

WORDS CONFUSED AND MISUSED

The following pairs or groups of words are often confused because they are similar either in meaning or in sound, form or origin. Some of them are very similar in meaning — so similar as to be called Synonyms. Take for instance, the word *see* or *look* or *observe*, or *glance at* or *notice*. Such words mean nearly, but not exactly, the same thing.

(A) Discrimination of Words Similar in Sound

1. Accept : He *accepted* my request. (took willingly)
- Except : All *except* Mohan were present there. (not including)
2. Access : He had no *access* to the Governor. (approach)
- Excess : He has money in *excess*. (more than what is needed)
3. Admit : He *admitted* that he had told a lie.
- Acknowledge : Please *acknowledge* the receipt of this letter.
- Confess : He has *confessed* the crime.
4. Advice(n) : Thank you for your good *advice*. (counsel).
- Advise(v) : He *advised* me to stop all dealings with him.
5. Allowed : He is *allowed* to take leave. (permitted)
- Aloud : Please speak the sentence *aloud*. (loudly)
6. All together : *All* of them *together* raised an objection against his marriage (all in one voice)

- Altogether** : The fever has *altogether* disappeared. (entirely)
- 7. All ready** : I am *all ready* for the show. (quite prepared)
- Already** : I have *already* performed the task. (before now)
- 8. Alter** : Nothing can *alter* my decision. (change)
- Altar** : The priest bowed before the *altar*. (holy table in a church)
- 9. Angle** : Find the *angles* of this triangle.
- Angel** : *Angels* are heavenly beings.
- 10. Ascent** : It is a steep *ascent* from Rajpur to Mussoorie.
(upward road; going up)
- Assent** : The President has refused to give his *assent* to the proposal. (sanction)
- 11. Assay** : Many explorers have *assayed* to climb Everest and have become successful. (attempted)
- Essay** : Shelia wrote a good *essay* on 'Life in the Mountains.' (write up composition)
- 12. Bare** : He was flogged on his *bare* skin. (uncovered)
- Bear (v)** : He cannot *bear* this pain. (tolerate).
- Bear (n)** : A *bear* has thick fur. (a wild animal)
- 13. Bail** : The accused was released on *bail* (security)
- Bale** : I saw ten *bales* of cotton there. (bundles)
- 14. Berth** : I have got two *berths* reserved.
(sleeping place in a train or aboard a ship)
The ship was *berthed* in the harbour. (moored)
- Birth** : Please accept my hearty congratulations on the *birth* of your son. (to be born)
- 15. Blew** : The guard *blew* the whistle and the train steamed off.
- Blue** : The sky is *blue*. (a colour)
- 16. Bore** : I am *bored* with your speech. (weary of)
- Boar** : A *boar* is a wild animal.
- 17. Born** : He was *born* in a small cottage. (given birth to by his mother)
- Borne** : The poor mother has *borne* many hardships. (endured)
- 18. Brake** : The *brake* of the car is out of order.
- Break** : I cannot *break* this stick into two.
- 19. Bridal** : I could not attend his *bridal feast*. (relating to a wedding)
- Bridle** : The horse broke the *bridle* and ran away (head-harness for horse)
- 20. Canvass** : He is *canvassing* for votes. (trying to secure)
- Canvas** : I have lost my *canvas* shoes (a rough cloth)
- 21. Canon** : You must not act against the *canons* of morality (rules, laws)
- Cannon** : There were *cannons* to their right as well as left. (big guns)
- 22. Caste** : He is a Brahman by *caste*.
- Cast** : *Casting* a glance at her, he shed a few tears.
- 23. Cattle** : The snake *casts* its slough once in a year.
- Kettle** : The *cattle* are grazing in the field.
Place the *kettle* on the fire.

24. Centre : O is the *centre* of the circle.
 (the exact middle point)
- Middle : In the *middle* of the last act she was shot dead.
25. Cession : China demands the *cession* of a part of Indian territory.
 (giving up)
- Session : The *session* of the council begins at 2 p.m. every-day.
26. Check : I have *checked* his accounts. (examined)
- Cheque : I have to get a *cheque* cashed. (written order to a bank
 to pay money)
27. Cord : Bind the bundle with the *cord*. (rope)
- Chord : AB is a *chord* in the circle.
- Card : He has sent me a very beautiful greeting *card*.
28. Current (n) : The *current* of this river is very strong.
- Current (adj) : This fashion is *current* nowadays.
- Currant : *Currants* are dried grapes.
29. Deadly : He received a *deadly* wound. (fatal)
- Deathly : He looked *deathly* pale. (like death)
30. Deceased : The *deceased* person left behind him a widow with three
 children. (dead)
- Diseased : He is always by the bed of his *diseased* sister. (sick)
31. Deer : There are many *deer* in this forest.
- Dear : He is very *dear* to me.
 Sugar is very *dear* nowadays. (expensive)
32. Descent : My friend claims *descent* from a royal family. (origin)
 The hill has a gentle *descent*. (a downward slope)
- Decent : He is a *decent* fellow. (respectable)
- Dissent : I *dissent* from your opinion. (differ)
33. Descry : I *descryed* a goat on a hill in the distance.
 (discovered by sight, espied)
- Decry : His enemies try to *decry* his worth. (strongly criticize)
34. Desirable : It is not *desirable* that students should take part in
 politics.
- Desirous : He is *desirous* of wealth. (wishing for)
35. Device (n) : He thought of a very clever *device*. (a plan devised, a
 contrivance)
- Devise (v) : Can you *devise* a way out? (plan)
36. Differ : I *differ* with you on this point. (disagree)
- Defer : I cannot *defer* payment any longer. (postpone)
37. Difference : Find the *difference* between these two sums.
- Deference : He treats his parents with great *deference* (regard)
38. Devoted : He is *devoted* to his employer.
- Addicted : He is *addicted* to gambling.
39. Diary : I have lost my school *diary*. (a note book for recording
 things)
- Dairy : He has started a *dairy*. (where milk, butter, etc. can be
 had)
40. Doze : He *dozed* off to sleep. (light sleep)
- Dose : He took the last *dose* of medicine at ten. (quantity of
 medicine)

