

## 130

## Common

Mistakes in English

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Mistakes and students go together. Otherwise, pupils would be teachers. English - a language of few infallible rules - is fertile land for blunders and I have been listening to and committing them for years. One day I started to keep a list of the most common slips and ended up with around three hundred. After eliminating the least frequent I listed the remainder, which you'll find below.

Even though I have strived to include the most common errors this list is - as many others arbitrary. I therefore apologise to those faults who feel their prevalence makes them belong here and to those who are in but consider themselves exceptional and would rather join another club. In or out? Coffee or dinner? Kiss now or later? Lips or cheek? Decisions and missteps are, I'm afraid, the stuff of life. Though the fewer you make the easier it will be to impress that girl or lad tonight. Yours or mine?

This book has two parts. The first includes correct and incorrect examples. The second shows which ones are right.

## Part 1: Which one is wrong?

1. Accused of
2. Administrative
3. Agree
4. Alive \& live
5. Alternate \& alternative
6. Alternative \& alternate
7. Among \& between
8. Angry \& hungry
9. Anything \& nothing

The man was accused of the murder.
The man was accused with the murder.

I work as an administrative at a co-operative.
This is just an administrative problem.

Greta agrees with you. Greta is agree with you.

Only three people were alive after the accident.
Only three people were live after the accident.

We'll meet on alternate Mondays. Today, on the $11^{\text {th }}$ and on the $25^{\text {th }}$.
We'll meet on alternative Mondays. Today, on the 11 th and on the 25th.

Is this the only solution? Isn't there an alternate option?
Is this the only solution? Isn't there an alternative option?

The three boys divided the cake among themselves.
The three boys divided the cake between themselves.

He's angry because he had an accident.
He's hungry because he had an accident.

She can't see anything. She can't see nothing.

| 10. | As \& like | He's an engineer but works as a driver. <br> He's an engineer but works like a driver. |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 11. | Attempt \& intend | She tried to climb Mount Kilimanjaro last year but failed. This year she'll attempt it again. She tried to climb Mount Kilimanjaro last year but failed. This year she'll intend it again. |
| 12. | Axis \& axle | Shall I write the figure on axis $X$ or axis Y? <br> Shall I write the figure on axle $X$ or axle $Y$ ? |
| 13. | Axle \& axis | My car wheels are held together by the axis. <br> My car wheels are held together by the axle. |
| 14. | Bad \& badly | He reacts in a bad way. He reacts in a badly way. |
| 15. | Badly \& bad | He reacts bad. He reacts badly. |
| 16. | Be fifteen years old | We are both fifteen years old. We have both fifteen years. |
| 17. | Believe | I don't believe anything she ever says. <br> I'm not believing anything she ever says. |
| 18. | Between \& among | France lies among Spain and Germany. <br> France lies between Spain and Germany. |
| 19. | Billion | A billion is a thousand million in the USA. <br> A billion is a million million in the USA. |

20. Boring | I find the economics class boring. |
| :--- |
| I'm boring at the economics |
| class. |
21. Continually \& continuously | She's continually taking days off. |  |
| :--- | :--- |
|  | She missed Monday, Wednesday |
| and Friday last week. |  |
|  | She's continuously taking days off. |
|  | She missed Monday, Wednesday |
22. Continuously \& continually The bell rang continuously and didn't stop for even a second. The bell rang continually and didn't stop for even a second.
23. Crash into

He crashed a wall. He crashed into a wall.
32. Current \& actual I always check news online because I like to be informed about current affairs. I always check news online because I like to be informed about actual affairs.
33. Dairy

He works on a dairy farm. She writes on her dairy every night.
34. Deduce \& deduct
35. Deduct \& deduce

We can either deduce taxes from your salary now or next year. We can either deduct taxes from your salary now or next year.
36. Depend from

In a hierarchical organization employees depend from one boss.
In a hierarchical organization employees depend on one boss.

