

**25 WORDS YOU
NEED TO SPELL
AND/OR
USE CORRECTLY
(BECAUSE SPELL
CZECH CANT HELP)**

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CANT ≠ CAN'T

**Cant: pious platitudes;
jargon; salient angle**

CANT ≠ CAN'T

**Can't: a contraction
of cannot**

**ENGLISH IS A
COMPLEX
LANGUAGE**

**ENGLISH IS A
COMPLEX
LANGUAGE**

**Even "spell" has
multiple meanings**



You can spell a word.

**You can spell a word.
You can spell a coworker.**

You can spell a word.
You can spell a coworker.
You can cast a spell.

You can spell a word.
You can spell a coworker.
You can cast a spell.
You can rest a spell.

**NO PROFESSIONALS
WRITE AS MUCH
AS
GEOPROFESSIONALS.**

**NO PROFESSIONALS
FACE AS MANY
CLAIMS AS
GEOPROFESSIONALS.**

**IN THE EVENT OF A
CLAIM, OTHERS CAN
SUBPOENA YOUR
WRITTEN RECORDS.**

**IN THE EVENT OF A
CLAIM, OTHERS CAN
SUBPOENA YOUR
WRITTEN RECORDS.**

**THE BEST EVIDENCE
IS WHAT'S
IN WRITING.**

“If you can’t spell at a sixth-grade level, how do we know you can add and subtract?”

It’s more than “just” risk management. It’s personal image...and that’s what creates the image of your firm. Think about your proposals, reports, clarifications, correspondence...so much!

**MNEMONIC
DEVICES
CAN HELP**

HOMES

HOMES

**My very energetic
monkey just sat on
Nellie's pie.**

HOMES

**My very energetic
Monkey just sat on
Nellie's pie.**

BASMOQ

**SOME WORDS
YOU'LL JUST
HAVE TO LEARN
AND REMEMBER.**

IT'S and ITS

IT'S and ITS
**It's is a contraction for it
is, just as he's is a
contraction for he is and
she's is a contraction for
she is.**

IT'S and ITS

Its is the possessive form of it.

IT'S and ITS

Its is the possessive form of it.
"Its roar was deafening."

IT'S and ITS

If it's were the possessive form of it, we'd have hi's instead of his and her's instead of hers.

IT'S and ITS

It's is a contraction of it is. Its is the possessive form of it.

DO NOT USE ITS'.

WHO'S and WHOSE

WHO'S and WHOSE

Who's is another personal pronoun and, like it's, the apostrophe connotes a contraction, in this case, of who is. Whose is the possessive form of who or what.

YOU'RE and YOUR

YOU'RE and YOUR

You're is also a personal pronoun and, like it's and who's, the apostrophe connotes a contraction, in this case, of you are.

YOU'RE and YOUR

Your is the possessive form of you, the second-person pronoun, singular or plural.

**THEY'RE and THEIR
and THERE**

**THEY'RE and THEIR
and THERE**

They're is yet another personal pronoun and, like it's, who's, and you're, the apostrophe connotes a contraction, in this case, of they are.

**THEY'RE and THEIR
and THERE**

Their is the possessive form of the third-person plural personal pronoun. There is a pronoun referring to a place.

**THEY'RE and THEIR
and THERE**

**When proofing, beware of
heir and here.**

AFFECT and EFFECT

AFFECT and EFFECT

Each is a noun.

AFFECT and EFFECT

**Each is a noun.
Each is a verb.**



AFFECT and EFFECT

**Affect is most commonly
used as a verb.
It means to act upon.**

AFFECT and EFFECT

**Affect is most commonly
used as a verb.
It means to act upon. (A
for act; a for affect.)**

AFFECT and EFFECT

**Affect is most commonly used as a verb.
Her experience will affect the final design.**

AFFECT and EFFECT

Effect is most commonly used as a noun. It's the result when someone or something acts on someone or something else.

AFFECT and EFFECT

In other words, when you affect something, you produce an effect on it.

AFFECT and EFFECT

**In other words, when you affect something, you produce an effect on it.
(Effect is the noun.)**

AFFECT and EFFECT

Effect is also used somewhat frequently as a verb.

