigonometry term

sink synch or sync	to submerge; to descend to a lower level; where you wash dirty clothes to synchronize, to coincide or match up
slay sleigh	kill snow vehicle, sled
sleight slight	cunning, skill slender, of little substance
slew slough	past tense of <i>slay</i> swamp (pronounced <i>slew</i> or <i>slau</i>)
soar sore	to fly at great height in pain
soared sword	flew at great height a bladed weapon
sole soul	bottom of foot; lone the spiritual part of humans
spade spayed	digging tool to have removed the ovaries of an animal
staid stayed	solemn, serious remained, waited
stationary stationery	in one place writing paper
stile style	turnstile, passageway fashion
straight strait	not curved or bent narrow passage of water connecting two bodies of water
succour sucker	relief, assistance fool
sundae Sunday	ice cream with syrup day of the week
tare tear (verb)	allowance for the weight of packaging rip, pull apart

taught taut	past tense of <i>teach</i> tightly stretched
tea tee	a beverage a peg from which a golf ball is hit
team teem	group playing on the same side in a game swarm
tear (noun) tier	salt water coming from eyes when sad (pronounced like <i>ear</i>) a row or layer
than then	used for comparison indicates time, answers <i>when</i>
throes throws	agonizing struggles tosses, hurls
throne thrown	royal seat or office was tossed
thyme time	herb of the mint family past, present, future sequences of events
ticks tics	parasites; sounds of a clock facial twitches
tide tied	ebb and flow of the ocean past tense of <i>tie</i>
toad toed towed	similar to a frog having a toe pulled, hauled
told tolled	said sounded a bell
tort torte	a breach of contract a rich cake made with little or no flour
tracked tract	followed an extended area of land; a political or religious pamphlet

troop	a body of soldiers
troupe	a group of traveling performers
vain	excessively concerned about one's appearance
vane	a blade moved by wind as in <i>weather vane</i>
vein	blood vessel
verses	lines of poetry
versus	as compared to another choice; against
vial	small container for holding liquids
vile	repulsive, depraved
waiver	a relinquishment of some right
waver	to feel indecisive; vary
warn	to notify
worn	carried on the body; deteriorated
warrantee	person who is given a written guarantee
warranty	written guarantee
were	past tense of <i>are</i>
we're	contraction for we are
while	during or in the time that
wile	a trick to fool, trap, or entice
whine	complaining cry
wine	fermented grape juice that becomes an alcoholic beverage
whirled	spun rapidly
world	planet Earth
whorled	shaped like a coil
who's	contraction for who is Example: <i>Who's at the door?</i>
whose	possessive case of who Example: <i>Whose coat is this?</i>
wont (adjective, noun)	accustomed; habit
won't	contraction for <i>will</i> not

yoke	harness for oxen
yolk	yellow center of an egg
yore	long past
you're	contraction for <i>you are</i>
your	possessive pronoun