

- Ex. Seth *had* gone.
Maggie *was* going.
Herman *will* go.
That *might have* meant a lot of trouble for her.
The children *were* taken away. –or- the children *will have to be* taken away.
We *must* go.

Homograph

Homographs are words that are spelled alike but have different meanings. Homographs may or may not sound alike.

- Ex. bow (on a package); bow (what a violinist uses); bow (to shoot an arrow); bow (what a violinist does when the audience claps); bow (the front part of a boat)
Wind (blowing air); wind (what you have to do to the spring of a mechanical watch)

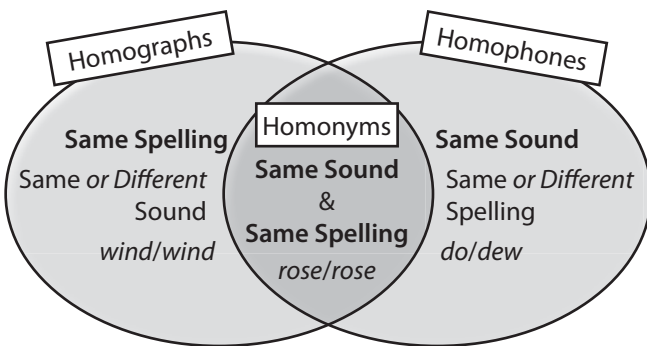
Homonym

In the strict sense, homonyms are words that both sound the same and are spelled the same, but do not mean the same thing.

- Ex. rose (flower); rose (stood up)
fair (carnival); fair (reasonable)
bee (insect); bee (group of people: quilting bee)
saw (cuts wood); saw (past tense of “see”)

TELL ME MORE!

Homonyms, by definition, are also homophones and homographs. For example, the homonyms bow (on a package) and bow (used to shoot an arrow) are homophones because they are two words that sound alike and homographs because they are also spelled alike. But not all homophones or homographs are also homonyms. The chart below may help you see the distinction.



Keep in mind that many use the term homonym more loosely, to mean “words that share the same spelling, regardless of pronunciation or share the same pronunciation, regardless of spelling.” Therefore, you will probably

find true homographs like object (a tangible thing) and object (to disagree), and true homophones like bow and bough classified as homonyms.

Homophones

Homophones are words that sound the same but have different meanings. Homophones may or may not have the same spelling.

- Ex. deer/dear
be/bee
piece/peace

Hyphen

A hyphen is a punctuation mark with multiple uses. It looks like a short dash (-).

- Ex. To divide words between their syllables when they are too long to fit on a single line
To join two or more words in compound numbers (*twenty-four, ninety-nine, etc.*)
To make compound words (*sixteen-year-old boy*)
To join single letters with other words (*T-shirt*)
To join numbers in scores, votes, life spans, etc. (*1865-1903, 24-17*)
To join two or more words that form a single adjective before a noun (*hard-working man*)
To prevent confusion (*re-create* instead of *recreate*)

Idiom

An idiom is a group of words that paints a mental picture (a “word picture” or “figure of speech”) that means something totally different from what the words themselves imply. Some idioms can sound quite silly if you don’t recognize them for what they are.

- Ex. Phil was *pulling my leg*. The product development team was *having a ball*.

Imperative

An imperative is a sentence in which one person commands another to do something. When you issue a command, you are saying that it is imperative—necessary—that someone do what you say. The subjects of imperative sentences are usually implied or understood. The subject is almost always you (the person being spoken to).

- Ex. Go to your room!
Tell the doctor what he needs to know.
Go to the zoo to see the elephants.