AFFECT and EFFECT

**Effect is also used somewhat frequently as a verb.
It means to make happen.**

AFFECT and EFFECT

Jack affects the change.

Jill effects the change.

AFFECT and EFFECT

Jack affects the change.

AFFECT and EFFECT

Jack affects the change.

**Jack was one of several
people whose
suggestions we used in
developing the final plan.**

AFFECT and EFFECT

Jill effects the change.

AFFECT and EFFECT

Jill effects the change.

**Jill makes the change
happen.**

AFFECT and EFFECT

**USE THE WRONG WORD,
AND WHAT YOU WRITE
STILL MAKES SENSE. BUT**

AFFECT and EFFECT

**USE THE WRONG WORD,
AND WHAT YOU WRITE
STILL MAKES SENSE. BUT
IT'S WRONG; YOU WILL
SAY SOMETHING YOU DO
NOT MEAN TO SAY.**

AFFECT and EFFECT

**USE THE WRONG WORD,
AND WHAT YOU WRITE
STILL MAKES SENSE. BUT
IT'S WRONG; YOU WILL
FAIL TO WHAT YOU
INTENDED TO SAY.**

**ENSURE and ASSURE
and INSURE**

**ENSURE and ASSURE
and INSURE**

THREE BAD WORDS

**ENSURE and ASSURE
and INSURE**

THREE BAD WORDS

**ENSURE and ASSURE
and INSURE**

**BAD OR NOT, YOU NEED TO
KNOW WHAT THEY MEAN!**

**ENSURE and ASSURE
and INSURE**

***Ensure:* Make sure or
guarantee.**

**ENSURE and ASSURE
and INSURE**

***Assure:* Promise or
guarantee.**

**ENSURE and ASSURE
and INSURE**

***Insure:* Provide or purchase
an insurance
policy or indemnity.**

**COMPLIMENT
and
COMPLEMENT**

**COMPLIMENT
and
COMPLEMENT**
A compliment (the noun
with an I) is an
expression of praise.

**COMPLIMENT
and
COMPLEMENT**
A compliment (the noun
with an I) is an
expression of praise.
I love that dress on you.

**COMPLIMENT
and
COMPLEMENT**

**A compliment (the noun
with an I) is an
expression of praise.**

I value your assistance.

**COMPLIMENT
and
COMPLEMENT**

**A compliment (the noun
with an I) is an
expression of praise.**

I am awed by your spell.

**COMPLIMENT
and
COMPLEMENT**

**When you offer an
expression of praise, you
compliment (the verb
with an I) someone.**

**COMPLIMENT
and
COMPLEMENT**

**I compliment you on your
eyes.**

**COMPLIMENT
and
COMPLEMENT**

**A compliment is a
complimentary remark.**

**COMPLIMENT
and
COMPLEMENT**

**A compliment is a
complimentary remark.
And because
compliments are free,
they're complimentary.**

**COMPLIMENT
and
COMPLEMENT**

**Complement (the verb
with an E) means to
complete.**

**COMPLIMENT
and
COMPLEMENT**

**Coffee complements a
meal because it
completes it.**

**COMPLIMENT
and
COMPLEMENT**

**The geoprofessional
complements the design
team.**

**COMPLIMENT
and
COMPLEMENT**

Were a geoprofessional to compliment the design team, the geoprofessional might say, "I'm so proud to be on the same team."

**COMPLIMENT
and
COMPLEMENT**

A complement (the noun with an E) is something that completes something.

**COMPLIMENT
and
COMPLEMENT**

Coffee is a complement to a good meal. ("That's good coffee," is a compliment.)

**COMPLIMENT
and
COMPLEMENT**

When coffee compliments a good meal, it says, "That's a good meal." (And someone has talking coffee.)

**STATIONARY
and
STATIONERY**

**STATIONARY
and
STATIONERY**

Stationary (the adjective with an A) describes something or someone who does not move.

**STATIONARY
and
STATIONERY**

**Stationery (the noun with an
E) means writing paper.**

**STATIONARY
and
STATIONERY**

**Stationery (the noun with an
E) means writing paper.
(Write ends with an E.)**

CITE and SITE

CITE and SITE

Cite (the verb with the C) means to mention or refer to. (Think "citation" or "recital.")

