

# Top 15 Grammar Goofs

\*Adapted from [www.freemont.edu](http://www.freemont.edu)

## 1. Their/There/They're

Their = possessed or claimed by a group.

Example: I am going to their apartment tonight.

There = place.

Example: I will meet you there.

They're = they are.

Example: They're at the movie theater.

## 2. Who/That

Who = refers back to a particular person.

Example: The woman who found my wallet contacted me today.

That = refers to a non-human object.

Example: The school that raised the most money was honored at a banquet.

## 3. His or Her/Their

His or her = belonging to a single person

Example: Anyone can bring his or her dog to the event at the park.

Their = possessed or claimed by a group

Example: Attendees can bring their dogs to the event at the park.

## 4. It's/Its

It's = it is/has

Example: It's a nice day today.

Its = belonging to something

Example: The company is having its monthly meeting on Friday.

## 5. Who's/Whose

Who's = who is/has

Example: Who's going to the party tonight?

Whose = belonging to a person.

Example: The woman whose sister is coming to town has to leave the party early.

*Hint: If it doesn't sound right to say "who is/has," instead, then use whose.*

## 6. I/Me

I = use when referring to yourself before the verb.

Example: My friend and I went to the event.

Me = use when referring to yourself after the verb.

Example: My friend went to the event with my spouse and me.

*Hint: If it doesn't sound right to say "me" by itself, then use I.*

## 7. Affect/Effect

Affect = to influence.

Example: A good teacher can affect kids positively.

Effect = 1. As a result. 2. A change that is a result or consequence of an action or other cause.

Example: The teacher had a positive effect on her students.

## 8. 's/s'

's = belonging to a single person or object.

Example: The woman's dog was playful.

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s' = belonging to multiple people or objects.

Example: My friends' dogs are playing in the yard.

### **9. Fewer/Less**

Fewer = a small number of.

Example: The company has fewer than 20 employees.

Less = to a smaller extent.

Example: The company is less successful now that it only has 20 employees.

### **10. Than/Then**

Than = shows comparison.

Example: It is hotter today than it was yesterday.

Then = indicates sequence.

Example: He turned off the lights, then went to bed.

### **11. Lay/Lie**

Lay = to place or put.

Example: Before you enter the room, you'll need to lay down your belongings on the table.

Lie = to recline.

Example: Samantha was tired this morning so she decided to lie down.

### **12. Farther/Further**

Farther = a measure of distance or length.

Example: The baseball player hit the ball farther than he ever had.

Further = more of.

Example: She is enrolling in college because she wants to further her education.

### **13. Your/You're**

Your = Belonging to or associated with the person or people that the speaker is addressing.

Example: I will return your book tomorrow.

You're = you are.

Example: You're welcome to join us for tea this afternoon.

### **14. To/Too**

To = expressing motion in the direction of (a particular location).

Example: I am going to the store tonight.

Too = 1. To an excessive extent or degree. 2. Also, as well.

Example: Jim was driving too fast.

Example: I will be participating in the race, too.

### **15. Into/In To**

Into = to the inside of; in toward. The word *into* answers the question, *where?*

Example: Jane walked into her office to find a pile of papers on her desk.

In to = where the words in and to just happen to end up next to each other, they must remain separate words.

Example: Peter walked in to see his supervisor.