

Name (in Romaji):	→
Student Number:	→
Class Day + Period (examples: Monday 2, Friday 3):	→

COMMONLY CONFUSED

----- soon vs. quickly vs. early -----

These words cannot usually be switched out. If you switch them out and they still make sense, they will likely have different meanings.

Soon means something will happen that has not happened yet but will not take much time before the event occurs.

Example: He missed his train, but he caught the next one. He will be here soon.

- He missed his train, but he caught the next one. ~~He will be here quickly.~~
- He missed his train, but he caught the next one. ~~He will be here early.~~

Quickly means the pace is fast.

Example: He finished his homework quickly.

- ~~He finished his homework soon.~~
- He finished his homework early.

(This sentence is ok, but it doesn't mean his fast pace. It means that he completed his homework in less time than was expected or in less time than was given to him).

Early means something happened before a regularly expected time.

Example: He arrived at the restaurant early so he could be ready for his date.

- ~~He arrived at the restaurant soon so he could be ready for his date.~~
- ~~He arrived at the restaurant quickly so he could be ready for his date.~~



PRACTICE

- (1) He will eat a/an _____ lunch because he will be busy starting from 10:00.
- (2) He said he wasn't ready yet, but that he would be _____.
- (3) The Olympic runner _____ crossed the finish line.

----- say vs. tell vs. speak vs. talk -----

Say: when you want to mean “use your voice to express something in words.”

- Examples:
- Say the answer if you know the answer.
 - I said three words, but then he interrupted me.

Tell: when you want to mean “say or write something *to someone*.”

- Examples:
- Please tell me your name and occupation.
 - She told him the good news.

Speak: with languages and with talking in general.

- Examples:
- I can speak five languages.
 - We spoke with our boss this morning.

Talk: when the topic is general.

- Examples:
- Let's talk about this later.
 - He talked about his big project while he was at the party.

Both ***speak*** and ***talk*** have similar meanings. There is no big difference, and they can often (but not always) be used in the same situation.

- Examples:
- I spoke to her about it.
 - I talked to her about it.
 - I spoke in English.
 - I talked in English.

BUT: ~~Let's speak about it.~~ ← This sounds a bit strange.

PRACTICE

- (1) Your father _____ me that you are good at speaking French.
- (2) _____ me, do you love your parents?
- (3) He always _____ me some interesting stories about his cats.
- (4) Yesterday, we were sitting, drinking coffee and _____ about the weather.
- (5) Can we _____ tomorrow? I have to go to work now.



- (6) You should _____ to your parents about that.
- (7) I don't want to _____ you again and again to do your homework.
- (8) English is _____ all over the world.
- (9) I don't have any more to _____. Leave me alone!
- (10) They never stop _____. They are driving me crazy.

----- **watch vs. see vs. look** -----

Use the verb **watch** when there is action involved, particularly movement.

- Examples:
- I am watching the football game.
 - Someone always calls when I am watching a movie.

Use the verb **see** when you want to talk about the action of using your eyes and vision.

- Examples:
- Do you see those birds flying over there?
 - I was in a car accident because I didn't see the other car coming.

Use the verb **look** when you want to direct vision or attention towards something specific.

- Examples:
- Look at this picture of my daughter.
 - Don't look in the closet. Your birthday present is in there.

PRACTICE

- (1) I can't _____ very well without my glasses.
- (2) _____ at me when I am talking to you.
- (3) I will go into the other room and _____ the game in peace and quiet.



----- **listen vs. hear** -----

Listen: when you talk about concentration and effort behind the act.

- Examples:
- Listen to what your parents tell you.
 - I listen to music in my free time.

Hear: when you mean that catching sounds is possible.

- Examples:
- Do you hear that siren?
 - I heard an interesting rumor today.

- (1) That man is crazy. He says he listens to / hears voices in his head.
- (2) Ruby is the most interesting storyteller. I could listen to / hear her for hours.
- (3) On rainy days I like to listen to / hear the sound of the rain falling to the ground.
- (4) Our house is next to the highway, so you can always listen to / hear the sound of cars.
- (5) I can't watch TV when all my young cousins come to visit. They are so noisy that I can't listen to / hear the TV.

----- **especially** -----

It is often very easy to determine whether or not a writer is a native Japanese speaker or not. This is because they often begin sentences with “especially.” This is not usually done in English.

- (1) ☒ I like sweets, especially cake.
☐ ~~I like sweets. Especially, I like cake.~~
☐ ~~I like sweets. Especially, cake.~~
- (2) ☒ I like to travel, especially on long holidays.
☐ ~~I like to travel. Especially, I like to travel on long holidays.~~
☐ ~~I like to travel. Especially, long holidays.~~
- (3) ☒ Watching movies is fun. I especially enjoy watching comedies.
☐ ~~Watching movies is fun. Especially, I enjoy watching comedies.~~
- (4) ☒ Cars create a lot of pollution, especially big trucks.
☐ ~~Cars create a lot of pollution. Especially, big trucks cause a lot of pollution.~~



PRACTICE

- (1) _____
- (2) _____
- (3) _____
- (4) _____
- (5) _____

----- **almost, almost all, almost always, most, & hardly ever** -----

One of the most difficult areas for English learners is the distinction between almost, almost all, almost always, most, and hardly ever.