CITE and SITE

Site (the noun with the S) means an area. Site (the verb with the S) means to locate. (If you can use a mnemonic to remember cite, site is the other one, just like stationary.)

Site and site

Differentiating the project site from others by referring to it as the capital-S Site is dangerous and should not be done.

Site and site
To differentiate the project site, use an acronym; e.g., "The Hidden Tower Project site (HTP site)...." or "The Hidden Tower Project Site (HTPS)...."

CITE and SITE and SIGHT

CITE and SITE and SIGHT
The ophthalmologists' campground was a site for sore eyes.

**CITE and SITE
and SIGHT**

**The ophthalmologists'
campground site was a
sight for sore eyes.**

**CRITERIA
and
CRITERION**

**CRITERIA
and
CRITERION**

**Criteria is the plural of
criterion, a noun meaning
a rule or principle for
evaluating or testing
something.**

**CRITERIA
and
CRITERION**
ASTM E1527 is the criterion
we apply.

**CRITERIA
and
CRITERION**
ASTM E1527 is the criterion
we apply.
ASTM E1527 conveys an
array of criteria.

DATUM and DATA

DATUM and DATA
Data is the plural of datum.

DATUM and DATA
Data is the plural of datum.
The data are...

DATUM and DATA
Data is the plural of datum.
The data are...
The data show...

DATUM and DATA

Data is the plural of datum.

**The data are...
The data show...
The data reveal...**

DATUM and DATA

Data is the plural of datum.

**The data are...
The data show...
The data reveal...
Four is the datum in
question.**

HOME and HONE

HOME and HONE

"To hone in on..." means

HOME and HONE

**"To hone in on..." means
you heard it wrong and
you're repeating it.**

HOME and HONE

**To "hone" means to
sharpen. Some folks assume
that "hone in" therefore
means to sharpen one's
focus. It doesn't.**

HOME and HONE

To "home in" means to direct onto a point or target. (That's why it's a homing pigeon and not a honing pigeon.)

FLESH and FLUSH

FLESH and FLUSH

To "flesh out" is a metaphor, meaning to add flesh to the bones; like writing a report based on an approved outline.

FLESH and FLUSH

To "flush out" is a hunting metaphor, meaning to drive from a hidden or secure position.

FLESH and FLUSH

You'd "flush out" an answer and "flesh out" a report outline.

BATE and BAIT

BATE and BAIT

***Bate:* Restrain**

BATE and BAIT

***Bait:* A lure or, as a verb, to add a lure to a trap.**

BATE and BAIT

If you write, "I wait with baited breath," you're implying you had worms for lunch.

**PEAK and PEEK and
PIQUE**

**PEAK and PEEK and
PIQUE**

**Peak, the noun, is the top, as
in a mountain peak.**

**PEAK and PEEK and
PIQUE**

**Peak, the noun, is the top, as
in a mountain peak.
Peak, the verb, means
to reach the top
in a given activity.**

**PEAK and PEEK and
PIQUE**

**Peak, the noun, is the top, as
in a mountain peak.**

**Peak, the verb, means
to reach the top
in a given activity.**

His billability peaked at 120%.

**PEAK and PEEK and
PIQUE**

**To peek is to look quickly or
sneakily. Peek, as a
noun, is a quick or
furtive look.**

**PEAK and PEEK and
PIQUE**

**To peek is to look quickly or
sneakily. Peek, as a
noun, is a quick or
furtive look.**

She peeked. He saw and said, "Eek."

**PEAK and PEEK and
PIQUE**

To pique is to excite.

**PEAK and PEEK and
PIQUE**

To pique is to excite.

**"The situation piqued my
curiosity."**

**PEAK and PEEK and
PIQUE**

**A situation that peaks your
curiosity would be almost
the same thing**

**PEAK and PEEK and
PIQUE**

**A situation that peaks your
curiosity would be almost
the same thing
but it would also indicate
you don't know about pique!**

**PEAK and PEEK and
PIQUE**

**The noun pique means a
feeling of irritation or
resentment.**

"He experienced a fit of pique."

