

PUNCTUATION

COMMAS

Commas indicate slight pauses in reading and differentiate sentence parts. You must use commas:

- Before any conjunction** that connects two independent clauses:
I thought it would rain, and it did.
- After an introductory phrase:**
After the rainfall, the sun finally came out.
- To separate items in a series:**
I like rock, pop, blues, country, and hip-hop.
- To set off a parenthetical phrase:**
Amateur dancers, who often know little about traditional Spanish music, sometimes confuse dances such as the mambo and the samba.
- With dates:**
On August 8, 1976, the music world changed forever.
- To set off quotations** that occur inside a sentence:
Sarah said, "I love you," and she meant it.
- To subdivide numbers** into groups of three digits:
4,251,730
- To indicate direct address:**
Greg, give me the remote control.
- To separate adjectives:**
The hot, humid, nasty day made Alison irritable.
- To indicate omissions of verbs** in parallel clauses:
Jenny likes the Mets; Pedro, the Angels; and Frank, the Marlins.

APOSTROPHES

- Indicate **possession** when added to a noun or pronoun.
In certain academic corners, Philippa Foot's mid-century philosophy is influential.
- Indicate that letters have been left out when used as part of a **contraction**.
I don't speak French.
- Do not** indicate plurals and are **not** necessary in verbs.
 - The cat's play outside.
 - He call's his dog.

QUOTATION MARKS

- Represent **text as speech**:
"I would have been great," he insisted.
- Indicate **material excerpted** from another writer's work:
Not every love affair is "star-cross'd."
- Indicate **titles of poems, essays, and short stories**:
Shelley's "Ode to a Skylark" meditates on spontaneous artistic creation.
- May not** be used in place of underlining or italicizing for emphasis.
 - Hey "Dad"! This win's "for you."
 - Periods and commas go *inside* punctuation marks.
 - Question marks, exclamation marks, colons, semicolons, and dashes go *outside* quotation marks unless they are part of the quotation.

SEMICOLONS

- Take the place of a conjunction** that joins independent clauses. In such cases, if a period replaces the comma, the sentence still will make sense.
Betsy liked to sew; it was her passion.
- Separate items in series** that contain commas within single-item descriptions.
He had an old, unraveling sweater; a new, hand-knit sweater; and a faded, torn pair of jeans.

COMPOSING SENTENCES

SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

- Singular subjects** take singular verbs, and **plural subjects** take plural verbs.
 - The dog eats his food.
 - The dog eat his food.
- Separated subjects and verbs:** If the verb and subject are separated by other words, the verb should agree with its subject rather than with the nearest noun.
 - The actors in the movie, which we went to see before dinner on Tuesday, were impressive.
 - The actors in the movie, which we went to see before dinner on Tuesday, was impressive.
- Collective nouns:** When the subject is a singular noun that refers to a group, the verb remains singular.
 - The band of soldiers piles into the chopper.
 - The band of soldiers pile into the chopper.
- A singular subject that is part of a plural element:** When a singular subject is isolated from a larger group, use a singular verb.
 - One of the backup singers was unable to perform at the President's Day concert.
 - One of the backup singers were unable to perform at the President's Day concert.
- Two singular subjects joined by "and"** take a plural verb.
 - Frankie and Edmund love dancing.
 - Frankie and Edmund loves dancing.
- Two subjects combined to form a single unit** take a singular verb.
 - Cutting and pasting is a good technique to master.
 - Cutting and pasting are a good technique to master.
- Two singular subjects joined by "or" or "nor"** take a singular verb.
 - Either Darla or Judith is going with me to the dance.
 - Either Darla or Judith are going with me to the dance.
- A mixed subject joined by "or" or "nor":** The verb agrees with the closest noun.
 - Neither milk nor eggs contain much Vitamin A.
 - Neither eggs nor milk contains much Vitamin A.

SUBJECT-PHASE CORRESPONDENCE

Descriptive phrases that introduce sentences must agree with the grammatical subject of the sentence.

- Hanging in the closet, my dress smelled like mothballs.
- Hanging in the closet, I saw my dress.