Almost means less than 100%, or not quite all the way.

For example:

- (1) Person A: Can you get that bowl from the top shelf?
Person B: No, I can't. I can almost reach it, but I am not tall enough.
- (2) I almost got a perfect score on my science test.
- (3) I almost slipped and fell on that banana peel.

Almost all means that most of the things in a group (people, things, etc.) are included, but not every one of them. You can think of it this way: **Almost all = most**

For example:

- (1) Almost all of the exchange students are from Korea. (This means most of the exchange students come from Korea, but a few of them come from elsewhere.)
- (2) Almost all people have a computer in their homes. (This means that most people have a computer in their homes, but a few people do not.)
- (3) Almost all of the bread at the bakery was sold. (This means that most of the bread had been sold, but that there were still a few pieces of bread left in the bakery.)

If you use almost all as most, the sentences above would look like this:

- (1) Most of the exchange students are from Korea.
- (2) Most people have a computer in their homes.
- (3) Most of the bread at the bakery was sold.



INTERESTING NOTE:

What is the difference between these sentences?

- (1) Most students study hard for their final exams.
- (2) Most of the students study hard for their final exams.

For (1) = it is about students in general (i.e., all over the world).

For (2) = it is about a specific group of students (e.g., those in a specific class or school).

ALSO NOTE:

AVOID: ~~almost of~~ or ~~most all~~.

Almost always describes a frequency.

For example:

- (1) I almost always wake up early. (However, some days I do not wake up early.)
- (2) It almost always snows on January 1st. (However, some years there is no snow on this day.)

Similarly, **hardly ever** means *almost never*. It means close to 0%, but not quite 0%.

For example:

- (1) I hardly ever eat sweets. (This means that normally I do not eat any sweets but that I will eat sweets maybe once every three months, once a year, etc.)
- (2) It hardly ever rains in the desert. (This means that normally there is no rain in the desert but that on rare occasions it will rain.)

PRACTICE

Write some sentences using **almost**, **almost all**, **most**, **almost always**, and **hardly ever**. Try to talk about real life things. Let your teacher check your sentences, then share with a partner.

- (1) _____
- (2) _____
- (3) _____
- (4) _____
- (5) _____



----- participles -----

Participles are verb forms that function like adjectives: they describe nouns. Participles can be either present or past. If a particle is a present participle, it can end in **-ing**. If a particle is a past participle, it can end in **-ed**, **-en**, **-d**, **-t**, or **-n**.

Take a look at the following chart of present and past participles.

Verb	Present participle	Past participle
bore	boring	bored
confuse	confusing	confused
excite	exciting	excited
surprise	surprising	surprised

When should you use the present participle and when should you use the past participle?

Present participles are used when you are describing a noun that causes an action.

Examples: • That was an exciting party. • That party was exciting.

Past participles are used when you describe a noun affected by an action. It also shows how someone feels about someone or something.

Example: • The excited children enjoyed the party.

For the present participle sentences, the party caused the excitement. Usually, things cause such action. In rare cases, people will cause the action. For the past participle sentence, the children were affected by the party (which means they had *feelings* about the party), so they were excited.

Let's take a look at some more example sentences.

(1) I was bored.

This is a good sentence. It means that I had nothing to do.

(2) I was boring.

This sentence is good, too, but it has a very different meaning from sentence (1). "I was boring" means that I was not entertaining to other people. People can be boring, but many English learners say sentence (2) by accident when they really want to say sentence (1).



(3) The movie was boring.

This sentence is perfectly fine. There are many boring movies.

(4) ~~The movie was bored.~~

Why is (4) a bad sentence? Only living things like people can be bored. Dogs and cats may be talked about as being bored because sometimes animals are given human qualities. However, things like movies, books, or television shows can never be bored, only boring!

Based on these examples, we can say that there is a general trend:

Use the past participle to describe people: (especially people's feelings)	I was bored. I was surprised. I was shocked.
Use the present participle to describe things:	The book was boring. The news was surprising. The end of the movie was shocking.

Present participles can be used to describe people, too, but it describes their quality, not their state. Discuss the following example sentences in class:

- Brian is an exciting teacher. (quality, an opinion)
- Brian is an excited teacher. (state, anyone can see)
 - Brian is a boring teacher. (quality, an opinion)
 - Brian is a bored teacher. (state, anyone can see)

So, if you say “I was boring,” it means that you are not interesting! “I was bored” means that you had nothing interesting to do for a short time, but that you are still an interesting person!



PRACTICE

Write some sentences to describe yourself, your friends, your classmates, or your school? You may use some of the following words (or others) as either present or past participles:

bore**excite****surprise****confuse**

(1) _____

(2) _____

(3) _____

(4) _____

(5) _____

(6) _____

(7) _____

(8) _____

