

Let's Mind our Language

Homophones

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A homophone is one of two or more words which sound fully or approximately the same but which have different meanings. The following are considered to be good examples of homophones and they are believed to be some but not all of their kind in the dictionaries of the English language, for it is quite difficult to write down all of them here in this bulletin due to time and space limitations. Furthermore, please be aware that most of the words may not be put in their alphabetical order. We believe that this random collection of homophones may be useful to especially English teachers.



abase/abess
abate/abet
age/edge
amber/ember
and/end
air/heir
ankle/uncle
ate/eight
aye/eye/I
allowed/aloud
altar/alter
apprise/apprize/uprise
apprehend/upper-hand
arc/ark
be/bee
bail/bale/bell
bald/bawled/bold
band/banned
bank/bunk
bare/bear/beer
baron/barren/barn
base/bass

baste/based/best/beast
bacon/beckon/beacon
beach/beechn/bitch
bean/been/bin
beat/beet/bit
bed/bade
bee/be
beer/bear/bier
berries/buries
berth/birth
bet/bait/bate
bicker/beaker
bid/bead
blare/Blair
but/butt
buy/by/bye
billed/build
blew/blue
boar/bore
board/bored
Bonn/bonne/bone
bonny/bony
booth/booze
border/boarder
bough/bow
boy/buoy
brake/break
branch/brunch
bread/bred/braid
brewed/brood
bunker/banker
burn/Bern

business/busy-ness
cant/Kant
canon/cannon
canvas/canvass
ceiling/sealing
cell/sell/sail
cellar/seller
cent/scent/sent/saint
cereal/serial
chaste/chest
cheap/cheep/chip
chews/choose
chile/chilli/chilly
chick/chic/cheek
choke/chalk
chord/cord
choir/quire
chute/shoot
cite/sight/site
clause/claws
click/cliqne
coarse/course
coast/cost
coat/cot/caught
cold/called
colonel/kernel
con/cone
conquer/conker
corps/corpse/corpus
courtesy/curtsey/curtsy
coward/cowered

crick/creek
critic/critique
crush/crash
currant/current
cut/cat
cymbal/symbol
dairy/diary
date/debt
days/daze
dear/deer
dean/din
derive/drive
deference/difference
desert/dessert
dew/due/do
die/dye
dim/deem
dip/deep
discuss/discus
disk/disc
discrete/discreet
doe/dough
don/done
dote/dot
drag/drug
dual/duel
dump/damp
each/itch
earn/urn
ear/err
eat/it
eel/ill

elk/ilk	hear/here	mate/met/mete	pray/prey
enter/inter	heard/herd	meat/meet	profit/prophet
either/ether	higher/hire	medal/meddle	puck/pack
ewe/yew/you	him/hymn	message/massage	pail/pale
exultation/exaltation	hip/heap	mick/meek	power/pour
facts/fax	hoes/hose	mid/mead	put/putt
fade/fed	hole/whole/hall	mill/meal	quack/quake
faint/feint	holy/wholly	mind/mined	quarry /query
fair/fare	hope/hop	miner/minor	queue/cue
falls/false	horse/hoarse	mint/meant	quiet/quite
faze/phase/fez	horde/hoard	missed/mist	quote/coat/caught/cot
feature/future	hour/our	Mrs/misses	rain/reign/rein
feel/fill	idle/idol	mock/moke	rap/wrap
feast/fist	impetus/impetuous	moose/mousse	rational/rationale
feat/ feet /fit	in/inn	mope/mop	read/reed/rid
find/fined	incite/insight	moral/morale	red/read/raid
field/filled	keen/kin	mouth/mouse	real/reel/rill
fish/phish	keel/kill	morning/mourning	realty/reality
flair/flare	keys/kiss	much/match	ream/rim
flash/flush/flesh	knead/need	muscles/mussels	right/write/rite
flea/flee	kneel/nil	net/nett	road/Rhode/rode/rod
fleet/flit	knight/night	new/knew	robe/rob
flew/flu	knit/nit/neat	no/know	roaster/roster
flour/flower	knives/naives	noble/nobble/nobel	role/roll
for/fore/four	knot/not/note/naught/ nought	nose/knows	roam/Rome
fool/full/-ful		none/nun	root/route/rut
foul/fowl/fall	laid/led/lade	ode/odd/owed	rot/wrote/rout
found/fond	lake/lek	one/won	Ruble/Rouble/rubble/ rabble
frees/freeze/frieze/frizz	laps/lapse	overdo/overdue	
fright/freight	laser/leather	paced/paste	rump/ramp
fur/fir	lays/laze	pain/pane/pen	rupture/rapture
fury/ferry/fiery	lane/lain	pail/pale	rush/rash
get/gate	laud/loud	pair/pare/pear/peer	rhyme/rime
genes/jeans	lead/lid	passed/past	sail/sale/cell/sell
gene/gin	leave/live	paste/pest	savor/savior
gnaw/now	led/laid/lade	patter/pater	seller/sailor
God/goad	leak/leek/lick	pause/paws	secret/secrete
goat/got	leads/Leeds	peace/piece/peas	scene/seen/sin
grate/great	least/list	peak/peek/pick	scheme/skim
grit/greet	lien/lean/ litter/liter	pea/pee	sever/severe
grin/green	lessen/lesson	pear/peer/pier	scull/skull
grid/greed	lightening/lightning	pill/peal/peel	sea/see
groan/grown	light/lite	pin/peen	sear/seer
guard/gourd	lion/line	pip/peep	seek/sick/Sikh
guessed/guest	loan/lone	pity/pithy/piety	seem/seam/SIM
guilt/gilt	made/maid	place/plaice	sew/so/sow/saw
gush/gash	mad/mud	plain/plane	shade/shed
hat/hut	mail/male	play/ply	sheer/shear
hay/hey	mall/mole/moll	pleas/please	sheen/shin
hair/hare	maize/maze	plum/plumb	sheet/shit/sheath/sheathe
hale/hell/hail	mane/men/main	Paul/poll/pole	ship/sheep
haven/heaven	manner/manor	poor/pore/pour	shoe/shoo
hello/halo/hallow/hollow	Mary/marry/merry	pool/pull	shod/showed
heal/heel/hill		pope/pop	

