

Homonyms, Homophones and Other Word Challenges
By Dr. Joan Joesting-Mahoney

Homonyms are words that are spelled differently yet pronounced the same and there are “near” homonyms which are words that are pronounced almost the same but not identically. There are some words that are just confusing and are confused. The computer spelling checker cannot be relied upon to catch these words because they are actually spelled correctly when viewed alone but are spelled incorrectly when used in different parts of sentences. (Gorrell, Donna. The Little, Brown Workbook NY: Longman, 2001).

This is an attempt to help a writer to correctly use these often misspelled words. These “tricks” have been gleaned from over 50 years of “off and on” free lance writing and teaching English at the community college level. Also, this writer has a doctorate in psychology and definitely believes that “a spoonful of sugar makes the medicine go down” so that “humorized” instruction is used as much as possible.

adapt, adopt

adopt is easier to tell because one remembers that an adopted child/pet has an opened mouth like the “o” in the word begging for food/water/college tuition/down payment on a home, etc.

addition, edition

addition is easy to tell because one has been adding for years

access, excess

excess has the “ex” prefix like extra which means too much

accept, except

again, the “ex” prefix meaning too much. Except comes from exception

advice, advise

I see “vice” in advice as most people who give advice have this kind of vice, that is, trying to stuff other people with their ideas/views

affect, effect

affect is always a verb or action word and effect is a noun (person, place or thing). Effect begins with an “e. Here in hurricane "tortured" Florida, we remember going "eke" when we went outdoors after a hurricane and saw the effect of the hurricane, the neighbor's roof in our yard.

aisle, isle

isle comes from island

alley, ally

alley has an “e” in it which like is like a fiendish eye peeking down a deserted alley

allowed, aloud

aloud has “loud” in it and that is what it means to speak aloud.

allude, elude

elude has an “e” which alludes to the “e” in escape

already, all ready

all are ready which is all ready while “already” refers to implied time

allusion, illusion

illusion refers to something one sees when “ill” or a false impression

altar, alter

for nonreligious people an “altar” is a pile of sticky “tar” where people worship

altogether, all together

“altogether” means “whole” like the word is whole while all together refers to a group of people

amoral, immoral

“im” means “not” so immoral is not moral while “amoral” means not moral or immoral

anecdote, antidote

“anecdote” is a short entertaining story while “anti” means against with an antidote being something against a disease

angel, angle

“angel” has “gel” in it while an “angle” had better not gel or it would not be a type of corner

ante, anti

“ante” is before & “anti” is against. I am always against something
ascent, assent
the “cent” in ascent reminds me that I want the cents in my piggy bank to rise, while “assent” means to
“consent” or comply
assistance, assistant
the “tant” is someone who does something like combatant and assistance is the noun for assist

baring, barring, bearing

“baring” is like a bar put in front of something while “barring” is excepting with the “2 r’s”, and “bearing”
is carrying/giving birth like “carrying” a bear while giving birth which is just what everyone wants to do.

bear, bare

a bear is an animal with fur/ears/tail/claws, etc. Just remember the “ear” on a bear and “bare” is what you
“are” at birth

base, bass

a “base” is not something you want to “erase” while playing baseball or tag while a bass is a fish you
would like to catch many of. Anyway, see the “2 s’s” but bass can also be a deep voice/tune. In my
darker music-hating moments, I feel that the bass sound is the braying of an “ass”. Again, notice the
double “ss’s” in both bass and ass. Let me stress to all music lovers that I’m just joking but not really.

beach, beech

“each” of us would like beach front property while a “beech” is a tree with more than 2 leaves. Notice the
“2 e’s”

beat, beet, beef

one must beat an animal to death before one can “eat” it (usual factory farm animal cruelty which is why I
don’t eat beef), but a “beet root” has 2 e’s like it has many roots + the “t” as in eat.. “Beef” cattle have “2
e’s” or eyes.

berth, birth

I can give birth so there is the “I” in birth.

beside, besides

beside without the “s” means near while besides with the “s” means something longer like moreover,
furthermore, etc.

