

1. desktop released safety
2. abundant rhythm masterpiece
3. ILGWU loudly planned
4. importance couldn't senator-elect
5. ahead extremely going
6. www.dragonsupport.dragonsys.com/support/tweb.nsf/
7. membershiprewards@ib.americanexpress.com

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LAB 6: Word Usage

The following words and phrases are often used incorrectly in everyday speech and in business writing. Learn to use them correctly to help achieve your communication goals.

In some cases in the following list, one word is often confused with another similar word; in other cases, the structure of our language requires that certain words be used only in certain ways. Because of space, only brief and incomplete definitions are given here. Consult a dictionary for more complete or additional meanings.

6.1 Accept/Except *Accept* means “to agree to”; *except* means “with the exclusion of.”

I will **accept** all the recommendations **except** the last one.

6.2 Advice/Advise *Advice* is a noun meaning “counsel”; *advise* is a verb meaning “to recommend.”

If I ask for her **advice**, she may **advise** me to quit.

6.3 Affect/Effect *Affect* is most often used as a verb meaning “to influence” or “to change”; *effect* is most often used as a noun meaning “result” or “impression.”

The legislation may **affect** sales but should have no **effect** on gross margin.

6.4 All Right/Alright Use *all right*. (*Alright* is considered substandard.)

The arrangement is **all right** (not *alright*) with me.

6.5 A Lot/Alot Use *a lot*. (*Alot* is considered substandard.)

We used **a lot** (not *alot*) of overtime on the project.

6.6 Among/Between Use *among* when referring to three or more; use *between* when referring to two.

Among the three candidates was one manager who divided his time **between** London and New York.

6.7 Amount/Number Use *amount* to refer to money or to things that cannot be counted; use *number* to refer to things that can be counted.

The **amount** of consumer interest was measured by the **number** of coupons returned.

6.8 Anxious/Eager Use *anxious* only if great concern or worry is involved.

Jon was **eager** to get the new car although he was **anxious** about making such high payments.

6.9 Any One/Anyone Spell as two words when followed by *of*; spell as one word when the accent is on *any*.

Anyone is allowed to attend **any one** of the sessions.

Between See *Among/Between*.

6.10 Can/May *Can* indicates ability; *may* indicates permission.

I **can** finish the project on time if I **may** hire an additional secretary.

6.11 Cite/Sight/Site *Cite* means “to quote” or “to mention”; *sight* is either a verb meaning “to look at” or a noun meaning “something seen”; *site* is most often a noun meaning “location.”

The **sight** of the high-rise building on the **site** of the old battlefield reminded Monica to **cite** several other examples to the commission members.

6.12 Complement/Compliment *Complement* means “to complete” or “something that completes”; *compliment* means “to praise” or “words of praise.”

I must **compliment** you on the new model, which will **complement** our line.

6.13 Could of/Could've Use *could've* (or *could have*). (*Could of* is incorrect.)

We **could've** (not *could of*) prevented that loss had we been more alert.

6.14 Different from/Different than Use *different from*. (*Different than* is considered substandard.)

Your computer is **different from** (not *different than*) mine.

6.15 Each Other/One Another Use *each other* when referring to two; use *one another* when referring to three or more.

The two workers helped **each other**, but their three visitors would not even look at **one another**.

Eager See *Anxious/Eager*.

Effect See *Affect/Effect*.

6.16 e.g./i.e. The abbreviation *e.g.* means “for example”; *i.e.* means “that is.” Use *i.e.* to introduce a restatement or explanation of a preceding expression. Both abbreviations, like the expressions for which they stand, are followed by commas. (Many writers prefer the full English terms to the abbreviations because they are clearer.)

The proposal has merit; **e.g.**, it is economical, forward-looking, and timely.

Or: The proposal has merit; for example, it is economical, forward-looking, and timely.

Unfortunately, it is also a hot potato; **i.e.**, it will generate unfavorable publicity.

Or: Unfortunately, it is also a hot potato; that is, it will generate unfavorable publicity.

6.17 Eminent/Imminent *Eminent* means “well-known”; *imminent* means “about to happen.”

The arrival of the **eminent** scientist from Russia is **imminent**.

6.18 Enthused/Enthusiastic Use *enthusiastic*. (*Enthused* is considered substandard.)

I have become quite **enthusiastic** (not *enthused*) about the possibilities.