COMPARISONS

- To compare two items, use **-er** or "more."
Julia is shorter than Isabelle.
Isabelle is the more imaginative of the two girls.
- To indicate a superlative among more than two items, use **-est** or "most."
Jack is the fastest runner in the group.
Luther is the most gifted dancer in New York.

PRONOUNS

- Pronouns must agree with the nouns they replace in person, number, and gender.
Original: Jenny and Sarah crashed Matt's car into a tree.
With pronouns: They crashed his car into it.
- "None" takes a singular verb when it indicates "no one" or "not one" and a plural verb when it indicates more than one thing or person.
 - None of us is perfect.
 - None are as angry as those whose money was stolen.
- Pronouns should refer clearly to a particular noun.
 - As John showed his house to Joseph, John asked him what he thought of it.
 - John asked Joseph what he thought of his house.
- Do not** change a sentence's perspective by switching personal pronoun reference midway.
 - They thought of calling a cab, but you can't always trust cab drivers, so they didn't.
 - They thought of calling a cab, but they didn't trust cab drivers, so they didn't.

THINGS TO AVOID

- Fragments.** Don't use incomplete sentences as complete sentences.
 - She liked all sorts of movies. Such as dramas, comedies, and mysteries.
 - She liked all sorts of movies, including dramas, comedies, and mysteries.
- Double negatives.** If two negations (words like "not" or "never") occur in the same phrase, they confuse the meaning of the phrase by canceling one another out.
 - You should never not change the batteries in your smoke detector.
 - You should always change the batteries in your smoke detector.
- Comma splice.** Using a comma instead of a semicolon or period to separate independent clauses is incorrect and creates a run-on sentence.
 - There are many people in India, the country has a high population density.
 - There are many people in India; the country has a high population density.

COMPOSING PARAGRAPHS

A paragraph can be divided into three parts: the topic sentence, the body, and the concluding sentence.

- The topic sentence** introduces your paragraph and states its main idea.
- The body** provides evidence and support for your topic sentence.
- The concluding sentence** summarizes the main argument of the paragraph. Not every paragraph needs a concluding sentence: short paragraphs, or paragraphs that are part of a larger flow of argument, often do better without them.

Example of a paragraph:

Although most people believe that "April showers bring May flowers," May often proves to be a far rainier month than April. For the past five years, the average East Coast rainfall in May has been 4.6 inches, as opposed to just 3.2 inches for April. When confronted with this statistic, some meteorologists argue that April once was rainier than May, before ocean current patterns shifted to increase May's average rainfall. Others point out that, in some parts of the world, April remains rainier than May. A third group officially opposes any inquiry into the statistical anomaly, asserting that "April showers bring May flowers" is a totally unscientific proverb perpetuated by TV weather reporters who lack real understanding of the weather. Although no one doubts the fallacy of the ever-popular adage, the scientific community does not agree on the reason for the statement's untruthfulness.

COMPOSING AN ESSAY*

THE THESIS STATEMENT

A thesis statement notifies your reader of your original idea regarding a topic. While your general argument may be something like "Slavery didn't cause the Civil War," your thesis statement gives your original, specific idea about a subject. A thesis statement **should be neither obvious nor vague**. A thesis must be **controversial and arguable**; it should be possible for someone to come up with a reasonable argument contradicting your own.

Example of a good thesis statement:

Disagreement between the North and South over tariffs and states' rights was a more significant cause of the Civil War than were opposing views about slavery.

- This thesis statement is strong. It makes a controversial claim against which people could argue and clearly identifies specific economic and political factors.

*FOR A MORE IN-DEPTH LOOK AT COMPOSING AN ESSAY, SEE THE ESSAYS & TERM PAPERS SPARKCHART™

ENGLISH COMPOSITION

THESIS PARAGRAPH

The first paragraph of the paper describes the focus of your argument and your reason for making it. In the paragraph, you should:

1. **Give background material and context.** Assume that your reader is well educated and can understand an argument about a book or event with which he or she is unfamiliar. Give only the most relevant background information in your first paragraph.
2. **State your motive and thesis.** Your introductory paragraph should tell your reader why your paper is relevant. Typically, you'll want to make your thesis statement in the final sentences of the introductory paragraph.

