



## GOALS

- Learn why mastering word forms is important in writing
- Understand four problems writers commonly encounter with word forms
- Use different parts of speech (nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs) and their most common forms correctly in exercises and writing assignments

Aside from your academic work or your job, what are some of your hobbies, special interests, or talents?

## LEARN WHAT THE ERROR IS

### Errors with Word Forms

A **word-form** error is one in which the choice of the word is correct but the wrong form of it has been used. For example, in the sentence *I had a happiness day*, the adjective *happy* should be used instead of the noun *happiness*. Note that the parts of speech we will address in this unit are nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, and present and past participles used as adjectives. The editing symbol for a word-form error is *wf*.

A word in English can have several different forms, depending on whether the word functions as a noun, verb, adjective, or adverb. Examine the following forms of the word *success*. Notice how each form has a different grammatical function.

- His success surprised everyone. (noun)
- She has been successful in persuading others. (adjective)
- I certainly hope she succeeds! (verb)
- Ana could hardly believe that she had successfully finished the race. (adverb)

Errors with present and past participles that are used as adjectives are also covered in this unit. For example, the sentence *I am interesting in molecular genetics* is incorrect because the past participle *interested* should be used rather than the present participle *interesting*. Errors with infinitives, gerunds, participles, and base forms are treated in Unit 2, “Verb Forms.”

Note that word-choice errors (Unit 13) are errors in which an incorrect word has been chosen. Word-form errors (this unit), on the other hand, are those in which the correct word has been chosen but the grammatical form of the word (noun, verb, adjective, or adverb) is incorrect.

Academic and professional writers are expected to use word forms correctly. Although word-form errors are classified as local (less serious) errors because they affect individual clauses rather than larger parts of a text, they are highly noticeable to the reader because they affect content words (nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs)—words that carry the most meaning in a sentence. Thus, writers need to be aware that numerous word-form errors will make a piece of writing appear flawed to the reader.

## Suggestions for Reducing Errors

- When you are unsure whether you are using the correct form of a word, look up the word in a dictionary to check its different forms. Almost all dictionaries indicate the part of speech (noun, verb, adjective, adverb) next to the word. Some dictionaries also include example sentences, which can be very helpful.
- Become aware of common word endings, called **suffixes**, that identify words as nouns, verbs, adjectives, or adverbs. For example, *-ness* and *-tion* are common noun endings; *-ous* and *-ful* are common adjective endings; *-en* and *-ify* are common verb endings; and *-ly* is a common adverb ending. A list of the most common word endings is included in this unit.
- Be aware of word formation when you read in English. Take time to analyze sentences, making sure you can identify nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs in each sentence.

Write answers to the following questions. Share your answers with another student.

1. Choose two suffixes that you already know. Give two examples of words that take each suffix.
2. How can a dictionary help you with accurate word formation?

## GRAMMAR JOURNAL ENTRY 14 WORD FORMS

Respond to the following in your grammar journal.

1. What is your definition of success and/or a successful person?
2. Choose two words that you use frequently, such as *friend*, *education*, *environment*, or any other words you wish. Then, list all of the different forms of these two words that you can think of. Label the different forms as nouns, adjectives, verbs, or adverbs. Then, in a dictionary, verify whether the parts of speech are correct.

## UNDERSTAND COMMON PROBLEMS

This section presents four problems that writers commonly encounter with word forms. First, take the pre-test to see what you already know about word forms. When you finish, check your answers on page 354. Then, carefully study each problem and the examples that illustrate it.

Pay particular attention to those problems that correspond to the pre-test questions you had difficulty with. Remember that becoming aware of the types of errors you most often make with word forms will increase your chances of avoiding these errors in your writing.

### Pre-test

### What Do You Already Know?

Test your ability to recognize and correct errors with word forms.

- A** Correct the marked word-form errors. These are examples of the four common problems that are presented in this unit.

**Problem 1** Electronic <sup>we</sup>communicate via e-mail, Facebook, and texting has become commonplace around the world.

**Problem 2** Employees must submit weekly progress reports in a <sup>we</sup>timeful manner.

**Problem 3** Heating up a frozen dinner is sometimes <sup>we</sup>convenient than cooking a meal.

**Problem 4** As a possible career goal, I am <sup>we</sup>interesting in computer science.

- B** Underline and correct the one error in each of the following sentences. (The errors are not in any particular order.)

