

The Brief  
**Grammar Book**

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# CAPITALIZATION

Capitalization rules are fairly commonplace. But it is important to brush up on major rules as you start to write college level essays. You must always capitalize in the following situations:

## 1. The first words of a sentence

Everyone knows that pizza is the best food ever.

## 2. The pronoun "I"

Last summer I spent a whole month eating pizza with my family.

## 3. Proper nouns (the names of specific people, places, organizations, and sometimes things)

Mountain Empire Community College

Big Stone Gap, Virginia

Pacific Ocean

Young Men Christian Academy

God

Microsoft Office

Pepsi Cola

Kentucky Wildcats

Denver Broncos

The Great Depression

Woodrow Wilson

Thomas Edison

The Microsoft Corporation

## 4. Titles, if they precede the person's name (but not if the title comes after)

Eddie finally was able to meet Mayor Kimby to discuss his concerns.

Tomorrow, I will be able to meet John Lang, mayor of Queenstown.

## 5. Family relationships (when used as proper names, but not when just mentioning a relative)

I make it no secret that Uncle Thomas is my favorite relative.

My favorite relative is my uncle, Thomas, who lives in Florida.

I asked my mother to make me some pasta.

I asked Mother to make me some pasta.

**6. Days of the week, names of months, names of holidays**

January  
Friday the 13th  
Christmas Eve  
Halloween

**7. The names of countries, nationalities, and specific languages**

English  
Spain  
United States of America  
Portuguese

**8. The first word of a direct quote**

Mark Twain wrote, "The difference between the right word and the almost right word is the same as the difference between lightning and the lightning bug."

**9. Abbreviations for groups**

YMCA  
NBC  
ABC  
IBM

**10. The major words in the titles of books, articles, and songs (but not short prepositions or the articles "the," "a," or "an," if they are not the first word of the title)**

In high school, my favorite reading was *The Catcher in the Rye*.

# PUNCTUATION RULES

## THE COMMA (,)

The comma is one of the most misused and abused punctuation marks. Many students use them incorrectly—either adding a comma where no comma should go (thereby breaking up the sentence awkwardly) or forget to include a comma where one is needed. The following rules are meant to be simple guidelines to help you determine when a comma is necessary. We will also explore comma splice errors in this section.

### **1. Use commas between two complete sentences when they are joined using conjunctions—AND, BUT, FOR, OR, NOR.**

The party was over, **but** the guests wanted to stick around for the after party.

Note that when the two sentences separated by conjunctions are NOT complete sentences, no comma is needed.

John left the party **and** went to get something to eat.

**2. A comma must be used when separating a dependent clause from an independent clause.** To tell the difference, remember that an “independent” clause could exist on its own. If you took that sentence just by itself, it would be a complete sentence. However, when looking at a “dependent” clause, you’ll notice it cannot exist on its own. It needs the other sentence in order to make sense. The dependent clause will come first in the sentence. Look at the following example.

Before leaving the party, John decided to grab one last drink.

### **3. Use commas between three or more things in a list.**

Cynthia, Eddie, and Sera decided to drive to the party together. They climbed into Eddie’s car, turned the radio up loud, and sung the whole way there.

### **4. Use commas when using two or more adjectives to describe a noun.**

The loud, excited fans cheered the football team to victory.

Mary prayed to meet a tall, dark, handsome stranger.

**5. Always use commas between city and state names**

I grew up in Big Stone Gap, Virginia.

Todd lives in Birmingham, Alabama.

**6. Commas are used between the day and year (but not after the month)**

We were married on March 26, 2012.

Note that since you do not use a comma after the month, you would not use a comma at all.

March 2012 was one of the best months in my entire life.

Also, sometimes you will see a date listed in military or international format. In these cases, the day is listed before the month and no comma is used.

We were married on 26 March 2012.

**7. Use commas when you add additional information (a phrase or a clause) in the middle of your sentence.**

Richard James, the man who invented the Slinky toy, died in 1974.

I ran into Eddie Bauer, my college roommate, yesterday while at the movies with my wife.

**8. If you begin your sentence with an exclamation (using words like “yes,” “oh,” “well”) you must always use a comma.**

Oh, I wasn't expecting company!