Example of a good thesis paragraph:

Almost as soon as the Civil War ended, Americans began to search for a way to understand the reasons for the bitter conflict. Even today, strong feelings and personal bias influence debate over the causes of the war. Because the years leading up to the war were characterized by growing conflicts over a series of political and economic disagreements between the Northern and Southern states, isolating individual causes of the war is difficult. It is easy to assume that the main cause of the war was disagreement over slavery simply because the outcome of the war had such dramatic effects on the institution of slavery. In fact, disagreement between the North and South over tariffs and states' rights was a more significant cause of the Civil War than were opposing views about slavery.

BODY PARAGRAPHS

1. **Topic sentences** begin every paragraph. They should introduce new information that confirms or complicates your thesis statement.
2. **Evidence and analysis.** Within the paragraph, use specific evidence to support the idea stated in your topic sentence. Use analysis sentences to explain why this evidence supports your argument.
3. **Transitions within paragraphs.** The ideas in a body paragraph should come in a logical sequence that explains, complicates, or develops the idea put forth in the paragraph's topic sentence.
 - Transitional words ("furthermore," "in contrast," "for example," "as a result") help your reader understand the way that you are developing your main idea.
4. **Transitions between paragraphs.** Each paragraph should explicitly relate to the preceding and following paragraph.
 - Phrases like "also important," "in addition," or "we should also note that" are weak because they don't explain the relationship between ideas in consecutive paragraphs.

Example of a body paragraph:

Disagreements between the North and South regarding cotton tariffs created a divisive political atmosphere that was instrumental in states' decisions to secede from the Union. Vice President John Calhoun proposed that individual states had the right to nullify specific acts of Congress in order to protect the welfare of the states against the federal government. When Calhoun proposed this doctrine of nullification, it became clear that the South worried that the North was wielding power in order to damage the South's economy. This worry influenced the Southern states to consider separation from the North. In short, the economic issue of cotton export, separate from moral concerns over slavery, marked the initial split between North and South.

- This body paragraph is effective because it states an argument and then uses evidence persuasively. A strong topic sentence is supported by a specific incident, which is then explained. The paragraph does not simply retell the events surrounding cotton exportation. Rather, it shows how economic concern about cotton relates to the division between North and South.

CONCLUDING PARAGRAPH

A conclusion should explain the significance of your thesis statement in a larger context. Although a conclusion should provide a sense of closure, it should not make broad, unwarranted generalizations or claims.

Techniques for concluding:

1. One of the most effective ways to provide a sense of closure is to **cite a relevant quotation** from the text you are working with and explain how to **interpret that quotation using your argument**.
2. Another technique is to explain a term that you bring up in your thesis statement.
3. Ending your paper by showing that your argument can be applied to a related topic reiterates the relevance of your ideas.

Example of a strong concluding paragraph:

In 1876, after the end of the Civil War, Confederate General Robert Hunter asked, "Had the South permitted her property, her constitutional rights and her liberties to be surreptitiously taken from her without resistance and made no moan, would she not have lost her honor with them?" Understanding that the South feared not only a loss of slave labor, but also a loss of honor, can make the root causes of the Civil War a bit clearer. In referring to "her constitutional rights and her liberties," Hunter does refer to the institution of slavery. However, he also refers to the pride of economic productivity, which the South feared would wither and die under the economic policies of the North. Although an absolute understanding of the causes of the Civil War is unattainable, identifying the interactions among various causes is an ongoing project.

STYLE GUIDELINES

Unlike grammar rules, which you *must* follow, these style guidelines are suggestions that help make your writing clear and effective.

USE THE ACTIVE VOICE

Whenever possible, use the active voice, which is clearer than and provides more specific information than the passive voice. To use the active voice, make the subject of the sentence perform the action on the predicate of the sentence.

Passive: My car was driven to Tulsa by Sarah.

Active: Sarah drove my car to Tulsa.

Passive: The hill was taken.

Active: The soldiers took the hill.

USE PARALLEL CONSTRUCTIONS

A parallel sentence construction repeats a grammatical pattern in order to express a logical relationship between ideas in a sentence. Common parallel structures repeat prepositional phrases, verb phrases, noun phrases, predicate nouns, or predicate adjectives.

1. The words that introduce the separate parts of a parallel construction should serve identical grammatical functions.

➤ I told her to be brave, love her country, and that she should trust in God.

