

Commonly confused words

Affect / Effect

Affect (as a verb) means to change or influence something.

Example: The hot room **affected** my concentration in the exam.

Effect (as a noun) means the end result or outcome of something.

Example: The room temperature had a negative effect on my performance.

NB: Effect is sometimes used as a verb and means to cause or bring about.

Example: She tried to *effect* a change in her working environment.

Who's / Whose

Who's is the shortened form of who is.

Example: Who's teaching the computing course?

Whose can be used as a relative pronoun.

Example: This is the child whose drawings are famous.

Whose can also be used as an adjective that shows ownership.

Example: Whose drawings are these?

Practise / Practice

Practice is a noun (memory aid: *ice* is a noun*).

Example: She is doing her piano practice this afternoon.

Practise is a verb.

Example: She needs to **practise** drug calculations before she sits her final exam.

*NB: Similarly, advice is a noun (*Example: She gave him some helpful advice*.) and advise is a verb (*Example: She advised him to invest his money wisely*.).

Off / Of

Example: Turn the lights off before you leave (NB: off has a soft 'f' sound).

Example: Take care of the dogs while I'm away (NB: of has a `v' sound).

The words **should've**, **could've**, **would've** are short for should *have* etc, **NOT** should *of*. The apostrophes in these words are used to show that letters have been omitted (left out).



Commonly confused words

Loose / Lose

Loose is an adjective.

Example: The dog escaped because its collar was too loose.

(NB: loose has a soft 's' sound)

Lose is a verb.

Example: The All Blacks are unlikely to **lose** the match this Saturday.

(NB: In lose the 's' sounds like a 'z'.)

Choice / Choose

Choice is a noun.

Example: We had to wear a pink uniform. We had no choice.

(NB: choice has a soft 's' sound.)

Choose is a verb.

Example: We did not **choose** the colour of our uniform.

(NB: In choose the 's' sounds like a 'z'.)

Your / You're

You're is the shortened form of you are (the apostrophe shows that the 'a' has been omitted).

Example: You're going to have a lot of work to do this weekend.

Your is a possessive adjective.

Example: Put your bag in the cupboard.

There / Their / They're

There = place or fact

Examples: Have you been **there** before? **There** are many things to see and do.

Their = belonging to them

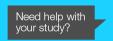
Example: **Their** names are Paul and Janet.

They're is short for they are.

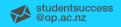
Example: **They're** new students at Otago Polytechnic.



For a larger list of commonly confused words go <u>HERE</u>













Commonly confused words

Exercises Complete the following sentences. (In some cases you will need to add -s or -ed.)

- 1. The bad weather our skiing. (affect/effect)
- 2. Stress has a negative on my health. (affect/effect)
- 3. Her decision will a lot of people. (affect/effect)
- 4. that woman in the red coat? (who's/whose)
- 5. socks are these? (who's/whose)
- 6. Is he the one going to the conference? (who's/whose)
- 7. They are going to for the concert this evening. (practise/practice)
- 8. She doesn't work in a hospital; she is in private (practise/practice)
- 9. He needs to more if he wants to become a better skier. (practise/practice)
- 10. The bird fell its perch. (off/of)
- 11. January is the beginning (off/of) the year.
- 12. Jackie is an important member the management team. (off/of)
- 13. There was no way that she could the competition. (loose/lose)
- 14. The rope became and the horse galloped away. (loose/lose)
- 15. There will be a public outcry if our team the match tomorrow. (loose/lose)
- 16. It was hard to because everything on the menu looked fantastic. (choice/choose)
- 17. We have two we can either stay here, or move to Christchurch. (choice/choose)
- 18. After the interviews she had to the most suitable applicant. (choice/choose)
- 19. Are these floppy discs? (you're/your)
- 20. Remember to call friend over the next couple of days. (you're/your)
- 21. likely to improve if you continue to practise. (you're/your)

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