

A GUIDE TO...

**HOMONYMS**  
**HOMOPHONES**  
& **HOMOGRAPHS**

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**COMMA**  
CHAMELEON

# HOMONYMS

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The suffix 'nym' means 'name'. Homonyms are words that are spelled the same (like homographs) and pronounced the same (like homophones), but have different meanings. Here are some of the most common ones:

## **Address**

1. To speak to
2. A location

## **Air**

1. The mixture of gases in the environment
2. An impression of a quality or manner given by someone

## **Arm**

1. The upper limb of a human body
2. A division or branch of a company
3. To kit one out with weaponry

## **Band**

1. A musical group
2. A flat, thin loop of material

## **Bark**

1. A tree's outer layer
2. The sound a dog makes

## **Bat**

1. An implement used for hitting a ball
2. A nocturnal flying mammal

## **Bright**

1. Very smart or intelligent
2. Giving out or reflecting a lot of light

## **Circular**

1. Taking the form of a circle
2. A newsletter distributed to a lot of people

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## **Current**

1. Up to date
2. The flow of water or electricity

## **Die**

1. To cease living
2. A cube marked with numbers 1 to 6

## **Express**

1. Something done fast
2. To convey one's thoughts or feelings with words

## **Fair**

1. Equitable
2. Beautiful

## **Kind**

1. A group of people/things having similar characteristics
2. Caring in nature or action

## **Lie**

1. To recline
2. To tell a falsehood

## **Match**

1. To pair similar items
2. A stick for making a flame
3. A sporting contest

## **Mean**

1. The average
2. Not nice, unkind

## **Pound**

1. A unit of weight
2. To hit repeatedly

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### **Ring**

1. A metal band, worn on a finger
2. Something circular in shape

### **Right**

1. Correct
2. The direction that is the opposite of left

### **Rock**

1. A genre of music
2. A large stone

### **Rose**

1. The past tense of rise
2. A prickly bush or shrub that bears flowers

### **Spring**

1. One of the four seasons
2. A coil of metal

### **Stalk**

1. A part of a plant
2. To follow stealthily

### **Tender**

1. With gentleness
2. An offer to carry out work or supply goods
3. To present something formally

### **Tire**

1. To grow fatigued
2. A part of a wheel

# HOMOPHONES

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The suffix 'phone' relates to sound. When you talk on the telephone, you hear the other person's voice. And phonology is the study of a language's sounds. So 'homophone' means 'same sound', and these words are pronounced the same. Here are some common ones:

## **brake / break**

**Example:** When driving at night, it's important to hit the brake and take a break.

## **cell / sell**

**Example:** If you sell drugs, you might get arrested and end up in a prison cell.

## **sent / scent**

**Example:** The flowers I sent my teacher had an incredible scent.

## **die / dye**

**Example:** If you drank a bottle of fabric dye, you might die.

## **flour / flower**

**Example:** The recipe calls for flour and an edible flower.

## **for / four**

**Example:** I bought four ice creams for just £2.

## **heal / heel**

**Example:** I broke my heel once, and it took about four months to properly heal.

## **hear / here**

**Example:** I wanted to sit here so I could hear the band better.

## **hour / our**

**Example:** We have one hour before our flight departs.

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**idle / idol**

**Example:** Being idle makes me nothing like my idol, Einstein.

**knight / night**

**Example:** The knight fought all the more fiercely at night.

**knot / not**

**Example:** I do not know how to tie a reef knot.

**poor / pour**

**Example:** I pour drinks for a living, but I'm quite poor at it.

**right / write**

**Example:** There is no right way to write a great novel.

**sea / see**

**Example:** I love to wake up and see the sea.

**sole / soul**

**Example:** The sole reason for her kindness is her gentle soul.

**son / sun**

**Example:** My son loves to spend time outside in the sun.

**steal / steel**

**Example:** The girders were made of steel, and some reprobate decided to steal them.

**tail / tale**

**Example:** My dog chasing his tail is a tale my kids love to hear.

**weather / whether**

**Example:** The weather looks changeable today. I don't know whether to bring a rain mac or a thick coat.

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# OFT-CONFUSED HOMOPHONES

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These homophones frequently get confused:

## **accept/except:**

**Accept** is a verb that means to take or receive. **Except** is used as a preposition or conjunction to mean but or exclude.

## **affect/effect:**

**Affect** is a verb and indicates an influence. **Effect** is a noun (in most cases) and is the result of an action or change.

## **compliment/complement:**

**Compliment** means to say something nice about someone or something. **Complement** means something that enhances something else.

## **then/than:**

**Then** is a versatile word used as an adverb, noun or adjective to show the order of how things happened. **Than** is a subordinating conjunction you can use to make comparisons.

## **to/too:**

**To** can be a preposition or infinitive when used with a verb. **Too** is an adverb or a synonym for also.

## **you're/your:**

**You're** is a contraction for you are. **Your** is a pronoun.

# HOMOGRAPHS

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The suffix 'graph' denotes something written or drawn. The word 'homograph' means 'same picture' or 'same writing', and homographs are words that are spelt the same but pronounced differently. Here are some common ones:

## **accent**

1. Stress or emphasis
2. A manner of speaking or pronunciation influenced by the region in which one lives or grew up

## **agape**

1. Wide open
2. A Greek word meaning 'love'

## **attribute**

1. A characteristic or quality
2. To think of as belonging to or originating in some person, place or thing

## **bass**

1. A deep voice or tone
2. A kind of fish

## **bow**

1. To bend at the waist
2. Ahe front of a boat
3. A pair of tied loops

## **buffet**

1. To hit, punch or slap
2. A self-serve food bar

## **compact**

1. Small
2. To make small
3. A small case for holding make-up

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**compound**

1. To mix or combine
2. An enclosed area with a building or group of buildings inside

**content**

1. Happy or satisfied
2. All that is contained inside something

**contract**

1. An agreement
2. To get, acquire or incur

**coordinates**

1. brings into proper place or order/
2. a set of numbers used to calculate position

**desert**

1. A hot, arid region
2. To leave

**digest**

1. A condensed version of some information
2. To change food in the stomach into a form that can be absorbed by the body

**discount**

1. A reduction in price
2. To give no credence to the significance of something

**down**

1. In a lower position
2. Soft, furry feathers

**entrance**

1. The place of entry
2. To bewitch, delight or enrapture

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**fine**

1. Very good
2. Sharp or keen
3. Delicate or subtle
4. A sum of money paid to settle a matter

**frequent**

1. Occurring regularly
2. To visit a place with regularity

**incense**

1. A substance that produces a pleasant odour when burned
2. To infuriate or make very angry

**lead**

1. To go first, with followers behind
2. A type of metal

**minute**

1. 60 seconds
2. Extremely small

**moped**

1. Acted sad or gloomy
2. A bicycle with a motor

**object**

1. A thing you can see or touch
2. To be opposed to

**proceeds**

1. Advances or continues on
2. The money or profit gained from a sale or venture

**produce**

1. To create or make
2. Fresh fruits and vegetables

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**project**

1. A plan or proposal
2. To throw or hurl forward
3. To cause a shadow or image to fall upon a surface

**number**

1. A numeral
2. To count
3. More numb

**refuse**

1. Waste or garbage
2. To reject or decline to accept

**row**

1. A fight
2. To propel a boat forward using oars
3. A line

**subject**

1. Under some authority or control
2. To bring under authority or control
3. To make liable or vulnerable
4. A topic
5. The noun in a sentence about which something is said in the predicate

**tear**

1. To rip
2. A drop of water from the eye

**wind**

1. To turn
2. Moving air

**wound**

1. Turned
2. An injury