| 37. | Depend on | My decision will depend of the information I have. <br> My decision will depend on the information I have. |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 38. | Desert \& dessert | The Gobi desert is cold at night and warm during the day. The Gobi dessert is cold at night and warm during the day. |
| 39. | Dessert \& desert | Would you like apple pie for desert? <br> Would you like apple pie for dessert? |
| 40. | Diary | He keeps a private diary. These are diary cows. They produce milk. |
| 41. | Dislike | Mark dislikes modern architecture. Mark is disliking modern architecture. |
| 42. | Doctor | My brother is a doctor. My brother is doctor. |
| 43. | Download \& upload | We must download the page from the server to our laptop. We must upload the page from the server to our laptop. |
| 44. | Enjoy | I am enjoy the cinema. I enjoy the cinema. |
| 45. | Enjoy | I enjoy my children. I enjoy with my children. |
| 46. | Everywhere | He looked for the keys every place. <br> He looked for the keys everywhere. |


| 47. | Except | We'll finance all the new projects except for Joe's, which will be discontinued. <br> We'll finance all the new projects except Joe's, which will be discontinued. |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 48. | Explain | Please explain me your theory. Please explain your theory to me. |
| 49. | Familiar | I can'† remember her face but her name does sound familiar. We have a large family sol invited several familiars to the wedding. |
| 50. | Few \& little | We need a few dollars to meet our savings goal. <br> We need a little dollars to meet our savings goal. |
| 51. | Flour \& flower | You need flour to bake a pizza. You need flower to bake a pizza. |
| 52. | Flower \& flour | Most flours bloom in spring. Most flowers bloom in spring. |
| 53. | Folder \& carpet | I use a carpet to keep papers. I use a folder to keep papers. |
| 54. | For \& since | I've waited for three hours already. I've waited since three hours already. |
| 55. | Good \& well | This is a good book. This is a well book. |
| 56. | Had better | You had better to visit the client tomorrow. <br> You had better visit the client tomorrow. |


| 57. | Hate | I hate her because she is mean. I'm hating her because she is mean. |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 58. | Intend \& attempt | I attempt to attend university when I finish school. I intend to attend university when I finish school |
| 59. | It's \& its | It's going to snow. Its going to snow. |
| 60. | Its \& it's | The company pays its employees once a month. <br> The company pays it's employees once a month. |
| 61. | Job \& work | I'm the company manager. It is my job to solve problems. I'm the company manager. It is my work to solve problems. |
| 62. | Ladder \& stairs | Shall I move the ladder under the chandelier so you can change the bulb? <br> Shall I move the stairs under the chandelier so you can change the bulb? |
| 63. | Large enough | This boat isn't large enough for all our family. <br> This boat isn't enough large for all our family. |
| 64. | Lay \& lie | You must lay the table before they arrive. You must lie the table before they arrive. |
| 65. | Lie \& lay | He always lays down for a nap. He always lies down for a nap. |

66. Like
67. Like \& as
68. Listen
69. Live \& alive
70. Load
71. Look forward to
72. Love
73. Make a mistake
74. Many \& much
75. Media \& medium

I like Picasso because he's a Cubist painter. I'm liking Picasso because he's a Cubist painter.

That product is very much as the one we developed.
That product is very much like the one we developed.

I always listen my boss. I always listen to my boss.

NBC will broadcast the match alive.
NBC will broadcast the match live.

They'll load the computer on the mains.
They'll load the elephant onto the lorry.

We look forward to meeting your partner.
We look forward to meet your partner.

I love him more and more every day.
I'm loving him more and more every day.

Andrew wrote this list so he would make fewer mistakes.
Andrew wrote this list so he would do fewer mistakes.

Many people came today. Much people came today.