- 41. Duel** : Sohrab and Rustum fought a *duel*.
 (combat between two persons)
- Dual** : Fetch a *dual* desk from that room. (double)
- 42. Dyeing** : The dyer is *dyeing* my turban. (colouring)
- Dying** : The child is *dying*.
- 43. Dye** : He has *dyed* his beard red.
- Die** : All of us have to *die*.
- 44. Envelop(v)** : The fire soon *enveloped* the house. (covered)
- Envelope (n)** : Put this paper in the *envelope*. (covering for a letter)
- 45. Enviable** : His position is an *enviable* one (fit to be envied).
- Envious** : He is *envious* of the wealth of his brother. (feels envy)
- 46. Extinguish** : *Extinguish* the fire, please. (put out)
- Distinguish** : *Distinguish* between these two words.
 (find the difference)
- 47. Fain** : He is a *distinguished* person. (famous)
- Feign** : I would *fain* to have helped you. (be glad)
- 48. Faint (adj.)** : He *feigned* illness. (pretended to have)
- Faint (v.)** : I have a very *faint* idea of what you told me. (dim)
- Feint** : The wounded person *fainted* owing to loss of blood.
 (to become unconscious)
- 49. Farmer** : All his joyful talk is mere *feint*. (pretence)
- Former** : The boxer made a *feint* to put his opponent in confusion.
 (a deceptive movement)
- 50. Feet** : An Indian *farmer* is a hard worker.
- Feat** : M and N are friends. The *former* (i. e., M) is a doctor.
- 51. Fair** : Don't touch my *feet*. (part of the body)
- Fare** : Everyone liked his *feats*. (deeds of skill)
- Fare** : I like *fair* dealings. (honest)
- 52. Fatal** : He is of a *fair* complexion. (light in colour)
- Fateful** : I want to see the *fair*. (a periodical market with amusements)
- 53. Floor** : What is the railway *fare* from Delhi to Amritsar?
 (passage money)
- Flour** : The wound proved *fatal*. (deadly)
- Flower** : On that *fateful* moment of success, he suddenly died.
 (charged with fate)
- 54. Form** : Spread a carpet on the *floor*.
- Farm** : Bread is made from *flour*. (powder made from grain)
- 55. Gait** : This plant has beautiful purple *flowers*.
- Gate** : I want to get this *form* printed.
- 56. Gamble** : This *farm* belongs to Mr. Jacob.
- Gambol** : He walks with a peculiar *gait*.
 (manner of walking)
- 57. Goal** : Shut the *gate*, please.
- Gamble** : It is bad to *gamble*, but war is also a *gamble*. (game of chance)
- Goal** : Look at the *gambols* of the kitten. (frisking about)
- Goal** : India has reached the *goal* of self sufficiency in food.
 (aim, object, end)

Gaol58. **Hair** : The accused was sent to *gaol*. (jail)**Heir**: *Hair* grows on our heads.**Hare**: He is the *heir* to the throne. (Pronunciation-Air)59. **Hale** : He caught a *hare*. (an animal)**Hail**: He is quite *hale* and hearty. (healthy)It *hailed* yesterday.He *hails* from Bihar. (comes originally from)60. **Heel** : She *hailed* a taxi and went away. (called)**Heal**: Your shoes are down at *heel*.61. **Herd** (n): The wound will take three days to *heal*. (get well, cure): A *herd* of cattle is grazing in the field. (group)**Heard** (v)The gauchos *herded* the cattle. (brought together)62. **Hole** (n): I *heard* the sound of music.**Whole** (adj): It is the *hole* of a snake.63. **Hoard**: The teacher asked the *whole* class to sit down.: He was arrested for *hoarding* grain.
(storing secretly)**Horde**: In ancient times *hordes* of Tartars attacked China.
(large gangs)64. **Idle**: He is an *idle* fellow. (lazy)**Idol**: We saw many *idols* in the temple. (images)65. **Innocent**: He is an *innocent* child. (sinless, simple)**Innocuous**: This snake is quite *innocuous*. (harmless)66. **Leather**: My shoes are made of *leather*. (tanned hide of animals)**Lather**: Good soaps give a lot of *lather*. (foam)67. **Latter**: He offered me mangoes and apples, but I pre-ferred the
latter.**Letter**: Here is a *letter* for you.**Later**: He came *later* than Mohan.68. **Lesson**: Learn your *lesson*.**Lessen**: This medicine is sure to *lessen* the pain. (make less)69. **Licence** (n): Here is my car *licence*. (permission from authority)**License** (v): He has been *licensed* to deal in tobacco. (allowed)70. **Lightning**: Flashes of *lightning* frighten children. (electric discharge

in clouds)

Lightening: By *lightening* the burden of the poor servant he won
the gratitude of his parents. (making light or less heavy)**Lighting**: He is *lighting* a fire (or lamp). (kindling)71. **Late**: He returned home *late* at night.**Lately**: He has been *lately* appointed headmaster. (recently): He is *loath* to go with me. (unwilling)72. **Loath (loth)(adj)**: I *loathe* practical jokes. (dislike)**Loathe** (v): He wears *loose* clothes. (not tight)73. **Loose**: Don't *lose* your temper.**Lose**: He spoke in a *low* voice.74. **Low**: Those who are *lowly* are loved by God. (humble)**Lowly**: There was not much *mail* yesterday. (letters, parcels,
etc. sent by post)75. **Mail**

