

List of Frequently Confused Words

a lot	many
alot	no such word (slang for "a lot")
allot	to distribute
ability	power to do something
capacity	facility to contain something
abjure	renounce
adjure	appeal
accede	to agree
exceed	to surpass
accent	vocal emphasis, to emphasize
ascent	vertical path upward
assent	agreement
accept	to receive, to regard as true
except	to exclude
acquire	to gain possession of
attain	to achieve a goal
obtain	to gain possession of
adherence	attachment
adherents	followers
adapt	to adjust
adept	skillful
adopt	to take or accept as one's own
addition	something added
edition	the total issue or number of copies
adverse	against
averse	disinclined
affect	as a verb-to influence, to change (usual usage) as a noun-affectation-as in "His accent was an
affect."	
effect	as a noun-a result (usual usage) as a verb-to bring about-as in "He will effect a
recovery."	

affectation affection	pretense fondness
affinity infinity	connection to limitless space, time, distance
aggravate irritate	to worsen to annoy, to cause discomfort
aisle isle	passageway land surrounded by water
all ready already	entirely ready reference to time
all together altogether	in a group completely
allay alley ally	to relieve a narrow passage a comrade, to join
allude elude refer	to refer indirectly to to evade to direct
allusion delusion illusion	an indirect reference false reasoning false vision
altar alter	a place of worship to change
amateur novice	a nonprofessional a beginner
amiable amicable	good-natured peaceful
among between	more than two only two
amount number	measured quantity counted entities

anecdote	a brief story
antidote	a remedy
ante-	before or prior to
anti-	against or opposed to
anxious	worried
eager	ardent, impatiently expectant
apparent	obvious through deductive reasoning
evident	obvious through external signs
appraise	to evaluate
apprise	to inform
apprehend	to seize, to grasp
comprehend	to understand
apt	appropriate
liable	bound to occur, legally obligated
libel	written slander
likely	probable, probably
arrant	notorious
errand	a task
errant	wandering, roving
assay	to analyze
essay	a short literary composition, to attempt
assure	to remove doubt
ensure	to guarantee
insure	to protect
avocation	a hobby
vocation	a profession
bare	to uncover
bear	an animal, to carry, to endure
bazaar	a market
bizarre	strange
believe	convinced by reason
feel	convinced by emotion

berth	a sleeping or mooring place
birth	origin, beginning of existence
beside	next to
besides	also
biannual	twice a year
biennial	every other year
semiannual	twice a year
bi-	every other period (biweekly, bimonthly)
semi-	twice within the period (semiweekly, semimonthly)
billed	requested payment
build	construct
built	constructed
bloc	a group of people
block	a solid object, to impede
boar	a male swine
Boer	a Dutch South African colonist
boor	a rude person
bore	a dull person, a hole, to make a hole
born	given birth to
borne	carried or supported
born or bourne	a stream, a limit or goal
borough	a governmental unit
borrow	to receive temporarily
burro	a donkey
burrow	a hole, to dig
bouillon	soup
bullion	bulk precious metal
breadth	width
breath	an inhalation or exhalation of air
breathe	to inhale and exhale air
calendar	a register of time
calender	a rolling machine
colander	a strainer
can	is able

may	is permitted
cannon	a big gun
canon	a law
canvas	cloth
canvass	to solicit, to survey
capital	the seat of government, investment money, an
upper case	letter
capitol	a legislative building
carat or karat	weight (four grains)
caret	an editor's mark
carrot	a vegetable
casual	informal, by chance
causal	referring to the cause
ceiling	the interior upper surface of a room
sealing	closing tightly
censer	incense burner
ensor	to criticize, to delete from publication
censure	to blame
cession	surrender of a title or right
session	a meeting
character	the whole of an actual personality
reputation	the external perception of a personality
chased	pursued
chaste	pure, virginal
choral, chorale	a hymn
corral	a pen for animals
chord	a combination of musical notes
cord	a string
cite	to refer to, to summon
sight	vision or view
site	location