Most of the media live from advertising revenue.
Most of the medium live from advertising revenue.

| 76. | Medium \& media | I think you should try another media. <br> I think you should try another medium. |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 77. | Most | Most managers have arrived. Most of managers have arrived. |
| 78. | Motorway | We drove through the motorway. We drove through the autoway. |
| 79. | Much \& many | Having much money is always better than having little money. Having many money is always better than having little money. |
| 80. | Must | We must increase prices. We must to increase prices. |
| 81. | Nothing | She didn't understand nothing. She understood nothing. |
| 82. | Now \& actually | He used to be a secretary. He's a manager now. <br> He used to be a secretary. He's a manager actually. |
| 83. | Officer \& official | Could you please call a police officer? <br> Could you please call a police official? |
| 84. | Official \& officer | This is an officer statement. This is an official statement. |
| 85. | Parents-in-law | She loves her parents-in-law. She loves her fathers-in-law. |
| 86. | Parking | I rarely leave my car at a parking lot because it's too expensive. I rarely leave my car at a parking because it's too expensive. |


| 87. | People | Most people are interested in thei health. <br> Most people is interested in their health. |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 88. | Personal \& personnel | I have a personal trainer. I have a personnel trainer. |
| 89. | Personnel \& personal | Where's the personnel department? Where's the personal department? |
| 90. | Price \& prize | The price of this shirt is twelve dollars. <br> The prize of this shirt is twelve dollars. |
| 91. | Prize \& price | She's an excellent student and won the first price. She's an excellent student and won the first prize. |
| 92. | Professor | Anthony is a university professor. He teaches Physics. Richard is a kindergarten professor. He teaches children. |
| 93. | Raise \& rise | Farmers raise cattle. Farmers rise cattle. |
| 94. | Recipe | Do you have the recipe for Yorkshire pudding? <br> The doctor gave me a recipe for more antibiotics. |
| 95. | Rise \& raise | Prices raise because of inflation. Prices rise because of inflation. |
| 96. | Rob \& steal | He robbed me. He stole me. |

97. Safe \& secure
98. Salary \& wage
99. Say \& tell
100. Secure \& safe
101. Sensible \& sensitive
102. Sensitive \& sensible
103. Series
104. Sew \& sow
105. Since \& from

Is your neighbourhood safe? There are many robberies in mine. Is your neighbourhood secure? There are many robberies in mine.

The manager collects her salary monthly.
The manager collects her wage monthly.

He always says that India is a powerful country. He always tells that India is a powerful country.

Is the rope safe? If it loosens the cargo might move.
Is the rope secure? If it loosens the cargo might move.

She's a sensible woman so I trust she'll make the right decision. She's a sensitive woman so I trust she'll make the right decision.

She's a very sensitive child and will cry if you shout at her. She's a very sensible child and will cry if you shout at her.
$2,4,6$ and 8 make a serie of even numbers.
$2,4,6$ and 8 make a series of even numbers.

They need to sew at least ten shirts a day.
They need to sow at least ten shirts a day.

I've been waiting here since eleven this morning. I've been waiting here for eleven this morning.

| 106. | Sow \& sew | We will sew corn in our farm. We will sow corn in our farm. |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 107. | Stairs \& ladder | Walk up the marble ladder to reach the hotel lobby. Walk up the marble stairs to reach the hotel lobby. |
| 108. | Stake \& steak | Our company owns a stake in Citibank. <br> Our company owns a steak in Citibank. |
| 109. | Stationary \& stationery | Stationary satellites remain at the same relative position. Stationery satellites remain at the same relative position. |
| 110. | Stationery \& stationary | We need to purchase more stationery. <br> We need to purchase more stationary. |
| 111. | Steak \& stake | I always order my stakes welldone. <br> I always order my steaks welldone. |
| 112. | Steal \& rob | He stole the wallet from my bag and I never realized! He robbed the wallet from my bag and I never realized! |
| 113. | Story \& history | Can you tell me the Cinderella story tonight? <br> Can you tell me the Cinderella history tonight? |
| 114. | Straight \& strait | Look straight ahead and you'll see the factory. <br> Look strait ahead and you'll se the factory. |