1. Most of the students thought that the second quiz was more easy than the first one.
2. When my friends are late, I always start to get impatience.
3. The pharmacy is locating right behind the bank.
4. My roommate needs to straightize her room.

### Problem 1

The choice of a word is correct, but the wrong part of speech has been used.

### Four Common Problems

Incorrect: She was <sup>wf</sup>easy persuaded to change her vote.

Correct: She was easily persuaded to change her vote.

(An adverb instead of an adjective is needed to modify the verb persuaded.)

Incorrect: The students will clearly feel the <sup>wf</sup>lost of Mr. Jensen, who will retire soon.

Correct: The students will clearly feel the loss of Mr. Jensen, who will retire soon.  
(A noun instead of an adjective is needed as the direct object of the verb *feel*.)

Incorrect: Her attitude is a <sup>wf</sup>reflect of the views of society.

Correct: Her attitude is a reflection of the views of society.  
(A noun instead of a verb is needed in this position.)

Incorrect: I am a graduate student in the Department of Management and <sup>wf</sup>Financement.

Correct: I am a graduate student in the Department of Management and Finance.

Incorrect: I studied <sup>wf</sup>hardly before I took the TOEFL exam.

Correct: I studied hard before I took the TOEFL exam.

**SELF-HELP STRATEGY:** Study the list of common word suffixes in this unit to become familiar with noun, verb, adjective, and adverb suffixes. However, keep in mind that there are no rules that will tell you whether a word requires a specific suffix to mark it as a certain part of speech. For example, the noun form of the verb *manage* requires the *-ment* ending, while the verb *finance* does not require an ending to form the noun *finance*. To verify word forms that you are unsure of, check your dictionary.

Incorrect: That was the <sup>wf</sup>worse movie I have seen in a long time.

Correct: That was the worst movie I have seen in a long time.

### Problem 2

A suffix has been used incorrectly.

### Problem 3

The incorrect adjective or adverb form has been used in a comparison.

**Problem 4**

The incorrect present or past participle form has been used as an adjective.

Incorrect: This semester, Faizah has been <sup>wf</sup> more busier than usual.

Correct: This semester, Faizah has been busier than usual.

Incorrect: Mario is working <sup>wf</sup> hard this year than last year.

Correct: Mario is working harder this year than last year.

Incorrect: The essay was <sup>wf</sup> interested.

Correct: The essay was interesting.

Incorrect: The <sup>wf</sup> interesting members of the audience stayed after the lecture to ask further questions.

Correct: The interested members of the audience stayed after the lecture to ask further questions.

## REVIEW GRAMMAR SOLUTIONS

### Common Word Suffixes

The following lists will help you recognize common noun, verb, adjective, and adverb suffixes. After you study each list, add your own examples of suffixes.

#### 1. Noun Suffixes

SUFFIX	EXAMPLES
-ance	importance, distance, <u>reliance</u>
-ancy	expectancy, redundancy, _____
-ant	hydrant, participant, _____
-arium	planetarium, aquarium, _____
-ary	diary, commentary, _____
-ation	education, dedication, _____
-cide	genocide, herbicide, _____
-dom	kingdom, martyrdom, _____
-eer	volunteer, engineer, _____
-ence	presence, emergence, _____
-ency	potency, transparency, _____
-er	teacher, speaker, _____
-ess	princess, actress, _____

SUFFIX	EXAMPLES
-hood	likelihood, childhood, _____
-ian	guardian, librarian, _____
-ion	fusion, religion, _____
-ism	socialism, sexism, _____
-ist	specialist, artist, _____
-istics	statistics, logistics, _____
-ity	legibility, impossibility, _____
-logy	geology, analogy, _____
-ment	argument, establishment, _____
-ness	sadness, likeness, _____
-ology	terminology, ecology, _____
-or	instructor, doctor, _____
-orium	auditorium, moratorium, _____
-ory	observatory, laboratory, _____
-ship	scholarship, friendship, _____
-sion	expression, admission, _____
-tion	application, indication, _____
-ure	closure, departure, _____
-work	network, homework, _____

## 2. Verb Suffixes

SUFFIX	EXAMPLES
-ate	mediate, delegate, <i>regulate</i> _____
-en	lengthen, brighten, _____
-ify	solidify, intensify, _____
-ize	finalize, customize, _____

## 3. Adjective Suffixes

SUFFIX	EXAMPLES
-able	agreeable, understandable, <i>believable</i> _____
-al	emotional, lethal, _____
-an	American, Italian, _____
-ant	important, hesitant, _____
-ate	considerate, subordinate, _____
-ative	superlative, demonstrative, _____
-ed	interested, challenged, _____
-ent	different, excellent, _____
-ese	Japanese, Maltese, _____

Continued on page 290.

