

analysis/analyses	medium/media
crisis/crises	stimulus/stimuli
datum/data	thesis/theses

Some nouns with foreign roots have regular and irregular plural forms (*appendix / appendices / appendixes*). Be consistent in the spelling you choose.

Note: Some writers now treat *data* as though it were singular, but the preferred practice is still to recognize that *data* is plural and takes a plural verb: *The data are clear on this point: the pass/fail course has become outdated by events.*

Compound nouns with hyphens generally form plurals by adding *s* or *es* to the most important word.

attorney general/attorneys general
mother-in-law/mothers-in-law

For some compound words that appear as one word, the same rule applies (*passersby*); for others, it does not (*cupfuls*).

If both words in the compound are equally important, add *s* to the second word: *singer-songwriters*.

A few words such as *fish* and *sheep* have the same forms for singular and plural.



Tip for Multilingual Writers:

American and British Spelling

Standard British spelling differs from American spelling for some words—among them *color / colour, canceled / cancelled, theater / theatre, realize / realise, and judgment / judgement*.

Exercise 60.1 Practicing spelling

Write the correct plural form for each of the following words. Consult the preceding rules or a dictionary, as needed.

Bentley	hoof	trophy
president-elect	potato	index
life	fungus	Sidney
box	brother-in-law	self
appendix	stereo	nucleus

Exercise 60.2 Practicing spelling

Some words in the following list are misspelled. Circle each of the misspelled words, and write the correct spelling next to it.

either	boxxing	hopping
hygiene	supplied	nieghbor
dealer	neither	worried
buying	divorced	tring
exced	managable	receipt

60b Words pronounced alike but spelled differently

Homonyms sound alike but have different meanings and different spellings. The following is a list of common homonyms as well as words that are almost homonyms.

COMMON HOMONYMS and NEAR HOMONYMS

accept: “to take willingly”
except: “to leave out” (verb);
“but for” (preposition)

affect: “to influence” (verb);
“a feeling or an emotion”
(noun)

effect: “to make or accomplish”
(verb); “result” (noun)

all ready: “prepared”
already: “by this time”

discreet: “tactful” or “prudent”
discrete: “separate” or “distinct”

cite: “to quote or refer to”
(noun); “to leave” (verb)
sight: “spectacle, sense”
site: “place”

desert: “dry, sandy place”
(noun); “to leave” (verb)
dessert: “after-dinner course”

hear: “perceive by listening”
here: “at this place”

it’s: contraction for *it is* or *it has*
its: possessive pronoun

loose: “not tight”
lose: “to misplace”

passed: past tense of *pass*
past: “former time”

peace: “quiet, harmony”
piece: “part of”

plain: “simple”
plane: “aircraft” or “tool for
leveling wood”

precede: “to come before”
proceed: “to go forward”

principal: “most important”
(adjective); “the head of an
organization” or “a sum of
money” (noun)

principle: “a basic standard or
law” (noun)

(continued)

COMMON HOMONYMS and NEAR HOMONYMS *(continued)*

their: possessive pronoun
there: adverb of place
they're: contraction for
they are

to: indicating movement
too: "also"
two: number

weather: "atmospheric
condition"
whether: "if it is or was true"

who's: contraction for *who is*
whose: possessive of *who*

your: possessive pronoun
you're: contraction for *you are*

COMMONLY MISPELLED WORDS

A
absence
accessible
accidentally
accommodate
achieve
address
amateur
analysis
analyze
apparent
appearance
appropriate
argument
athlete
average

B
basically
beginning
believe
beneficial
business

C
calendar
cemetery
certain

changing
chief
column
commitment
committee
competition
conceive
consistency
continuous
convenient
criticism
curiosity
curious
curriculum

D
decision
definitely
descendant
desirable
desperate
discipline
discussion
disease
dissatisfied

E
ecstasy

efficient
eighth
embarrass
emphasize
entirely
environment
especially
exaggerate
exercise
existence

F
familiar
fascinate
February
foreign
fulfill

G
gauge
government
grammar
guarantee
guard
guidance

H
harass

COMMONLY MISPELLED WORDS

height
heroes
humorous

I
imaginary
immediately
incredible
independence
individual
influential
intelligence
interest
irrelevant
irresistible

J
judgment

K
knowledge

L
laboratory
license
luxury
lying

M
maintenance
manageable
marriage
meant
medicine
mischievous
misspelled
mortgage
muscle

N
necessary
neighbor

nuclear
nuisance
numerous

O
occasion
occur
official
opponent
opportunity

P
parallel
parliament
particularly
performance
permanent
permissible
persuade
pitiful
playwright
possession
practically
preference
prejudice
prevalent
privilege
professor
pronunciation

Q
questionnaire
quizzes

R
receive
recommend
referred
remembrance
reminisce
repetition
restaurant

rhyme
rhythm
ridiculous

S
sacrifice
schedule
secretary
seize
separate
similar
sincerely
sophomore
succeed
summary
surprise

T
technique
tendency
thorough
together
tomorrow
tragedy
twelfth

U
unanimous
unconscious
unnecessary
usually

V
vacuum
vengeance
villain

W
weird
wholly
writing

Practice

Words commonly spelled wrongly are also included here.

1 Correct the spelling where necessary.

- a) deciding *deciding*
- b) swimming
- c) foto
- d) qestion
- e) whistle
- f) known
- g) thier
- h) beatful
- i) receipt
- j) begining
- k) phychiatrist
- l) sucesfull

2 Use the letters in brackets to make a word which fits the space.

- a) Sue said she'd (nehop) *phone* me but I haven't (iredvece) a call yet.
- b) When the referee blew the (stewilh) the players left the (edlih)
- c) Ellen (feclyslusucs) completed the course in nuclear (shipsy)
- d) I didn't (wolk) how to cut the string without a (inke)
- e) The police arrested the (itfeh) as he was (negvial) the bank.
- f) Jim asked a (sigontue) , but his teacher wasn't (nlsigent)
- g) At the (nigenibn) of the film, I had a poor (wive) of the screen.
- h) These ancient (mucosn) are (yitbueftual) made.

3 Write each verb with an -ing ending.

- a) control *controlling*
- b) thicken
- c) grip
- d) choose
- e) fly
- f) make
- g) upset
- h) hook
- i) write
- j) improve
- k) swim
- l) ride