

Ten Words You Need To Stop Misspelling

by The Oatmeal <http://theoatmeal.com>

A lot
 Always leave a space here.
Remember, there's a lot of space in our space.

Alot is not a word.
 You don't write *alot*, *alotof*, *alotagoes*, *alotshop*.
 So don't write alot.

Definitely
 There is no A in "definitely."
 To help you remember, use this:
If you put an A in "definitely," then you're definitely an A-hole.

It's
 This is a contraction for *it is* or *it has*.
If you can replace it with *it is* or *it has*, then use *it's* in your sentence.
 For example:
It's not that easy gets to walk a redwood in school, and I have to take the right number!

Its
 This is indicating possession.
Use this when one thing owns another.
 For example:
The alienator owns only shoes, pens, and sunglasses. King of them, when the it got for thinking the huge doing a long hole.

Confused by apostrophes? Click here to learn how to use them.

Then
 is used for time.
First I stole a panda bear, then we drank malt liquor together.

Than
 is used for comparison.
I'm much better at holding my liquor than a panda bear.

The sequence of actions indicates time: first stealing the panda, and then drinking.

This is comparing a panda's drinking ability with your own, so you should use "than."

Effect Affect
 Most of the time *effect* is a noun and *affect* is a verb.

If you're unsure, try substituting a different verb and see if it works.

As a child, he was *affected* by his parents.
 As a child, he was ~~affected~~ eaten by his parents.

A verb works here so you should use "affected."

C'MERE, RANDALL
 I want to ingest you, just like I did your precious casserole.

You ate ~~them~~? But we sang only of love and melody! You're a scumbag, Dad!

Their They're There

Their is possessive, meaning it owns something.
I hate our new neighbors. Their cat keeps eating the leftover casserole.

They're is a contraction for "they are."
They're gonna get a shovel to the face unless they get that cat under control. No one eats my casserole.

There refers to a place or idea.
Look over there! An alien just materialized out of that cat's chest!

In this case, *their* is referring to the neighbors who own a cow.
 In this case, *they're* means "they are."
 In this case, *there* is referring to a location.

It can also refer to something more abstract:
 There are many reasons to discipline a cow. For starters, a cow who eats rancid casserole will later become a host for alien parasites.

Abstract usage! I love it!

Lose Loose

Opposite of win
 Not tight

Pretend the extra O is a hemorrhoid on the word. Hemorrhoids are never tight.

man, we got the MOST hemorrhoid! Tight, best!

Weather Whether

Snow, rain, sunshine, typhoons. All that crap.
The hot sun, I make super-happy sunshine! Also, one day it'll explode and scorch you all blue like the excessive little scorching that you want.

Whether is used in this way:
 Your correct usage of this word will determine whether or not I kick you in the hemorrhoids.

Nothing gets a point across like a solid kick to the hemorrhoids.

Weird Not wierd

Remember it like this:
 We ... ir ... d ...
 We ... are (ir) ... dangerous (d) to those dumb, dirty dolphins.

Every time you spell it this way, a dolphin gets run over by a jet ski.

Your You're

These both use the same rules as "their" and "they're."

Your is possessive. In other words, you own something.
Your new baby alien loves to cuddle, but he keeps crapping in your refrigerator at night.

You're is a contraction of "you are."
You're definitely cleaning out the fridge tomorrow morning, assuming that little bear can't keep his bowels in check.

This is referring to your alien and your refrigerator.
 This translates to "you are definitely cleaning..."