board, bored

board is like a hard piece of wood with “ard” and “hard” and “board” in both while “bored” can mean to
bore a hole or to be bored. from listening to my favorite lecture about glorious pronouns. Note the “e” in
bore.

boarder, border

boarder has several meaning such as one who gets on a ship or airplane or one who eats his/her meals
like a paying guest, while a border has “order” in it as one is usually ordered to stop at borders of countries.

born, borne

born with “orn” from horn in it means to be brought into life like a female sheep (ewe) giving birth
to a lamb with tiny horns. Borne is the past participle of bear or to carry. Please see the “ne” at the end of
borne. Never do I want to carry anything.

brake, break

Brakes are what stop cars. If your car brakes fail, they will rake your body parts off the road. Break
means to wreck things like a bird does with his/her beak.

breath, breathe

Breath refers to air taken in and out of the lungs and is a noun while breathe is a verb that requires
he/she to take a breath. Please see the “e” in both he/she and breathe.

bridal, bridle

bridal has to do with all brides. Please see the “al” in bridal and the “al” in all, while bridle is what
horses wear on their heads by which they are controlled.

by, buy, bye

“by” is short and sweet when one passes someone/something. I go by you, while buy with the “y” is
what you like to do: shop, that is, buy things. Bye is what happens to your credit rating when you buy too
much. If you are sprinting against me in a tight bicycling or running race, I might yell, Bye!”

capital, capitol

Capital has many meanings including capital letters, the main city where the state/national government meets while capitol is the building where politicians meet. Please see the “tol” in capitol. See I “told” you they were liars. Please understand that I am just joking as there are some honest politicians. Maybe!

canvas, canvass

canvas is a tough cloth like denim while canvass is the vast pestering of people to try to get votes.

sensor, censure, censor

censor is someone who takes the census while censure means to blame a person for bad things that I am sure that he/she has done.. Please note the sure. Sensor comes from the senses and is connected with reception and connection of impressions like the sensor on an alarm system.

cereal, serial

cereal, a breakfast food, is often made from corn so see the “c” in both corn and cereal while serial comes from the word series that is a list of things in some kind of order

choice, choose, chose

choice is a noun and we all have choices, while choose is the present tense and chose is the past tense of this irregular verb. The present participle is chosen.

chord, cord

chord has many meanings but most often it refers to music in that three or more tones are sounded together to make a harmonious sound. Please note the “h” in chord and harmonious..

cite, sight, site

cite means to quote a passage when writing. Please note the “e” at the end of cite and the “e” at the end of quote. Sight has the “s” from see; therefore, sight is what you see. The site is a building place which must be just right. Site and right rhyme

close, clothes, cloth

rarely is close confused with clothes which is a noncount plural noun and can refer to many articles of clothing while a cloth is a singular noncount noun and be a dish cloth or refer to yards of cloth. Noncount nouns are names of those things you don't usually count like rice, coffee, tea, etc. One could count grains of rice but instead we write cups/pounds, etc. of rice.

coarse, course

coarse has many letters like hoarse and is like a hoarse grating cloth while course can mean a class in a specific discipline, a river course, etc. A course is something that follows rules whether natural or made by humans.

complement, compliment

complement is something that goes well with another thing while I love compliments as they are good things said about me. Please see the “I” and the “I” in compliment. Complement is like fine wine (notice the “e” in complement and in wine. The wine “complements” fine dining.

consul, council, counsel

Consul is like an attorney with the “sul” from attorneys who are sometimes somewhat “sullen.” The council is a group of people sometimes sitting on a window sill. Please see the “il” in council and the “il” in sill, while counsel means to sell or deliver.

costume, custom

The “u” in custom reminds me that “you” must obey customs while you wear “costumes” which can cost you money to make or rent.

cursor, curser

The “or” in the “cursor” reminds me about someone pointing at me to do something “or” I’ll be probably punished so I must stay out of trouble and not be a curser, that is, use bad words on the Internet or in front of my students.

