

CONFUSING WORDS 9

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

1. seam, seem: *Seam* is a noun meaning “a line of joiner formed by sewing two separate pieces of material together”; “a thin layer, as of rock”. *Seem* is a verb that means “to appear to exist”; “to appear to one's own mind or judgment”.

The **seams** on her dress need to be restitched.

The President's arrival **seems** earlier than usual.

2. set, sit: As a noun, the word *set* means “a group (of people, of places, or of things) of the same kind that belong together”. As a transitive verb, *set* means “to place in a specified position or state”; “to adjust (an instrument) to a particular calibration, as of a clock”. Its principal parts are *set, set, and set*. *Sit* is a verb meaning “to rest with the upper body vertical, and supported on the buttocks”; “to be seated”; “to cause to sit”. Its principal parts are *sit, sat, and sat*.

Kindly **set** that **set** of cutlery at the bottom of the drawer.

You just need to **sit** and think it for yourself; its plausibility is quite evident.

3. sole, soul: The noun *sole* means “the bottom surface of the foot or the shoe”; “the part on which something rests while standing”. As an adjective, *sole* means “single”; “being the only one”. *Soul* is a noun meaning “the spiritual aspect of a human considered separable from the body and everlasting”.

Jasper disliked the **soles** of his new work boots.

The pastor reminded those present at the sermon not to despair, as the **soul** of the flesh remained immortal.

4. some, sum: *Some* is an adjective that means “unknown or undisclosed by number, quantity, or name”. The noun *sum* means “the amount gotten from the operation of addition”; “the whole amount, quantity, or number”.

Could you please hand me **some** of those carrot pieces?

“The **sum** of expenditure for this year surpasses all previous years put together. This strategy better be worth the cost,” impatiently snarled the manager.

5. sometime, some time, sometimes: *Sometime* is an adverb that means “at an indefinite or unstated time”. *Some time* is a phrase that means “a period of time”. *Sometimes* is an adverb meaning “at times”; “now and then”.

At **sometime** today could you please water the flowers?

We spent **some time** getting through all of our differences. It was difficult, but well worth it.

Sometimes the squirrels run into the house.

6. stationary, stationery: *Stationary* is an adjective meaning “not moving”; “unmovable”. *Stationery* is a noun that means “writing materials and office supplies”; “a retail outlet that sells stationery and similar items”.

She is good at capturing photographs of **stationary** objects.

The parents of the children that attend this primary school barely afford meals, let alone **stationery**.

7. steal, steel: *Steal* is a verb which means “to take something belonging to another without permission”; “to commit theft”. *Steel* is a noun meaning “any of the various generally hard and malleable alloys of carbon and iron”.

I **steal**; only to feed my daughter.

There are people who chew glass in this world. What would they make of **steel**?

8. suppose to: *Suppose to* is the informal form of *supposed to*.
9. than, then: *Than* is a conjunction used to introduce the second element of an unequal comparison. *Then* is an adverb that means “at that time in the past”; “next in time, space, or

order”.

Then he had to open up his mouth claiming that the new car drove better **than** the used one.

10. them: It is incorrect to use *them* in place of *those*. *Those* is an adjective and a pronoun that is the plural of *that*. *Them* is the objective case of *they*.

Would you bring **those** [not *them*] records here please?

11. there, their, they're: *There* is an adverb meaning “in that place”; “to, into, or toward that place”. The pronoun *their* is the possessive form of *they*. *They're* is a contraction of *they are*.

They're all waiting for you over **there**.

Their dogs are quite the playful pets.

12. threw, through: *Threw* is the past tense of *throw* meaning “to have propelled into the air”; “to have hurled with some force”. *Through* is a preposition that means “in one side and out another side of”; “between or among”.

It was in anger that the nurse **threw** the chair **through** the window.

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