

# Common Grammatical Errors

Very often the words "mistake" and "error" are used interchangeably to label something that differs from the accepted standard. In language instruction, mistakes and errors should be differentiated.

Use the word "mistake" when the student produces a spoken or written form that differs from a standard the student knows. For example, the misspelling of a word that the student has learned previously is a mistake. Its correction is a matter for proofreading.

Use the word "error" when the student consistently produces spoken or written forms that differ from the standard and these nonstandard forms are likely the result of the student not knowing the rule or standard, or applying a false rule or standard. For example, the misspellings:

fone oxes elefant childs

are errors. They show the student does not yet know the "ph" spelling of "f" and plural forms of common irregular nouns. The correction of an error is a matter for instruction

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Common Errors

Examples

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Adds articles

bad: After the work, Jorge went home.  
good: After work, Jorge went home.

bad: We got a good news about our jobs.  
good: We got good news about our jobs.

bad: We need eggs and a sugar.  
good: We need eggs and sugar.

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Adds -s

bad: Ana must writes a letter.  
good: Ana must write a letter.

bad: Does he watches TV everyday?  
good: Does he watch TV everyday?

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Adds -ing

bad: He does working on the car.  
good: He does work on the car.  
good: He works on the car.

bad: He should mowing the lawn.  
good: He should mow the lawn.  
good: He should be mowing the lawn.

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Adds do

bad: Does he can fix the wheel?

good: Can he fix the wheel?

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bad: He does can fix the wheel.

good: He can fix the wheel.

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Omits to

bad: He say me it is raining.

good: He says to me "it is raining."

good: He tells me it is raining.

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bad: I like listen English.

good: I like to listen to English.

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Omits articles

bad: I gave box to nurse.

good: I gave the box to (the) nurse.

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bad: She is aunt of girl.

good: She is the aunt of the girl.

good: She is the girl's aunt.

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bad: He was brave soldier.

good: He was a brave soldier.

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Substitutes article

bad: We have a prettiest house in the neighborhood.

good: We have the prettiest house in the neighborhood.

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bad: Do you have the question?

good: Do you have a question?

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Tense shift

bad: Tomorrow we will go to the shopping center and  
have to buy sneakers for gym class.

good: Tomorrow we will go to the shopping center and  
buy sneakers for gym class.

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Not parallel

bad: William was a good president and smart.

good: William was a good president and he was smart.

good: William was a good, smart president.

-----

bad: Picking the berries, making the jam and the savings are fun

good: Picking the berries and making the jam are fun, and we save money.

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Not in agreement

bad: The flowers grows in the garden.

good: The flowers grow in the garden.

-----

bad: The doctor and nurse speaks to the patient.

good: The doctor and nurse speak to the patient.

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bad: Everybody have a name.  
good: Everybody has a name.

-----  
bad: The baseball player and the coach has taken his  
place on the stage.  
good: The baseball player and the coach have taken their  
places on the stage

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Person shift

bad: Becky and Kim took the bus to the pier on the island  
and then we walked to the cottage.  
good: Becky and Kim took the bus to the pier on the island  
and then they walked to the cottage.

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Incomplete sentence

bad: Children playing in the park.  
good: Children are playing in the park.

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bad: Commuters running to catch their trains.  
good: Commuters were running to catch their trains.

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bad: Who is?  
good: Who is there?  
good: Who's there?  
good: Who is it?

-----  
Wrong order

bad: I gave to him the tickets.  
good: I gave the tickets to him.  
good: I gave him the tickets.

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bad: On the shelf the book was found.  
good: The book was found on the shelf.

-----  
Wrong pronoun

bad: Jesse and me did the homework.  
good: Jesse and I did the homework.

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bad: Jesse and I did their homework.  
good: Jesse and I did our homework.

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bad: The pilots check his baggage.  
good: The pilots check their baggage.

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Wrong word

bad: There are less people in the audience today than yesterday.  
good: There are fewer people in the audience today than yesterday.

