

Homonyms/Homophones/ Homographs

Let's Learn!

What is a homonym?

A homonym can be a word that sounds the same and spelled exactly the same way as another word but has a different meaning. In the sentence, “The baseball **pitcher** drank a **pitcher** of water.”, the first word **pitcher** means the player in baseball who throws the ball to the batter and the second one means a container for holding and pouring liquids.

Examples of homonyms:

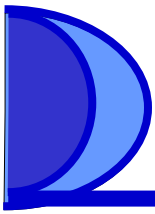
- **pen** (*writing instrument*) – **pen** (*enclosure for animal*)
- **spring** (*a season*) – **spring** (*coiled metal*)
- **bear** (*to endure*) – **bear** (*animal*)
- **lean** (*thin*) – **lean** (*rest against*)
- **bank** (*financial establishment*) – **bank** (*the slope bordering a river*)
- **bright** (*smart*) – **bright** (*filled with light*)
- **carp** (*to keep complaining*) – **carp** (*fish*)

What is a homophone?

A homophone is a word that sounds the same as another word but has a different meaning and spelling. In English, there are many homophones, and it's important to try to learn and understand them. You have to listen carefully to the context to know which word someone means if they're spoken aloud. For example, '**flower**' and '**flour**' are homophones because they are pronounced the same but you certainly can't bake using tulips.

Examples of homophones:

- **bare** – **bear**
- **board** – **bored**
- **pray** – **prey**
- **cent** – **scent**
- **doe** (*female deer*) – **dough** (*bake into bread*)
- **meet** – **meat**
- **peace** – **piece**



Homonyms/Homophones/ Homographs

What are homographs?

Homographs are two words written identically but have different meanings and are pronounced differently – like sow, meaning “**female pig**,” and sow, “**to plant seeds**.” Homographs can be confusing at first glance, but once you read them in the context of a sentence or hear them spoken aloud, you will easily figure out which word is intended.

Examples of homographs:

- **close** /kloʊz/ (to shut) – **close** /kloʊs/ (nearby)
- **bass** /beɪs/ (lowest tone) – **bass** /bæs/ (fish)
- **bow** /baʊ/ (bend forward) – **bow** /boʊ/ (weapon for shooting arrows)
- **lead** /li:d/ (to go in front of) – **lead** /led/ (a metal)
- **minute** /'mɪnɪt/ (unit of time) – **minute** /maɪnju:t/ (tiny)
- **tear** /ter/ (v) – **tear** /tɪr/ (n)
- **wind** /waɪnd/ (have many bends and twists) – **wind** /wɪnd/ (a gust of air)

Let's Try!

A. Directions: Choose (a) or (b)

Example:

I hope you are not *lying* a to me.
My books are *lying* b on the table.

- (a) telling a lie
(b) being in a horizontal position

1. Let's *play* _____ soccer after school.
The author wrote a new *play* _____ .

- (a) theater piece
(b) participate in a sport

2. My rabbits are in a *pen* _____ outside.
Please sign this form with a black *pen* _____ .

- (a) an enclosed area
(b) a writing instrument

3. The kids are going to *watch* _____ TV tonight.
What time is it? I have to set my *watch* _____ .

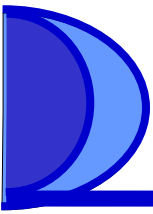
- (a) a small clock worn on the wrist
(b) look at

4. Ouch! The mosquito *bit* _____ me!
I'll have a little *bit* _____ of sugar in my tea.

- (a) a tiny amount
(b) past tense of bite

5. Which *page* _____ is the homework on?
Please *page* _____ the doctor if you need help.

- (a) one sheet of paper
(b) to call someone on an electronic pager



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B. Directions: Choose the correct word to complete sentence.

1. Alex is going to (wear, ware) his work boots today.
2. Mr. and Mrs. Rodriguez like to work in (there, they're, their) garden.
3. Humans have hands. Dogs have (paws, pause).
4. I heard that that book was (banned, band) from our school district.
5. I am very advanced in math, so I often get (bored, board) in class.
6. We would like to purchase (to, too, two) popsicles.
7. I would rather have an apple than a (pear, pair, pare).
8. I hope you are not going to (waist, waste) this opportunity.
9. For a rough (draft, draught), her work was fairly polished.
10. I think that blouse really (complements, compliments) your eyes.

C. Directions: In the following sentences, choose the homograph that matches the meaning provided in *italics* after the sentences.

1. After Harry had a glass of punch, he decided to punch Ron. (*a beverage*)
2. My dog will bark if you bark off that tree. (*sound a dog makes*)
3. When a bat got in the house, my father used a bat to try to get it out. (*a small, nocturnal rodent*)
4. It is very hard to carve into a hard surface. (*difficult*)
5. The girl sitting to the right of me got the right answer. (*correct*)
6. According to my ruler, the ruler's crown is three inches tall. (*an instrument to measure length*)
7. The boy spun his top on the top of the dining room table. (*the uppermost surface*)
8. The flour that we ground fell all over the ground. (*to pulverize*)
9. If you drop that stick, I will stick with you for this fight. (*support*)
10. My foot is over a foot long. (*body part*)