climactic	refers to climax
climatic	refers to climate
close	near, to shut
clothes	wearing apparel
coarse	not fine
course	a route, part of a curriculum, a division of a meal
compare	to assess similarities and differences
contrast	to assess differences
complement	to add to, to improve
compliment	to praise
comprehensible	understandable
comprehensive	inclusive
confidant,	trusted one, person in whom we confide
confidante	trusted one, female in whom we confide
confident	assured
conscience	sense of morality
conscious	awake
consul	an official
council	a conference, its members
counsel	an advisor, advice
contemptible	deserving of contempt
contemptuous	feeling of contempt
contend	to deal with, for, or against something
content	that which is contained within something
contiguous	adjoining, bordering
continual	occurring repeatedly
continuous	occurring ceaselessly
convince	to cause to believe
persuade	to cause to believe and act upon that belief
core	central part
corp	a group of people

corespondent correspondent	legal term a writer
credible creditable credulous	acceptable, believable praiseworthy gullible
criteria criterion	standards a single standard
cymbal symbol	a musical instrument a token, a representative sign
decease disease	die sickness
decent descent dissent	respectable vertical path downward disagreement
dent dint	a concavity, a surface depression effort
deprecate depreciate	to express disapproval, to belittle to decline in value
desert dessert	arid land, to abandon a sweet food, a reward
device devise	an appliance to plan
die dye	to expire from life a coloring agent, to add color to
discreet discrete	cautious or tactful separate or distinct
disinterested uninterested	without self-interest indifferent, lacking interest
disqualify unqualified	to judge unfit, to eliminate from unfit, lacking qualifications for
divers diverse	several different, distinct in kind

dual	two
duel	a fight
dying	expiring from life
dyeing	coloring
either	one or the other
neither	none
eligible	qualified
illegible	unreadable
ineligible	unqualified
legible	readable
elicit	to draw forth, to evoke
illicit	improper
emerge	to come out from
immerge	to go into
emigration	leaving
immigration	entering
eminent	of highest status
imminent	soon to occur
emulate	to equal, to excel
imitate	to mimic, to copy
envelop	to surround, to enclose
envelope	a covering
epigram	a witty statement
epitaph	a tribute to the dead
epithet	a descriptive name
equitable	fair, just
equable	steady, uniform
exalt	to praise
exult	to rejoice
exceedingly	to a great degree
excessively	to too great a degree

exceptional
exceptionable

unusual
objectionable

excerpt
extract
obtain

a selection, to select
a concentrated portion, to pull out forcibly, to

excite
incite

to stir up emotionally
to stir into action

expect
suspect

to believe a thing will happen
to doubt the truth of

extant
extent

still existing
the measure of, the limit

facetious
factious
factitious
fictitious

joking
causing dissension
artificial
imaginary

faint
feign
feint

not strong, to lose consciousness
to give false appearance
a diversionary tactic, to pretend

fair
fare

a festival, not foul, light complexioned
a toll, a toll payer, to get along

famous
notable
noteworthy
noted
notorious

celebrated
remarkable
remarkable
well-known, distinguished by reputation
widely known in an unfavorable sense

farther
further

physical distance
in addition to

feat
feet
fete

an accomplishment
leg endings
a festival

fewer
less

smaller number
smaller quantity

flair
flare

ability, distinctive manner
a flame, to flame

flaunt flout	to make a showy display of to disparage, to show contempt
forbear forebear	to refrain from an ancestor, a predecessor
forceful forcible	vigorous by force or strength
foreword forward	a preface a direction
formally formerly	in a formal way at a previous time
fort forte	a fortified building an ability, a strong point
forth fourth	forward between third and fifth
funeral funereal	a ceremony sad, melancholy
gamble gambol	to wager to leap about playfully
genius genus	exceptional ability type
gibe jibe	to scoff at, to mock to change direction (nautical)
gild guild	to overlay with gold an association
gilt guilt	overlaid with gold culpability, the opposite of innocence
good well	not bad, the opposite of evil not ill, skillfully or correctly-as in "well done."
gorilla guerrilla	an ape an irregular soldier

