

CONFUSING WORDS 8

Be sure to consult a dictionary as some of the words below have other meanings not described here.

1. plain, plane: As an adjective, the word *plain* means “clearly understood”; “uncomplicated”; “free from impediments.” As a noun, *plain* means “a region of land that is flat and without trees, such as a plateau.” The word *plane* is a noun that means “a flat, level, or even surface.” *Plane* also means “a carpenter's tool used for smoothing and leveling wood.”

It is **plain** to see how unlikely your explanation is. Where can a gang of thieves hide on a treeless **plain**?

The apprenticeship taught me how to properly use a **plane** to make smooth wooden surfaces.

2. poor, pore, pour: Pour is a verb meaning “to make stream or flow continuously or profusely”; “to rain hard or heavily.” Pore is a noun that means “a minute orifice such as the ones on the skin of humans”; “a miniscule opening or passageway.” As a verb, pore means “to study carefully and attentively”; “to ponder.” Poor is an adjective that means “having little or no wealth”; “having few or no possessions”; “inferior or inadequate.”

The **poor** cannot afford to bathe their **pores** with the addictive **pours** of luxury.

3. precede, proceed: *Precede* is a transitive verb that means “to come before in time, order, or rank.” *Proceed* is an intransitive verb meaning “to go forward or onward”; “to move in an orderly fashion”; “to undertake and carry on an action.”

The **preceding** match between Venezuela and Uruguay determined which team would **proceed** to the finals to duel with Mexico.

4. principal, principle: As an adjective, principal means “foremost in importance, rank, or worth.” As a noun, the word principal means “the head administrator of an elementary or high school”; “the main participant in a given situation”; “a sum of money owed as a debt.” Principle is a

noun meaning “a basic truth, standard or assumption.”

His **principal** reason for being absent from the meeting was based on the **principle** of solidarity.

The **principal's** awful gambling habit made the news last week.

5. provided, providing: *Provided* can be used as a subordinating conjunction meaning *if*.

Providing cannot be used in this manner.

We will begin **providing** assistance to the patients, **provided** we have received full payment.

6. quiet, quit, quite: *Quiet* is an adjective meaning “without noise”; “making no noise”; “still.” *Quit* is a verb that means “to cease or stop”; “to give up.” *Quite* is an adverb which means “completely”; “actually.”

Rosa decided to **quit** smoking cigarettes: “It got **quite quiet** when I told my friends, as though I'd committed a horrid act.”

7. quote, quotation: *Quote* is a verb which means “to copy the words of another”; “to state a price for goods and services.” *Quotation* is a noun meaning “the act of quoting”; “a quoted excerpt.” Though the noun *quote* is informally used as a substitute for *quotation*, such usage is largely unacceptable in formal writing.

8. raise, rise: As a transitive verb, *raise* means “to move or cause to upward”; “to build or erect.” As an intransitive verb, *rise* means “to ascend”; “to get to a standing position after lying or sitting.” It should be noted however that *raise* is properly used as a transitive verb; it takes an object. *Rise* is standard for intransitive uses – it doesn't take an object. *Raise* is generally accepted in intransitive use.

When the temperature **rises**, the snow begins to melt.

She **raised** the policeman above her head and threw him on the car.

9. real, very, really: As an adjective, *real* means “not pretended or fictional”; “actual.” *Really* is an adverb that means “in fact”; “truly.” *Very* is also an adverb meaning “absolutely or extremely”; “to a large extent.” In formal writing do not use *real* as a substitute for *really* or *very*.

The temperature in Antarctica is **very** [not *real*] cold.

This book is **really** boring.

Are angels **real**?

10. respectfully, respectively: *Respectfully* is an adverb meaning “in a manner that shows respect.” *Respectively* is also an adverb that means “each in the order given or mentioned.”

The principal was dumbfounded by the students whom suddenly behaved **respectfully**.

The primary colors are yellow, red, and blue **respectively**.

11. right, rite, wright, write: As an adjective, *right* means “in accordance with justice, law, morality”; “correct or proper.” As a noun, *right* means “a just or legal claim”; “that which is just, moral, legal, or proper.” *Rite* is a noun meaning “a customary way of conducting a ceremonial act.” *Wright* is a noun which means “a person who builds or constructs something.” *Write* is a verb meaning “to inscribe or record letters or symbols on a surface.”

There really is no **right** way to performing these ancient **rites**.

A **playwright** **writes**.

12. scene, seen: *Seen* is the past participle of the verb see. *Scene* is a noun meaning “the place or location where something happens”; “the setting in which the action of a narrative occurs.”

“Whatever has been **seen** and recorded at the **scene** of the crime of the La Goya case should be kept quiet,” argued the detective, “if we want to this investigation closed soon.”

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