| 115. | Strait \& straight | The ship crossed the Strait of Gibraltar. <br> The ship crossed the Straight of Gibraltar. |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 116. | Suit \& suite | All lawyers must wear suites at this office. <br> All lawyers must wear suits at this office. |
| 117. | Suite \& suit | She stayed at her suite all day. She stayed at her suit all day. |
| 118. | Tell \& say | She never says me the truth. She never tells me the truth. |
| 119. | The reason why | She couldn't explain the reason why she was here. <br> She couldn't explain the reason because she was here. |
| 120. | Think of | I'm thinking of moving to Australia. <br> I'm thinking to move to Australia. |
| 121. | Times \& per | Two per three equals six. Two times three equals six. |
| 122. | Two pounds' worth | I'd like two pounds' worth of sweets. <br> l'd like two pounds worth of sweets. |
| 123. | Upload \& download | We must upload the page from our laptop to the server. We must download the page from our laptop to the server. |
| 124. | Used to | We used run a small company. Now it's grown rather large! We used to run a small company. Now it's grown rather large! |


| 125. | Wage \& salary | Their salaries are between five and six dollars an hour though they should be much higher. Their wages are between five and six dollar an hour though they should be much higher. |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 126. | Want to | I want that you contact the production supervisor immediately. <br> I want you to contact the production supervisor immediately. |
| 127. | Well \& good | She dances, sings and draws quite good. <br> She dances, sings and draws quite well. |
| 128. | Who \& whom | Who is responsible for collections at this office? <br> Whom is responsible for collections at this office? |
| 129. | Whom \& who | I'll send this note to who it may concern. <br> I'll send this note to whom it may concern. |
| 130. | Work \& job | Writing the budget is hard job. I wish I didn't have to do it every year! <br> Writing the budget is hard work. I wish I didn't have to do it every year! |

## Part 2: Right and wrong

1. Accused of
2. Administrative
3. Agree
4. Alive \& live
5. Alternate \& alternative
6. Alternative \& alternate
7. Among \& between
8. Angry \& hungry
9. Anything \& nothing

The man was accused of the murder.
The man was accused with the murder.

This is just an administrative problem.
t work as an administrative at a eo-operative.

Greta agrees with you. Greta is agree with you.

Only three people were alive after the accident.
Only three people were live after the accident.

We'll meet on alternate Mondays. Today, on the $11^{\text {th }}$ and on the $25^{\text {th }}$. We'll meet on alternative Mondays. Today, on the 11 th and on the 25th.

Is this the only solution? Isn't there an alternative option?
Is this the only solution? Isn't there an alternate option?

The three boys divided the cake among themselves.
The three boys divided the cake between themselves.

He's angry because he had an accident.
He's hungry because he had an accident.

She can't see anything. She can't see nothing.

| 10. | As \& like | He's an engineer but works as a driver. <br> He's an engineer but works like a driver. |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 11. | Attempt \& intend | She tried to climb Mount Kilimanjaro last year but failed. This year she'll attempt it again. She tried to climb Mount Kilimanjaro last year but failed. This year she'll intend it again. |
| 12. | Axis \& axle | Shall I write the figure on axis X or axis $Y$ ? <br> Shall\| write the figure on axle $X$ or axle Y? |
| 13. | Axle \& axis | My car wheels are held together by the axle. <br> My car wheels are held together by the axis. |
| 14. | Bad \& badly | He reacts in a bad way. He reacts in a badly way. |
| 15. | Badly \& bad | He reacts badly. He reacts bad. |
| 16. | Be fifteen years old | We are both fifteen years old. We have both fifteen years. |
| 17. | Believe | I don't believe anything she ever says. <br> f'm not believing anything she ever says. |
| 18. | Between \& among | France lies between Spain and Germany. <br> France lies among Spain and Germany. |
| 19. | Billion | A billion is a thousand million in the USA. <br> A billion is a million million in the USA. |

20. Boring | I find the economics class boring. |
| :--- |
| l'm boring at the economics |
| class. |
21. Continually \& continuously |  | She's continually taking days off. |
| :--- | :--- |
|  | She missed Monday, Wednesday |
| and Friday last week. |  |
|  | She's continuously taking days off. |
|  | She missed Monday, Wednesday |
22. Continuously \& continually The bell rang continuously and didn't stop for even a second. The bell rang continually and didn't stop for even a second.
23. Crash into