gourmand	a big eater, a glutton
gourmet	a connoisseur of foods
grisly	horrible
gristly	tough, tough and elastic
grizzly	gray-haired, a type of bear
guarantee	to secure, to ensure
guaranty	financial security or agreement
hail	frozen rain, to call aloud
hale	healthy
hair	a fibrous growth
hare	a rabbit-like rodent
hanged	a person is hanged
hung	an object is hung
healthful	contributing to good health
healthy	in good health
hear	to perceive sound
here	in this place
hoard	a cache
horde	a crowd
hole	a cavity
whole	entire
holey	having holes
holy	sacred
wholly	entirely
human	pertaining to homo sapiens
humane	benevolent, kind
idle	inactive
idol	an object of worship
idyll	a description of a peaceful country scene, or such
a scene	
impassable	can not be passed
impassible	without feeling
impossible	can not be accomplished

imply infer	to suggest, to state indirectly to draw a conclusion
impostor imposture	the person who commits a fraud the fraud committed
incite insight	to provoke mental vision
incredible incredulous	unbelievable unbelieving
indict indite	to accuse to write, to compose
ingenious ingenuous	talented, clever, original innocent, unsophisticated
intelligent smart	quick to learn in fashion
invaluable valuable	priceless worth a high price
its it's	a possessive pronoun a contraction of "it is"
jealous zealous	envious diligent, devoted, vigorous
knight night	a rank the opposite of day
later latter	after a passage of time the last mentioned
laid lain lane lay lie lied lye	past tense of lay past participle of lie (to recline) a track, a path to place, past tense of lie (to recline) a false statement, to state falsely, to recline past tense of lie (to state falsely) a caustic chemical
lean	free of fat, to incline

lien	a legal claim
leave let	to depart from to permit
lessee lessor	lease holder lease grantor
lessen lesson	to make smaller a unit of learning
levee levy	an embankment an imposition or assessment
lightening lightning	decreasing in weight an electrical discharge
like as	a preposition (looks like rain) an adverb or conjunction (dark as night)
loose loosen lose	free, unrestrained, to set free to let free to misplace
luxuriant luxurious	of abundant growth rich, splendid
majority plurality	more than half the largest part, but less than half
marital marshal martial	concerning marriage an official, to organize concerning the military
masterful masterly	powerful, domineering skillful
medal meddle metal mettle	a trophy, an award to interfere a substance—such as gold, silver, steel, etc. quality of a person's character
miner minor	a mine worker not of legal age, smaller, less important
moral	virtuous

morale	state of mind
motif	theme
motive	incentive
naval	pertaining to a navy
navel	a dent, a depression, site of the umbilical knot
nausea	illness
nauseated	feeling ill
nauseous	causing nausea
new	not old
novel	not common, a fictional work
number	things counted
quantity	amount measured
occultist	believes in dark forces, witchcraft, etc.
oculist	treats eyes
ophthalmologist	treats eyes
optician	makes eyeglasses
optometrist	checks vision
official	an authorized person, that which is authorized
officer	an elected or appointed person
officious	meddlesome
ordinance	a law
ordnance	military hardware
orient	east, to face or point toward something
occident	west
oscillate	to swing, to vibrate
osculate	to kiss
overdo	do to excess
overdue	past due
paid	past tense of "pay" (in the sense of a payment)
paid out	past tense of "pay out" (a hose, cable, line, etc.)
pain	discomfort
pane	a plate of glass

pair	two alike
pare	to cut away
pear	a fruit
palate	the roof of the mouth
palette	an artist's board
pallet	a bed, a skid
paramount	the highest of
tantamount	the same as
partially	not completely
partly	not all of something
passed	went beyond
past	ago, over
peace	serenity, absence of war
piece	a portion, a part
pedal	a foot lever
peddle	to sell
perpetrate	to commit
perpetuate	to preserve
persecute	to oppress, to harass
prosecute	to carry on, to pursue a course of action, to sue in a
court	of law
personal	private
personnel	the staff of an organization
physic	a laxative
physical	material, pertaining to the body
physique	the appearance of the body
psychic	a seer, of the mind
plain	not fancy, simple
plane	a flat surface, a tool, an aircraft, to render flat
plaintiff	the suing party
plaintive	mournful
plait	a pleat or braid, to pleat or braid