➤ I told her to be brave, to love her country, and to trust in God.

2. Parallel construction always should be balanced in length. If one element of a list of comparison is significantly longer than the others, readers will have difficulty remembering the other elements in the list.

➤ The movie bored the audience because it dragged on for hours, had repetitive music, and was the first work of a director who liked to use jarring camera techniques and numerous characters.

➤ The movie, which was its director's first effort, bored the audience with its excessive length, repetitive music, rudimentary direction, and numerous characters.

AVOID WORDY LANGUAGE

If you can convey the same meaning with fewer words, do so. Padding paragraphs with extra words is confusing and usually obvious to readers and teachers. Specifically, the phrase "there is" almost always is unnecessary and may be eliminated.

➤ These instances of three-dimensional representation manifest the preoccupation with concrete structure inherent in their societal formation.

➤ These sculptures demonstrate their society's interest in structure.

➤ There is a urn that sits next to the fireplace.

➤ An urn sits next to the fireplace.

AVOID GENDER BIAS

Whenever possible, avoid using gendered pronouns to refer to both men and women.

1. Use "humanity" or "humankind" rather than "man" or "mankind."
2. Fix gender bias by using "he or she" or "his or her," or by pluralizing.

➤ The average American washes his hands three times every day.

➤ The average American washes his or her hands three times every day.

➤ Average Americans wash their hands three times every day.

USE EUPHEMISM ONLY WHEN NECESSARY

Euphemism is the use of an indirect word or phrase to hint at real meaning.

1. Euphemism can be useful if you are discussing a delicate or sensitive topic or if you want to avoid language that is too vulgar or harsh.

➤ I'm sorry that your mother was run over by a car.

➤ I'm sorry that your mother passed away.

2. Unnecessary euphemism, however, often just confuses writing.

➤ Maggie didn't complete her work because she is motivationally challenged.

➤ Maggie didn't complete her work because she is lazy.

AVOID COLLOQUIAL OR REGIONAL LANGUAGE

Many figures of speech and idioms used in conversation are inappropriate for writing.

➤ Ben hit the nail on the head when he suspected Isabel of boosting his watch.

➤ Ben's suspicion that Isabel had stolen his watch was astute.

DON'T MIX METAPHORS

Do not compare a thing to more than one other thing in the same sentence.

➤ The argument was veiled behind a sea of disagreement.

➤ Disagreement veiled the argument.

➤ A sea of disagreement surrounded the argument.

AVOID CLICHÉS

Overused words and idioms make sentences informal and difficult to understand.

➤ He stood by her side through thick and thin; even when their relationship was on the rocks, he saw the light at the end of the tunnel.

➤ He was loyal to her both in good and bad times; even when they had disagreements, he was optimistic that their relationship would remain strong.

CONTINUED ON OTHER SIDE

COMMONLY CONFUSED WORDS AND PHRASES

affect/effect - *Affect* is a verb meaning "to cause something to change." *Effect* is a noun meaning "a result brought about by a cause."

He tried to affect the outcome.
He had an effect on the outcome.

aggravate/irritate - *Aggravate* means "worsen." *Irritate* means "annoy" or "cause minor pain."
The loud music aggravated her headache.
The cigarette smoke irritated her throat.

all ready/already - *All ready* means "prepared." *Already* means "previously."

The dancer was all ready to go on stage.
The dancer's performance is over already.

all right/alright - *Alright* is a common contraction of *all right*. Although *alright* technically is not incorrect, *all right* is strongly preferred.

He said he felt all right.
❌ He said he felt alright.

a lot/alot - *Alot* is a common contraction of *a lot*, but is incorrect.

She liked it a lot.

❌ She liked it alot.

allusion/illusion - An *allusion* is a reference to something else. An *illusion* is a false vision or a fantasy.
The poem contains an allusion to Greek mythology.
The ghost was an illusion.

"an" with H-words - Use "a" instead of "an" in front of words that begin with H unless the H is silent.
A hero played a harp for an hour.

and also - *And also* is redundant. Use either *and* or *also*, not both.

aural/oral - *Aural* relates to the ears and hearing; *oral* relates to the mouth.