No, I would not like dessert.

**9. Use commas with dialogue to show who is speaking and what was said.**

I looked at my father and asked, “Do you think I can be a doctor someday?”

“You can be anything you want to be,” he replied.

The report from CNN stated, “There have been 141 deaths in this conflict since it began.”

## THE SEMICOLON (;)

The semicolon is another powerful piece of punctuation. When used correctly, it can eliminate fragment or run-on errors and help you create longer, flowing sentences. However, like the comma, many students use the semicolon incorrectly. Remember that you can only use a semicolon if your sentence meets two criteria:

- 1) Both sentences joined by the semicolon must be complete sentences. If either sentence would be incomplete by adding the semicolon, you must not use it. You do not want to create a fragment.
- 2) The two sentences being joined must relate to one another. You could not say something like: “My favorite color is blue; I eat nachos on Sunday.” Those two sentences are not at all related. A better example would be:

After work, I always try to take a detour through Stalling Avenue; this allows me to avoid traffic on Main Street as I drive home.

Note, too, that you do not capitalize after the semicolon (notice the word “this” is lowercase. The only exception would be if the first word in the next sentence is a proper noun or meets one of the other criteria posted in the capitalization section in this guide (such as “I”).

You must also use a semicolon when joining two complete sentences if the second sentence begins with a conjunctive adverb (however, thus, nonetheless, furthermore, moreover, meanwhile) or a transitional phrase (for example, for instance, in addition, in other words, on the other hand, even so, in fact).

My aunt normally likes to join us every Sunday for dinner; **however**, this week she is cooking for her in-laws at her own home.

Sally is not exactly a people person; **in other words**, she does not like to be around human beings very often.

Lastly, be sure to use a semicolon when listing two or more items that already include a comma in them (such as dates or locations).

I have lived in many places over the course of my life including Wise, Virginia; Kingsport, Tennessee; Seattle, Washington; Las Vegas, Nevada.

The best days of my life happened on August 3, 1999; January 16, 2001; October 27, 2007; December 25, 2013.

## **THE COLON (:)**

The colon is most often used after a complete sentence, when you want to list or quote something after your sentence (where a dialogue tag is not used and the quote just naturally picks up after your sentence ends).

My wife always visits the same exact stores when she visits the mall: Kirkland's, Victoria's Secret, and any place that sells shoes.

Mark Twain wrote one of the greatest quotes on why grammar is so important: "The difference between the right word and the 'almost' right word is the difference between lightning and the lightning bug."

Colons can also be used when you want to stress a point.

Pete finally found the perfect dog for him: a golden retriever.

There are also some fairly obvious reasons to use a colon such as to separate hours and minutes when listing times, after a formal greeting, or in a Bible verse.

1:20 a.m

To Whom It May Concern:

John 3:16

## **THE PARENTHESIS ( )**

The parenthesis is used to add emphasis (and it adds more emphasis than by using commas) to any clarifying information.

My brother always used to pick on me (he was older and much larger) when we were kids.

Athens, Greece (where we went for our honeymoon) is one of the most amazing cities in the world.

The parenthesis can also be used to list historical dates.

Albert Einstein (1879-1955) was perhaps the smartest person ever to live.

D-Day (6 June 1944) is the most famous military landing of all time.



## **THE DASH (--)**

So far, we have learned that commas and parentheses can be used to add emphasis in a sentence. Dashes add more emphasis—and catch the reader’s attention—much more than either of the previous punctuation marks. Just be sure to use them sparingly. Many professors and even many readers can grow annoyed when you overuse the dash—it feels like after a while the marks begin to take over a page—in your papers. Here’s a good example:

This grammar book—written by the greatest English professor of all time—is a pleasure to read!

Okay, so maybe I slipped that sentence in there on you. But you noticed it, right? You get the picture.

You can also use a dash with phrases or lists that already contain a comma.

Mike’s sisters—Sarah, Lacy, and Hannah—always go everywhere together.

