

COMMONLY CONFUSED WORDS

In English, there are many words that sound the same, but have completely different spellings and meanings. Here are some of the words that are most commonly confused.

accede (to agree to)	aid (help)
exceed (to go beyond)	aide (assistant)
accept (to take)	allay (to make less)
except (to exclude)	alley (a narrow street)
access (right of way)	ally (friendly country or person)
excess (too much)	
adapter (someone who adapts)	all ready (completely ready)
adaptor (piece of equipment that adapts)	already (previously, so soon)
addition (something added)	allude (to mention in passing)
edition (number of copies of a book, newspaper, etc.)	elude (to escape or avoid)
adverse (unfavourable)	allusion (a brief mention)
averse (disinclined)	illusion (a false impression)
advice (recommendation)	altar (platform in a church)
advise (to recommend)	alter (to change)
affect (to influence)	arc (a curved line)
effect (to accomplish, result)	ark (a type of boat)
	artist (a person who is skilled in fine arts)
	artiste (a theatre performer)

ascend (climb, rise)	boy (a male child)
assent (agreement, permission)	buoy (a floating object)
aural (by ear)	brake (to slow and stop)
oral (by mouth)	break (to fracture, damage)
ball (money given to release a prisoner)	breach (to break)
bale out (to remove water from a boat)	breech (rear part of a gun)
ballet (a form of dancing)	bridal (belonging to the bride)
ballot (a method of voting)	bridle (a horse's harness)
base (basis, foundation)	broach (to bring up a subject)
bass (a lower part in music)	brooch (a piece of jewellery)
bazaar (marketplace, fair)	cannon (gun)
bizarre (strange)	canon (law)
birth (being born)	canvas (cloth)
berth (a mooring place)	canvass (to solicit opinions, votes, etc.)
bloc (a group of nations)	choose (to select)
block (a solid mass)	chose (past tense of to choose)
born (given birth)	chord (musical tones)
borne (carried, produced)	cord (thin rope)
bough (a tree branch)	cite (to quote)
bow (form of greeting)	sight (power of seeing)
	site (place)

coarse (rude, rough)	its (belonging to it)
course (series, route)	it's (it is)
complement (something that completes or balances)	lead (a metal, to guide)
compliment (praise)	led (past tense of lead)
dairy (milk farm)	lightening (becoming lighter)
diary (daily record book)	lightning (as in thunder)
desert (arid region, to leave or abandon)	miner (one who mines)
dessert (final course of a meal)	minor (underage person)
dual (of two, double)	moral (relating to good behaviour)
duel (fight)	morale (level of spirits)
flair (aptitude, style)	naval (of the navy)
flare (to burn, burst out)	navel (umbilicus)
foreword (introduction to a written work)	palate (roof of mouth, taste)
forward (onward, ahead)	palette (artist's paintboard)
idle (inactive)	pallet (crude bed, platform)
idol (image of a god)	passed (past tense of pass)
immigrant (person coming into a country)	past (former time)
emigrant (person leaving a country)	pastel (artist's crayons)
	pastille (type of sweet)
	pedal (foot lever)
	peddle (to sell)

personal (belonging to someone, intimate)	rhyme (short poem)
personnel (staff)	rime (frost)
plane (aeroplane, level)	sceptic (unbeliever)
plain (ordinary; open land)	septic (infected)
precede (to go before)	stationary (fixed)
proceed (to continue)	stationery (paper supplies)
prey (animal killed for food)	stile (steps over a wall)
pray (to say a prayer)	style (manner of doing things)
prise (to open with a tool)	their (belonging to them)
prize (award for winner)	there (at that place)
principal (chief, head person)	they're (they are)
principle (rule)	to (toward)
rapped (knocked)	too (also, excessive)
rapt (fascinated)	two (number)
wrapped (covered)	waive (to give up)
raze (to destroy totally)	wave (to salute; on sea)
raise (to lift up, increase)	weather (state of atmosphere)
reign (of a monarch)	whether (if)
rein (part of a horse's harness)	who's (who is)
review (a report)	whose (of whom)
revue (amusing theatre show)	you're (you are)
	your (belonging to you)