**PEAK and PEEK and
PIQUE**

**"I experienced a fit of peek"
is an excuse used by a
peeping Tom.**

**PRINCIPAL
and
PRINCIPLE**

**PRINCIPAL
and
PRINCIPLE**

**Principal (the noun) means
a chief or head. The
common mnemonic:
"The principal is my pal."**

**PRINCIPAL
and
PRINCIPLE**

**Geoprofessional firms have
principals. They also have
principles, which means a
basis of conduct.**

CANON and CANNON

CANON and CANNON

A canon is a fundamental principle. (ASCE's code of ethics comprises fundamental principles and fundamental canons.)

CANON and CANNON

A cannon goes boom.

LEAD and LED

LEAD and LED

To lead is to be first or to guide. Lead can also be an adjective (the lead horse) or a noun (the horse has the lead).

LEAD and LED

Lead is also a metal, but it's pronounced differently: i.e., "led."

LEAD and LED

To read is to comprehend written words. Read in the present tense is pronounced "reed," as in "I read." In the past tense it's spelled the same, but pronounced "red," as in "I read."

LEAD and LED

Lead in the present tense is pronounced "leed," as in "I lead." But in the past tense it's spelled differently - led - and pronounced differently; i.e., "led."

LOOSE and LOSE

LOOSE and LOSE

Loose is an adjective that means unconfined. As a verb, it means to let go. Loose rhymes with moose and noose.

LOOSE and LOSE

Lose is a verb that means to suffer a loss. It does not rhyme with dose or close, or with hose, nose, or rose. Because it's pronounced "looz," people assume that it's spelled with two O's.

BUS and BUSS

BUS and BUSS

A bus is a vehicle.

BUS and BUSS

A bus is a vehicle.

A buss is a kiss.

BUS and BUSS

Two busses are two kisses.

BUS and BUSS

**Two busses are two kisses.
Two buses are two vehicles.**

POSSESS and POSSES

POSSESS and POSSES

The issue is proofreading.

POSSESS and POSSES

Posses is a typo that can easily slip through. It's the plural of posse, which is an armed force with legal authority.

**PREMIER
and
PREMIERE**

**PREMIER
and
PREMIERE**

Premier without the E on the end is a noun, meaning the prime minister, or an adjective meaning first in rank.

**PREMIER
and
PREMIERE**

One could say that "Tom is the premier candidate for principal."

**PREMIER
and
PREMIERE**

Premiere relates to entertainment; the kind of stuff they talk about on the television show "E!."

**PREMIER
and
PREMIERE**

As a noun, a premiere is the first public performance of a movie or play. As an adjective, it's used as the "premiere performance."

**ORDINANCE
and
ORDNANCE**

**ORDINANCE
and
ORDNANCE**
**An ordinance is a law or
regulation I must obey.**

**ORDINANCE
and
ORDNANCE**
**Ordnance comprises
munitions that can knock
my eyes out.**

STATUTE and STATUE

STATUTE and STATUE

A statute is an ordinance or law. A statue is a three-dimensional work of art. Statutory and statuary are often the result of inadequate proofreading. Be aware!

E.G. and I.E.

E.G. and I.E.

Both are abbreviations of Latin expressions that we use to create some variety in our writing, so we do not continually say, for example, "in other words" or "for example."

E.G. and I.E.

E.g. is an abbreviation of *exempli gratiā*, which means "for example." Like "such as," it usually is followed by a brief list of typical examples.

E.G. and I.E.

"We use many Latin abbreviations in our writing; e.g., e.g., i.e., etc., and et al."

E.G. and I.E.
I.e. is an abbreviation of *id est*, which means "that is" or "in other words."

E.G. and I.E.
"John talks a lot; i.e., he is not a mute."

E.G. and I.E.
E.g. exemplifies. I.e. identifies.

MUTE and MOOT

MUTE and MOOT

***Mute:* An adjective meaning
silent or a noun
meaning a person
incapable of speech.**

MUTE and MOOT

**"John talks a lot;
i.e., he is not a mute."**

MUTE and MOOT

***Moot:* An adjective meaning debatable.**

MUTE and MOOT

**“That’s a mute point.”
WRONG! WRONG!
WRONG! WRONG!**

“That’s a moot point.”

COMPRISE

COMPRISE

To consist of or
be composed of.