Except See *Accept/Except*.

6.19 Farther/Further *Farther* refers to distance; *further* refers to extent or degree.

We drove 10 miles **farther** while we discussed the matter **further**.

6.20 Fewer/Less Use *fewer* to refer to things that can be counted; use *less* to refer to money or to things that cannot be counted.

Alvin worked **fewer** hours at the exhibit and therefore generated **less** interest.

Further See *Farther/Further*.

6.21 Good/Well *Good* is an adjective; *well* is an adverb or (with reference to health) an adjective.

Joe does a **good** job and performs **well** on tests, even when he does not feel well.

i.e. See *e.g./i.e.*

Imminent See *Eminent/Imminent*.

6.22 Imply/Infer *Imply* means “to hint” or “to suggest”; *infer* means “to draw a conclusion.” Speakers and writers *imply*; readers and listeners *infer*.

The president **implied** that changes will be forthcoming; I **inferred** from his tone of voice that these changes will not be pleasant.

6.23 Irregardless/Regardless Use *regardless*. (*Irregardless* is considered substandard.)

He wants to proceed, **regardless** (not *irregardless*) of the costs.

6.24 Its/It's *Its* is a possessive pronoun; *it's* is a contraction for "it is."

It's time to let the department increase **its** budget.

6.25 Lay/Lie *Lay* (principal forms: *lay, laid, laid, laying*) means "to put" and requires an object to complete its meaning; *lie* (principal forms: *lie, lay, lain, lying*) means "to rest."

Please **lay** the supplies on the shelf. I **lie** on the couch after lunch each day.

I **laid** the folders in the drawer. The report **lay** on his desk yesterday.

She had **laid** the notes on her desk. The job has **lain** untouched for a week.

Less See *Fewer/Less*.

Lie See *Lay/Lie*.

6.26 Loose/Lose *Loose* means "not fastened"; *lose* means "to be unable to find."

Do not **lose** the **loose** change in your pocket.

May See *Can/May*.

Number See *Amount/Number*.

One Another See *Each Other/One Another*.

6.27 Passed/Past *Passed* is a verb (the past tense or past participle of *pass*, meaning "to move on or by"); *past* is an adjective, adverb, or preposition meaning "earlier."

The committee **passed** the no-confidence motion at a **past** meeting.

6.28 Percent/Percentage With figures, use *percent*; without figures, use *percentage*.

We took a commission of 6 **percent** (or 6%), which was a lower **percentage** than last year.

6.29 Personal/Personnel *Personal* means "private" or "belonging to one individual"; *personnel* means "employees."

I used my **personal** time to draft a memo to all **personnel**.

6.30 Principal/Principle *Principal* means “primary” (adjective) or “sum of money” (noun); *principle* means “rule” or “law.”

The guiding **principle** is fair play, and the **principal** means of achieving it is a code of ethics.

6.31 Real/Really *Real* is an adjective; *really* is an adverb. Do not use *real* to modify another adjective.

She was **really** (not *real*) proud that her necklace contained **real** pearls.

6.32 Reason Is Because/Reason Is That Use *reason is that*. (*Reason is because* is considered substandard.)

The **reason** for such low attendance **is that** (not *is because*) the weather was stormy.

Regardless See *Irregardless/Regardless*.

6.33 Same Do not use *same* to refer to a previously mentioned item. Use *it* or some other wording instead.

We have received your order and will ship **it** (not *same*) in three days.

6.34 Set/Sit *Set* (principal forms: *set, set, set, setting*) means “to place”; *sit* (principal forms: *sit, sat, sat, sitting*) means “to be seated.”

Please **set** your papers on the table. Please **sit** in the chair.

She **set** the computer on the desk. She **sat** in the first-class section.

I have **set** the computer there before. I had not **sat** there before.

6.35 Should of/Should've Use *should've* (or *should have*). (*Should of* is incorrect.)

We **should've** (not *should of*) been more careful.

Sight See *Cite/Sight/Site*.

Sit See *Set/Sit*.

Site See *Cite/Sight/Site*.

6.36 Stationary/Stationery *Stationary* means “remaining in one place”; *stationery* is writing paper.

I used my personal **stationery** to write them to ask whether the minicomputer should remain **stationary**.