So in a nutshell, the parentheses and dashes work in pretty much the same way. You just have to decide how much emphasis you want to place on the words inside the punctuation marks and how much you want them to stand out. You also can mix it up and use both types of punctuation marks throughout your papers so that you never have to rely too heavily on either one.

## **QUOTATION MARKS (“ ”)**

Quotation marks do exactly what they sound like: they are used to mark direct quotations. When quoting, you should place the punctuation inside the quotation marks under normal circumstances.

My mother said, “Please stop playing your music so loudly.”

“I’ll play it however loudly I want,” I shouted back at her.

Note the periods above (and this rule also applies to commas) always go inside the quotation marks.

Another major use of quotation marks is to note titles. You should not use quotation marks around titles of novels (instead, use underlining or italics). But always use them around titles of short stories, songs, television shows, speeches, newspaper and magazine articles, and poems.

My favorite TV show is “Modern Family.”

Ever since I heard “Centuries” by Fall Out Boy, I haven’t been able to get it out of my head.

“Hills like White Elephants” is a very underrated story!

You might also add quotation marks around a word to note you are using it ironically or sarcastically.

Bill called himself a “master” of automotive repair. But his car just keeps breaking down so really how good could he be?

Do not use quotation marks for at all for block quotations.

Lastly, if you ever have to use a quote within a quote (for example, you are quoting a newspaper interview where the writer also told what someone said), you should use the single apostrophe mark (‘) around the secondary quote. For example:

According to the Post News, one of the witnesses in the murder case testified that the husband threatened to murder his wife before it actually happened: “Jimmy was very unhappy when he learned of his wife’s affair. He told me, ‘I swear I’ll kill that woman for this.’”

Note that at the end of this quote, you actually end up both with the single quotation mark and also the double quotation mark. That is okay even if it looks funny. It is proper to do it this way.

### The Apostrophe

The apostrophe’s main use is to show possession. It is used when you are trying to show that one noun belongs to the other. For example: **Mary’s car**. The car belongs to Mary. Or, as another example: The college’s courses. The courses belong to the college.

If the word already ends in –s, and is singular, you can still add the ‘s at the end. For example: **James’s computer**. Note that “James” is singular (it is a name) but already ends with –s. It may look funny, but “James’s computer” is appropriate.

If the word ends in –s, but is plural, add the apostrophe after the –s, but \*do not\* add another –s. For example:

**The dogs’ bones were all over the yard.**

“Dogs” is plural. So you do add the apostrophe, but do not add an additional –s.

If a word is plural, but does not end with –s, you will include the ‘s as normal.

**The children’s toys were all broken.**

When two or more nouns are joined together using the word “and”, you do not have to add ‘s to all nouns. Just add it to the last noun to show possession:

**Bill and Susie’s car.**

Another major use for apostrophes is in contractions (two words combined together). An example would be the contraction of “wouldn’t” for the words “would not.”

**Forming plurals of lowercase letters**

**Don't use apostrophes for personal pronouns, the relative pronoun *who*, or for noun plurals.**

Apostrophes should not be used with possessive pronouns because possessive pronouns already show possession — they don't need an apostrophe. His, her, its, my, yours, ours are all possessive pronouns. However, indefinite pronouns, such as one, anyone, other, no one, and anybody, can be made possessive. Here are some examples:

**wrong:** **his'** book  
**correct:** **his** book  
**correct:** **one's** book  
**correct:** **anybody's** book

**wrong:** **Who's** dog is this?  
**correct:** **Whose** dog is this?

**wrong:** The group made **it's** decision.  
**correct:** The group made **its** decision.

(Note: Its and it's are not the same thing. It's is a contraction for "it is" and its is a possessive pronoun meaning "belonging to it." It's raining out= it is raining out. A simple way to remember this rule is the fact that you don't use an apostrophe for the possessive his or hers, so don't do it with its!)

**wrong:** a friend of **yours'**  
**correct:** a friend of **yours**

**wrong:** She waited for three **hours'** to get her ticket.  
**correct:** She waited for three **hours** to get her ticket.

## SUBJECT VERB AGREEMENT

It is important for you to note that each sentence must have a subject and verb in order to be a complete sentence. However, it is also just as important to recognize that subjects and verbs can both be either singular (one) or plural (two or more).