- Male** : No *male* member was present in the house.
- 76. Main** : There was an armed guard at the *main* gate.
- Mane** : The *mane* of the lion was covered with blood. (long hair on the neck of an animal)
- 77. Mantel** : Put this picture on the *mantel*-shelf. (shelf above the fireplace)
- Mantle** : He wrapped the girl in his *mantle*. (cloak)
- Mental** : *Mental* worry is killing him. (of the mind)
- 78. Marry** : He wished to *marry* late. (wed)
- Merry** : Let us make *merry*. (enjoy ourselves)
- 79. Mean** : What do you *mean* by such behaviour? (intend)
He is a *mean* fellow. (low)
- Means** : His *means* are few. (resources)
- Mien** : The bridegroom had a dignified *mien* (look or bearing)
- 80. Medal** : Here is my *medal*.
- Meddle** : Do not *meddle* with my affairs. (interfere)
- 81. Memorable** : It is a *memorable* day in the history of the school. (worthy to be remembered)
- Memorial** : A *memorial* is to be erected in the lawn. (statue etc)
- 82. Metal** : Iron is a useful *metal*.
- Mettle** : This enterprise will soon test your *mettle*. (spirit or courage)
- 83. Minor** : We indulge more in *minor* matters and thus lose time. (small, of no consequences)
Minors cannot cast vote. (not of prescribed age, not an adult)
- Miner** : The job of a *miner* is very risky. (person who works in a mine)
- 84. Naughty** : He is a *naughty* fellow (badly behaved)
- Knotty** : He set me a very *knotty* problem in Algebra. (difficult)
- 85. Pair** : I have lost a *pair* of shoes.
- Pare** : To *pare* the sheet of paper, I need a sharp knife, (to trim)
- Pear** : I like *pears* very much. (fruit)
- 86. Patrol** : The police *patrol* at night caught the thief.
- Petrol** : Motor cars run on *petrol*.
- 87. Peace** : He longed for *peace*.
- Piece** : He gave me a *piece* of land.
- 88. Plane** : *Plane* me this piece of wood. (smooth)
- Plain** : The Indo-Gangetic *plain* is very fertile.
She is *plain* in looks.
- Plan** : He acted upon my *plan*.
- 89. Pour** : *Pour* some water into the basin.
- Pore** : Perspiration comes out of our *pores*. (holes)
- 90. Practice (n)** : *Practice* makes a man perfect. (repetition)
- Practise (v)** : One must *practise* what one preaches. (do, act upon)
- 91. Pray** : He *prayed* to God to grant health to his ailing son. (offer prayers)
- Prey** : He fell an easy *prey* to malaria. (victim)

92. **Preposition Proposition** : Falcons *prey* upon doves. (hunt and kill)
 : "On" is a *preposition*. (part of speech)
 : The *proposition* to be discussed is "War is an Evil".
 (subject for debate)
93. **Price Prize** : What is the *price* of this book?
 : He was given a *prize* for his essay.
94. **Profit Prophet** : It is sure to bring me some *profit*. (gain)
 : A *prophet* is seldom honoured in his own country.
95. **Prophecy (n) Prophesy (v)** : His *prophecy* about the defeat of Germany has come true. (foretelling)
 : He *prophesied* the fall of Moscow. (foretold)
96. **Quire** : I have purchased four *quires* of paper (A quire consists of 24 sheets of paper.)
- Choir** : The song was sung by the village *choir*. (body of singers)
- Coir** : I want fifteen metres of *coir* matting. (coconut fibres)
97. **Quite Quiet** : I am *quite* well, thank you. (altogether)
 : Keep *quiet*, please. (silent)
98. **Rain Reign** : When did it *rain* last?
 : Describe the *reign* of Akbar.
- Rein** : The rider held the *reins* of the horse in his hand.
99. **Recover Re-cover** : He has *recovered* his senses. (regained)
 : The floor should be *re-covered* with a layer of plaster.
 (covered again)
100. **Redress Re-dress** : His grievances are still to be *redressed*. (set right)
 : Have your wound *re-dressed*. (dressed again)
101. **Remark Re-mark** : He *remarked* that his brother was a fool. (commented)
 : Please *re-mark* my paper. (mark again)
102. **Reck Wreck** : But little he'll *reck* if they let him sleep on. (care, heed)
 : The ship was *wrecked* in the open sea. (destroyed)
- Wreak** : He is determined to *wreak* vengeance on his enemies.
 (give play to).
103. **Residents Residence** : The *residents* of this place are good people.
 : I met him at his *residence*. (dwelling)
104. **Ring Wring** : *Ring* the bell, please. (sound)
 : *Wring* the wet cloth to drive out water.
105. **Rite** : Who performed the funeral *rites*?
 (ceremonies)
- Right Wright** : Your answer is quite *right*. (correct)
 : Shakespeare was a *playwright*. (maker, worker)
- Write** : *Write* a letter to your father.
106. **Route Root Rout** : The land *route* is the safer of the two.
 : The *roots* of this tree have gone deep into the earth.
 : The enemy forces were put to *rout*. (utterly defeated)
107. **Sale Sail** : The winter *sale* is on.
 : The ship set *sail*.
108. **Sometime Sometimes** : Mr Duke, *sometime* professor of Physics at the University of Calcutta, is no more. (at a time not fixed)
 : I *sometimes* hear from my brother. (occasionally)

- Sometime** : He was there for *sometime*. (some period of time)
- 109. Soul** : The *soul* is immortal.
- Sole** : His cat is his *sole* companion. (only)
- : He caught a *sole*. (a kind of fish)
- : The hot sand burned the soles of their feet. (the bottom surface of the foot)
- 110. Sore** : His eyes are *sore*.
- Sour** : The grapes are *sour*. (Pronunciation – Sowr)
- Soar** : This bird cannot *soar* high. (fly)
- 111. Stare** : Do not *stare* at me. (look)
- Stair** : He fell down from the *stairs*.
- 112. Steal** : They who *steal* are thieves.
- Steel** : This chair is made of *steel*.
- 113. Story** : It is a very interesting *story*. (tale)
- Storey** : He slept on the upper *storey*. (floor of a building)
- 114. Straight** : AB is a *straight* line. He walked *straight* in.
- Strait** : The ship passed safely through the *Strait* of Gibraltar. (narrow passage of water)
- 115. Suit** : He has filed a *suit* against me. (action in law court)
I have placed an order for warm *suit*. (clothes). The climate of Bihar *suits* me. (fits)
- Suite** (pron. sweet) : He wired for a *suite* to be reserved for him in the Royal Hotel. (set of rooms)
- Soot** : *Soot* is pure carbon. (black substance in smoke)
- 116. Tail** : The cow has a long *tail*.
- Tale** : He narrated an interesting *tale*. (story)
- 117. Team** : Our football *team* has won the match. (group of players)
- Teem** : This tank *teems* with fish. (abound)
- 118. Throne** : Queen Victoria succeeded to the *throne* of England, after her father's death.
- Thrown** : The ball was *thrown* by the child.
- 119. Trifling** : I don't mind this *trifling* sum of money. (of small value)
- Trivial** : He raised *trivial* objections against the scheme. (of small importance)
- 120. Unanimous** : All were *unanimous* that he should be dismissed: (all of the same opinion)
- Anonymous** : It is an *anonymous* letter. (without the name of the writer)
- 121. Unbelief** : It is an age of *unbelief*. (to have no belief)
- Disbelief** : His *disbelief* in God turned him into an atheist. (denial of truth, wrong belief)
- 122. Vacation** : During the last summer *vacation* I went to Delhi.
- Vocation** : What is his *vocation* in life? (occupation)
- 123. Vain** : He is a *vain* fellow. (proud)
- Vane** : The *vane* shows us the direction of the wind. (weathercock)
- Vein** : *Veins* carry the blood to the heart. (blood vessels)