dairy, diary

Dairy is where milk cows are kept and since they must be milked twice each day, the “da” refers to dairy. The first “I” in “diary” is what I have kept since 1976, my exercise diary. Another psychologist called me compulsive and I guess that I am compulsive about words.

dammed, damned

The two “m’s” refer to the large “thing” that holds water back forming a lake, while the “damn” with the “n” is something I should not (see the “n” in not) say or yell at someone even when he/she deserves it.
dear, deer

My “ears” love to hear me called “dear” while the 2 “e’s” in “deer” refer to the animal that is killed. Deer seem to have two very sad eyes.

deceased, diseased

The “cease” in “deceased” means that the deer killer as explained above has died and is deceased. He has also stopped or “deceased” killing innocent “deer”. The “diseased” has that “dis” prefix which is negative; therefore, the living thing is “not at ease.”

definitely, defiantly

I get defiant when students continually confuse these two words. Please see the “an” in “defiantly” which shows my “anger,”

decent, descent, dissent

Decent refers to proper dress/behavior can earn one more “cents” while “des” means going down, and since I have often been called a “dissenter” or a disagreeing person, the “I” in “dissent” is what I too often do and for which I get into trouble.

desert, dessert

A desert is an arid geographical area or a man/woman can “desert” his/her child but I prefer two desserts as this is the word for after dinner sweets and has the 2 “s’s”

device, devise

A device is sometimes something that makes “ice” while devise is like planning.

dining, dinning

“Dining” comes from to dine which is divine, while “dinning” with its 2 “n’s” is noisy noise which is annoying

dual, duel

“Dual” is always two together while a “duel” is a contest between two people. Please note all the “e’s” for the eyes that will be focused on each other when they walk 10 paces apart and then turn around and shoot each other.

dyeing, dying

“Dyeing is changing the color of something like fabric or hair and will be noticed with the eyes. Please note the “e” in dyeing, while “dying” has no “e” because the spelling rule is when there is a vowel before a “y” at the end of a word, drop the “y” and add “ing.” This was before spell check was invented; nevertheless, it is still true.

elicit, illicit

The “el” in “elicit” means to draw out while the “ill” in “illicit” refers to “ill” or bad like “illegal.”

emigrate, immigrate

“Emigrate” means to “enter” or move into, while the “immigrate” should have its “im” chopped off so that you have migrate and everyone knows about migrating birds. Migrating birds defecate on my solar dryer, that is, a rope between two trees where I hang my freshly washed clothes.

eminent, imminent

The first “e” in eminent refers to an eye that is what eminent means: famous, while “imminent” has the “i’s” which mean it is threatening evil.

envelop, envelope

Envelop is a verb that means to surround which makes an “envelope” a piece of paper/cardboard which surrounds a piece of paper/greeting card, etc.

fair, fare

These two words can be excessively confusing since “fair” can refer to airfare that isn’t necessary “fair” or just. My best way of remembering the difference between these words is to remember that “airfares” “are” never “fair” as the rules are always up in the “air.”

faze, phrase, phase

“Faze” reminds me of being agitated, while a “phrase” can be an incomplete sentence that “runs on” with the “r’s” being in common. A phase is something that donkeys or “as-s go through and is part of

their maturation process. Children/teenagers/males of all species, but not mature women, all go through obnoxious phases.

flea, flee

A “flea” is an insect that should be kept away. Please note the “a” in “flea” and the “a” in “away,” while “flee” has the two “e’s” which one needs to see when one leaves or flees an area.

flour, flower

“Flour” has “our” in it and it is important that I keep our flour supply constantly ready for baking. Flowers have leaves. Please note the “l” in both flowers and leaves.

foreword, forward

“Fore” always means “before” so it is something at the beginning of a book while “for” means going ahead so “forward” means proceeding onward..

former, farmer

“Former” always means first while a “farmer” is someone who farms and is always complaining about the too much rain/not enough rain. Please note the “a” in “farmer” and in rain. Yes, I have farmed and understand their problems.

forth, fourth

“Fourth” always indicates “four” in a line while “forth” is to move on or get the heck out of here.