The loud drum music damaged her aural capabilities.
Regular brushing and flossing are important components of oral hygiene.

awhile/a while - *Awhile* is an adverb meaning "for some time." A *while* is an article and noun and should be used as an object. The phrase "for awhile" is incorrect.
Take off your shoes and rest awhile.
Rest for a while.

backward/backwards - *Backward* is preferred in the U.S.; *backwards* is acceptable as an adverb but never as an adjective.

He glanced backward.
She caught his backward glance.

bad/badly - *Bad* is an adjective; *badly*, an adverb. Do not use *bad* as an adverb. The phrase "I feel badly" is commonly used but incorrect.

The bad man hit his brother.
He plays tennis badly.

❌ She hurt him bad.

❌ I lied to her and now I feel badly about it.

bazaar/bizarre - *Bazaar* is a noun meaning "market." *Bizarre* is an adjective meaning "strange" or "unusual."

beside/besides - *Beside* means "next to." *Besides* means "also" or "in addition to."

I ran beside the river.
He is a liar, and besides that, a thief.

between/among - *Between* is used when something is shared by only two people or things. *Among* is used when something is shared by more than two people or things.

This secret will remain between you and me.
Among the four brothers, Aaron was the tallest.

breath/breathe - *Breath* is a noun; *breathe* is a verb.

I took a deep breath.
I breathe heavily.

capitol/capital - A *capitol* is a building in which a legislative body meets, whereas *capital* is used to refer to political centers and uppercase letters.

Senator Smith walked into the U.S. Capitol.
Salt Lake City is the capital of Utah.

Every sentence must begin with a capital letter.

council/counsel - A *council* is a group. *Counsel* is advice or guidance; *to counsel* is to advise.

The city council met on Tuesday.
I was confused, but my teacher gave me counsel.

compare to/compare with - *Compare to* connotes similarity between the things compared. *Compare with* can connote similarity or difference.

He compared her apple pie to heaven.
He compared Lincoln with Hitler.

complement/compliment - *Complement* means "to go well with." A *compliment* is a flattering statement or the act of making one.

My sense of humor complements her love of laughter.
I paid her a compliment.

continual/continuous - Something that is *continuous* never stops. Something that is *continual* is recurring but can stop.

The Earth rotates continuously.
My girlfriend continually asks me to give her flowers.

criteria/criterion - *Criteria* is the plural of *criterion*.

different than/different from - *Different from* is more correct than *different than*.

discreet/discrete - *Discreet* means "prudent" or "modest." *Discrete* means "separate."

They left the party discreetly to avoid making a scene.
He had several discrete groups of friends.

etc./e.g./i.e. - *Etc.* is short for *et cetera* and means "and so forth." *E.g.* is short for *exempli gratia* and means "for example." *I.e.* is short for *id est* and means "that is."

He was an expert in tropical diseases: malaria, typhoid fever, cholera, etc.
She loved Shakespeare's more fanciful comedies, e.g., *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.
Asbestos is carcinogenic, i.e., cancer-causing.

forward/forwards - *Forward* is preferred in the U.S.

further/farther - *Further* refers to time or degree.

Farther refers to physical distance.
After further thought, he chose to surrender.

He moved the desks farther apart to avoid crowding.

good/well - *Good* is an adjective. *Well* is an adverb. "I feel good" means "I feel moral," not "I feel healthy" or "I feel happy."

The good man donated half of his estate to charity.
I don't feel well; my stomach hurts.

hanged/hung - Always use *hung* except in the case of execution with a rope.

We hung the stockings on the line.
The convicts were hanged.

its/it's - *Its* is the possessive form of "it." *It's* is a contraction meaning "it is."

Its main use is as a spice grinder.
It's used mainly for grinding spices.

lay/lie - *Lay* is used when the subject of the sentence acts on a direct object. *Lie* is used when there is no direct object.

Julie lays down the book.
Julie lies down for a nap.

less/fewer - *Less* is used for quantities that cannot be counted. *Fewer* is used for quantities that can be counted.

In winter, there is less daylight because the sun is in the sky for fewer hours.

lightening/lightning - *Lightening* means "making light." *Lightning* flashes from the clouds during storms.