For most regular subjects, adding an (s) will make the subject plural. However, the opposite is actually true with verbs. If you add an (s) to most regular verbs, they become singular.

Example:

Singular: **Dog**

Plural: **Dogs**

Singular: **Sits**

Plural: **Sit**

The **dog sits** in the yard.

The **dogs sit** in the yard.

This simple rule will help you to figure out how to make subjects and verbs agree. Additionally, there are a set of important rules for you to remember. In these sentences, verbs will always appear in orange/yellow while verbs will appear in blue.

1. Two or more singular nouns joined by the word “and” make a plural subject (and therefore require a plural verb)

**The hamburger and the slice of pizza sit untouched on Mary’s plate.**

In the above example, both hamburger and a single slice of pizza are, on their own, singular subjects. However, since the above sentence joins them with the word “and” that makes the subject plural since two subjects are now joined together. Since the subject is plural, this means you use “sit” because it is also plural.

2. The opposite rule applies two or more singular nouns are joined by the word “or”. This creates a singular verb:

**The hamburger or the slice of pizza sits alone on Mary’s plate.**

3. When an indefinite pronoun is included in the sentence, the subject will always be singular no matter how many subjects are in the sentence (even if the subject seems like it should be plural). Take note of the following list of indefinite pronouns:

- Each, either, neither
- Anyone, anybody, anything
- Everyone, everybody, everything
- No one, nobody, nothing
- Someone, somebody, something

If you see any of the above words in the sentence, always assume the subject is singular and check to make sure the verbs are singular as well. For example:

**Every** chicken wing and pork rib **sits** untouched on Mary's plate.

**Everyone** in the world **is** praying for peace right now.

**Nobody** ever **closes** door after I leave.

Again, sometimes a sentence will strongly feel like it should have a plural verb. But if you see an indefinite pronoun, you should keep the verb singular. For example:

**Each** of the men **is** leaving home for war.

Many students might make the mistake of labeling "men" as the subject in the above sentence. Since "men" is plural, they would say "are leaving" since that would be the plural form of the verb. However, an indefinite pronoun "Each" is present. That means the word "each" is actually the subject and is singular. Therefore, you must say "is leaving" to have a proper subject-verb agreement.

4. Use caution with the following phrases: 1) either...or 2) neither...nor 3) not only...but also. These phrases will try to confuse you about what is the true subject of a sentence. As a rule, if you spot one of these three phrases, your verb should always take the form of the nearer subject. Look at the following examples:

**Either the boss or her employees take** lunch at noon.

**Either her employees or the boss takes** lunch at noon.

Both of these sentences deal with the "either...or" phrase. In the both sentences, you seemingly have two subjects: boss and employees. But in the first sentence, employees appears closer to the verb (take). For that reason, the verb

must be plural since the word “employees” is plural. In the second example, the opposite is true. The word “boss” is closer to the verb. Thus, the verb will be singular (takes) because “boss” is singular. The same rules apply to the other phrases mentioned above as well. Note the subject closer to the verb impacting whether the verb becomes singular or plural in the following sentences:

**Neither Juan nor his kids are available today.**  
**Neither his kids nor Juan is available today.**

**Not only Julie but also all of the grandchildren want to visit Grandma.**  
**Not only the grandchildren but also Julie wants to visit Grandma.**

5. Beware the following interrupting phrases:

- As well as
- Along with
- Together with
- Including
- In addition to
- Especially

Take the following sentence for example:

The squirrel as well as the pigeons keeps an eye on Sammy, the sneaky cat.

In the above sentence, an interrupting phrase has been inserted to confuse you away from the true subject in the sentence. Many students might say that both “the squirrel” and “the pigeons” are the subjects. That would mean the verb should be “keep” an eye on Sammy. However, “as well as” is an interrupting phrase. By rule, you must cross out the phrase as well as the subject attached to it. Then read the sentence without the crossed out material. That helps make the sentence a lot clearer:

The ~~squirrel as well as the pigeons~~ keeps an eye on Sammy, the sneaky cat.

