

# 15 of the Most Common Spelling Errors



With spell-check on our computers and phones and tablets these days, you might think that spelling errors are a thing of the past (note: not “passed”). But that’s actually not true. [Researchers have found the spelling errors have become \*more\* frequent in written communication](#) because people expect the spell-checker to catch their errors. When spell-check fails, the error then remains, and this can make your work appear sloppy.

Below is a list of some of the most commonly misspelled words in the English language and their most common misspellings. Which one do you think is correct?

## Common Spelling Errors: Take the Quiz...

...and see how high you rank among English spellers. (Or, cheat and jump to the end for the answers!)

1	Business	Buisness	Buisiness
2	Committee	Commitee	Comittee
3	Conscious	Concious	Conscience
4	Definitely	Definately	Difinitely
5	Fluorescent	Florescent	Flourescent
6	Forty	Fourty	Fortey
7	Government	Goverment	Govermant



8	Idiosyncrasy	Idiosyncracy	Idiotsynchracy
9	Immediately	Immediatly	Immediatley
10	Millennium	Millenium	Milennium
11	Noticeable	Noticable	Notisable
12	Tendency	Tendancy	Tendensy
13	Truly	Truely	Truley
14	Weird	Wierd	Wired
15	Privilege	Privledge	Privlege

## Two Extra Credit Questions:

1. There are two words in the third column that, as spelled, are correct spellings of entirely different words. Which two words are they?
2. There is another word in this article that is not spelled correctly. It's a very commonly misspelled word, not ironically, I suppose. What word is it?

## Answers

Want to know the answers? Well, this was a little sneaky I suppose, but the first word in each row was the correctly spelled version. How did you do?



If you got 12 or more right, you can consider yourself a better speller than the vast majority of [native English speakers](#) in the world.

8 to 11 correct: frankly, you're still probably above average compared to most native English speakers. Study a few more and you will be stellar!

7 or under: These are tricky, so don't feel too badly. We put them here so you could learn!

## Extra Credit Answers:

### A) Conscience and Wired.

- Conscience is a homonym (sounds the same, different spelling and different meaning) of "conscious." "Conscience" is what makes you feel guilty after doing something wrong. "Conscious" is best described by its opposite: when you hit your head and pass out, you are UNconscious. So "conscious" is definitely preferable!
- "Wired" means that something has wires running through it. "Weird" is something that is odd, bizarre, or unexpected.

**B)** The misspelled word is "misspelled / misspells." It appear in those forms in the second paragraph and, oddly enough, is probably one of the *most frequently* misspelled words in the English language! Major extra credit points if you caught it.



**So remember:** don't always rely on spell-check. It keeps you from learning and sometimes leaves errors in place. Or, even worse, spell-check might substitute another word for the word you intended. We've all seen the hilarious memes of auto-corrected text messages and you certainly don't want your next paper going viral because of your spelling errors. So go old school, study up, and [spell correctly!](#)