

Common Homophones

accept/except

Accept means receiving willingly: The organization will *accept* donations through the first of the month.

Except means exclude: You may donate all items *except* car seats and cribs.

affect/effect

Affect indicates influence: The medicine did not *affect* her the way the doctor had hoped.

Use *effect* as a noun: The new medicine had negative side *effects*.

aloud/allowed

Aloud means verbally: Reading *aloud*—and doing it well—is a skill that requires practice.

Allowed refers to something permitted: Dogs are not *allowed* to be on school property.

are/our

Are is a present-tense verb: "We *are* staying at the hotel closest to the stadium.

Our is the plural possessive form of *we*. They will bring *our* keys to the hotel lobby.

bear/ bare

Bear refers to an animal or to indicate the ability to support: How did that brown *bear* open the security gate at the campsite? The wagon can hardly *bear* the weight of the load.

Use *bare* as an adjective indicating lack of clothing or adornment: His *bare* neck burned in the sunlight.

brake/break

Use *brake* as a verb meaning to stop or as a noun when referring to a device used to stop or slow motion: The bike's *brake* failed, which is why he toppled town the hill.

Use *break* to indicate smashing or shattering or to take a recess: My back will *break* if we put one more thing in this backpack. OR Use *break* as a noun to indicate a rest or pause: We took a water *break* after our first set of drills because it was so hot outside.

buy/by/bye

Buy refers to purchasing an item: I do need to *buy* new shoes for the kids.

By indicates location: Please put the food *by* the door so we do not forget it!

Bye is an abbreviation for "goodbye."

capital/capitol

Use *capital* when referring to a city, a wealth or resources, or an uppercase letter: The *capital* of Maryland is the gorgeous city of Annapolis.

Use *capitol* when referring to a building where lawmakers meet: The *capitol* has undergone extensive renovations this year.

complement/compliment

Use *complement* when referring to something that enhances or completes: The cranberry sauce is a perfect *complement* to the turkey dinner.

Use *compliment* as an expression of praise: I was pleased to have received so many *compliments* on my new dress and shoes today.

here/hear

Here indicates location: Please come back *here* and put your shoes away!

Hear indicates listening: Can you *hear* the birds' beautiful singing outside?

it's/its, you're/ your

It's is the contraction for *it is*. *You're* is a contraction for *you are*.

Its & *Your* are possessive.

one/won

Use *one* when referring to a single unit or thing: I have *one* more muffin left before the box is empty.

Use *won* as the past tense form of the verb "to win": Shelly's team *won* the tournament and celebrated with ice-cream sundaes!

principle/principal

Use *principle* as a noun meaning a basic truth or law: Many important life *principles* are learned in kindergarten.

Use *principal* as a noun meaning the head of a school or organization, or a sum of money:

The *principal* is a well-respected member of the community because of the hard work and effort she puts forth in her position.

than/then

Than is used for comparisons: John is much taller *than* his brother.

Then indicates time: We went to the park in the morning, and *then* we left to pick up lunch.

there/their/they're

there: *There* will be a lot to eat at the party tonight. Put the book there. (pronoun/adv.)

Their is possessive. The students put *their* coats in the closet.

they're is the contraction for they are.

to/too/two

To can be a preposition or infinitive. We're going *to* the park. We want *to* help in any way we can.

Too means *excessively* or *also*. I ate *too* much ice cream for dessert, *too*.

Two is a number. Marcy ate *two* pieces of pie.

weather/whether

Weather refers to the state of the atmosphere: The constantly changing springtime *weather* is driving us crazy.

Whether introduces choice: Please tell us *whether* you would like to go to the event.

which/witch

Which as a pronoun: Cora wore her favorite pink shoes, *which* she received as a birthday gift.

Witch to mean a scary or nasty person: The Halloween *witch* decorations must finally come down off the wall!

cell/ sell

cent/ scent

knot/ not

peace/ piece

right/ write

wait/ weight

weak/ week

Glue entire rectangle down. Place glue on blank rectangle (dotted line = right border).

Glue entire rectangle down. In each narrow row, write one set of homophones (1 word in each column). In each wide row, draw a picture representing the word above.