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bad: The little girl is very handsome. (handsome is for a male)  
good: The little girl is very pretty. (pretty is for a female)

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bad: He was not conscience when he arrived at the hospital.  
good: He was not conscious when he arrived at the hospital.

wrong use of no

bad: I no can do that.  
good: I can not do that.  
good: I can't do that.

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bad: I no think it is cold.  
good: I do not think it is cold.  
good: I don't think it is cold.

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Wrong adjective/noun order

bad: It is a shirt black.  
good: It is a black shirt.  
good: It's a black shirt.

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bad: She is fluent more than Tom.  
good: She is more fluent than Tom.

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@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@

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other

bad: Why you go?  
good: Why do you go?

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bad: Where you work?  
good: Where do you work?

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bad: What we celebrate on December 25?  
good: What do we celebrate on December 25?

-----  
bad: Why you want to speak English?  
good: Why do you want to speak English?

-----  
bad: When is the party? Where it will?  
good: When is the party? Where will it be?

-----  
bad: What wrong with my homework?  
good: What's wrong with my homework?

-----  
bad: Today is Tuesday, day of school.  
good: Today is Tuesday, a school day.

-----  
bad: Which want do you want, the red our the blue?  
good: Which one do you want, the red or the blue?

-----  
bad: Wha do you say?  
good: What do you say? (present tense - now)  
good: What did you say? (past tense - yesterday)

-----  
bad: Wich color?  
good: Which color?

-----  
bad: What is the city of Tx.?  
good: What is the capital of Tx.?

-----  
bad: When is you birthday?  
good: When is your birthday?

-----

bad: What is this? This a book.  
good: What is this? This is book.  
good: What is this? This is a book.

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bad: On top of the table (this is ok)  
good: next to the pig (this is ok)  
good: in front of the pig (this is ok)

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bad: It cost 25.09.  
good: It costs \$25.09.

-----

bad: He is class.  
good: He in class.  
good: He's in class.  
good: He is in class.

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bad: He wend tosee hiss mother.  
good: He went to see his mother.

-----

bad: I have gray car.  
good: I have a gray car.

-----

bad: Those green apples are my.  
good: Those green apples are mine.

-----

bad: Used the big table.  
good: I used the big table.

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bad: Have a small apartment.  
good: I have a small apartment.

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bad: My black hair, is short.  
good: (ok but no "æ", "œ" My black hair is short)  
good: My hair is black and short. (better)  
good: I have short black hair. (best)

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bad: You watched the movie on the house. (past tense)  
good: You watched the movie at home.

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bad: She brush you hair. (present tense)  
good: She brushes her hair.

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bad: She brushed you hair. (past tense)  
good: She brushed her hair.

-----

bad: She will brush you hair. (future tense)  
good: She will brush her hair.

-----

bad: Do you cleaned the machine the ice cream?  
good: Did you clean the ice cream machine?

-----

bad: You will watched the movie on the house.  
good: You will watch the movie at home.

-----

bad: Do you will clean the machine the ice cream?  
good: Will you clean the ice cream machine?

-----

bad: This is Mary. My sister.

good: This is Mary. She is my sister.

good: This is Mary, my sister.

-----

bad: When do we go? At 2:00 P.M. For my house.

good: When do we go? We go at 2:00 P.M. to my house.

-----

bad: Why did he go?

He went to see his mother. To Hiuston, Tx.

good: Why did he go?

good: He went to see his mother in Houston, Tx.

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bad: Dolares

good: dollars

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bad: I'm study English.

good: I'm studying English.

good: I study English.

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bad: Inglish

good: English

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bad: She I'll study English tomorro.

good: She'll study English tomorrow.

good: I'll study English tomorrow.

-----

bad: They watches TV.

good: They watch TV.

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bad: I'll watch TV in the night

good: I'll watch TV tonight

good: I'll watch TV at night

-----

bad: He ran to avoid getting wet in rain.

good: He ran to avoid getting wet in the rain.

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bad: She's clean windows glasses.

good: She's cleaning the windows.

good: She's cleaning windows.

good: She cleans the windows.

good: She cleans windows.