6.37 Sure/Surely *Sure* is an adjective; *surely* is an adverb. Do not use *sure* to modify another adjective.

I'm **surely** (not *sure*) glad that she is running and feel **sure** that she will be nominated.

6.38 Sure and/Sure to Use *sure to*. (*Sure and* is considered substandard.)

Be **sure to** (not *sure and*) attend the meeting.

6.39 Their/There/They're *Their* means "belonging to them"; *there* means "in that place"; and *they're* is a contraction for "they are."

They're too busy with **their** reports to be **there** for the hearing.

6.40 Theirs/There's *Theirs* is a possessive pronoun; *there's* is a contraction for "there is."

We finished our meal but **there's** no time for them to finish **theirs**.

They're See *Their/There/They're*.

6.41 Try and/Try to Use *try to*. (*Try and* is considered substandard.)

Please **try to** (not *try and*) attend the meeting.

Well See *Good/Well*.

6.42 Whose/Who's *Whose* is a possessive pronoun; *who's* is a contraction for "who is."

Who's going to let us know **whose** turn it is to make coffee?

6.43 Your/You're *Your* means "belonging to you"; *you're* is a contraction for "you are."

You're going to present **your** report first.

APPLICATION

DIRECTIONS Select the correct words in parentheses.

1. Please (advice/advise) the (eminent/imminent) educator of the (real/really) interest we have in his lecture.
2. The three workers on the (stationary/stationery) platform (can/may) help (each other/one another) if they are running late.
3. The writer (implied/inferred) that she and her colleagues divided (their/there/they're) time about evenly (among/between) the two projects.
4. (Whose/Who's) convinced that (fewer/less) of our employees (can/may) pass the exam?

5. If you (loose/lose) seniority, (your/you're) work schedule might be (affected/effecte'd).
6. Mary Ellen (cited/sighted/sited) several examples showing that our lab employees are (real/really) (good/well) protected from danger.
7. In comparing performance (among/between) the two companies, Brenda noted that our company earned 7 (percent/percentage) more than (theirs/there's).
8. Try (and/to) (complement/compliment) the advertising group for (its/it's) stunning new brochure.
9. When Susan (laid/lay) the models on the table, I was surprised at the (amount/number) of moving parts; (e.g./i.e.), I had expected simpler designs.
10. The reason the (personal/personnel) department (could of/could've) been mistaken is (that/because) we failed to keep them informed.
11. Sherry refused to (accept/except) the continuous-form (stationary/stationery) because it had (fewer/less) absorbency than expected.
12. (Your/You're) being paid by the (amount/number) of defective finished products you (cite/sight/site) while observing on the assembly line.
13. The (principal/principle) reason we're (anxious/eager) to solve this problem is that (a lot/alot) of workers have complained of dizziness.
14. All our customers are (enthused/enthusiastic) about the new pricing (accept/except) for Highland's, which asked for a quantity discount and expected (it/same) to be granted.
15. Be sure (and/to) point out to her that the (percent/percentage) of commission we pay new agents is no different (from/than) that which we pay experienced agents.
16. I am (anxious/eager) to see if (its/it's) going to be Arlene (whose/who's) design will be selected.
17. I (implied/inferred) from Martin's remarks that Austin is a (sure/surely) bet as the (cite/sight/site) for our new plant.
18. The (principal/principle) (advice/advise) that Michelle gave was to (set/sit) long-term goals and stick to them.
19. Although (their/there/they're) located (farther/further) from our office than I would like, I believe their expertise will (complement/compliment) our own.
20. (Any one/Anyone) who can (farther/further) refine the (loose/lose) ends of our proposal should come back this afternoon.
21. In the previous shot, Joyce and Kathy (should of/should've) been (laying/lying) next to (each other/one another) on the beach, discussing their plans for the evening.
22. Please (set/sit) awhile and tell them about your (passed, past) adventures in the Foreign Service, (e.g./i.e.), the time you were arrested in Buenos Aires for doing a (good/well) deed for a local shopkeeper.

23. (Theirs/There's) no reason to pry into an applicant's (personal/personnel) life; however, it is (all right/alright) to ask about the applicant's general state of health.
24. (Any one/Anyone) of the stockbrokers, (irregardless/regardless) of his or her philosophy, would (sure/surely) question such a strategy.
25. (Their/There/They're) will be little (affect/effect) on operations from the (eminent/imminent) change in ownership of the firm.