COMPRISE

To say "This class is
comprised of professionals"
would be
WRONG
WRONG
WRONG

COMPRISE

"This class comprises
professionals."

COMPRISE

It also means to form or constitute.

COMPRISE

"Professionals comprise this class."

APPRISE and APPRAISE

APPRISE and APPRAISE

**To apprise is to inform:
"Jack apprised Jill
of their situation."**

APPRISE and APPRAISE

**To appraise is to evaluate:
"Jack appraised the
seriousness of his and
Jill's situation."**

APPRISE and APPRAISE

**The words are closely
related and easy to confuse.**

APPRISE and APPRAISE

The words are closely related and easy to confuse.

Note that inform and evaluate are good words, too.

IMPLY and INFER

IMPLY and INFER

When you imply, you indicate or suggest without being explicit.

IMPLY and INFER

When you imply, you indicate or suggest without being explicit.

“John implied he was unhappy with his performance review.”

IMPLY and INFER

When you infer, you conclude, often from someone else’s implication.

IMPLY and INFER

When you infer, you conclude, often from someone else’s implication.

“I inferred from his tears that John was unhappy with his performance review.”

BETWEEN and AMONG

BETWEEN and AMONG

Between means in the space separating two points, people, dates, etc.

BETWEEN and AMONG

Between means in the space separating two points, people, dates, etc.

Among means in the midst of more than two points, people, or whatever.

**PERSPECTIVE
and
PROSPECTIVE**

**PERSPECTIVE
and
PROSPECTIVE**

Perspective is a noun
connoting one's point of
view.

**PERSPECTIVE
and
PROSPECTIVE**

Prospective is an adjective
meaning likely or potential;
from "prospect," a noun
meaning outlook.

BREACH and BREECH

BREACH and BREECH

Breach is a verb that means to rupture. The rupture itself is a breach (a noun). Levees and earth dams breach. You can also breach an earth dam or levee, as long as...

BREACH and BREECH

you figure out how to dress them in a pair of breeches. Breech the noun refers to the human buttocks. It's also part of a gun.

LEVY and LEVEE

LEVY and LEVEE

Levy is a noun meaning a collection activity, like a tax levy. As a verb, levy means to impose something to be collected, like a tax or import duty.

LEVY and LEVEE

A levee is an embankment designed to contain a river. Problems can arise because levies and levees can be easily confused or overlooked when proofing.

LEVY and LEVEE

And you really need to know which is which when you write something like, "Levies will be needed to fund the levees; i.e., a levee levy."

BOLDER and BOULDER

BOLDER and BOULDER

Bolder is a comparative adjective. Boulder is a noun we should not have to explain. After all, many of U are in boulders.

AUGER and AUGUR

AUGER and AUGUR

One of these is a bit for drilling holes in the ground. The other is a prophet or, as a verb, a word meaning to predict or prophesy.

Do you know which is which?

AUGER and AUGUR

One of these is a bit for drilling holes in the ground. The other is a prophet or, as a verb, a word meaning to predict or prophesy.

AUGER and AUGUR

One of these is a bit for drilling holes in the ground. The other is a prophet or, as a verb, a word meaning to predict or prophesy.

AUGER and AUGUR

One of these is a bit for drilling holes in the ground. The other is a prophet or, as a verb, a word meaning to predict or prophesy.

CAPITAL and CAPITOL

CAPITAL and CAPITOL

Capital (with an A) has many meanings. As an adjective, it can describe a type of letter; as a noun, it can refer to investment funds or the chief city of a state or nation.

CAPITAL and CAPITOL

Capitol (with an O) is a building, like the U.S. Capitol or the capitol in most state capitals. Most capitols have domes.



DESERT and DESSERT

DESERT and DESSERT

A desert is a large arid expanse. The verb desert, which is pronounced like the after-meal treat, means to abandon a place, person, or duty.

DESERT and DESSERT

A dessert is the after-meal treat. Have too much of it and you may wind up with two esses, too.

Coming Attraction

**Join us on
Wednesday, August 8,
2012, at 12:30 PM EDT,
for our next webinar on
how to prepare lists.**

Coming Attraction

**There's still time
to sign up for
FUNDAMENTALS OF
PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE
CLASS 22**

Questions?

**Just e-mail
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Thank you!