SUFFIX	EXAMPLES
-ful	colorful, useful, _____
-ible	responsible, infallible, _____
-ic	characteristic, electric, _____
-ing	interesting, challenging, _____
-ious	delicious, cautious, _____
-ish	childish, foolish, _____
-ive	expressive, competitive, _____
-less	colorless, useless, _____
-like	childlike, lifelike, _____
-ly	friendly, lonely, _____
-ous	famous, dangerous, _____
-some	wholesome, bothersome, _____
-y	dressy, noisy, _____

#### 4. Adverb Suffixes

SUFFIX	EXAMPLES
-ly	usually, legibly, <i>quietly</i> _____
-ward	afterward, upward, _____
-wise	clockwise, likewise, _____

### Comparative and Superlative Forms of Adjectives

1. **One-syllable adjectives and adverbs:** Add *-er + than* for the comparative form and *the + -est* for the superlative form.

**Examples:**

The midterm test was harder than the final test. (comparative)

Some students think that essay tests are the hardest. (superlative)

My roommate usually stays up later than I do. (comparative)

Monica stays up the latest of all my friends. (superlative)

2. **Most adjectives and adverbs of two or more syllables:** Use *more ... than* for the comparative form and *the most* for the superlative form.

**Examples:**

The Mexican restaurant downtown is more popular than the Chinese restaurant. (comparative)

The Vietnamese restaurant is the most popular. (superlative)



3. **Two-syllable words that end in -y:** Change the -y to -i. Then, add -er + *than* for the comparative form and *the* + -est for the superlative form.

**Examples:**

The red car is sportier than the blue car. (comparative)

The black convertible is the sportiest of all. (superlative)

4. **The following words have irregular comparative and superlative forms.**

	COMPARATIVE	SUPERLATIVE
good	<i>better than</i>	<i>the best</i>
bad	<i>worse than</i>	<i>the worst</i>
little	<i>less than</i>	<i>the least</i>
much/many	<i>more than</i>	<i>the most</i>

**Examples:**

I like my chemistry class better than my math class. (comparative)

I like my history class the best of all. (superlative)

I am earning less money this year than last year. (comparative)

Of all my friends, Juan earns the least money. (superlative)

Jogging is better exercise than walking. (comparative)

The best exercise program is a daily workout. (superlative)

## Choosing the Appropriate Participle as an Adjective

1. **Use the past participle form of the verb when you are describing something or someone affected by someone or something else.**

**Examples:**

The reader was interested in the essay.

An interested reader can read an essay for hours.

(In both cases, the focus is on the reader's being interested in the essay.)

2. **Use the present participle form of the verb when you are describing something that affects someone or something else.**

**Examples:**

The essay was interesting.

An interesting essay holds the reader's attention.

(In both cases, the focus is on the essay's being interesting.)

## IMPROVE YOUR WRITING STYLE

### WORDS WITH MULTIPLE FORMS

*Be aware that many English words have more than one form for the same part of speech. However, the different forms have different meanings. As you encounter these different forms and uses, you will need to memorize them, since their usage is not rule-based but instead is vocabulary-based. The more you read and listen to English, the sooner you will become acquainted with these different forms. Below you will find selected examples.*

**1. friend** (noun)

**friendship** (noun)

My friend helped me move to a new apartment.

My friendship with Mr. Jones led me to go into the engineering field.

**2. comparable** (adjective)

**comparative** (adjective)

This hotel is comparable to the one we stayed at last year.

Kevin's research is a comparative study of health services in India.

**3. various** (adjective)

**variable** (adjective)

**varied** (adjective)

Her job requires her to travel to various countries each year.

The weather is variable in the spring.

The climate of the United States is varied, with some parts having a cold climate and others having a hot and humid climate.

**4. characteristic** (noun)

**character** (noun)

Conscientiousness is one of John's characteristics.