6. Also beware inverted word order. Many students mistakenly believe the subject has to appear before the verb in a sentence. But that is not always the case. Sometimes the real subject comes after the verb. For example:

**Here is the onions you need for the chili.**

If you tried reading just that sentence, you might think “here” is the subject since “are” is the verb. But remember that words like “here” and “there” can never be the subject of a sentence. Instead, you have an inverted word order situation. You must ask yourself “what is here?” In this sentence, the answer would be “the opinions” of course. That makes

onions your subject. When you figure that out, you can read the sentence backwards: “The onions is here.” That would not make sense. Onions are plural, so you need to have a plural verb. Thus, the correct way to put this sentence would be:

**Here are the onions you need for the chili.**

The same thing applies with prepositional phrases. You must ignore the prepositional phrase and look for the actual subject. For example:

**In the refrigerator is the jalapeno peppers you might want to add.**

Look past the preposition and ask yourself “what is in the refrigerator?” Your answer will be “the jalapeno peppers” and you’ll have your real subject. So change “is” to “are” here:

**In the refrigerator are the jalapeno peppers you might want to add.**

7. Collective nouns are words that imply more than one person but that are considered singular and take a singular verb, such as group, team, committee, class, and family. Examples:

**The team runs during practice.**  
**The committee decides how to proceed.**  
**My family is dysfunctional.**

## SENTENCE FRAGMENTS

Fragments are incomplete sentences. Commonly, they occur simply because students try to insert a period or semi-colon in the wrong places. This ends up separating what should have been a good sentence into two parts: a complete sentence and a fragment leftover. For example, here is a good sentence:

**John knew he was meant for great things because he had a dream he became leader of the whole world.**

That sentence would be fine. It is complete. However, some students might try to insert a period where no period belongs. That leads to the following problem:

**John knew he was meant for great things. Because he had a dream he became leader of the whole world.**

The complete sentence is in green and the newly created fragment is in red. Notice how easy it is to actually create a fragment (just by inserting one single, tiny period). You may have this kind of trouble in your writing. But rest assured, we will work on these issues throughout the semester. The following guide will attempt to give you the knowledge needed to identify and avoid fragment mistakes. After that, it just takes hard work and practice to really master it all. But I'll be here to help you each step of the way.

There is a three step process to help you figure out whether or not a sentence is complete or a fragment:

- 1) Does the sentence have a verb? If not, the sentence is a fragment.
- 2) Does the sentence have a subject? If not, the sentence is a fragment.
- 3) Can you place "I realize" at the start of the sentence and it all still make sense? If not, you most likely have a fragment.

If the sentence fails even one of the above three question tests, you should identify it as a fragment. After that, you just need to know what type of fragment it is. For that reason, I have developed the "IT RAD" fragment guide to help you all with that. Each letter of IT RAD stands for a different type of fragment:

**I** ng Clause  
**T** o Clause  
**R** elative Clause  
**A** fterthought  
**D** ependent Clause



It should be noted that most professors will not teach fragments in this fashion. Most of the time you will not need to actually label a fragment as an “ING Clause” or a “Dependent Clause.” But if you can start to associate these names (and how to find and correct them) with fragments, you will start to also notice them more and more in your own writing. When that happens, you’ll start to become a pro at avoiding fragment issues. At the college level, you should not ever really have a fragment or run-on sentence. So this is important.

We will go over each of these types of fragments in the sections below and I will give you some simple techniques to help you identify these types of fragments in the future. Remember, you must FIRST identify whether the sentence is actually a fragment by using the 1-2-3 question test mentioned above. If the sentence fails one of those questions, you can then proceed to the next step which is to identify what type of fragment it is and how to correct it.

## ING Clauses

These types of fragments are fairly easy to identify. They are fragments that begin with an “ING” word. For example:

**Swimming faster than ever before. Tony tried to escape the shark.**

Note that the first sentence in the above list is a fragment because it does not have a subject. It does have a verb (swimming) but it also would fail the third question (can you put “I realize” in front of it and have it still make sense?). Therefore it is certainly a fragment. The first word in the sentence is “swimming” which ends in “ING,” therefore making this an “ING Clause” type of fragment. These are also fairly easy to correct. Simply remove the period and replace it with a comma. Unless the first word in the second sentence is a proper noun, you would change the first letter from an upper case letter to a lower case letter.