Taking off your backpack would help in lightening your load.
He was struck by lightning during the storm.

like/as - *As* is a conjunction; it comes before a complete clause. *Like* is a preposition. If the phrase introduced by *like* or *as* includes a verb, use *as*; if not, use *like*.

He ran quickly, as a runner should.
He ran like the wind.

little/few - *Little* refers to quantities that cannot be counted. *Few* refers to quantities that can be counted.

He had little hope.
He had few prospects.

medium/media - *Media* is the plural of *medium*.

Oil paint is the favorite medium of many artists.
Art students learn techniques in a variety of media, including pencil, oil paint, and watercolor.

much/many - *Much* generally refers to quantities that cannot be counted. *Many* refers to quantities that can be counted.

There was much dirt in the old truck.
Dirt has many uses.

predominant/predominate - *Predominant* is an adjective. *Predominate* is a verb.

It is the predominant idea among scientists.
The idea predominates among scientists.

principle/principal - *Principle* refers to an idea, especially a moral precept. *Principal* refers to high rank or importance.

I agree with the principle of nonviolence.
Human error was the principal cause of the accident.
Principal Jones suspended the student.

prior/previous/before - *Prior* and *previous* are interchangeable adjectives. *Before* is an adverb.

The previous arrangement existed prior to this arrangement.
This arrangement was made before the new information came to light.

prophecy/prophecy - *Prophecy* is a verb that means "to make prophecies." *Prophecy* is a noun that means "a prediction of future events."

The seer prophesied that Oedipus would be ruined.
The prophecy came true when Oedipus killed his father and married his mother.

quote/quotation - *Quote* is a verb; *quotation*, a noun.

I want to quote Twain in my paper.
That quotation from Twain's novel is really clever.

real/really - *Real* is an adjective. *Really* is an adverb.

A common mistake is to use *real* as an adverb.
The terror of the situation was real.
The situation was really terrifying.
❌ I did real well.

so - Avoid using *so* as an word of emphasis. "It was very cold" is preferable to "It was so cold."

stationary/stationery - *Stationary* is an adjective referring to a state of motionlessness. *Stationery* is a noun referring to paper and envelopes.

than/then - *Than* is a comparative term. *Then* refers to chronological sequence.

Cornelius was smarter than Rocky.
I slept, and then I woke up.

that/which - *That* is used to provide information that is necessary to identify a specific item. *Which* is used to add extra information about an item already identified.

The ticket that John bought was nonrefundable.
John paid for the ticket, which cost fifty dollars.

their/they're - *Their* is the possessive form of "they." *They're* is a contraction meaning "they are."

Their eyes were closed in sleep.
They're sleeping.

toward/towards - *Toward* is preferred in the U.S.

try to/try and - *Try to* introduces an action to be tried. *Try and* is correct only if followed by an unrelated action.

Try to stop me.
You will try and fail.

❌ Try and stop me.

used to/use to - *Used to* refers to a past action. *Use to* is incorrect.

We used to play ball in this field.
❌ We use to play ball in this field.

whether/if - *If* means "on the condition that." *Whether* is used in situations of speculation or uncertainty.

I will go to the party if I get my work done first.
I wonder whether the plane will arrive on time.

❌ I wonder if the plane will arrive on time.
If the plane is late, he will wonder what is wrong.

who/whom - *Who* is a subject; *whom* is an object.

Who is coming to the party?
Whom should I invite?
Tim saw Cheryl, who was wearing a red coat.
Tim saw Cheryl, whom he loves like a sister.

who's/whose - *Who's* is a contraction meaning "who is." *Whose* is the possessive form of "who."

Who's there?
Whose car is that?

