



## Common Errors in English

- 1- **The absolute Adjectives:** Some adjectives are not gradable in degrees. For instance, the adjective “perfect” is not a gradable adjective: we can not use the comparative case “more perfect than” with it neither can we use the superlative case “the most perfect”. It is a very common error in English. The adjective “Unique” is also an absolute adj.
  - Wrong: This book is more unique.
  - Correct: This book is unique.
- 2- **Between vs. among.**

Use “between” for only two persons or things and “among” for more than two.

  - The bank is between the post office and the public school.
  - A hands-on activity is done among all students.
- 3- **Gender vs. sex.**

“Sex” is used to label biologically determined aspects of maleness and femaleness (reproduction, etc.) while “gender” refers to their socially determined aspects (behavior, attitudes, etc.), but in ordinary speech this distinction is not always maintained.
- 4- **Who vs. which.**

“Who” is a relative pronoun used with people while “Which” is used with animals and inanimate things.

  - The politicians are not the only people who can negotiate.
  - The book which I bought has just come out.
- 5- **Feeling badly:** Verb “Feel” here is a linking verb so it should take an adjective not an adverb.
  - He feels bad now.
- 6- **“Forte”:** You shouldn’t pronounce the “e” in “not my forte.” This word is of a French origin and the French people do not pronounce “T-E” at the end. It mistakenly sounds like an Italian musical term “for-tay”.
  - That’s not my forte: that’s not my specialty or I am not good at this thing. Now, approximately all English speakers pronounce “forte” with “E”.
- 7- **Titled vs. entitled:** You should say that the book is titled so and so rather than entitled because it is standard. However, “entitled” is more commonly used.
- 8- **Healthy vs. healthful:** Healthy is used with people while healthful is more used with things.
  - This food makes me healthy, wow, it is a healthful food!
- 9- **Raise vs. rear:** Crops are raised; children are reared.



Standard writers insist that “raise” is used with crops while “rear” with children, but in American English children are usually “raised.”

#### **10- Lose vs. loose.**

“Lose” is a transitive verb meaning come to be without something; to suffer the loss of something.

- I do not want to lose more in this project.
- She lost her purse at the restaurant.  
“Loose” is an adjective: free or released from attachment; not bound together; not strict.
- The seat belt is very loose; you can keep it a little bit tight.
- That is a loose interpretation of the text.

#### **11- Whose vs. who’s.**

- Whose is a possessive pronoun of who.
- Whose car is this?
- Whose wallet did the robber take? While “Who’s” is a contraction for “who is.”
- Who’s going to come with me?
- I am wondering who’s going to accept these conditions?

#### **12- I vs. Me.**

“I” is the first person pronoun used as a subject. While “Me” is the object form of the same pronoun.

- Wrong: She invited my wife and I to her wedding party.
- Correct: She invited my wife and me to her wedding party.
- Wrong: Tom and me will travel tomorrow.
- Correct: Tom and I will travel tomorrow.

#### **13- Effect vs. Affect.**

Effect is a noun produced by a cause.

- The effect of the anesthesia is still available in the blood.
- This new policy will have no effect on economy.
- Affect is a transitive verb meaning to act on, to have some effect on someone or something.
- The cold weather badly affected all the crops.
- This movie has affected me deeply.

#### **14- Accept vs. Except.**

“Accept” is a verb: to agree on, to take or receive.

- He accepted the offer.

“Except” is a preposition; it means excluding, save, but. Thus, it will never follow a subject such as I, they, we.

- Everyone except me will go.
- Do whatever you want except asking me to help.
- Except for his strict personality, he is a good manager.

#### 15- **To vs. Too.**

“To” is a preposition which precedes a noun.

- He went to the concert.

“Too” is a conjunctive adverb joining two sentences which have some additive relationship.

- John does not like driving a truck. He is very bad at driving a sedan too.

#### 16- **Since vs. For.**

“Since” is an adverb meaning a time ago. It should be followed by the exact date when the action occurred.

- I did not see her since 2009.

“For” is a preposition which is used to indicate that a certain period of time passed.

- I did not see her for six years now.

17- **Split Infinitive:** Infinitive is the verb in its pure form without any conjugation, it should be preceded by “to”. Some people may put an adverb between the infinitive and “to” which is ungrammatical.

- Wrong: The student exerted much effort to easily catch up with her class.
- Correct” The student exerted much effort to catch up with her class easily.

18- **Few vs. Less.** Some people confuse these quantifiers.

“Few” is used with countable nouns like books, cars, tables, etc. While “less” is used with uncountable nouns such as sugar, salt, water etc.

- I have a short shopping list; I need to get few items this weekend.
- I am on a diet; I need less sugar.

19- **I.e. and e.g.** these two abbreviated words commonly cause confusion, and many people use them interchangeably. However, they are different in use.

“I.e.” means “that is” or “in other words”. It comes from the Latin words “id est”.

“E.g.” means “for example”. It comes from the Latin words “exempli gratia”. You should use “i.e.” and “e.g.” when writing informally. In formal writings, it is recommended to write out the meanings: “that is” or “for example”.

- Writing has different types, e.g. narrative, argumentative, and expository.
- The legislative committee did not accept the draft i.e. they will not pass the law.

20- **As vs. Like.**

“As” is used like a conjunction, joining two clauses while “like” is used as a preposition, telling where, when or how the noun in the sentence is doing. A general rule is that “like” should be followed by an object forming a prepositional phrase and “as” should be followed by a clause containing a verb.

- She is a Math genius like her sister.
- They can calculate quickly as a calculator does.

“Like” compares two things:

- He is acting like a child.
- Kim, like her mother, has a long hair.

“As” should be followed by a complete sentence with a subject and a verb. It also can be replaced by “the way”.

- No history book tells the story of Independence the way this book does.
- I cannot play volleyball as he does.

She makes delicious food as her mom did.