**Swimming faster than ever before, Tony tried to escape the shark.**

Note here that “Tony” is a proper noun so we keep the capital letter. But if the second sentence had started with “The shark” we would change it to “the shark.”

Lastly, also remember that the ING word must appear as one of the **first two words in the sentence.** This means that you could have an ING clause fragment that looks like this:

**Sometimes descending to depths of over a thousand feet. Penguins are able to swim deeper than most land creatures.**

The fact that this sentence begins with “sometimes” would cause some students to misidentify this problem as some other type of fragment error. But note that the second word in the sentence “descending” is obviously an ING word.

Therefore, this is still an ING Phrase fragment error which would be corrected simply by inserting a period and changing the case on the word Penguin:

**Sometimes descending to depths of over a thousand feet, penguins are able to swim deeper than most land creatures.**

That's all for ING Phrases! Let's move on.

## TO Clauses

Here we have yet another type of fragment error that should be fairly easy to identify. These are sentences beginning with the word "to" that are incomplete and appear either before or after a complete sentence. The word "To" \*must\* be the first word in the sentence. If it appears anywhere else in the fragment, it is NOT a To Clause. Make sure you pay attention to that. Here is an example of a To Clause that appears after the complete sentence:

**John was determined to finish college and earn a degree. To prove everyone wrong for doubting him.**

This type of To Clause is corrected simply by combining the two sentences together without any punctuation at all:

**John was determined to finish college and earn a degree to prove everyone wrong for doubting him.**

However, if the To Clause comes before the complete sentence, as in:

**To prove everyone wrong for doubting him. John was determined to finish college and earn a degree.**

You must correct this type of error by adding a comma:

**To prove everyone wrong for doubting him, John was determined to finish college and earn a degree.**

## Relative Clauses

Relative clauses occur when you attempt to modify a noun in the complete sentence. You'll be able to easily identify them by looking for the **clue words: who, whose, which, that**. If you know a sentence is definitely a fragment and you spot one of those clue words as the first word in the fragment, you know for certain you have a relative clause. These are corrected simply by combining the two sentences together without punctuation. For example:

**Tom offered his apology to his girlfriend. Which she did not accept.**

**Tom offered his apology to his girlfriend which she did not accept.**

**Michelle screamed when she saw the spider. That dangled from the one clean bathroom towel.**

**Michelle screamed when she saw the spider that dangled from the one clean bathroom towel.**

One important exception to the fragment rule deals with questions. If you have a question that begins with one of the clue words—who, whose, which, or that—you will always have a complete sentence. Questions are always complete sentences. For example: Who knew English could be so much fun? Just because this question begins with “who” does not make it a fragment. It is complete because it is asking a question. Always take note of the question marks.

## **Afterthoughts**

These are perhaps the most difficult types of fragments to identify because there really are no true clue words other than “and.” If a sentence begins with the word “and” (such as: “And that night he discovered the secret to the fountain of youth”) it is an Afterthought type of fragment.

Overall, Afterthoughts are incomplete sentences that are usually added on to a complete sentence to further explain it or add detail. These sentences do not make sense on their own. For example:

**Tom ran all the way across town. With only one shoe on his feet.**

See, in this case, the writer wanted to tell that Tom ran across town. That part is a complete sentence. However, when the writer went to add more information on to the event, he accidentally created a fragment with the second sentence. That second sentence would not at all make sense if you tried just reading it by itself. Afterthoughts are generally corrected just by combining the sentences together without punctuation:

**Tom ran all the way across town with only one shoe on his feet.**

If you struggle with labeling Afterthoughts, follow one simple rule: if you know the sentence is definitely a fragment but it does not have any of the clue words associated with the other four types of fragments, you most likely have an Afterthought type of fragment. Label it as such and correct it accordingly.