foul, fowl

“foul” is a bad smell while the “owl” in “fowl” shows it relates to birds/ducks/geese/gulls, etc. which cannot be housebroken so they are all “foul” if kept in a confined location.

gorilla, guerrilla

“Gorilla” has the big furry head while a “guerrilla” is a type of terrorist who does not use standard methods of warfare. Note the 2 “r’s” in both words.

heard, herd

“heard” has that “ear” in it so it is the past tense of what one does with his/her “ears” while a herd is a group of herbivores or animals who eat herbs/grass.

heal, heel

“Heel” with the 2 “e’s” is what you have two of unless you were born with one or a shark ate it.

hear, here

“Hear” is what you do with your ears while “here” is where you are. Please note the “here” in “where.”

heroin, heroine

“Heroin” is a narcotic while “heroine” is a female hero which the English languages now calling a hero without the feminine ending “e”. I would rather be a hero than a heroine as it sounds too much like heroin and I’m not a narcotic nor have ever had anything to do with them.

hoarse, horse

“Hoarse” is a coarse sound usually caused by someone having trouble with his/her vocal cords while a horse is a four-legged grass eating, mane/tail wearing usually domesticated animal. that one can ride or drive when it is attached to a wagon/buggy, etc.

hole, whole

A “hole” is a depression in something usually in the ground while a “whole” is an entire thing. Please note the “w” at the beginning of the word “whole.”

holey, holy

“Holey” usually means there are many holes in something like clothing, arguments, etc. while holy refers to good things in most religions.

human, humane

A “human” is a person while “humane” is an adjective that describes a kind/caring person.

idea, ideal

An “idea” is a thought while an “ideal” is a good bunch of ideas. Please notice the “l” which ends the word, ideal.

incidence, incidents, instants

An “incidence” is some type of “occurrence.” Please note the “c” while “incidents” pluralizes them, and “instants” refers to this moment.

irrelevant, irreverent

“Irrelevant” has that “ir” prefix which means not so it means not relevant while “irreverent” means

not reverent or not showing respect respect.

instance, instants

“Instance” means to give an example while “instants” is urgent with the “stant” referring to:standing
its, it’s

One can write: her tires, his tires, and its tires all denoting ownership while “it’s” = “it is.”

knew, new

“Knew” is past tense of know. Please note the “k” while new is something never existing before.

later, latter, ladder

“Later” is more recent while “latter” is nearer the end with the 2 “t” stressing latter than later. A
“ladder” has at least 2 rungs or steps that look something like the 2 “d’s” in ladder.

lay, lie

Lay is the present tense of rest or recline while “lie” is the past tense or it can also be the present tense
tense and noun meaning to tell a falsehood. “Liar, liar, pants on fire. You told a lie.”

lead, led

“Lead is the present tense to pull someone or some animal around while “led” is the past tense. “Lead” is
also a noun meaning a heavy medal or weight or a certain type of pencil. “Get the lead out and get to
work,” my father used to yell at me for some reason.

lessen, lesson

“Lessen means to make something less, while “lesson” is what is taught to someone, with the “son” in the
word referring to what you want your “son.” to know.

liable, libel

“Liable” means legally bound to do something whereas “libel” means something written illegal and bad
about a person. Please note the “el” in “libel” and “le” in “illegal.”

lightning, lightening

“lightning” writes in white jagged lines across the sky in while “lightening” my long hair takes “ten”
bottles of dye. Please notice the “ten” in lightening.

mantel, mantle

A “mantel” is that ledge above a fireplace while the “mantle” is what you someone “tells” you to wear
instead of a coat. Please see similarities between “tle” and “tells.”

marital, martial

“martial”, an adjective (descriptive word) refers to war while “marital” refers to marriage with the “I”
coming first in many marriages which can result in a type of war or a “martial” divorce

maybe, may be

These two words mean the same that is “perhaps”.

meat, meet

“Meat” with “eat” in it is from a dead animal which you “eat” while “meet” is the present tense of
when you come together with someone and see them with your two eyes like the 2 “e’s” in meet.