-----

bad: Petter listened the radio.

good: Peter listened to the radio.

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bad: The boy is listening music.

good: The boy is listening to music.

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bad: Mary will listen the birds.

good: Mary will listen to the birds.

-----

bad: B.day

good: birthday

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good: Sep/10/75 (this is ok)

good: 9/10/1975 (month/day/year)

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bad: Why did you by it?

good: Why did you buy it?

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bad: Yesterday I went with mom jump in the park.  
good: Yesterday I went with mom and jumped in the park.

-----  
bad: I will jump with my Sister and my Cousin a rope.  
good: I will jump rope with my sister and my cousin.  
(use lower case for sister and cousin.)

-----  
bad: Should invite my friends to my house and will play.  
good: I should invite my friends to my house and we will play.

-----  
bad: The Sunday played soccer.  
good: This Sunday I played soccer.

-----  
bad: I playing in the beach.  
good: I'm playing at the beach.

-----  
bad: I worked in a baker.  
good: I worked in a bakery.

-----  
bad: Workin a baker.  
good: I am working in a bakery.  
good: I work in a bakery.

-----  
bad: I stopped traffic lights.  
good: I stopped at traffic lights.

-----  
bad: I stop trafic lights.  
good: I stop at traffic lights.

-----  
bad: I eating with the boy.  
good: I am eating with the boy.

-----  
bad: I cleaning my house.  
good: I am cleaning my house.

-----  
bad: I jumped an rope.  
good: I jumped rope

-----  
bad: I jump an rope  
good: I jump rope

-----  
bad: My friend borrow me his car.  
good: My friend borrowed my car from me.  
good: My friend lent me his car.

-----  
bad: Can you borrow me your cell phone?  
bad: Yes, I can borrow you my cell phone.  
good: Can I borrow your cell phone?  
good: Can you lend me your cell phone?  
good: Yes, you can borrow my cell phone.  
good: Yes, I can lend you my cell phone.

-----  
bad: Why does the shoes wear? (desgastar)  
good: Why do the shoes wear? (desgastar)

-----  
bad: I pull a bucket.  
good: I carry a bucket

-----  
bad: what time cooking you breakfast?

good: what time do you cook breakfast?

bad: In the afternoon, run in the park.  
good: In the afternoon, I run in the park.  
bad: Where run every afternoon?  
good: Where do you run every afternoon?

bad: Where would you like to travel to your grandfather?  
good: Where would you like to travel to with your grandfather?

bad: Who do you go shopping every Sunday?  
good: Who do you go shopping with every Sunday?

bad: How often prefer your daughters go to school?  
good: How often do your daughters prefer to go to school?

bad: Do you hungry?  
good: Are you hungry?

bad: Do you good?  
good: Are you good?

bad: I like tomato.  
good: I like tomatoes.

bad: Do you always cry?  
good: Do you always cry?

bad: Do you love thay woman?  
good: Do you love that woman?

bad: Rose no can use type.  
good: Rose can't type.  
good: Rose can't use a typewriter.

bad: She no can't cook.  
good: She can't cook.

bad: We yes can operate equipment.  
good: We can operate equipment.

bad: Do you like stop to the store?  
good: Do you like to stop at the store?

bad: Did you like stopped the park?  
good: Did you like stopping at the park?

bad: Do she talk to school with the friend?  
good: Does she talk at school with her friend?

bad: Did she talk to job with the boss?  
good: Did she talk at work with the boss?  
good: Did she talk about the job with the boss?

bad: Do he jump to house?  
good: Does he jump at his house?  
good: Does he jump at home? (his house == his home)

bad: Did he jumped in the park?

good: Did he jump in the park?

bad: I like to shop?

good: Do I like to shop?

bad: Did we think to barday the teacher?

good: Did we remember the teacher's birthday?

bad: What to borrow my sweater?

good: Want to borrow my sweater?

good: Do you want to borrow my sweater?

bad: That you laugh at me?

good: Why do you laugh at me?

good: Are you laughing at me?

bad: Made me laugh so much the clow.