He crashed into a wall. He crashed a wall.
32. Current \& actual I always check news online because I like to be informed about current affairs. talways check news online because I like to be informed about actual affairs.
33. Dairy

He works on a dairy farm. She writes on her dairy every night.
34. Deduce \& deduct
35. Deduct \& deduce

We can either deduct taxes from your salary now or next year. We can either deduce taxes from your salary now or next year.
36. Depend from

In a hierarchical organization employees depend from one boss.
In a hierarchical organization employees depend on one boss.

| 37. | Depend on | My decision will depend on the information I have. <br> Ay decision will depend of the information I have. |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 38. | Desert \& dessert | The Gobi desert is cold at night and warm during the day. The Gobi dessert is cold at night and warm during the day. |
| 39. | Dessert \& desert | Would you like apple pie for dessert? <br> Would you like apple pie for desert? |
| 40. | Diary | He keeps a private diary. These are diary cows. They produce milk. |
| 41. | Dislike | Mark dislikes modern architecture. Mark is disliking modern architecture. |
| 42. | Doctor | My brother is a doctor. My brother is doctor. |
| 43. | Download \& upload | We must download the page from the server to our laptop. We must upload the page from the server to our laptop. |
| 44. | Enjoy | I enjoy the cinema. Lam enjoy the cinema. |
| 45. | Enjoy | I enjoy my children. Ienjoy with my children. |
| 46. | Everywhere | He looked for the keys everywhere. <br> He looked for the keys every place. |


| 47. | Except | We'll finance all the new projects except for Joe's, which will be discontinued. <br> We'll finance all the new projects except Joe's, which will be discontinued. |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 48. | Explain | Please explain your theory to me Please explain me your theory. |
| 49. | Familiar | I can't remember her face but her name does sound familiar. We have a large family sot invited several familiars to the wedding. |
| 50. | Few \& little | We need a few dollars to meet our savings goal. <br> We need a little dollars to meeł our savings goal. |
| 51. | Flour \& flower | You need flour to bake a pizza. You need flower to bake a pizza. |
| 52. | Flower \& flour | Most flowers bloom in spring. Most flours bloom in spring |
| 53. | Folder \& carpet | I use a folder to keep papers. t use a carpet to keep papers. |
| 54. | For \& since | I've waited for three hours already. <br> f've waited since three hours already. |
| 55. | Good \& well | This is a good book. This is a well book. |
| 56. | Had better | You had better visit the client tomorrow. <br> You had better to visit the client łomorrow. |

57. Hate
58. Intend \& attempt
59. It's \& its
60. Its \& it's
61. Job \& work
62. Ladder \& stairs
63. Large enough
64. Lay \& lie
65. Lie \& lay

I hate her because she is mean.
I'm hating her because she is
mean.
I intend to attend university when I finish school tattempt to attend university When I finish school.

It's going to snow. Ifs going to snow.

The company pays its employees once a month.
The company pays it's employees once a month.

I'm the company manager. It is my job to solve problems. I'm the company manager. It is my work to solve problems.

Shall I move the ladder under the chandelier so you can change the bulb?
Shall I move the stairs under the chandelier so you can change the bulb?

This boat isn't large enough for all our family.
This beat isn't enough large for all our family.

You must lay the table before they arrive.
You must lie the table before they arrive.