The past tense is met and the present participle is met.

mine, mind

The word “mine” can be a hole in the ground from which coal, gravel, etc. is dug and it can also be
personal pronoun like this book was written by me and it belongs to me. It is mine. The “mind” is like
one’s “dumb” brain. Please note the “d’s” in both words.

miner, minor

A “miner” with the “er” ending is someone who mines while the “minor” is someone who is under
twenty-one years of age. Please note the “o” in “one” and the “o” in “minor.” Minors seem to frequently
complain about being below “drinking age.”

midst, mist

“Midst” is being in the middle of something like a swarm of bees with the “d” in “midst” and “middle”
giving you warning. A “mist” is just water vapor that can blur one’s vision.

moral, morale, morel

“Moral” means conformity with culturally accepted goodness in conduct/behavior while “morale”
means enthusiasm to suffer hardship. Please see the “e” in “morale” and the “e” in “enthusiasm.”

“Morel” refers to either an edible mushroom or a poisonous plant. Be careful which you eat as some of

you may find yourself in “el” or “hell.”

naval, navel

“Naval” is an adjective referring to any country’s navy although some land-locked countries do not have navies. Your “navel” is your belly button. Please note the “e” in both “navel” and “belly”.

night, knight

“Night” means after sunset when there is no light. Please see the “n” in “night” and the “n” in “no,” while a “knight” in the olden days carried a lance which looked like the “k” in “knight.”

of, off

“Of” is one of the many English prepositions which are words that can describe a rabbit on the mountain. “Of” specifically refers to something coming from something. For example, he is an example “of” a jerk. “Off” with the double “ff’s” means away from something. I tell my cats to get “off” the table and rarely say it calmly. Those double “ff’s” are like a hiss.

or, ore

“Ore” comes from a mine. Please note the “e” in “ore” and “mine.”

pail, pale

“Pail is a thing that is made of metal or plastic, usually waterproof, that I use to carry something like a water or milk pail. Please note the “I” in “pail” while “pale” refers to “ale” or beer. If I drink too much ale/beer I will vomit and get pale.

past, passed

“Past” is a noun or verb that refers to something is at least a few seconds old. Everyone since birth has a “past” while “passed” is the past tense of “pass” as I have been too often passed in running, bicycling, or swimming races.

patience, patient

“Patience” means to wait without complaining, while “patients” is what you do not want to be, a “patient” of one of the usually greedy doctors in the US. Please note the “t” in “not” and the “t” in “patient.”

peace, piece

“Peace” is absence of war while “piece” is what I want, like a “piece” of cake. Please see the “I” in both “piece” and “I”.

peak, peek

“Peak refers to a mountain top while “peek” is a short look done with your two eyes. Please note the two “e’s” in peek.

pedal, petal, peddle

“Pedal” with the “d” means to pedal a bicycle till you almost “die.” Please see the “d” in “pedal” and “die,” while “petal” is a piece of a flower that you can touch and not get hurt. Please see the “t” in both “petal” and “touch.” “Peddle” means to go from place to place selling something with the two “d’s” referring to what peddlers do.. Peddlers walking from door to door are now very rare; whereas there many items being peddling on e-Bay, the modern way.

persecute, prosecute

“Persecute” means to oppress cruelly; whereas “prosecute” means to enforce by legal procedures. You can distinguish between these two words by looking at the “o” in “prosecute” and the “o” in “enforce.”

personal, personnel

“Personal” means peculiar to the person while “personnel” means the people employed to do the work. A trick to tell the difference between the two words is to note the “nel” in “personnel.” A “Nell” does the work in personnel in a corporation.

perspective, prospective

“Perspective” means to draw/paint items on a flat surface so that they appear the way they appear in regular vision while “prospective” has the prefix “pro” in it which means coming ahead so “prospective” means something that is ahead like a “prospective” client/patient.

picture, pitcher

A “pitcher” has many meanings including someone who throws a ball or something that holds a liquid that can be poured from it. There is “her” in “pitcher” and her pitch or her pouring of the milk from the pitcher.