- Wane** : The moon is now on the *wane*. (decrease)
124. **Veil** : She peeped at her husband through her *veil*. (covering for the face)
- Vale** : Words cannot describe the beauty of the *vale* of Kashmir. (valley)
- Wail** : Whoever heard her wails shed tears. (moans or cries of lament, sorrow)
125. **Verse** : He used to write plays in *verse*. (group of lines forming a unit in a poem)
- Worse** : His condition is growing *worse* day after day.
126. **Visitor** : The exhibition had a large number of *visitors* on Sunday.
- Visitant** : The cuckoo comes in spring. What a lovely voice this *visitant* (migratory bird) has!
127. **Waist** : Put it round your *waist*. (part of the body)
- Waste** : Don't *waste* your money.
128. **Wander** : Don't *wander* about in the streets.
- Wonder** : I *wonder* why he didn't come.
129. **Way** : The *way* was long.
- Weigh** : It *weighs* ten kilos.
130. **Weak** : He is *weak* in health. (not strong)
- Week** : A *week* has seven days.
- Wick** : Please trim the *wick* of the lamp.
131. **Weather** : *Weather* permitting, we shall have a sail this evening. (atmospheric conditions)
- Whether** : He asked me *whether* I was ill. (if)
132. **Wear** : This cloth *wears* well. He *wears* a loose coat.
- Ware** : Who does not praise his own *wares*? (articles for sale)
133. **Wet** : Take off the *wet* clothes.
- Whet** : The sight of mangoes *whetted* my appetite. (stimulated)
He *whetted* the knife on an oiled stone till it was razor-sharp.
134. **Whither** : Do you know *whither* he is going? (to what place) (used in poetry)
- Wither** : The flower has *withered*. (decayed)
135. **Willingly** : I did it *willingly*. (of my free will)
- Wilfully** : He *wilfully* insulted his friend. (intentionally)
136. **Wrath (n)** : The child was terribly afraid of his father's *wrath*. (anger)
- Wroth (adj)** : Father was *wroth* at my misbehaviour. (angry) (used in poetry)
137. **Wreath (n)** : *Wreaths* were laid at his bier. (garlands of flowers)
- Wreathe(v.)** : Flames *wreathe*d the ship on all sides. (encircled)
- : His face was *wreathed* in smiles.
138. **Yoke** : Put the horse to the *yoke*. He *yoked* a pair of bullocks.
- Yolk** : Do not mix the *yolk* with the white. (of the egg)

(B) Words Similar in Meaning or Form

1. Accident (something unexpected; mishap): A railway *accident* occurred yesterday.
- Incident** (subordinate event) : A strange *incident* took place there.
- Event** (some important occurrence) : Describe the *events* of the reign of King Ashoka.
2. Adopt (take up: accept as one's own): I cannot decide which course I should *adopt*.
He has *adopted* a son.
- Adapt** (adjust properly, make fit): We must *adapt* ourselves to the changed circumstances.
- Adept** (thoroughly proficient) : He is an *adept* in the art of debating.
3. Affect (produce effect on): Age *affects* his memory.
- Effect** (n. result) : His speech produced no *effect* on the audience.
(v. accomplish) : The prisoner *effected* his escape from the prison.
4. Affection (love) : I have great *affection* for children.
- Affectionate** (pretence, artificiality): His sorrow is a mere *affectionation*. Just mark with how much *affectionation* he talks.
5. Aged (full of age or years): I met an *aged* woman in the street.
- Ancient** (old as opposed to modern): There ruled a powerful king over Oudh in *ancient* days.
- Old** (refers to age): How *old* are you? It is an *old* chair.
- Antique** (old fashioned, gone out of fashion): The Maharaja is fond of *antique* furniture.
6. Allow, Permit *Allow* implies absence of opposition; *permit* implies approval and sanction.
He was *allowed* to go to the picture. He was *permitted* to go and see his ailing mother.
7. Allusion (reference) : There is no *allusion* in this passage to Indian mythology.
- Illusion** (deception) : Some of us say that the world is an *illusion*.
8. Amiable (lovable): His *amiable* nature soon won him many friends.
- Amicable** (friendly) : He is trying for an *amicable* settlement of the dispute.
9. Answer (we answer a question): He *answered* my question in a careless manner.
- Reply** (we reply to a charge or an objection or letter): He said nothing in *reply* to my objection.
10. Apposite (suitable, appropriate) : His speech was considered to be quite *apposite* to the occasion.
- Opposite** (contrary) : Suggest a word *opposite* to it in meaning.
11. Artist (one who practises one of the fine arts such as painting, music, poetry): Ajanta paintings are the work of great *artists*.
- Artiste** (professional singer, dancer, actor): A group of *artiste* from Russia are coming to stage a show for us.
- Artisan** (one who practises a mechanical art): A carpenter is an *artisan*.

