

a lot vs alot

a lot is correct and *alot* is incorrect

The class has had *a lot* of time to complete the project, so it should be done well.

We have *a lot* of great ideas for the spring fair.

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to vs too vs two

to can be a preposition | We're going *to* the park.

to can indicate an infinitive when it precedes a verb | We want *to* help in any way we can.

too is an adverb that can mean excessively when it precedes an adjective or adverb | I ate *too* much ice-cream for dessert.

too is a synonym for also | The book's cover has ripped, so we need to have it repaired.

two is a number
Marcy ate *two* pieces of pie.
I have *two* books I'd like to read.

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are vs our

are is a verb in present tense, a form of the verb 'to be'

We *are* staying at the hotel closest to the stadium.
They *are* my cousins.

our

our is an adjective, the plural possessive form of *we*

They will bring *our* keys to the hotel lobby.
The pleasure is all *ours*.



double negatives

A double negative is the combination of two negatives when only one is necessary.

I *don't* have *nothing* to say to him.
Barry *doesn't* want *no* help from you.

When double negatives are used, often the writer's intended meaning is not clearly conveyed to readers, as in:
She is *not unattractive*.

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feel badly vs feel bad

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feel bad is correct if you're talking about emotions

Because *feel* is a linking verb and a linking verb is followed by an adjective—not an adverb—the latter phrase is correct.

I *feel bad* about not bringing a snack for her.

It gets confusing because *feel* can be an action verb or a linking verb. Action verbs express actions, and linking verbs are less powerful; they express a state of being or a 'sense' (*feel, smell, taste*).

Consider:

Those flowers smell sweet. (The flowers have a sweet smell.)

The old dog smells badly. (The old dog is not good at smelling.)

by accident or on accident

Though research has found that the majority of people under 35 use the phrase *on accident* and those over 35 prefer *by accident*, both are correct.

Since 1970, the phrase *on accident* has been on the rise, perhaps from combining *by accident* with *on purpose*.

?: Which do you often use?

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irregardless

Irregardless is a word, though it is not a standard word, which means that common usage has put it in many dictionaries, but that it is not a standard word.

Regardless means without regard, so *irregardless*, with the negative prefix *ir-* means without *without regard*. It doesn't make sense. *Irregardless* is not a good word. Don't use it.

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cannot or can not

Both are correct!

?: Which do you often use?

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it's vs its

it's is the contraction for *it is*
It's raining today, so the baseball game will be cancelled.

its is the possessive form of *it*
 The cat is licking *its* paws.

?: Think of one sentence for each: its & it's.

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books vs book's vs books'

books is the plural form ('plural' means more than one) of *book*
 Please put the *books* on the counter.

book's is the possessive form ('possessive' means belongs to) of *book*
 The *book's* cover has ripped, so we need to have it repaired.

books' is the possessive form of *books*
 All of the *books'* covers have to be replaced since they were labeled improperly.

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their vs there vs they're

their is a pronoun
 The students put *their* coats in the closet.

there
there can act as different parts of speech, depending on how it is used in a sentence. Most commonly, it is used as a pronoun or adverb.

There will be a lot to eat at the party tonight. (pronoun)
 Put the book over *there*. (adverb)

they're is the contraction for *they are*
They're going to have practice immediately after school today.

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all right vs alright

Alright is not *all right*!

'alright' is not grammatically correct and is actually a shortened, slang term for 'all right'.

Despite falling down the steps, the cookies were *all right*.

?: What other words do you hear used that are not standard English words?

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your vs you're

your is a pronoun
Please bring *your* books to class with you tomorrow.

you're is a contraction for you are
You're going to absolutely love this new recipe.

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me vs I

me is always the object: Please give that to *me*!
I is always the subject: *I* am going to the mall after school.

There's a simple trick for this one, when there is another person involved in the I/me equation. Remove the other person, and see how the sentence sounds.

My mom and *me/I* are making cookies today. (*I* sounds better, and *I* is the subject.)

She gave Lucy and *me/I* brand new aprons. (*Me* sounds better, and *me* is an object.)

Though many, many people would say that "She gave Lucy and *I* brand new aprons" sounds correct, it is, indeed, incorrect.

a whole nother

a whole nother is slang for *a whole other*, or *another whole*

The baseball uniform dilemma is *a whole other* story.

OR

The baseball uniform dilemma is *another whole* story.

?: Which do you most often hear?

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anyways

Anyways is NOT a word!

?: What should you use instead of 'anyways'?

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who vs whom

who and *whom* are both pronouns

who is subjective which means it can replace a subject
Who loves cheeseburgers? | Who stepped on my finger?

whom is objective which means it replaces an object
Whom do you love? (You do love *whom*. Replace *him* for *whom*, and if *him* makes sense, use *whom*.)
Whom should we invite to the party?
To *whom* does this package belong?

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fewer vs less

fewer is used with numbers you can count
There are *fewer* than ten items clearance right now.

less is used with uncountable quantities
I should drink *less* coffee.

exception: use *less* when referring to time, money, or distance
The program lasted *less* than thirty minutes.
We paid our babysitter *less* than \$50 for staying.

**?: Correct or incorrect:
grocery line '10 items or less'?**

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bring vs take

bring is used to move things toward the subject
Please *bring* your sneakers with you to PE class.
They will *bring* our keys to the hotel lobby.

take
Take your camera with you to the beach.
Take your luggage with you when
you leave.

**?: How can you explain
restaurant take-out**

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affect vs effect

affect is most often used as a verb
The constant use of electronics is *affecting* children's attention
spans.

effect is most often used as a noun
Electronics can have a positive *effect* on children's learning.

?: How can you remember?

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