

## USAGE

The verb **affect** means to influence: *Your ideas will affect people.*

As a verb **affect** can mean to pretend: *The author affected an English accent.*

The adjective **affected** means pretentious or artificial.

The verb **effect** means cause: *Your plan will effect a new procedure.*

The noun **effect** means result: *Your plan will produce a good effect.*

**Affect**, not **impact**: It is best to use the word **impact** only as a noun, and not as a verb, in discussing the effect of individuals on history. When we say that x “impacted” y, this usage has an unpleasant medical connotation. The preferable word is **affected**. We affect others.

To **aggravate** is to make worse, not to **irritate**; these are not synonyms. *It irritated her that she aggravated her cold.* In other words, we should not say, “That insult aggravated me.”

Use **a lot**, not **alot**: There is no such word as *alot*, just as there is no such word as *abook*.

Use **and**, not **&**. In ordinary sentences, do not substitute the ampersand (&) or the mathematical plus symbol (+) for the coordinating conjunction *and*.

**Bad** is an adjective: *The bad decision ruined the bad hatter.*

**Badly** is an adverb: *The sturdy Celt did not swim badly.*

Use **feel bad** rather than **feel badly**: *The victim felt bad.*

The noun **data** is plural and requires a plural verb: *These data are not encouraging the scholars.* *Datum* is the singular.

Use the adjective **fewer** for countable things: *There are fewer Visigoths.*

Use **less** for uncountable amounts: *There is less sugar for the citizens.*

**Good** is an adjective: *The good swimmer swam her fastest time.*

**Well** is usually an adverb: *The good swimmer swam well.*

**Well** can sometimes be an adjective: *He is not a well man.*

**Hopefully** is an adverb meaning full of hope; it should not be used as a substitute for “I hope.” To say “Hopefully, I can go” is an error. *I hope this teaches them a lesson.*

Clothes, when put out to dry, are **hung**. People, when strung up to die, are **hanged**. *The conspirators in Lincoln’s assassination were hanged.*

**It’s** is the contraction of *it is*: *It’s pointless to question Caesar.*

**Its** is a possessive adjective or pronoun: *The dog ate its food, growling.*

Use **lend** as a verb: *Please lend me money for a cloak.*

Use **loan** as a noun: *Give me a loan for a day.*

To **lie** (v.i.) is to rest: *I will lie in the shade near the field.*

To **lay** (v.t.) is to put: *I will lay the hammer near the centurion.*

The adverb **literally** means actually, not figuratively. You could say, "We literally left within two minutes," but not, "We literally vanished." If you did not really physically vanish, poof, then you did not literally vanish.

**Nauseous** means sickening to others: *The outcome was nauseous to us.*

**Nauseated** means sick at the stomach: *The seasick citizen was nauseated.*

In other words, if I say "I am nauseous," it means I make *you* sick. When my stomach is upset, I am nauseated, not nauseous.

The noun **phenomenon** is singular, and **phenomena** is plural: *The weirdest phenomenon was the way the donkeys ran in circles. There were many phenomena involved.*

Save **plus** for mathematics, and use **in addition to** or **also** instead.

**Regardless**, not **irregardless**. There is no such word as *irregardless*.

Use **raise** transitively: *The crew will attempt to raise the Titanic.*

Use **rise** intransitively: *The mist began to rise slowly through the air.*

**Than** is a conjunction: *We have more provisions than you have.*

**Then** is an adverb: *We will go now; you go then.*

**They're** is the contraction of *they are*: *They're feeding rhinos grits.*

**Their** is a possessive adjective: *He is feeding their giraffes.*

**There** is an adverb of place: *We are feeding the elephants there.*

**To** is a preposition or an infinitive: *She went to Boston to collect stones.*

**Too** is an adverb meaning also or too much: *I sleep too much, too.*

**Two** is a number: *Two attendants twisted twine in the twilight.*

**Who** is a subject pronoun: *Who is with the guest?*

**Whom** is an object pronoun: *To whom do you wish to give the chisel?*

**Who** refers to people: *It was they who followed the crowd.*

**That** and **which** refer to objects: *Camels ate the grass that remained.*