- 12. Assent** (give agreement to a proposal) : I gladly *assent* to your proposal.
- Consent** (agree to a course of action) : I cannot *consent* to your going abroad.
- 13. Attempt** (v) (try to succeed) : He *attempted* twice to reach the top but failed each time.
(n) (single action) : He made two *attempts*.
- Effort** (continued action) : His *efforts* were at last crowned with success.
- Try** (make an effort only—used in a general sense) : If you fail once, *try* again.
- 14. Avenge** (punish an injury done to another) : He *avenged* his father's murder.
- Revenge** (v.) (punish for a wrong done to oneself or another) : He *revenged* himself upon his enemies.
- 15. Banish** (send a person out of any place) : Mr. Kapoor was *banished* from the U.S.A.
- Exile** (send a person out of his native place) Mr. Kapoor was *exiled* from India.
- 16. Battle** (a fight esp. between organized forces or troops) : In the second *battle* of Panipat, Hemu was totally defeated.
- Fight** (quarrel, act of fighting) : I found the brothers fighting among themselves for their father's property.
- 17. Beneficial** (kind, doing good) : This measure has proved very *beneficial* to poor farmers.
- Beneficent** (showing active kindness) : He was thought to be a *beneficent* king.
- 18. Capable** (able) : He is a very *capable* headmaster.
- Capacious** (roomy) : Weekly meetings are held in the *capacious* hall of the college building.
- 19. Casual** (accidental, occasional) : A *casual* remark led to the discovery of the whole plot. I took *casual* leave for two days. He is only a *casual* student.
- Causal** (due to or referring to a cause) : There is no *causal* connection between health and longevity of life.
- 20. Ceiling** (the inner roof) : The ceiling of this small room is so low that it can be touched by raising the hand.
- Sealing** (the act of setting a seal) : Seal the parcel, please. I want a stick of *sealing*-wax.
- Roof** (the top covering of a building, tent, bus, car, etc) : The *roof* of his house has fallen after the heavy rains.
- 21. Character, Conduct, Reputation**: *Character* denotes a man's real quality; *conduct* denotes that which a man does; *reputation* denotes the opinion other people hold of a man's character.
- The chairman of the society had gained a high *reputation* but he was not a man of *character*.
His *conduct* is praiseworthy.

- 22. Cheat, Deceive :** *Cheat* means to obtain something from a person by deceit. *Deceive* means to make a person believe what is untrue.
- He *cheated* me out of a thousand rupees.
He *deceived* me by reporting that he was ill, while in reality, he was all right.
- 23. Childish** (foolish) He is *childish* in his ways.
Childlike (like a child, innocent, simple): Everyone likes his *childlike* simplicity.
- 24. Clear** (transparent, audible or cut down trees) : His voice was quite *clear*. The settlers *cleared* the land for building their cottages.
- Clean** (free from dirt, or make clean of dirt): Bring me a tumbler full of *clean* water. *Clean* the utensils, please.
- 25. Cloth** (material or a piece of material made by weaving). *Cloth* is manufactured in Mumbai.
- Cloths** (pieces of cloth): I gave my servant two clean *cloths*, and told him to polish the cups.
- Clothes** (dress): He has not yet changed his *clothes*.
- 26. Cold** (opposite of hot): It is very *cold* nowadays.
Cool (slightly cold but pleasant and refreshing): The strangers were served with a *cool* drink. It is very *cool* in the shade.
- 27. Compare with, Compare to :** A thing is *compared with* another when we want to note both the resemblances and the differences. If we *compare* one thing *to* another we try to show that one is like the other. We *compare* similar things *with* one another. We *compare* a thing *to* another dissimilar thing.
- 28. Compliment (s)** (an expression of praise) : Thank you for the *compliment*.
(pl. greetings): Present my best *compliments* to your brother.
- Complement** (that which completes): The duties of parents are *complementary*; one's work is a *complement* to that of other in raising the children.
- 29. Comprehensible** (capable of being understood): His speech was not at all *comprehensible*.
- Comprehensive** (including much or all): A *comprehensive* scheme has been prepared by the Government.
- 30. Confident** (sure) : I am quite *confident* of his success.
Confidant (a trusted person; a sharer of secrets) Kailash is my *confidant* and I trust him fully.
- Confidential** (secret, trusting) : The *confidential* file is missing.
- 31. Considerable** (large, big): A *considerable* sum of money has been set aside for the marriage of Meena.
- Considerate** (mindful of the feelings of others): Be *considerate* in dealing with others.
- 32. Contain** (1) (to hold, to have inside) : What does this box *contain*?
(2) (to keep under control) I was so happy that I could not *contain* myself.

- Consist of** (to be made up of) : A train *consists of* an engine and a number of carriages.
33. **Conscious** (aware) : I am *conscious* of my weakness.
Conscientious (obedient to conscience, scrupulous, hard working) : He is a *conscientious* worker.
34. **Contagious, Infectious** : A *contagious* disease is spread by contact or touch. An *infectious* disease may spread in any way. Nowadays they are inter-changeable.
35. **Contemptuous** (showing contempt) : He referred to him in *contemptuous* terms.
Contempestible (worthy of contempt) : He is a *contemptible* fellow.
36. **Contented** (not wishing for more) : He leads a *contented* life.
Satisfied (all expectations fulfilled) : I am quite *satisfied* with your work.
37. **Continual** (denotes repeated action, often recurring) : I cannot work at home on account of *continual* interruption.
Continuous (unbroken action) : The rain was *continuous* for several hours.
38. **Core** (the innermost part of a thing) : Only the *core* of the fruit is rotten. I thank you from the *core* of my heart.
- Corps** (division of an army—pronounced as 'kor') : I have joined the National Cadet *Corps*.
39. **Corpse** (human dead body) : Hundreds of *corpses* lay on the battlefield.
Carcass (animal dead body) : There is the *carcass* of a cow lying in that field.
40. **Corporal** (bodily) : He was given *corporal* punishment.
Corporal (non-commissioned officer below the rank of sergeant in an army or air force.) His son has become a *corporal* in the air force.
- Corporeal** (having a body) : Angels are not *corporeal* beings.
41. **Council** (assembly) : Dr. Khare is a member of the *Council*.
Counsel [(1) advice, (2) barrister] : He did not forget his mother's *counsel* at that time. The defence *counsel* objected to the postponement of the case.
42. **Course** (direction taken) : He adopted a wrong *course* of action.
Coarse (rough) : He was dressed in *coarse* khaddar.
43. **Credible** (believable) : His story is not at all *credible*.
Creditable (worthy of praise) : His success in the examination is quite *creditable*.
- Credulous** (apt to believe easily) : Villagers are *credulous* people.
44. **Crime** (a breach of human law) : Stealing is a *crime*.
Sin (an offence against divine law) : For a Hindu, it is a *sin* to eat beef.
- Vice** (violation of the moral law) : Idleness is a *vice*.
45. **Custom** (a usage commonly practised in a society or country) : It is a *custom* in this country to cremate the dead.
Costume (dress) : Everyone laughed at his strange *costume*.
Habit (settled practice of an individual) : He gave up the *habit* of smoking.

