

English Usage Topics

Compare To or Compare With

How does "to" compare with "with" when used with "compare"? Or should it be "How does 'to' compare to 'with'...?"

Different From or Different Than

So, just how do "from" and "than" differ when used after "different"? Are they all that different after all?

That vs. Who

Which relative pronoun is preferred when talking about a person or a thing? Turns out, it's all relative.

Absolutes

Absolutes are supposed to be the end-all-be-all of descriptors. They are supposed to be beyond compare, but just how absolute is the rule?

An Historical or A Historical

A historic debate (an historic debate?) is finally put to rest.

Each

Each to their own.

None Is vs. None Are

When it comes to English grammar rules, none is ever totally right (but none are ever totally wrong, either).

Old and New Plurals

Out with the old, in with the new.

Who or Whom

Do you know to whom are you referring? You never know who might call you out on it.

The Parts of Speech

Learn how each word plays its part.

Capital Letters

Learn when to capitalize words correctly. We assure you, it's a capital idea.

Days and Dates

A primer on all things time related, such as days of the week, decades and centuries, and all manner of temporal descriptors.

Measurements

Big or small, fast or slow, hot or cold—no matter the metric, we've got the words you'll need.

Nationality Words

We can use terms of nationality to say a lot about people, places, and things.

Numbers and Fractions

This section will help you learn how to use number words correctly in your writing. There are quite a number of things to remember!

Plural Forms of Nouns

Plurals indicate more than one person, place, animal, or thing, but be careful: these are often trickier to form than simply adding "-s" to the end of a noun.

Punctuation

This will teach you all the basics of how to punctuate your writing. Period (full stop).

Spelling

A handy primer to help you navigate the tricky labyrinth of English spelling rules. Oops, we mean "labyrinth."

Verb Forms

This section covers a few of the trickier spelling conventions when conjugating verbs.

Abbreviations

In short, this section has all you need to know about shortening words and phrases.

Addressing Someone

This section covers the various words we use to address another person, also known as vocatives.

Advising Someone

You'd be wise to heed our advice if you want to learn how to advise someone else.

Age

In this section, we cover how to describe or ask about a person's age. Guaranteed to be appropriate for all ages.

Agreeing and Disagreeing

The various ways of expressing agreement and disagreement are pretty nuanced. We think you'll agree.

Apologizing

This section covers various ways of acknowledging and expressing remorse for one's actions.

Asking for Repetition

Excuse me? Come again? All the different ways to ask someone to repeat themselves.

Complimenting and Congratulating Someone

Compliments and congratulations—the ultimate ways to improve someone's day.

Criticizing Someone

Learn how to offer criticism without losing friends.

Discourse Markers

A discourse marker is a fancy way of saying "words that show how you feel and connect a sentence to what comes before or after it."

Emailing

This section covers the dos and don'ts of proper email etiquette.

Fixed Pairs

Ends and odds, early and bright, see and wait—they're just not quite right, are they? This section covers the word pairs that always occur in the same order.

Greetings and Goodbyes

You say hello (or hi, or hey), and I say goodbye (or bye, or cheerio).

Groups of Things, Animals, and People

This section covers some of the most common words used to describe a group.

Intentions

How do you let other people know what you are planning to do? Don't worry, we intend to tell you.

Introducing Yourself and Other People

This section goes over the social niceties surrounding introductions.

Invitations

There are several ways of inviting someone to do something or to come to some place. We invite you to have a look!

Letter Writing

This section covers the dos and don'ts of proper letter-writing etiquette.

Male and Female

This section covers the words we traditionally use to specify gender in English.

Meals

Learn when "tea" means the same thing as "dinner." Don't worry, we won't make a meal out of it.

Money

Some people think it's rude to discuss money issues. Not us.

Names and Titles

Learn how to use names or titles properly when talking or writing about people.

Offers

This section will teach you how to make someone an offer they can't refuse. Or at least be pretty persuasive.

Opinions

Don't be afraid of being opinionated. Just read this section and learn how to express your opinions properly.

Permission

Asking, giving, and refusing permission. Go ahead and learn about it all—you don't need our permission.

Pieces and Amounts

Here's a hefty serving of information about how to describe pieces and amounts of uncountable nouns.

Places

This section deals with all manner of spatial vocabulary. Location, location, location!

Possession and Other Relationships

This section teaches you how to express all sorts of different relationships between people and things. Just don't turn into the possessive type!

Reactions

This section will help you find the words to express your reaction in just the right way. How wonderful!

Replies

Do you want to learn how to express your replies correctly? It's a little more complicated than a simple "yes" or "no."

Requests, Orders, and Instructions

This section will help you learn how to get what you want from others (without being too bossy about it).

Suggestions

This section will teach you how to use the power of suggestion to its greatest effect.

Telephoning

This section covers the dos and don'ts of proper phone etiquette.

Thanking someone

This section teaches how to express thanks, whether formally or casually. You don't want to seem ungrateful, do you?

Time

This section deals with all the various ways we express, discuss, and ask about time. It's about time someone put it all in one place!

Transport

This section deals with the mechanics of transportation—at least from a grammatical point of view!

Warning Someone

This section teaches several ways of warning someone not to do something. We're warning you: you won't want to miss it.

Words with Alternative Spellings

Don't you hate it when you see a word spelled more than one way? Or should it be "spelt"...?

Words with the Same Pronunciation

This section deals with homophones—words with different spellings but the same pronunciations.

Words with Two Pronunciations

This section deals with homographs—words with the same spellings but different pronunciations.

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