plain, plane

The word “plain” can mean flat level ground or something/person that lacks decoration or beauty while “plane” can mean smooth and can be so smooth that it flies through the air like an airplane. I see the “I” in “plain” and remember that I have been called “plain”:

pole, poll

That “pole” has the single “l” that sticks up into the sky like a telephone pole while the “poll” where information/votes are collected. Please see the “ll” in “poll” and “collected.”

pore, pour, poor

A “pore” is a tiny opening and one can dream for gold “ore” with “pour” being a verb to more liquid which is something that “our” mother always does. Doesn’t she “pour” milk? “Poor” has the 2 “o’s” which refer to the two “o’s” in “too” as there are too many people who have too little money so they are “poor.” I believe that there are poor people just people who make poor choices regarding their money.

pray, prey

“Pray” has that “ray” in it which shines from heaven when you “pray,” while “prey” is something that is hunted to kill and eat. Please see the “e” in “prey” and “eat.”

presence, presents

“Presence” means to be in a particular place, while “presents” are usually gifts that are “sent” by someone to you. You should always write a proper thank you note.

precede, proceed

“Precede” has the prefix “pre” which always means before while “proceed” has “pro” which means going ahead of.

predominant, predominate

“Predominant” is an adjective or descriptive word which means to dominate while “predominate” is a verb which means to be superior over others.

principal, principle

“Principal” is usually the head of a school and he was always my “pal” as I was sent by my teachers to see him so often. “Principal” can also mean “main” with both words having that important “a”.

A:principle” refers to moral beliefs.

profit, prophet

“Profit means making money, that is, being financially “fit” while a “prophet.” is always someone who speaks for God. Please notice the “o” from God and the “he”. This writer refuses to get down to the nitty-gritty of religion as it can be dangerous job wise and some religious fanatics believe in burning down houses or even murder.

prophecy, prophesy

A “prophecy” is a noun and is a prediction by God’s guidance of a future event and “prophesy” is a verb that means to predict something under divine guidance.

prose, propose

“Prose” is written language without rhyme/rhythm while to “propose” is to get down on that knee “pose” and ask someone to marry you.

quiet, quite, quit

“Quiet” refers to something that you would say to someone who “ets” or eats nosily, while “quite” has the “e” that is also in “very” but “quit” means to just simply STOP.

raise, rise

“Raise” is the present tense of to elevate something like one’s hand, while “rise” means to “get up.

respectfully, respectively

“Respectfully” means to show honor or esteem for someone/something while “respectively” means relating individually to two or more persons or things. Notice the “i’s” in “individually” and in “respectively.”

right, rite, write

“Write” is to form sentences on paper or word processor with the “w” referring to the up and downs of composing. “Rite is like a religious ceremony and “right” is a direction or can mean correct. This word “right” is extremely confusing when speaking as one be directing someone to make a right turn and then say right when he/she does it correctly. “Right,” you say and the person makes another right turn.

ring, wring

A “ring” is a piece of jewelry that goes around a finger. Please note all those “r’s” while to “wring” is to twist a cloth as when trying to squeeze it dry. Please note the “w” in “wring” and the “w” in “twist.”
road, rode

On a “road” you can find a toad which is like a frog but “rode” is a verb which is the past tense of “ride”.
role, roll

“Role” is a character that an actor plays while “roll” can be a bread-like thing that one eats. The 2 “l’s” mean that I want more than one “roll” but would not “roll” around on the ground to get two.

sail, sale

“Sail” is one of those nouns that can be a verb. It is a piece of heavy cloth tied on a boat so that the wind can propel the boat forward. “Sale” goes back to that “ale” already mentioned. It refers to something that is being sold at a lower price like that “ale on sale.”

sat, set

“Set” means always to “put or place” anything. Please note the “e” in both “set” and “place”. It is also an irregular verb but remains “set” in all tenses. However, “sat” is the past tense of “sit.”

sense, since

“Since” always means “time.” Please note the “t” in “time” and “since”

shone, shown

“Shone” means the light from the sun or some other light source. Please note the “one” in “shone” and one other light source. “Shown” is the past participle of “shine”.

