

# Commonly Misused Words

## Accept, Except:

Accept is a verb meaning to receive. Except is usually a preposition signifying exclusion.

**Example:** I will accept all the packages except that one.

Except is also a verb meaning to exclude.

**Example:** Please, except that item from the list.

## Affect, Effect:

Affect is usually a verb meaning to influence. Effect is usually a noun meaning result.

**Example:** The drug did not affect the disease, and it had several adverse side effects.

Effect can also be a verb meaning to bring about.

**Example:** Only the president can effect such a dramatic change.

## There, Their, They're:

There is an adverb specifying place; it is also an expletive. (**Ex:** There is a wasp in here.)

Their is an adjective specifying possession. (**Ex:** Their love will last forever.)

They're is a contraction combining “they” and “are.” (**Ex:** I love these socks because they're so soft.)

## To, Too, Two:

To is a preposition. (**Ex:** Sally goes to school.)

Too is an adverb. (**Ex:** Brandon is too young for school.)

Two is a number. (**Ex:** He is only two years old.)

## Your, You're:

Your is a possessive pronoun.

You're is a contraction of “you” and “are.”

**Example:** You're going to catch a cold if you don't wear your coat.

**Hint:** Sound out “you are” in the sentence. If it works in the sentence, it can be written as you're. If it sounds awkward, it is probably supposed to be your.

**Example:** You're shoes are muddy. “You are shoes are muddy.” That doesn't work, so it should be written as “Your shoes are muddy.”

## Lie, Lay:

Lie means “to recline or rest on a surface.” Its principal parts are *lie, lay, lain*.

Lay means “to put or place.” Its principal parts are *lay (present), laid (past)*.

**Hint:** Chickens lay eggs. I lie down when I am tired.

## Who, Which, That:

Which and That should refer to things, not people. (In some cases, that may be used in reference to a group of people)

Who should be used to refer to a person or people.