good: The clown made me laugh so much.

bad: What is it smells so good?

good: What is it that smells so good?

bad: Warmest blanket is blue.

good: The warmest blanket is blue.

bad: What course did you take to get home?

good: What route did you take to get home?

bad: take the course nearest.

good: I took the nearest route.

bad: You are very thirsty?

good: Are you very thirsty?

bad: Yes, I have thirst.

good: Yes, I am thirsty.

bad: Do you have any money left?

good: Yes leftover me a dollar.

good: Yes, I have a dollar leftover.

bad: Who let the dog?

bad: He let the dog.

good: Who let the dog out?

good: He let the dog out.

bad: As is varnished wooden table?

good: Is it a varnished wooden table?

bad: How I can save money?

good: How can I save money?

bad: Why people are afraid of heights?

good: Why are people afraid of heights?

bad: Why the lions attack people?

good: Why do the lions attack people?

bad: coming to the nurse

good: The nurse is coming

bad: check to the temperature  
good: check the temperature

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bad: check to the heart  
good: check the heart

-----  
bad: The nurse too me pulse.  
good: The nurse took my pulse.

-----  
bad: Nice to meet you she to say.  
good: Nice to meet you, she says.

-----  
bad: I'm sick and backache too much.  
good: I'm sick and my back aches too much.

-----  
bad: Nice to met you too.  
good: Nice to meet you too.

-----  
bad: Is very sick Jose.  
good: Jose is very sick.

-----  
bad: I have headace, backache, cold.  
good: I have a headache, a backache, and a cold.

-----  
bad: I take temperature.  
good: she takes his temperature.

-----  
bad: I took the pulse.  
good: She takes his pulse.

-----  
bad: He give you good morning to doctor.  
good: He says good morning to the doctor.

-----  
bad: She takes your pulse at Jose.  
good: She takes Jose's pulse.

-----  
bad: He is siting.  
good: He is sitting.

-----  
bad: norse  
good: nurse

-----  
bad: Nurse takes the paper the information.  
good: The nurse has the paper with his information.

-----  
bad: Wats is your problem?  
good: What is your problem? (What's your problem?)

-----  
bad: fiver  
good: fever

-----  
bad: He in the waiting room.  
good: He is in the waiting room.

-----  
bad: Nurse comes to take the information.  
good: The nurse comes to take the information.

-----  
bad: The doctor asks what has.  
good: The doctor asks him what he has.

(The doctor asks him "what's the ,matter?")

-----  
bad: Doctor taking the temperature will.  
good: The doctor will take his temperature.  
-----

bad: This in waiting room.  
good: This is in the waiting room.  
-----

bad: She look my hand.  
good: She looks at my hand.  
-----

bad: She have information paper.  
good: She has the information paper.  
-----

bad: She doin questions.  
good: She's asking questions.  
-----

bad: He won the first place.  
good: He won first place.  
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bad: "When should be used the word 'me'?"  
good: "When should the word 'me' be used?"  
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Lend, prestar  
Borrow pedir prestado, tomar prestado

I lend something to you.  
You borrow something from me.  
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The word "I" is used for the subject of a sentence.  
Example: "I like chocolate."  
The word "me" is used for the object of a sentence.  
Example: "They help me"

La palabra "yo" se utiliza para el sujeto de una oraci3n.  
Ejemplo: "Me gusta el chocolate."  
La palabra "yo" se utiliza para el objeto de una oraci3n.  
Ejemplo: "Ellos me ayudan"

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"candy" can be used for plural. It is used to refer to candy in general.  
Example: "I like candy."  
"candies" is used when you want to talk about individual pieces of candy.  
Example: "I used two candies for the eyes of the cookie."

"candy" se puede utilizar para el plural. Se utiliza para referirse a dulces en general.

Ejemplo: "Me gustan los dulces."

"candies" se utiliza cuando se quiere hablar de las piezas individuales de dulces.

Ejemplo: "Us3 dos caramelos para los ojos de la galleta."  
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besides (in addition to) adem3s de  
beside (next to) al lado de