

Commonly Confused Words

Its vs It's

Its - Possessive pronoun

Examples:

- Turn the camera on its side.
- The dog went into its kennel

It's - Contraction: It is

Examples:

- It's all my fault.
- It's been a hot day.



Their vs There vs They're

Their - Possessive Pronoun

Examples:

- Her taunts had lost their power to touch him.
- She heard someone blow their nose loudly.

There - Adverb: in, at, or to that place or position

Examples:

- We went to Paris and stayed there eleven days.
- The store is there on the right.

They're - Contraction: They are

Examples:

- They're going on a boat ride.



Then vs Than

Then - Adverb: At that time; next

Examples:

- I was living in Cairo then.
- She won the first and then the second game.

Than - Conjunction & preposition

Examples:

- He was much smaller than his son.
- He claims not to own anything other than his home.



Accept vs Except

Accept - Verb: To consent, to receive; to come to recognize as valid or correct

Examples:

- He would accept their offer and see what happened.
- She is willing to accept his responsibility.

Except - Preposition: Not including, other than

Examples:

- Nothing else mattered except that she was alive.
- In every cell of your body except you red blood cells exists a copy of your DNA.



Affect vs Effect

Affect - Verb: To influence

Examples:

- The lack of rain affected the way my garden grew this year.
- My glasses affect my eyesight.
- The motivational speech from the coach affected the team greatly.

- Noun: Emotion or desire

Examples:

- He displayed a happy affect.

Effect - Noun: A result

Examples:

- The effect of the lack of rain was that my plants all died.
- Her tears had no effect on the policeman who gave her a ticket.
- The special effects in the new movie were really cool.

- Verb: To bring about or to cause

Examples:

- The mayor wanted to effect change in her community.



Assure vs Ensure vs Insure

Assure - Verb: To tell someone something positively

Examples:

- I assure you that there is a supermarket in town.
- He wants to assure a favorable vote.

Ensure - Verb: To make certain that will occur

Examples:

- The client must ensure that accurate records be kept.
- She would ensure him a place in society.

Insure - Verb: To provide insurance coverage

Examples:

- Subsidiaries set up to insure the risks of a group of companies.
- By appeasing Celia they might insure themselves against further misfortune.



Lay vs Lie

Lay - Verb: To put something or someone down

Examples:

- She went upstairs to lay her baby in his crib.
- She wouldn't put it past him to lay a trap for her.

Lie - Verb: To rest or recline

Examples:

- My dog always lies on my bed when I'm away at school.



CARTHAGE
COLLEGE

BRAINARD
WRITING CENTER