He always lies down for a nap.
He always lays down for a nap.
66. Like
67. Like \& as
68. Like Picasso because he's a
Cubist painter.
l'm liking Picasso because he's a
Cubist painter.

| 76. | Medium \& media | I think you should try another medium. <br> think you should try another media. |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 77. | Most | Most managers have arrived. Most of managers have arrived. |
| 78. | Motorway | We drove through the motorway. We drove through the autoway. |
| 79. | Much \& many | Having much money is always better than having little money. Having many money is always better than having little money. |
| 80. | Must | We must increase prices. We must to increase prices. |
| 81. | Nothing | She understood nothing. She didn' $\dagger$ understand nothing. |
| 82. | Now \& actually | He used to be a secretary. He's a manager now. <br> He used to be a secretary. He's a manager actually. |
| 83. | Officer \& official | Could you please call a police officer? <br> Could you please call a police efficial? |
| 84. | Official \& officer | This is an official statement. This is an officer statement. |
| 85. | Parents-in-law | She loves her parents-in-law. She loves her fathers-in-law. |
| 86. | Parking | I rarely leave my car at a parking lot because it's too expensive. trarely leave my car at a parking because it's too expensive. |

$\left.\begin{array}{l}\text { 87. People }\end{array} \begin{array}{l}\text { Most people are interested in their } \\ \text { health. } \\ \text { Aost people is interested in their } \\ \text { health. }\end{array}\right\}$
97. Safe \& secure
98. Salary \& wage
99. Say \& tell
100. Secure \& safe
101. Sensible \& sensitive
102. Sensitive \& sensible
103. Series
104. Sew \& sow
105. Since \& from

Is your neighbourhood safe? There are many robberies in mine. ts your neighbourhood secure? There are many robberies in mine.

The manager collects her salary monthly.
The manager collects her wage monthly.

He always says that India is a powerful country.
He always tells that India is a powerful country.

Is the rope secure? If it loosens the cargo might move.
Is the rope safe? If it loosens the eargo might move.

She's a sensible woman so I trus $\dagger$ she'll make the right decision. She's a sensitive woman so I trusł she'll make the right decision.

She's a very sensitive child and will cry if you shout at her. She's a very sensible child and will ery if you shout at her.
$2,4,6$ and 8 make a series of even numbers.
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They need to sew at least ten shirts a day.
They need to sow at least ten shirts a day.

I've been waiting here since eleven this morning. f've been waiting here for eleven this morning.

| 106. | Sow \& sew | We will sow corn in our farm. We will sew corn in our farm. |
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| 107. | Stairs \& ladder | Walk up the marble stairs to reach the hotel lobby. <br> Walk up the marble ladder to reach the notellobby. |
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| 110. | Stationery \& stationary | We need to purchase more stationery. <br> We need to purchase more stationary. |
| 111. | Steak \& stake | I always order my steaks welldone. <br> talways order my stakes welldone. |
| 112. | Steal \& rob | He stole the wallet from my bag and I never realized! He robbed the wallet from my bag and I never realized! |
| 113. | Story \& history | Can you tell me the Cinderella story tonight? <br> Can you tell me the Cinderella history tonight? |
| 114. | Straight \& strait | Look straight ahead and you'll see the factory. <br> Look strait ahead and you'll se the factory. |

115. Strait \& straight
116. Suit \& suite | The ship crossed the Strait of |
| :--- |
| Gibraltar. |
| The ship crossed the Straight of |
| Gibraltar. |
117. Suite \& suit | All lawyers must wear suits at this |
| :--- |
| office. |
| Alllawyers must wear suites at this |
| office. |
118. Tell \& say | She stayed at her suite all day. |
| :--- |
| She stayed at her suit all day. |
119. The reason why
She never tells me the truth.
She never says me the truth.

| 125. | Wage \& salary | Their wages are between five and six dollar an hour though they should be much higher. <br> Their salaries are between five and six dollars an hour though they should be much higher. |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 126. | Want to | I want you to contact the production supervisor immediately. <br> t want that you contact the production supervisor immediately. |
| 127. | Well \& good | She dances, sings and draws quite well. <br> She dances, sings and draws quitegood. |
| 128. | Who \& whom | Who is responsible for collections at this office? <br> Whom is responsible for collections at this office? |
| 129. | Whom \& who | I'll send this note to whom it may concern. <br> f'll send this note to who it may concern. |
| 130. | Work \& job | Writing the budget is hard work. I wish I didn't have to do it every year! <br> Writing the budget is hard job. 1 wish I didn't have to do it every year! |



