

# 10 Help yourself

## Easily confused words reference

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### Common problems

#### **accept / except**

*accept* (verb) means to agree to something or take something willingly.

*except* (verb) means to not include somebody or something, or *except for* (preposition) which is used before things or persons about which a statement is not true.

#### **affect / effect**

*affect* (verb) means to have an influence on somebody or something.

*effect* (noun) means a result of an action on somebody or something.

#### **alone / lonely**

*alone* (adjective) describes a person or thing that is separate from others.

*lonely* (adjectives) describes a person who is alone and sad.

#### **among / between**

*among* (preposition) means surrounded by or being included in normally three or more people or things.

*between* (preposition) means in the space separating two or more people or things.

#### **ashamed / embarrassed**

*ashamed* (adjective) means feeling guilty because you have done something wrong on purpose.

*embarrassed* (adjectives) means feeling stupid or awkward in front of other people.

#### **at last / lastly**

*at last* (adverb) means after a delay or a big effort.

*lastly* (adverb) means the final point or stage, or the last thing in a list.

#### **borrow / lend**

*borrow* (verb) means to temporarily take and use something from someone else and return it later.

*lend* (verb) means to allow someone else to temporarily take and use something of yours and return it later.

#### **break / broke**

*break* (verb) means to damage something, often into two or more pieces.

*brake* (verb) means to apply mechanical force to stop a vehicle.

#### **classic / classical**

*classic* (adjective) means something accepted as being among the best, or a typical example.

*classical* (adjective) means something from the Ancient Greece or Rome, or something in a particular traditional style.

#### **complement / compliment**

*complement* (verb) means to add something new in a way that improves something else; *complement* (noun) is the thing that is added.

*compliment* (verb) means to say something nice to somebody; *compliment* (noun) is what is said.

#### **continual / continuous**

*continual* (adjective) means an action that is repeated many times.

*continuous* (adjective) means something that happens for a period of time without stopping.

#### **definite / definitive**

*definite* (adjective) means certain to happen, or unlikely to change.

*definitive* (adjective) means final or unable to change further.

#### **discreet / discrete**

*discreet* (adjective) means careful or tactful in order to keep a secret or avoid embarrassing someone.

*discrete* (adjective) means separate or distinct from other things of the same type.

#### **disinterested / uninterested**

*disinterested* (adjective) means unbiased or objective.

*uninterested* (adjective) means not interested, or not wanting to know.

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### ***economic / economical***

*economic* (adjective) means connected with trade and finance.

*economical* (adjective) means using something, often money, in a way that avoids waste or allows saving.

### ***electric / electronic***

*electric* (adjective) means that something uses or produces electricity.

*electronic* (adjective) means that something is made up of small parts such as transistors or microchips.

### ***fewer / less***

*fewer* (adjective) is used with plural nouns to mean 'not as many'.

*less* (adjective) is used with uncountable nouns to mean 'a smaller amount'.

### ***historic / historical***

*historic* (adjective) means that an event that is likely to be remembered in the future.

*historical* (adjective) means that something is related to the real past and history in general.

### ***principal / principle***

*principal* (adjective, noun) means the main or most important person or thing.

*principle* (noun) means the idea that something is based on, or a strong moral belief.

### ***stationary / stationery***

*stationary* (adjective) means not moving.

*stationery* (noun) means things like paper and pens used for studying or working in an office.