46. **Delightful** (pleasing to the mind as well as the senses, except taste): We had a *delightful excursion*
- Delicious** (having a very pleasant taste or smell): The mangoes were *very delicious*.
47. **Dependent** (adj.) (relying on) : He is *dependent* upon his brother.
- Dependant** (n): He is very watchful of the interests of his *dependants*.
48. **Desert** (1) (a sandy waste) : Arabia is a vast *desert*.
 (2) (forsake) : He has *deserted* his party.
- Dessert** (fruit or sweet dish served at the end of a meal): The *dessert* consisted of mangoes and grapes.
49. **Destiny** (fate) : Everyone is the architect of his own *destiny*.
Destination (goal, journey's end): Arriving at our *destination* we had some refreshments.
50. **Discover, Invent, Explore**: To *discover* means to find out a thing that existed before, but was not known; to *invent* means to create, devise or find out what did not exist before; to *explore* means to travel over a region in search of geographical knowledge.
Columbus discovered America. Baird invented television. Captain Cook explored the Pacific.
51. **Divers** (several) : His failure is due to *divers* causes.
Diverse (different in qualities) : In life we come across men of *diverse* natures.
52. **Doubt** (feel uncertain, question the truth of) : I *doubt* whether you can finish that work single-handed.
Suspect (to imagine something is true) : I *suspect* that my servant has stolen my wrist-watch.
53. **Drown** (to die in water being unable to breathe, used for living beings)
Sink (to go down under water) The ship *sank* and many sailors were *drowned*.
54. **Efficient** (capable, competent) : He is an *efficient* secretary.
Effective (1) (having a high degree of effect) : The medicine is very *effective* in its action. *Effective* measures should be taken against the spread of plague.
 (2) (actual) : What's the *effective* strength of his supporters.
- Effectual** (answering a purpose) : The measures taken to end the agitation proved *effectual*.
- Efficacious** (producing a desired effect). It is an *efficacious* cure.
55. **Elicit** (draw out) : A teacher tries to *elicit* answers from students.
- Illicit** (unlawful) : He was taken into custody for *illicit* sale of drugs.
56. **Eligible** (fit to be chosen) : Only men are *eligible* for this post.
Ineligible (not fit to be chosen) : He is *ineligible* for the membership of the club.
- Legible** (which can be read) : Your handwriting is quite *legible*.
Illegible (which cannot be read) : Your handwriting cannot be easily read and is quite *illegible*.
57. **Emerge** (to come out) : A snake soon *emerged* from the hole.
Immerse (to dip in liquid) : The chemist *immersed* the metal in acid.

58. **Eminent** (famous) : He is an *eminent* physician.
Imminent (likely to happen very soon) : War is *imminent*.
 The *eminent* man was in *imminent* danger.
59. **Envy, Jealousy** : *Envy* means feeling of disappointment and ill-will at the sight of another man's good fortune and feeling anxious to possess equal advantage. *Jealousy* also means somewhat the same. It is a feeling or show of unhappiness because of the better fortune of others. He was filled with *envy* at my success. He showed great *jealousy* at his rival's success. Difference occurs in their other uses. The word *envy* is often used playfully as: Her beautiful house is the *envy* of the whole town. I *envy* his courage. *Jealousy* also means a feeling of fear because of possible or actual loss of rights as love. Her husband's *jealousy* always keeps her in tension.
60. **Exhausting** (tiring) : Public speaking is very *exhausting*.
Exhaustive (comprehensive, complete, tending to exhaust a subject) : He had written an *exhaustive* book on Indian economics. Mr. Kant's treatment of the subject is very *exhaustive*.
61. **Expedient** (advantageous, suitable) : It is *expedient* that he should go, **Expeditious** (quick, doing speedily) : An *expeditious* goldsmith will not take more than ten hours to make this ornament.
62. **Facility** (advantage, ease) : He was given every *facility* to complete his thesis in time. He writes English with *facility*.
63. **Felicity** (intense happiness) : Only the virtuous can enjoy true *felicity*.
64. **Famous, Illustrious, Notable, Renowned, Noted, Notorious** : *Famous* is used in a good sense and is a general term; *Illustrious* means distinguished for some high quality. *Notable* is used for some special fact; *Renowned* for some achievements; *Noted* for certain peculiarities; *Notorious* is used in a bad sense. Madurai is *famous* for its temples. Mahatma Gandhi was one of the most *illustrious* sons of India. Kolkata is a *notable* place. He is a *renowned* musician of Kashmir. Kullu is *noted* for its apples. He is a *notorious* gambler.
65. **Fetch, Bring** : *Fetch* means 'to go, get and bring' : *bring* means 'to come taking something with one'. Please *fetch* my stick from the class room. I have *brought* my umbrella with me. *Bring* me that book from the table.
66. **Forgo** (abstain from, do without) : I must *forgo* the privilege of addressing the meeting at this time.
- Forego** (go before, precede) : The *foregoing* facts lead us to this conclusion.
67. **Freedom** (implies absence of restraint at the present moment) : I enjoy perfect *freedom* at home.

- 47. Liberty** (implies previous restraint) : The slave humbly implored the king to set him at *liberty*.
- 68. Funeral** (pertaining to a cremation or burial) : Many people attended his father's *funeral*.
- Funereal** (dismal) : The city nowadays presents a *funereal* appearance.
- 69. Get, Obtain, Attain, Acquire** : *Get* is a general term; *obtain* means to get by effort; *attain* means gain a high position; *acquire* means to get a hold permanently.
I have *got* no money with me. All try to *obtain* happiness, but a few *get* it. No man can *attain* greatness without constant exertions. I have *acquired* a piece of land.
- 70. Godly** (pious) : He leads a *godly* life.
- Godlike** (like God) : Gandhiji was a *godlike* man.
- 71. Good morning, good afternoon, good evening, good night** : *Good morning* is used as a polite greeting when people first see each other in the morning, sometimes also used formally when people leave each other in the morning.
Good afternoon and *Good evening* are also used as polite greetings when people first see each other in the afternoon or in the evening respectively.
Good night is used when saying goodbye to somebody late in the evening, or when going to bed. When we first meet any one even in late evening or in the night, we should say *good evening*, not *good night*.
- 72. Gracious** (kind, merciful) : May this *gracious* ruler live long !
Graceful (agreeable, comely) : She looked *graceful* in her new dress.
- 73. Hard** (difficult) : You have set me a very *hard* problem.
Hardly (scarcely) : He had *hardly* stepped in, when he was stabbed.
- Hear, listen** : *Listen* implies attention; *hear* does not. I *heard* him talking to the girl. *Listen* to what I say.
- 74. Honorary** (getting no payment) : He is an *honorary* secretary.
Honourable (worthy of honour) : Teaching is an *honourable* profession.
- 75. Hope** (refers to good expectations, wishes) : We *hope* that better times will come.
Expect (means that a thing is probable) : I *expect* that flood will come before long.
- Fear** (refers to forebodings) : He *fears* his father will die.
- 76. House, Home** : A *house* is just a building: *Home* is the place where one lives. It has all the love of the family associated with it.
I have rented a new *house*. This rich man owns twenty *houses*.
I go *home* after the play is over. There is no place like *home*.
- 77. Human** (pertaining to man) : He is, after all, a *human* being.
Humane (kind, benevolent) : He treated his servants in a *humane* manner.
- 78. Ill** (suffering from some disease) : He has been *ill* for one week.
Sick (against) He spoke *ill* of his brother.
('Sick' in US English means the same thing as 'ill' in British English meaning 'not well' or 'in bad health'.) She visits

