

RESOURCE LIST TROUBLESOME WORDS & USAGES

WORD	MEANING/USAGE	WORD	MEANING/USAGE
accept	v. – to take (accept your apology) or regard as right (accept a verdict)	doesn't	v. – contracted form of third person SINGULAR verb DOES and NOT
except	prep. – excluding (all except one); conj. – but (except they left)	don't	v. – contracted form of DO and NOT; used with a PLURAL subject, I, or YOU
accidentally	adv. – (accidentally is NOT a word); adverbs of manner are formed by adding -ly to adjectives (accidental)	emigrate	v. – to leave one's country (move from)
adapt	v. – to adjust (adapt to new climate)	immigrate	v. – enter another country intending to remain (move to)
adept	adj. – proficient (adept typist)	ensure	v. – to make sure or certain
adverse	adj. – antagonistic (adverse criticism); contrary (adverse weather conditions)	insure	v. – to take out or issue insurance; to be paid money in the case of loss
averse	adj. – against (averse to debt)	assure	v. – to inform positively, make certain, or give confidence
affect	v. – to have an influence or change	everyday	adj. – ordinary (everyday occurrence)
effect	n. – a result or influence v. – to bring about	every day	adj. with n. – (call me every day)
all of	do NOT use OF with ALL (all the men, NOT all of the men)	farther	adj. – comparative of FAR; more distant (both can refer to physical distance)
allude	v. – indirectly refer to something	further	adv. – also, greater detail; can express abstract or figurative meaning
elude	v. – to evade or escape (eluded police)	go vs. say	v. – GO is NOT a synonym for SAY
amount	n. – overall size or sum (amount of \$)	good	adj. – used before nouns (good book) or after linking verbs (it is good)
number	n. – how many are in group	well	adv. – used with verbs, especially action verbs (sings well; does well)
appraise	v. – to evaluate or value (appraise gems)	imply	v. – to suggest (speaker implies)
apprise	v. – to inform or notify (apprise of ___)	infer	v. – to conclude (hearer infers)
between	prep. – references 2 items or number ranges (between him and her)	invent	v. – to create something that did not exist (Bell invented the phone)
among	prep. – used when referencing 3 or more items (among the states)	discover	v. – to find, learn, expose
complement	n. – something that completes v. – to complete	its	pron. – possessive pronoun used before a noun (NO apostrophe)
compliment	n. – a flattering remark v. – to praise (verb)	it's	contracted pronoun/verb that stands for IT IS and (needs an apostrophe)
continual	adj. – recurring in close succession	lie/lay/lying/lain	v. – to recline or be situated; intransitive (used without an object)
continuous	adj. – uninterrupted or constant	lay/laid/laying/laid	v. – to place or put; transitive (used with an object)
could of	OF should not be used in place of	lead	v. – to show the way (present tense)
should of	HAVE with could, would, or should;	led	v. – past tense of lead
would of	the correct verbs are COULD HAVE, SHOULD HAVE, and WOULD HAVE	lead	n. – a heavy, soft metal (pencil lead)

WORD	MEANING/USAGE
lend	v. – to give a loan (bank lends)
borrow	v. – to receive a loan (client borrows)
less	adj. – used with quantities or things that cannot be counted (less time)
fewer	adj. – comparative form of few; used with people or items that are countable
may	v. – helping verb meaning might (may rain) ; preferred over CAN for granting permission (you may go to the movie)
can	v. – helping verb indicating the ability to do something (can type)
maybe	adv. – perhaps (maybe I can)
may be	v. – helping verb MAY with the verb BE (may be eligible)
any/no	adj. – use only ONE negative word per sentence or clause; use ANY if the sentence contains NOT or a NOT (N'T) contraction
anything/nothing	pron./n. – same rule applies
anywhere/nowhere	adv. – same rule applies
principal	n. – head person or monetary amount
principle	n. – basic truth or assumption
rise/rose/risen	v. – to get or go up (steam rises); intransitive (used without an object)
raise	v. – to lift or bring up (raised a flag) transitive (used with an object)
real	adj. – true, not fake (real sugar)
really	adv. – truly, very (really wishing for ...)
sit	v. – to take a position (sit down); intransitive (used without an object)
set	v. – to place something somewhere; transitive (used with an object)
so	conj. – therefore; coordinating conj. that is preceded by comma
so that	conj. – SO followed by THAT gives a reason and is not used with a comma
teach	v. – to give instruction or knowledge
learn	v. – to take in knowledge

WORD	MEANING/USAGE
than	conj. – used in comparisons (bigger than I am)
then	conj. – time chronology or therefore; adv. – at that time (wasn't alive then)
that	relative pronoun used to begin a clause that gives necessary, specifying information; not preceded by comma
which	relative pronoun used to begin a clause that gives either specifying or additional information; must be preceded by a comma
who	relative pronoun used to begin a clause used that gives more info about the person(s); avoid using THAT or WHICH when referring to people
there	adv. – indicates place (put it there)
their	pron. – possessive form used before a noun (their car)
they're	pron./v. – contracted form of they are; needs an apostrophe (they're late)
theirs	pron. – possessive collective form of THEY
there's	pron./v. – contracted form of THERE IS
them	pron. – objective form of THEY
those	pron. – plural form of THAT; do not use THEM (object pronoun) for THOSE (pointer pronoun)
to	adv. – used to begin infinitive (to go) prep. – toward or in direction of
too	adv. – also (go too); excessively
two	adj./n. – numeral
who	pron. – subject or relative pronoun (man who won)
whom	pron. – objective form of WHO (it is whom you know that counts)
who's	pron./v. – contracted form of WHO IS
whose	pron. – possessive form of WHO (whose bike is this)
your	pron. – possessive form of YOU
you're	pron./v. – contracted form of YOU ARE
yours	pron. – the ones belonging to YOU