## Dependent Clauses

These types of fragments also contain the largest assortment of clue words: **after, although, as, because, before, if, since, until, while, when.** These fragments can come before or after the complete sentence. As with To Clauses, the way in which you correct a Dependent Clause will depend on if it comes before or after the complete sentence. Here is an example of the dependent clause coming AFTER the complete sentence:

**Jack always wanted to be a stand-up comic. Because he liked to make people laugh.**

The first sentence listed above is complete. It can exist on its own. It is an Independent Clause. However, the second sentence would not make sense on its own. It is dependent upon the first sentence in order to make sense. When the Dependent Clause comes AFTER the complete sentence, correct by simply combining the two sentences without any punctuation:

**Jack always wanted to be a stand-up comic because he liked to make people laugh.**

However, when the fragment comes BEFORE the complete sentence:

**Because he liked to make people laugh. Jack always wanted to be a stand-up comic.**

You must correct this by adding a comma between them:

**Because he liked to make people laugh, Jack always wanted to be a stand-up comic.**

## Commonly Confused Words

The following word list features words that are called “homophones”—words that generally sound the same but have different spellings and meanings. Make sure you take note over each set of words on this list. You may not even be aware you are misspelling a word until you see it listed below. Make sure you know the differences!

**A lot:** proper form of the words meaning “many”

**Alot:** this one is not a real word

**Allot:** to give out; to distribute

**Accept:** to take, to agree to

**Except:** excluding, not including

**Advice:** a recommendation, words intended to be helpful

**Advise:** to give advice

**Affect:** To have an impact on (an action)

**Effect:** An outcome or result

**All ready:** prepared (as in “I am all ready to leave for vacation”)

**Already:** something has happened in the past

**Brake:** To stop or slow, a device used for this purpose

**Break:** To smash or cause something damage, a period of rest

**Breath:** air inhaled and exhaled

**Breathe:** the act of inhaling and exhaling

**Buy:** to purchase

**By:** next to

**Bye:** short for “goodbye”; advance without playing.

**Capital:** an uppercase letter; city home to a state’s government.

**Capitol:** building where lawmakers meet and work.

**College:** a place of learning (like MECC)

**Collage:** many photographs stuck together to make one large piece of art

**Complement:** goes along well with

**Compliment:** to give praise

**Desert:** dry, sand covered area of Earth

**Dessert:** sweet food usually given at the end of a meal

**Dew:** thin water droplets, usually present in the mornings

**Do:** to take an action

**Due:** when something needs to be completed or turned in

**Hear:** to detect with the ears

**Here:** present, at this location

**Hole:** a missing piece

**Whole:** an entire thing

**Its:** a possessive (showing ownership) form of it

**It's:** contraction of "It is" or "it has"

**Knew:** past tense of know

**New:** recently introduced or created

**Know:** to understand or comprehend, to be acquainted with

**No:** a negative expression, the opposite of "yes"

**Lie:** to recline

**Lay:** to put something down

**Loose:** not tight

**Lose:** to misplace, to be defeated

**Mind:** the part of a person that thinks

**Mine:** belonging to me

**Passed:** went by (past tense of pass)

**Past:** the time before now

**Peace:** lack of conflict

**Piece:** a part of something

**Principal:** leader of school or other organization

**Principle:** a law, standard, or rule

**Quiet:** soundless or low in sound

**Quite:** very; fully

**Quit:** to stop

**Right:** correct, opposite of left

**Write:** to put words down in a form that can be read (as on paper)

**Set:** to put something somewhere

**Sit:** to be seated

**Suppose:** (verb) to assume something is true based on evidence

**Supposed:** this word usually goes with “to” as in someone is “supposed to” do something.

**Sight:** vision

**Site:** location

**Cite:** to credit the original author

**Than:** a word used to compare

**Then:** at another time, not now; next

**Their:** belonging to them

**There:** at a certain location, not here

**They’re:** contraction of “they are”

**Threw:** past tense of throw

**Through:** finished; going in one side and other the other

**To:** in the direction of, toward

**Too:** also

**Two:** number between one and three

**Use:** to put into service or employ

**Used:** past tense of use; accustomed

**Weather:** climate

**Whether:** a word used to present alternatives

**Whose:** the possessive form of who

**Who's:** contraction of "who is" or "who has"

**Your:** belonging to you

**You're:** contraction of "you are"