- ~~87. Sick~~ the sick. (feeling nausea) I am sick.
79. **Imaginary** (not real) : Angels are imaginary beings.
Imaginative (capable of forming mental pictures) : He is an *imaginative* poet.
80. **Immigrant** (one who comes into a country from another to settle) : The Tibetan *immigrants* in India enjoy all sorts of facilities.
Emigrant (one who goes out of one's country to settle in another) : The Indian *emigrants* in South Africa had to face many hardships.
81. **Imperial** (pertaining to an emperor or empire) : The *imperial* glory of England has vanished.
Imperious (haughty, overbearing) : He is hated by the people because he is very *imperious*.
82. **Industrial** (pertaining to industry) : The Government has decided to open an *industrial* training institute in every town.
Industrious (hard-working) : He is a very *industrious* student.
83. **Informer** (one who detects offenders and gives information against them) : Mr. Kabir is a police *informer*. (bad sense).
Informant (one who gives information in general) : My informant was an eye-witness of the accident. I know the facts, because my *informant* is an honest man.
84. **Ingenuous** (frank, artless) : Everyone likes him for his *ingenuous* nature.
Ingenious (skilful) : The student offered an *ingenious* excuse for his absence.
85. **Judicious** (prudent, sensible) : He has made a *judicious* selection of books.
Judicial (pertaining to court of law) : *Judicial* proceedings were instituted.
86. **Look, See** Look (to see carefully) : I *looked* at the sky for ten minutes but did not *see* any star there.
87. **Lovely** (very beautiful) : She is a *lovely* child.
Lovable (worthy of love) : He has brought a *lovable* puppy.
88. **Luxuriant** (rich in growth) : She has *luxuriant* hair.
Luxurious (given to luxury) : He leads a *luxurious* life.
89. **Momentary** (lasting for a short time) : The pleasure was *momentary*.
Momentous (important) : Many *momentous* issues were discussed at the Ministers' Conference.
90. **Official** (pertaining to an office) : Mr. Bose attended the Conference in his *official* capacity.
Officious (forward, meddlesome, given to offering service that is not wanted) : He is an *officious* fellow. He should mind his own business.
91. **Part** (Some division of a thing) : The main *part* of my work is done.
Portion (a share) : Each of the sons received his *portion* of the property.
92. **Persecute** (to worry, to harass) : The Jews were *persecuted* by the Nazis.
Prosecute (to bring before a court) : Bill-stickers will be *prosecuted*.

93. **Physic**(medicine) : The chemist handed over to me a wrong bottle of *physic*.**Physics**(a science) : I have lost my book on *physics*.**Physique**(bodily structure) : He possesses a fine *physique*.94. **Popular**(loved by people) : The civil surgeon is very *popular* with the people.**Populous**(thickly populated) : Kolkata is a *populous city*.95. **Practical**(concerned with practice, opposed to theoretical) : Science students do *practical* work once a week.**Practicable**(that can be done) : It is not a *practicable* plan.96. **Precede**(go before) : These three lessons must *precede* lesson ten.**Proceed**(go on; pass on to) : Let us *proceed* with the work in hand.97. **Prescribe**(advise) : The doctor has *prescribed* a medicine.**Proscribe**The law *prescribes* penalties for this crime.98. **President**(forbid use of) : The Government has *proscribed* that book.**Precedent**

(One who presides over a meeting. Head of a body) : Dr.

99. **Principal**Roy is the *President* of the Municipal Board.**Principle**(previous example) : Can you cite any *precedent* in support of your claim?100. **Proffer**(1) chief, (2) head of an institution, (3) a sum of money lent on interest; All the *principal* men of the city were invited by the *principal* of the college. What is the *principal* of the amount?**Prefer**(a rule of conduct) : He is a man of *principle*. He was prepared to sacrifice his position but not his *principle*.101. **Propose**(offer) : I *proffer* my services to you.**Purpose**(like better) : I *prefer* Shimla to Mussoorie.102. **Recent, Modern**(make a suggestion) : He *proposed* his friend's name for secretaryship.**object, aim**(object, aim) : What's your *purpose* in life?103. **Recollect, Remember**

(Recent applies to things which took place a short time ago; modern applies to things of the present.)

In the *recent* earthquake in Japan thousands of lives were lost.*Modern* writers prefer prose to poetry.

(Recollect means to call to mind something after some effort; remember means to call to mind without any effort).

As far as I *recollect*, he was not there. *Remember* that we

are going out tonight.

