

Commonly Confused Words

Asbury University
Center for Academic Excellence

Accept – to receive, agree to

Execept – exclude

Advise – (verb) to counsel

Advice – (noun) an opinion

Already – previously

All ready – completely prepared

Altogether – wholly, completely, in all

All together – everyone in one place

Always – every time

All ways – every way

Affect – (an action) to influence

Effect – (usually a noun) a result

Among – three or more

Between – only two

Beside – next to something

Besides – in addition to something

Capital – refers to the chief or highest reason, idea, place, or city; money; or a crime

Capitol – the building in which a legislature meets.

Defiantly – resisting or challenging

Definitely – complete agreement

Desert – a barren geographical region

Dessert – a sweet and sugary treat

Fewer – for countable things (*fewer* days)

Less – an uncountable amount (*less* time)

Hear – (verb) to perceive a sound

Here – in this present location

Lay – to put down something

Lie – placing oneself in a horizontal position

Lead – present tense of verb meaning “to conduct, to show the way” (rhymes with *need*).

Led – past tense or past participle of same verb (rhymes with *bed*)

Lead – noun; a metal (also rhymes with *bed*)

Lose – (verb) opposite of win

Loose – (adjective) released, unbound; (verb) to release, let go

Passed – (verb) to move beyond an object

Past – (noun) a former time, or

Past – (preposition) by or beyond, to walk *past*

Patience – long suffering, the ability to endure for long periods

Patients – (noun) individuals to be treated for illness

Piece – a section of a whole

Peace – a feeling of serenity

Principle – a rule

Principal – schoolmaster

Right – correct answer or direction

Rite – a ceremony, such as an initiation rite

Than – in comparison

Then – (adv.) used in a sequencer

To – (preposition) *she came to class*

Too – (adverb) meaning “also”

Two – the number 2

Whether – if it happens that; in case

Weather – atmospheric conditions

Written – refers to word spelling and style:

The words were written in very different fonts.
Also refers to past tense but must be preceded by *has* or *had*: *He has written a letter of consent.*

Wrote – past tense of write: *He wrote a letter in January.*