Tran's current behavior seems to contradict his character.

## PRACTICE WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNED

### EXERCISE 1

**Directions:** For the following nouns commonly used by academic and professional writers, fill in the other word forms.

Noun	Verb	Adjective	Adverb
1. characteristic	<u>characterize</u>	<u>characteristic</u>	<u>characteristically</u>
2. approximation	_____	_____	_____
3. production	_____	_____	_____
4. origin	_____	_____	_____
5. category	_____	_____	_____
6. significance	_____	_____	_____
7. theory	_____	_____	_____

### EXERCISE 2

**Directions:** Decide if a sentence is correct (C) or if it contains any word-form errors (I). If it is incorrect, underline the error and make the correction.

**Example:** I The young child did not receive much <sup>encouragement</sup> encourage to speak her native language.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Taking timed writing tests often gives students the beneficial of becoming more accustomed to writing quickly under pressure.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. The article very precisively and effectively explains the advantages and disadvantages of taking a class online.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Many young immigrants become maturity by dealing with adult problems at an early age.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. My supervisor quickly approval of my request for a two-week leave from work.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Gregorio came to Canada to pursuit his Ph.D.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. In order to succeed, one must be able to make sacrifices.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. My suggest is aimed at easing the problem.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. If I keep writing in this fashion, my writing skills might even become worst, for I might get used to making those mistakes.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. When my roommate cooks, I have to clean up the messiness he makes.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Being able to interact with a variety of people makes my job thorough enjoyable.

### EXERCISE 3

**Directions:** Fill in each blank with the correct form of the verb in parentheses.

**Examples:** Writing in English is quite challenging (challenge) for me.

I am confused (confuse) about what the lecturer meant by some of his statements.

1. My professor's absence was \_\_\_\_\_ (surprise) to all of us in the class.
2. The room, with its chipping paint, leaking roof, and lack of light, was \_\_\_\_\_ (depress).
3. Mario is \_\_\_\_\_ (interest) in the topic of the lecture because it is related to his research.
4. Natalie was \_\_\_\_\_ (puzzle) by the grade she received on her test.
5. Your ability to type quickly and accurately is \_\_\_\_\_ (amaze).
6. The amount of money raised by the walkathon was \_\_\_\_\_ (astonish).

7. Jack was completely \_\_\_\_\_ (surprise) by the party his friends gave for him.
8. This book is one of the most \_\_\_\_\_ (entertain) books that I have ever read.

#### EXERCISE 4

**Directions:** Practice making comparisons by writing sentences following the example given below.

**Example:** Compare two academic courses you have taken or are familiar with.

*The new course on cultural anthropology is more popular than the old one.*

1. Compare two different makes of cars.
2. Compare this month's weather to last month's.
3. Compare two cities you have lived in or visited.
4. Compare the price of food in your country of origin with that of another country.
5. Compare an aspect of your school or job with your expectation of it before you started.

#### EXERCISE 5

**Directions:** In the following student paragraph, correct the underlined word-form errors. Write the correct form of the word above each incorrect word form. The first one has been done for you.

My bilingualism may benefit me in terms of job opportunities. First of all, more and more immigrants arrive in the United States every year. To help these newcomers or to do business with them, bilingual and multilingual employees are needed. For example, banks, law firms, and insurance agencies often need employees who can communicative with both non-English speakers and English-speaking clients. Therefore, because I speak Spanish good, I might find many job opportunities in places where there are a lot of Spanish

speakers, such as Los Angeles, New York, Chicago, and Miami. Second, if I can achievement my goal of having my own dentist clinic, Spanish-speaking clients may be a good source for my earns. Many Spanish speakers tendency to feel more comfort with Spanish-speaking doctors and dentists. Even Hispanics who speak English very well would preference a Spanish-speaking dentist to an English-speaking one. So, overall, I may benefit economical from my knowledgement of two languages.

### EXERCISE 6

**Directions:** The following student paragraph contains nine errors in word form. Correct each word-form error. The first one has been done for you.