plate	a flat dish, a metal sheet, to coat with metal
portion	part of a whole
potion	a drink
pray	to beseech
prey	hunted creature, to hunt
precede	to be in front of something
proceed	to go forward
prescribe	to order, to recommend a remedy
proscribe	to condemn
principal	first in rank or authority
principle	fundamental truth or law
prophecy	a prediction
prophesy	to predict
proposal	a point or offer to be accepted or rejected
proposition	a point to be discussed
quiet	silent
quit	stop doing
quite	entirely
rain	precipitation
reign	to rule, a period of rule
rein	to curb, that which curbs
rebound	to bounce back
redound	to have an effect upon
reek	to emit strong odor
wreak	to inflict punishment upon
respectfully	politely
respectively	each in its given order
resume	to take up where left off
résumé	summation
reverend	a clergyman
reverent	respectful

right	correct, a direction, a guaranteed due
rite	a ceremony
wright	a craftsman
write	to commit to letters
rang	past tense of ring (she rang the bell)
ring	a bell sound, a finger ornament, a circle, to
encircle, to	make a bell sound
ringed	wearing, decorated, or formed like a ring; encircled
rung	a ladder step, past participle of ring (the bell was
rung)	
wring	to squeeze out
wrung	past tense of wring
role	the part acted
roll	a bakery good, a list, to rotate, to revolve
rout	to put to flight
route	a road, a way
salary	regular pay for non-manual work
wages	pay for manual work
satire	witty literary work
satyr	a lecherous man
seasonable	in keeping with the season, timely
seasonal	affected by the seasons, periodic
sensual	pertaining to grosser appetites (sex, food)
sensuous	pertaining to finer appetites (art, music)
set	to place
sit	to rest (as in a chair)
specie	coined money
species	type
staid	sedate, reserved
stayed	remained
stair	a step
stare	a fixed gaze, to gaze fixedly
stake	a post

steak	a cut of meat
stationary	immobile
stationery	writing material
statue	a sculpture
stature	height, status achieved
statute	a law
steal	to take without permission
steel	a metal
stile	a step
style	mode, fashion
straight	not curved, direct
strait	a narrow passage, restricted, tight
suit	clothing, a grouping of things (cards, etc.), a legal action, a romantic move, to please
suite	a grouping of things (musical pieces, rooms, etc.)
tare	a deducted weight
tear	to rip
tasteful	having good judgement
tasty	having good flavor
taught	imparted knowledge
taut	stretched tightly
temporal	mortal, not eternal
temporary	not permanent
tern	a bird
turn	to change direction, to revolve
their	possessive form of "they"
there	that place
they're	a contraction of "they are"
therefor	for this or for that thing
therefore	for this or for that reason
threw	hurled

though thorough through	notwithstanding complete in one end or side and out the other
to too two	a preposition (normally suggesting direction) also the number after one
tortuous torturous	sinuous, winding painful
urban urbane	not rural smooth-mannered
vain vane vein	useless, self-admiring a wind direction indicator a blood vessel, a body of ore
venal venial	corruptible excusable
vice vise	an evil practice a clamp
waist waste	a narrowing between wider portions superfluous matter, to wear away
wait weight	a delay, to delay heaviness
waive, waiver wave waver	the relinquishing of a claim or right an undulation, a hand sign to hesitate, to vacillate
want wont won't	a desire, to desire accustomed a contraction of "will not"
war wore	hostility between factions past tense of wear
ware wear where	manufactured merchandise apparel, to have apparel on, erosion, to erode in what place?
weather	climatic conditions

whether

pertaining to a choice

who's
whose

contraction of "who is"
possessive form of "who"

worm
warm

an elongated animal
not cold

yawl
yowl

a sailboat
to howl

yoke
yolk

a collar
an egg part

yore
you're
your

long ago
contraction of "you are"
possessive form of "you"