

Homonyms are the words that sound like one another, particularly when that are pronounced the same way but spelt differently.

The Concise Oxford Dictionary defines a homonym as: each of the two or more words having the same spelling and/or pronunciation or different spelling and/or pronunciation but different meanings and origins.

Example: Pole and Pole

The first Pole refers to a citizen of Poland who could either be referred to as Polish or a Pole. The second Pole refers to a bamboo pole or any other wooden pole.

The word homophone comes from the Greek homo meaning same and phone meaning sound. Strictly speaking therefore, the word homophone is used to refer to words which sound alike, although they have a different spelling and meaning.

Here are a few examples:

mail, male; wear, ware; metal, mettle; etc.

A homonym, on the other hand, is used to refer to words which have the same spelling and pronunciation but have a different meaning.

Here are a few examples:

May (month), may (possibility); can (be able), can (put something in container); bear (the animal), bear (to carry).

SUMMARY CHART

HOMONYM WORDS <i>SOUND</i>	HOMOPHONE WORDS type of homonym
same sound	same sound
same OR different spelling	different spelling
fair (county fair) fair (reasonable) pear (fruit)	pear (fruit) pair (couple) <i>Buzzy Bee Riddle #6; boo bee, booby</i>

pair (couple)
Buzzy Bee Riddle #6; boo bee, booby
Buzzy Bee Riddle #14; hum bug, humbug
Buzzy Bee Riddle #13: cell, sell

Buzzy Bee Riddle #14; hum bug, humbug
Buzzy Bee Riddle #13: cell, sell

HOMOGRAPH WORDS <i>SPELLING</i>	HETERONYM WORDS type of homograph
same OR different sound	different sound
same spelling	same spelling
lie (untruth) lie (lie down) tear (in the eye) tear (rip) <i>Buzzy Bee Riddle #4; spelling bee, spelling bee</i>	tear (in the eye) tear (rip)

Aisle: A walk way

Isle: An island

Aid: To help or assist somebody

Aide: An assistant (usually to a political leader)

Altar: A raised platform used as a place of worship

Alter: To change

Ascent: A climb, to increase, to go up

Assent: To agree or to give permission to

Bail:

The temporary release of an accused person awaiting trial, sometimes on the condition that a sum of money is deposited in the court to guarantee their appearance in the court at a future date

1. To scoop water out of a ship or a boat

Bale: A bundle of hay or dry grass

Bait:

Food used to entice fish or other animals as prey

Bate

If you wait for something with bated breath, you wait anxiously to find out what will happen.

a bad temper or rage

Band :

1: A small group of musicians and vocalists

2: A small group of people who have common interests and purposes

Banned: Something that is disallowed or illegal

Bard: A poet, traditionally one reciting epics (the Bard is a reference to William Shakespeare)

Barred:

2. Prohibited to do some thing and from going from some where

Berth:

1. A ship's allotted place at a wharf or dock

2. Moor or moored in a berth

3. Provide a berth for a passenger on a train

Birth:

1. The emergence of a body or the young creature from the body of its mother

2. The start of life as a physically separate being

3. The beginning of something, the origin, descent, ancestry

Cache: A hidden store of things

Cash: Money in coins or notes

Cannon:

1. A large, heavy piece of artillery formerly used in warfare

Canon:

1. A general rule or principle by which something is judged

2. The degree or the law of a Church

Canvas: A strong coarse unbleached cloth used to make sails, tents etc... and as a surface for oil painting

Canvass:

1. Solicit votes from voters

Complacent: Smug and uncritically satisfied with oneself or one's achievements, self-satisfied

Complaisant: Willingness to please others or to accept their behavior without protest

Complement:

1. A thing that contributes extra features to something else and thereby enhances and improves it

2. The number or quantity that makes something complete

Compliment: A polite expression of praise or admiration