(usual, uniform, orderly). (To be *regular* means to do the same thing at the same time daily): He keeps *regular* hours in everything he does. Be *regular* in the matter of exercise.He is a *regular* student of the school.(not late, always ready at the right time. To be *punctual* means to be exact as to the time and season for doing a thing. A person is said to be *punctual* when he observes the hour of the day that has been fixed upon for a certain job): He is very *punctual* in the matter of attending office.104. **Regular****Punctual**

105. **Relative Relation** (kinsman or kinswoman) : She is a near *relative* of mine.
 (connection between persons or things) : The *relation* between them is that of husband and wife. What's the *relation* between night and day?
 It is also used in the sense of 'relative'.
106. **Respectable** (deserving respect) : He is a *respectable* man.
Respectful (showing respect) : He was quite *respectful* to his teachers.
Respective (relating separately to) : Go to your *respective* places.
107. **Reverend** (worthy of respect) : The *reverend* preacher was a man of principle.
Reverent (expressing respect) : *Reverent* study of the Gita will make you a better man.
Revered (held in great respect) : Your *revered* father decided the matter in this manner.
108. **Ride, Drive** : You *ride* on an animal, whether on horseback, camel-back, elephant-back or on a bicycle, motorcycle, scooter. You *drive* in a conveyance which you control directly or indirectly e.g. car, cab. You *ride* in a vehicle controlled by another e.g. bus, train.
109. **Rob, Steal** : To *steal* is to take away secretly; to *rob* is to take away forcibly or with violence. Someone *stole* my watch. Someone *robbed* me of my watch. Note that a *thing* is *stolen*; a *person* or *bank* is *robbed*.
110. **Robber** (one who uses force or violence) : A band of *robbers* plundered the caravan.
Thief (one who steals secretly and uses no violence) : A *thief* came into my house at the dead of night and took away my T.V.
111. **Say, Tell, Speak, Talk** : *Say* is used to make a declaration, *Tell* to make a communication. *Speak* is used to say something. *Talk* to hold a conversation.
 What were you *saying* just now? He *told* me that he was ten years old. He *speaks* Persian very well. He is too tired to *talk*.
112. **Sensitive** (easily hurt) : He is very *sensitive*. Do not tease him.
Sensible (possessing sense) : He is a very *sensible* young man.
113. **Sensuous** (pertaining to senses) : Keats was a *sensuous* poet (i.e., loved beauty).
- Sensual** (given to lustful pleasure) : *Sensual* men usually die at an early age.
114. **Shade, Shadow** : *Shade* is opposed to light. It signifies a spot sheltered from the sun; *shadow* signifies the figure of the intercepting body. This tree provides a good *shade*. The pole casts a *shadow* on the ground.
115. **Shut, Close** : *Shut* means to *close* in such a way as to stop all passage through. *Close* means to come or bring near together. The gates of the city are *shut* now. *Close* your eyes.
116. **Sight** (1) Eyesight or power of seeing, (2) a thing seen: Your *sight* is quite good. What a beautiful *sight*!

- Scenery** (view of a landscape) : The *scenery* of the Himalayas is very charming.
- Site** (a place): I shall build my house on this *site*.
- Cite** (quote): Please *cite* some examples in support of your point.
- 117. Snow** (formed by the freezing of vapours) : *Snow* is falling outside.
- Ice** (formed by the freezing of water): Put some more *ice* in the glass.
- 118. Social** (relating to society): Man is a *social* animal.
- Sociable** (fitted for or fond of or willing to mix with society): He is a *sociable* person.
- 119. Spacious** (roomy) : It is a *spacious* hall.
- Specious** (appearing to be correct): It is a *specious* argument.
- 120. Stationary** (not moving) : The sun is *stationary*.
- Stationery** (writing materials): The shopkeeper deals in *stationery*.
- 121. Stop, Stay** (*stop* indicates a pause in movement, *stay* means to remain at one place. It is used for persons only): This train *stops* at every station. We *stayed* at home for a week.
- 122. Statue** (an image): Tilak's *statue* stands near the Town Hall.
- Statute** (written law): This *statute* is no longer in force.
- 123. Temporal** (earthly) :The affairs of this world are *temporal*.
- Temporary** (short-lived) : It is only a *temporary* arrangement.
- 124. Timid, Cowardly** : A *timid* man may, on certain occasions, be bold, a *cowardly* man never. A *coward* is a faint-hearted person. A sheep is a *timid* animal. He made a *cowardly* attack on the girl.
- 125. Union** (the state of being joined together): *Union* is strength.
- Unity** (oneness): He spoke on Hindu-Muslim *unity*.
- 126. Urban** (pertaining to towns and cities): He has been elected to the Assembly from the *urban*-constituency of Patna.
- Urbane** (courteous, refined in manners): His *urbane* manners charm everyone.
- 127. Verbal** [(1) referring to words (2) word for word]: The new edition of the book contains a few *verbal* changes only. It is a *verbal* translation of the Sanskrit text.
- Oral** (by word of mouth): Today the workers do not care about *oral*/instructions. Some medicines are not to be taken *orally*.
- Verbose** (full of words, wordy) : That was the most *verbose* speech I ever heard.
- N.B. *Oral* message, *oral* reply are correct. *Verbal* message meaning a 'spoken message' is wrong. *Verbal* is, however,

		nowadays loosely used in the sense of <i>oral</i> .
128. Veracity	(truthfulness): I can give you no assurance regarding the <i>veracity</i> of his statement.	
Voracity	(greed): The famished children fell to eating with <i>voracity</i> .	
129. Virtuous	(morally good): Kasturba was a <i>virtuous</i> woman.	
Virtual	(actual in effect): The Prime Minister of Nepal was at one time the <i>virtual</i> ruler of the State.	
130. Withhold	(keep back): Who can <i>withhold</i> the secret from me?	
Withstand	(oppose, resist): The German forces could not <i>withstand</i> the Russian advance.	
131. Womanly	(like a woman. It is used in a good sense): She is held in high esteem for her <i>womanly</i> virtues.	
Womanish	(effeminate. It is used in a bad sense): Edward was hated for his <i>womanish</i> ways.	

EXERCISE-1

Construct sentences showing the difference in meaning between the following pairs of words:

- (a) Practise, practice; fair, fare; weak, week; council, counsel; lose, loose; born, borne.
- (b) Principle, principal; stationery, stationary.
- (c) Refuse, deny; discover, invent; sink, drown.
- (d) Elder, older; corpse, carcass; famous, notorious.
- (e) Raze, raise; pray, prey; judicial, judicious; habit, custom; prescribe, proscribe; roll, role.
- (f) Continuous, continual; spacious, specious; mail, male; soul, sole; fowl, foul; verbal, oral; womanly, womanish.
- (g) Ingenious, ingenuous; stop, stay; robber, thief; birth, berth; rent, hire; advice, advise; due, dew; quite, quiet.
- (h) Captain, chief; fresh, new; snow, ice; friend, companion; course, coarse; beside, besides; walk, march; big, great.