shudder, shutter

“Shutter” is the thing that protects a window and since there are least two windows in most houses please see the two “s” while the 2 “d’s” in shudder refer to shake.

straight, strait

A “strait” is a narrow body of water between two pieces of land while a horizontal line is “straight.” Please note the “a’s” in both words but please notice that “ght” at the end of straight.

staid, stayed

“Staid” is something proper/passive that I have never been accused of while “stayed” in the regular past tense of to “stay” or to remain.

stake, steak

A “steak” is a piece of meat that you eat. Note the “ea” in both “steak” and “eat.”

stationary, stationery

“Stationary” means to remain in place. Please note the “a’s” in stationary and place; whereas “stationery” is something that you write on. Please see the “e’s” in both stationery and write.

steal, steel

“Steal” is the present tense of to take something that doesn’t belong to you but “steel” is a manufactured metal that requires two eyes to see. Please note the 2 “e’s” in both “steel” and “see.”

suit, suite

A “suite” usually is a group of rooms that have an attached “toilet” so please see the “e” in “suite” and in “toilet.”

summary, summery

A summary is to state briefly. Please note the “a’s” in both summary and state briefly while “summery” means summer-like.

than, then

“Than” always means comparison. Please see the “a’s” in “comparison” and “than.” “Then” always means time. Please see the “e’s” in “time” and “then.”

their, there, they’re, there’re

“Their” is always possessive as when two people of opposite genders are in a car, it’s always “his” turn to drive. Never mind that men per passenger mile driven have far more accidents than women. Please see the “i’s” in both “their” and “his.” “There is always a place, like here. “They’re” is nothing but a contraction of “they are” and “there’re” is also a mere contraction “there are.”

threw, through, thorough, thought

“Threw” is the past tense of “throw” while “through” can be seen as “thr” and “thorough” has that “rough” in it which means that someone has to do something completely. “Thought” is both a noun and a verb which is the past tense of think.

too, to, two

“Too” is like 100 degrees F. in Florida which is “too” hot while “to” is always a direction. “Two” is simply the numeral “2” written. If you can’t remember this, just know that the “w” in “two” has two wings.

tract, track

“Tract” is a pamphlet or leaflet for which one can respond to or act. Please see the “act” in “tract” while your “track” is the footprints you leave when you are fleeing from the police who can have you “roasted” on a rack.

your, you’re

“Your” is always possessive with the “our” proving it to you, while “you’re” is just another dull contraction for “you are.”

vain, vein, vane

“Vain” has the beginning of “ain’t” in it and I “ain’t vain.” “Vein which carries blood or nutrients in the case of leaves has the “e” in common with “leaves.” “Vane” usually refers to “weather vanes” which show the direction of the wind and are rarely used these days.

waist, waste

“Waist” has an “I” in it which I how I small I want my waist to be.

wander, wonder

“Wander” has an “a” in it which means to meander around while “wonder” has an “o” in it which is shows how your mouth opens when you hear something than amazes you. You have a big round mouth like an “o”.

weak, week

“Week” has those 2 “e’s” for the blessed weekend of two days.

weather, whether

“Weather” has rain with an “a” in both weather and rain.

were, wear, where, we’re

“Wear” has an “ear” in it and one must wear some kind of ear covering in cold weather. “Where” means you are being questioned about a place and you always answer “here.”: “We’re” is another usually boring contraction for “we are.”:

whose, who’s

“Whose” is always possessive and can be easily remembered by “Whose panty hose are you wearing?”

“Who’s” is another very boring contraction for “who is.”

worst, worse

“Worst” in the superlative of bad which is an irregular comparison. It’s always bad, worse for two, and “worst” for the absolute worst. Note the “st” which sounds like a hiss at the end.

write, right

“Write has that “r” in it which begins the word “read.” One must always write something before it can be read. Note the “r’s” after the “w”. Also, one must write to please the “right” or conservatives and hopefully one will write with his/her right hand. In the olden days, people who wrote with left hands were told that their mothers mated with the devil as it wasn’t right.