TABLE OF IRREGULAR VERBS

Base Form	Simple Past	Past Participle
arise	arose	arisen
awake	awoke/ awakened	awoken
be	was/were	been
bear	bore	born/borne
beat	beat	beaten/beat
become	became	become
befall	befell	befallen
begin	began	begun
behold	beheld	beheld
bend	bent	bent
bet	bet/betted	bet/betted
bid	bid	bid
bind	bound	bound
bite	bit	bitten
bleed	bled	bled
blow	blew	blown
break	broke	broken
breed	bred	bred
bring	brought	brought
broadcast	broadcast	broadcast
browbeat	browbeat	browbeat
build	built	built
burn	burnt/burned	burnt/burned
burst	burst	burst
bust	busted/bust	busted/bust
buy	bought	bought
cast	cast	cast
catch	caught	caught
choose	chose	chosen
cling	clung	clung
come	came	come
cost	cost	cost
creep	crept	crept
cut	cut	cut
deal	dealt	dealt
dig	dug	dug
dive	dove	dived
do	did	done
draw	drew	drawn
dream	dreamt/ dreamed	dreamt/ dreamed
drink	drank	drunk
drive	drove	driven
dwelt	dwelt/ dwelled	dwelt/ dwelled
eat	ate	eaten
fall	fell	fallen
feed	fed	fed
feel	felt	felt
fight	fought	fought
find	found	found
fit	fit	fit
flee	fled	fled
fling	flung	flung
fly	flew	flown
forbid	forbade	forbidden
forecast	forecast	forecast
forego	forewent	foregone
foresee	foresaw	foreseen
foretell	foretold	foretold
forget	forgot	forgotten
forgive	forgave	forgiven

Base Form	Simple Past	Past Participle
forsake	forsook	forsaken
freeze	froze	frozen
get	got	gotten/got
give	gave	given
go	went	gone
grind	ground	ground
grow	grew	grown
hang	hung	hung
have	had	had
hear	heard	heard
hide	hid	hidden
hit	hit	hit
hold	held	held
hurt	hurt	hurt
input	input	input
inset	inset	inset
interbreed	interbred	interbred
interweave	interwove	interwoven
keep	kept	kept
kneel	knelt/kneeled	knelt/kneeled
knit	knit/knitted	knit/knitted
know	knew	known
lay	laid	laid
lead	led	led
lean	leaned/leant	leaned/leant
leap	leapt/leaped	leapt/leaped
learn	learned/ learnt	learned/ learnt
leave	left	left
lend	lent	lent
let	let	let
lie	lay	lain
light	lit/lighted	lit/lighted
lose	lost	lost
make	made	made
mean	meant	meant
meet	met	met
mishear	misheard	misheard
mislay	mislaid	mislaid
mislead	misled	misled
misread	misread	misread
misspell	misspelled/ misspelt	misspelled/ misspelt
mistake	mistook	mistaken
mow	mowed	mowed/mown
outbid	outbid	outbid
outdo	outdid	outdone
outgrow	outgrew	outgrown
outrun	outran	outran
outsell	outsold	outsold
overcast	overcast	overcast
overcome	overcame	overcome
overdo	overdid	overdone
overdraw	overdrew	overdrawn
overeat	overate	overeaten
overhang	overhung	overhung
overhear	overheard	overheard
overlay	overlaid	overlaid
overlie	overlay	overlain
overpay	overpaid	overpaid
override	overrode	overridden
overrun	overran	overrun

Base Form	Simple Past	Past Participle
oversee	oversaw	overseen
oversell	oversold	oversold
overshoot	overshot	overshot
oversleep	overslept	overslept
overtake	overtook	overtaken
overthrow	overthrew	overthrown
partake	partook	partaken
pay	paid	paid
plead	pled/pleaded	pled/pleaded
pre-set	pre-set	pre-set
proofread	proofread	proofread
prove	proved	proven/proved
put	put	put
quit	quit/quitted	quit/quitted
read	read	read
rebind	rebound	rebound
rebuild	rebuilt	rebuilt
recast	recast	recast
redo	redid	redone
remake	remade	remade
repay	repaid	repaid
rerun	reran	rerun
resell	resold	resold
reset	reset	reset
rethink	rethought	rethought
rewind	rewound	rewound
rewrite	rewrote	rewritten
rid	rid	rid
ride	rode	ridden
ring	rang	rung
rise	rose	risen
run	ran	run
say	said	said
see	saw	seen
seek	sought	sought
sell	sold	sold
send	sent	sent
set	set	set
sew	sewed	sewn/sewed
shake	shook	shaken
shear	sheared	shorn/ sheared
shed	shed	shed
shine	shined/ shone	shined/ shone
shoot	shot	shot
show	showed	shown/ showed
shrink	shrank/ shrunk	shrunk
shut	shut	shut
sing	sang	sung
sit	sat	sat
slay	slew	slain
sleep	slept	slept
slide	slid	slid
sling	slung	slung
slit	slit	slit
smell	smelled/ smelt	smelled/ smelt
speak	spoke	spoken