Being multilingual enables me to communicate *directly* ~~direct~~ with many people. Even though I mostly use English in my everyday life, especially at the university, I still use Cantonese to communicate with my relatives. My grandmother, for example, who just recently came to the United States from Vietnam and is now living with my family, cannot understand English. The only language she speaks fluent is Cantonese. Therefore, knowing how to speak Cantonese allows me to communicate easy with her. By talking with her, I have learned some of my family's historical. She told me that she and my grandfather were originally from China, and she explanation what her life was like there. She has also told me interest stories about China that I never would have heard if I did not speak Cantonese. Besides Cantonese, I also speak Vietnamese. Being able to speak these languages in Asian restaurants has also been benefit to me. The restaurant employees recognize that they and I are from similar backgrounds because we speak the same language. They, therefore, give more attentive to me than to customers who do not speak the language. Thus, being able to speak these languages opens the door for me to communication closely with many different people.

### EXERCISE 7

**Directions:** Read a short news article. Then, underline all of the words with noun, verb, adjective, or adverb suffixes in two paragraphs of the article. Identify the part of speech (noun, verb, adjective, or adverb) of each word you have underlined.

**Post-test**

**What Do You Know Now?**

**A** Fill in the blanks with the correct word forms for these words, which are commonly used in academic and professional writing.

Noun	Verb	Adjective	Adverb
1. _____	analyze	_____	_____
2. recovery	_____	_____	
3. _____	_____	contributed	
4. _____	facilitate	_____	
5. norm	_____	_____	_____
6. _____	promote	_____	
7. _____	_____	involved	
8. modification	_____	_____	
9. _____	_____	_____	finally
10. _____	predict	_____	_____

**B** Check (✓) the part of speech for each of the words listed. Then, underline the suffix that indicates the part of speech.

	Noun	Verb	Adjective	Adverb
1. equate	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. individually	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. generosity	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. calmly	_____	_____	_____	_____
5. attentiveness	_____	_____	_____	_____
6. ability	_____	_____	_____	_____
7. dependable	_____	_____	_____	_____
8. regulation	_____	_____	_____	_____
9. strengthen	_____	_____	_____	_____
10. doubtful	_____	_____	_____	_____

**C** Circle the correct word form to complete each sentence.

- Deborah decided that she would like to major in biochemistry in preparation for (graduation/graduate) school in pharmacy.
- The school cafeteria is (periodical/periodically) inspected by the health department.
- We need to (considerate/consider) what to add to our grocery list for the party.

4. Gerald needs to find his anatomy textbook to (refer/reference) to some diagrams.

5. My advisor has given me much care and (supporting/support).

**D** Fill in each blank with the present or past participle of the word in parentheses.

1. The student found several \_\_\_\_\_ (confuse) sentences on the test.

2. A run-on sentence is also known as a \_\_\_\_\_ (fuse) sentence.

3. The newest theory about the 1918 flu virus is \_\_\_\_\_ (interest).

4. The new student union building is \_\_\_\_\_ (locate) behind the administration building.

5. Some of the Halloween costumes were very \_\_\_\_\_ (amuse).

**E** Write the comparative and the superlative forms for the following adjectives.

Adjective	Comparative Form	Superlative Form
1. good	_____	_____
2. difficult	_____	_____
3. fast	_____	_____
4. bad	_____	_____
5. light	_____	_____
6. foggy	_____	_____

**F** In the following e-mail a student wrote to her tutor, find and correct the five errors with word forms.

Dear Barbara,

How are you? I have not had a chance to visit you late since school keeps me very busy. However, I really appreciated your input on my application for pharmacy school, particularly the part where I talked about learning American Sign Language and the causes of deaf.



Thank you, too, for sending me such a detailed e-mail on how to success in taking the entrance exam.

I made a quick visiting to my father yesterday. He was happiness to see me and to find out that I am doing well in school.

Best,

Tuyet

## APPLY WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNED TO WRITING

Select a writing topic and follow the steps in Appendix A on page 337.

### Topic 1:

Describe in detail one of your hobbies, special interests, or talents. How long have you been pursuing this activity and why is it important to you? How does it enrich your life?



### Topic 2:

Think about your birth order among your brothers and sisters. Are you the youngest, the oldest, or somewhere in the middle? First, explain where you are in the order of birth of the siblings in your family. Then, explain how you think this birth order has affected you as a person. If you are an only child, explain how this situation has affected you.



### Topic 3:

Choose a book that you enjoyed reading or a movie that you enjoyed seeing. Briefly explain what the book or movie was about. Then, explain what you particularly liked about it or in what way it influenced you.

