

- Affect/effect – affect is a verb relating to emotion or pretentiousness / affectation (“The man affects an American accent”; “he was genuinely affected by the music”); effect is usually a noun (“His arrival had a big effect”)
- A lot, not “alot”
- All right, not “alright”
- All sorts, not “alsorts”
- Basically: this word is unnecessary in most contexts
- Continuous/continual – a continuous noise never stops; a continual noise is frequent but with interruptions
- Comprise or consists of (but not “comprises of”)
- Dependant/dependent: a dependant is a noun (“he looked after his friends”); dependent is an adjective (“they were dependent upon him”)
- Different from, not “different than”
- Discreet = modest/restrained; discrete = separate
- Disinterested = neutral/objective; uninterested = not interested
- Due to = say “because of”
- Every day = noun and adverb (“it happens every day”); everyday = adjective (“an everyday remark”)
- Formally – being formal; formerly – in the past
- Fraction – use with care: it doesn't always mean small. Saying “he produced a fraction of the necessary work” could mean 9/10 which is a lot!
- Homogeneous – of the same kind; homogenous – of common descent
- Imply/infer – I imply that you are mad; you infer that I am being rude
- It's (=it is/it has); its (= “the work was completed ahead of its deadline”)
- Like – use ‘as if’ – it looks as if he will be late
- Led – past tense of to lead; lead – rope for a dog and heavy element
- Less / fewer: less for quantities (I'll have less water); fewer than for items that can be individually counted (fewer than 10 bottles)
- Literally – use with care, not “He literally jumped out of his skin”
- Meet – not “meet with”
- Momentarily – “he stopped momentarily”, not the Americanism “I'll be there momentarily”
- More than – better than “over” (it cost more than £27)
- No one, not no-one
- On to, not “onto”
- Practice – noun (“I have football practice”); practise – verb (“I need to practise). If in doubt, test it out with “advice” and “advise” (“I must advise”, not “I must advice” = “I must practise”, not “I must practice”
- Prevaricate – to lie or deceive; procrastinate – to put something off
- Principal – head of a school; principle/principles = beliefs
- Program – runs on a computer; programme – something we watch on television or buy at a theatre
- Theirs (no apostrophe)
- Try to, not “try and”
- Under way, not “underway”
- Until, not “up until”
- Upcoming – avoid using this word
- While, not “whilst”
- Yours (no apostrophe)
- Outside, not “outside of”