Base Form	Simple Past	Past Participle
speed	sped/ speeded	sped/ speeded
spell	spelled/spelt	spelled/spelt
spend	spent	spent
spin	spun	spun
spit	spit/spat	spit/spat
split	split	split
spoil	spoiled/spoilt	spoiled/spoilt
spread	spread	spread
spring	sprang/ sprung	sprung
stand	stood	stood
steal	stole	stolen
stick	stuck	stuck
sting	stung	stung
stink	stank/stunk	stunk
strew	strewed	strewn/ strewed
stride	strode	stridden
strive	strove	striven
strike	struck	struck/ stricken
string	strung	strung
strive	strove/ strived	striven/ strived
swear	swore	sworn
sweep	swept	swept
swell	swelled	swollen/ swelled
swim	swam	swum
swing	swung	swung
take	took	taken
teach	taught	taught
tear	tore	torn
tell	told	told
think	thought	thought
throw	threw	thrown
thrust	thrust	thrust
tread	trod	trodden/trod
unbind	unbound	unbound
underlie	underlay	underlain
understand	understood	understood
undertake	undertook	undertaken
underwrite	underwrote	underwritten
undo	undid	undone
unwind	unwound	unwound
uphold	upheld	upheld
upset	upset	upset
wake	woke/ waked	woken/ waked
wear	wore	worn
weave	wove	woven
wed	wed/ wedded	wed/ wedded
weep	wept	wept
wet	wet/ wetted	wet/ wetted
win	won	won
wind	wound	wound
withdraw	withdrew	withdrawn
wring	wrung	wrung
write	wrote	written

COMMONLY MISSPELLED WORDS

absence	appropriate	candidate	controversy	eliminate	February	hypocrite	lose	opinion	practically	quantity	separate	traveled
accidentally	Arctic	category	criticize	embarrass	fiery	immediately	losing	optimistic	precede	quizzes	separation	transferring
accommodate	arguing	cemetery	deferred	eminent	foreign	incidentally	maintenance	paid	precedence	recede	sergeant	tries
accumulate	argument	changeable	definitely	encouragement	formerly	incredible	maneuver	parallel	preference	receive	severely	truly
achieve	arithmetic	changing	description	environment	fourth	inevitable	manufacture	paralysis	preferred	receiving	shining	tyranny
acquaintance	ascend	choose	desperate	equipped	frantically	intellectual	marriage	paralyze	prejudice	recommend	similar	unanimous
acquire	athletic	chose	dining	exaggerate	gauge	intelligence	maybe	pastime	prevalent	reference	sincerely	undoubtedly
acquitted	attendance	coming	disappointment	exceed	generally	irresistible	mere	performance	principle	referring	sophomore	unnecessary
advise	balance	commission	disappoint	excellence	government	interesting	miniature	permissible	privilege	repetition	specifically	until
amateur	beginning	comparative	dining	exercise	grammar	jewelry	mysterious	perseverance	probably	restaurant	specimen	usually
among	belief	conceivable	disappearance	exhilarate	grandeur	judgment	necessary	personal	procedure	rhyme	statue	villain
analysis	believe	conferred	disappoint	exhilarate	grievous	kindergarten	ninety	perspiration	profession	rhythm	studying	weather
analyze	beneficial	conscience	disappoint	existence	height	knowledge	noticeable	physical	professor	ridiculous	succeed	Wednesday
annual	benefited	conscious	disappoint	existence	heroes	laboratory	occasionally	possession	prominent	sacrifice	surprise	weird
apartment	boundaries	conscious	disappoint	existence	hindrance	led	occurrence	possibility	pronunciation	salary	technique	whether
apparatus	Britain	control	disappoint	existence	hoping	lightning	omitted	possible	pursue	schedule	temperamental	women
apparent	business	control	disappoint	existence	humorous	loneliness				seize	tendency	writing
appearance	calendar	controversial	disappoint	existence	hypocrisy					sense	tragedy	