side/sighed	stake/steak	tied/tide	weak/week/wick
sill/seal/seel	steal/steel/still	tier/tear	weep/whip
slit/sleet	steer/stir	tick/teak	wheat/wit
soot/soothe/suet/suite	storey/story	tin/teen/thin/TIN	wheal/weal/will/wheel
sneer/snare	strap/stirrup	to/too/two	which/witch
spill/spiel	suite/suit/sweet	toed/toad/towed	whine/wine
series/serious	sun/son	tone/ton	whirred/word/weird
sweet/sweat	surf/serf	truck/track	wander/wonder
stead/steed	swayed/suede	tweet/twit	warn/worn
simmer/seamer	sword/sward	tyre/tire	warm/worm
sine/sign/cine	tea/tee	undo/undue	wean/win
size/sighs/seize	tail/tale/tell	vessel/vassal	wane/when/wen
sit/seat	tamper/temper	vane/vein/vain	weal/will
site/sight/cite	taught/taut/thought	vale/veil	woe/woo
slam/slum	team/teem	vane/vain/vein	woke/walk
slay/sleigh/sly	tease/teeth	veal/vill	wood/would
sneak/snack	teas/tees	violate/violet	wore/war
soar/sore/sour	tense/tens	wade/weighed/wed	wreck/reck/rake
sole/soul	tern/turn	wail/whale/well/wale	wrest/rest
some/sum	test/taste	walk/woke	wring/ring
sop/soap	their/they're/there	waste/waist/west	wrist/wriest
stalk/stoke	thank/tank	wait/weight/wet/whet	wrung/rung
stair/stare	thaw/though	ware/wear/where /were	wry/rye
slick/sleek	thought/taught	warrior/warier	Yale/yell
some/sum	thrash/trash/thrush	way/whey/weigh	young/yang
stair/stare	thread/trade/tread	weather/whether/	youth/use
slick/sleek	threw/through	wither	yolk/yoke
slip/sleep	throne/thrown	with/whiz	

A bit hint on the pronunciation of some words

Like some other world languages, English has some confusing pronunciations in some of its words, especially with respect to the borrowed ones. In this regard, according to my superficial knowledge, the Italian language is far better than many languages in avoiding spelling and pronunciation confusions. In this language, you don't write what you don't speak (pronounce), or you don't normally speak (pronounce) what is not written. For example, if you write "Dove vai? Tu bisogna stare qui," in Italian, it is read in

Amharic like this, "ዶቫ ቫይ? ቱ ቢቫቫ ስ ሬ ኩቂ". Do you see how the word you know, 'dove'(the bird or the past and pp of the verb *dive*), is uttered? Had it been in English, it would have been read like the English word 'dove'; though this very word has two varying pronunciations when it refers to the bird and the past form of the verb 'dive' (US). You can also compare the English word 'stare' whose pronunciation is different from the Italian 'stare'(ስ ሬ). By the way the [literal] meaning of this Italian sentence is, "Where are you going? You need to stay here.)

