



Some Heteronyms

A heteronym is a word that has the same spelling as another word but with a different pronunciation and meaning. These words are sometimes also called homographs.

Affect ehFEKT- to change; AFFekt- a person's feelings or emotion

Alternate ALternit- the next choice; ALternait- switch back and forth

Are AHR- plural present tense of "to be"; AIR- 100 square meters (1/100th of a hectare) [although may also be pronounced AHR]

Ares AIRS- 100 square meter units [plural]; AIRReez- Greek god of war

Attribute ahTRIByoot- to consider resulting from; AHtribyoot- a characteristic of someone

August AUGust- month [capitalized]; auGUST- important, eminent

Axes AKsiz- more than one ax or axe; AKseez- the plural of axis

Bass BASE- a string instrument; (rhymes with mass)- a fish

Bow BAU- to lower one's head or the front of a ship; BOH- used to shoot arrows

Bowed BAU-d- to bend over; BOH-d- bent

Buffet BUFFet- to pound or bump; booFAY- place where you serve yourself

Close CLOZE- to shut; CLOS- near

Combine komBYNE- put together; KOMbyne- a threshing machine

Conduct KONduckt- behavior; kunDUCKT- to lead (see this heteronym below)

Conflict kunFLIKT- to act against; KAHNflict- a fight or disagreement

Console KAHNsole- an upright case; kunSOLE- to comfort

Content KAHNtent- meaning; kunTENT- satisfied

Contest kunTEST- to argue; KAHNtest- a match of skill

Contract CONtract- an agreement; conTRACT- to shrink or to agree on a project

Convert conVERT- to change one's belief; CONvert- one whose belief was changed

Converse KAHNvers- the opposite; kunVERS- to talk

Convict kunVIKT- to find guilty; KAHNvikt- a prisoner

Crooked KROOKt- to bend your neck; KROOK-ed- having a curve

Deliberate diLIBerit- carefully considered; diLIBerATE- to consider

Desert dihZURT- to leave ; DEZert- arid region

Digest DYEjest- collection of published material; dieJEST- absorb nutrients

Do DOO- to accomplish; DOE- a musical note

Does DUZ- performs; DOZE- more than one female deer

Dove DUV- a bird; DOEV- jumped off

Drawer DROR- the compartment you pull out from the dresser; DRAWer- one who draws

Excuse EKskyooz- to let someone off; EKskyoos- a reason or explanation

House HAUS- a building that serves as living quarters; HOWZ- to provide with living quarters

Incense INsens- burnt aromatic; inSENS- to make angry

Intern INtern- a physician in training; inTERN- confine to prescribed area

Intimate INTimate-personal or private; IntiMATE-to suggest

Invalid inVALLid- not valid; INvallid- an ill person

Laminate LAMinate- to construct by adding layers; LAMinit [although both pronunciations are listed]- the cover itself

Lather (rhymes with rather)- foam or suds; (rhymes with bath fur)- a worker who installs lath (lattice work) (15)

Lead LEED- to guide; LED- a metallic element

Minute MINNit- 60 seconds; myNOOT- tiny

Moderate MODerit- keeping within reason; MODerATE- to preside over

Moped MOPed--a vehicle; MOPED--to be gloomy or dejected

Mow MOH- to cut grass; MAU- a pile of hay

Multiply MULLtihPLIE- multiply two numbers; MULLtihplee- in a multiple manner

Number NUMber- one, two, three ...; NUMMER- more numb [many dictionaries do not list this use, which suggests that "more numb" is preferred; however, the listed use is given in The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, Third Edition, Electronic version.]

Nun NUN- women in religious order; NOON- 14th letter in Hebrew alphabet

Object ubJEKT- to complain; AHBjekt- a thing

Pasty PAstee- like glue; PASStee- a meat pie

Pate PAIT- a bald head; paTAY- a minced food; PAHT- a porcelain paste [diacritics in pâté and pâte don't count!](1)

Perfect PERfekt- exactly correct; perFEKT- to make correct (

Periodic PEEReeODDik- occasional; PUREeyeODDik- an iodine compound

Permit perMIT- to allow some event to occur; PERmit [although both pronunciations are listed]- a document giving permission

Polish POEl-ish- from Poland; PAHL-ish- shine [capitalization doesn't count!]

Present PREZent- a gift; preeSENT- to give a talk

Primer PRIHMer- an elementary book; PRYmer- the preparatory coat of paint

Produce PROdoos- vegetables; proDOOS- bring forth

Project proJEKT- to show a movie; PRAHjekt- a task

Pussy PUHSee- having pus; POOHSee; a kitten

Raven RAYven- black bird; RAVen- hungry

Rebel REBBell- a resister; rihBELL- to resist

Record RECKord- a list; reKORD- to write down

Recreation rek-ree-Ashun- pastime; REEcreeAshun- remake (also, recreate)

Refuse reFUSE- to deny; REFFyoos- garbage

Relay reelLAY- to put it down again, such as a carpet; REElay- a race by teams; rihLAY- to

pass along, such as information [One of our dictionaries gives these pronunciations, but does not distinguish meanings among the latter two. The pronunciation may vary among individuals.]

Rerun reRUN- to race again or to repeat a show on television; RErun- a repeated TV show (

Resume reeZOOM- to restart; REHZoomay- a document of experience [also résumé; diacritics don't count!]

Row ROH- a line; ROUW- a fight

Sake SAHkey- alcoholic drink; SAYK- a purpose

Secrete seeKREET- to discharge; sehKRET- an armored skullcap [secrète, diacritics don't count!]

Secreted seeKREETed- having put out; SEEkrehted- placed out of sight

Separate SEPerATE- to divide into groups; SEPreT- not joined together

Sewer SOwer- one who sews; SOOwer- place for human waste

Slough SLUFF- the outer layer of skin of a snake; [rhymes with OW!]- a hole of deep mud or mire; SLOO- a marshy pond

Sow SOUW- a pig; SO- to plant seed

Subject SUBjekt- the theme; subJEKT- to force upon someone

Tear TARE- to rip; TEER- fluid in eye

Wind WHINEd- to coil up; WINd- the blowing air

Wound WOOND- to injure; WOWND- coiled up

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