When we come to the point

in hand, we can understand that English has some words, maybe borrowed from other languages, which have odd spellings along with their odd pronunciations that could baffle and at times discourage especially new learners. I have tried to give few examples of these words here below. I followed this way: first, the word is presented; next how the word should be read is pointed; third, when it is possible, another word to which that word rhymes is stated. Example, **colonel** rhymes with **kernel**, even the pronunciation of these two diametrically different words is almost the same. (cf., dictionary.cambridge.org).

<u>The Word</u>	<u>The word it rhymes</u>	<u>The Word</u>	<u>The word it rhymes</u>
Bough (read as <i>baw</i>)	bow (curtsy)	Gnaw (read as <i>naw</i>)	now
Chore (read cho- as cha in chalk)	tore	Herb (read as 'erb', an herb or a herb)	earn or herd
Condign (read as <i>condine</i>)	confine	Indict (read as <i>indite</i>)	invite
Definite (read as <i>definet</i>)	delineate	Island (read as <i>ay-land</i>)	high land
Doughnut , also donut (read as <i>donat</i>)	co' conut	Knead (read as <i>ni:d</i>)	need
Faux pas (read as <i>fo pa</i>)	fora	Lieutenant (read as <i>leften-</i>)	covenant
Eunuch (read as <i>yunek</i>)	cooler	Mnemonic (read as 'nimonic)	Nilotic
Euphoria (read as <i>yuforia</i>)	utopia	Paradigm (read as	paralyze
Faeces (read as <i>fis:z</i>)	disease	Phlegm (read as <i>flem</i>)	blame
Folk (read as <i>fok</i>)	talk/walk	Pint (read as <i>pa:yint</i>)	bind
Gem (read as <i>jem</i>)	Some	Pneumonia (read as	Nicosia
Gum (reas as <i>ghem</i>)	fur	Psychic (read as <i>sa:ykik</i>)	tactic

Let's take care of tricky spellings like these ones:

Achieve Believe
 Belief Brief Besiege
 Buffet Bureau
 Ceiling Characteristics
 Conceive Conceit
 Conception Deceive
 Deceit Deception
 Describe Description
 Mischief Mischievous
 Perceive Perception
 Prescribe Prescription
 Receive Receipt
 Reception Relieve
 Relief Redeem
 Redemption Sieve Sift
 Thieve Theft
 Weird Resume
 Résumé

Let's take care of confusing pairs such as the following ones:-

Exacerbate/ exasperate
 Adapt/adopt/adept
 Rampant/rampart
 Bumpkin/pumpkin
 Damp/dump

Did/deed
 Dim/deem
 Fragrant/flagrant
 Concubine/porcupine
 Fall/fail
 Faint/feint
 Fright/freight
 Arson/arsenic
 Confident/confidant
 Pandemic/epidemic/
 endemic
 Fleet/flit
 Reasonable/treasonable
 Treatise/treaties
 Approach/rapprochement
 Rapture/rupture
 Exultation/exaltation
 Rest/restive
 Kind/kindle/kindling
 Amber/ember
 Gratitude/gratuitous

Linkage/leakage
 Weather/whether
 Curb/curve
 China/china
 Polish/polish
 Finnish/finish
 Turkey/turkey

Palestine/philistine
 Render/reindeer
 Sever/severe
 Secret/secrete
 Sew/sow/saw
 Lie/lay
 Forsake/sake
 Weep/wipe
 Bank/debunk
 All right/alright
 All ready/already
 Thrash/trash/thrush
 Shade/shed
 Dinner/diner
 Winer/winner
 Tornado/torpedo
 Super/supper
 Haven/heaven
 Liter/litter
 Later/latter
 Least/list
 Gay/guy
 Busy-ness/business
 Thump/thumb
 Stoke/stalk
 Massage/message
 Violate/violet/
 violent

Peak Hour, not pick hour
 Device/devise
 Advice/advise
 Arise/rise
 Struggle/strangle
 Strip/stripe
 Navy/navvy
 want/wont
 Moral/morale
 Genius/ingenious
 Sweet/sweat
 Flagrant/fragrant



Use of 'I'

Teacher: Ellen, please give me a sentence starting with "I".

Ellen: 'I is ...'

Teacher: No, Ellen.

Always say "I am..."
Ellen: All right... "I am the ninth letter of the English alphabet."

Source: internet