



B2 - Humour and homophones

Understand and use homophones accurately, interpret humour and misunderstanding in English, and improve vocabulary through wordplay.

Do you find this image funny?



Discussion questions

1. Do you enjoy jokes or puns in English?
2. Have you ever misunderstood a word because it sounded like another word?
3. What makes something funny in your language?
4. Do you think English humour is easy or difficult to understand?
5. What's your favourite English joke or pun (if any)?



Pun – what is it anyway?

A pun is a joke or play on words that uses the different meanings of a word—or words that sound alike but have different meanings—to be funny or clever.

Puns are often used in English humour, advertising, and creative writing because they're witty and wordy all at once.



Example of puns

1. “Time flies like an arrow. Fruit flies like a banana.”
The word flies is used in two different ways, leading to a silly but smart twist.
2. “I used to be a baker, but I couldn't make enough dough.”
Dough means both money and the stuff you make bread from.
3. “I’m reading a book about anti-gravity. It’s impossible to put down!”
Impossible to put down can mean both "very interesting" and "it literally floats."

Chicken Crisis — Sandra's Misunderstanding

Sandra had just started working at a small family-run hotel. One morning, her boss, Mrs. Doyle, asked her to help with breakfast. “Please collect the eggs from the henhouse,” Mrs. Doyle said. Sandra, still new to the job (and the language), panicked. She ran into the kitchen, opened the fridge, and took out a dozen boiled eggs.

Then she looked around and asked, “Where’s the hen’s house?” “Outside, behind the garden,” Mrs. Doyle replied, slightly confused. Sandra walked outside, carrying the eggs in a bowl. She found the henhouse, opened the door—and screamed. The chickens clucked angrily and flapped around her.

She thought she had to return the eggs to the hens. “These poor birds must be starving!” she shouted, tossing a boiled egg toward one of them. “Sandra! What are you doing?” Mrs. Doyle cried, running out. “Feeding them the eggs like you asked!”

Mrs. Doyle laughed so hard she nearly dropped the coffee tray. “I meant collect fresh eggs from the hens, not give them the ones from the fridge!” Sandra’s face turned bright red. “Oh no... I thought you meant bring eggs to the hen’s house!” “Welcome to the wonderful world of English,” Mrs. Doyle chuckled.

Reading comprehension questions

1. Why did Sandra get confused?

- a. She had never seen chickens before.
- b. She misunderstood the word “collect”.
- c. She thought the hens needed boiled eggs.

2. What did Mrs. Doyle actually want?

- a. To feed the hens breakfast.
- b. To collect fresh eggs from the chickens.
- c. To test Sandra’s language skills.

3. What did Sandra do with the eggs from the fridge?

- a. Made an omelette.
- b. Gave them to the guests.
- c. Threw them to the chickens.

4. How did Mrs. Doyle react?

- a. She got very angry.
- b. She found the situation funny.
- c. She left the hotel.

5. What part of English caused the misunderstanding?

- a. Tense confusion.
- b. Vocabulary about animals.
- c. Homophones or similar-sounding phrases.

Matching activity — which is which?

Match the homophones with the correct meaning on the right.

1. Flour

2. See

3. Meat

4. Knight

5. Hair

6. Toe

7. Flower

8. Tow



a. Animal used in war.

b. Sweet-smelling plant.

c. To pull something.

d. To look.

e. Food from animals.

f. On your head.

g. Baking powder or ingredient.

h. Part of your foot.

Lost in conversation

Read the dialogue and choose the correct word from the brackets

Anna: Hey, did you _____ the news this morning? (hear / here)

Ben: No, I didn't. I was actually on a _____. We had some turbulence over the mountains! (plain / plane)

Anna: Yikes. Sounds scary. I'm glad you're safe. Did you manage to _____ the client yesterday? (meet / meet)

Ben: Yes, finally. We met at that little café near the station. Nothing fancy—just a _____ sandwich and coffee. (meat / meet)

Anna: Classic Ben—keeping things simple and _____. (plain / plane)

Ben: Exactly. Oh, I brought you a small gift from the airport. It's a little wooden _____ of chocolate from Belgium! (piece / peace)

Anna: Aww, thanks! You always bring back the good stuff. Hang on, what's that smell? Is someone baking with _____? (flower / flour)

Ben: Yep. I think the bakery next door is testing a new recipe. They said it might be a lavender and _____ combo! (flower / flour)

Anna: Ew, seriously? I don't know if I want my bread to smell like a garden.

Ben: Haha! Oh wait—watch out! You need to hit the _____! (break / brake)

Anna: Whoa, that was close. You're supposed to tell me sooner when I'm about to _____ the glass door. (break / brake)

Ben: I tried! You never _____ me! (hear / here)

Create a sentence for each homophone

1. pair / pear
2. see / sea
3. meat / meet
4. sun / son
5. buy / by



Possible answers

1. pair (*two matching items*) / pear (*a type of fruit*)
“Where is my favourite pair of shoes?” / “She added a poached pear to the pudding.”
2. see (*to look*) / sea (*large body of water*)
“When did you last see him?” / “I’m not going on the boat with this rough sea!”
3. meat (*food from animals*) / meet (*to come together*)
“Eating meat twice a week is a healthier choice.” / “When would you like to meet your new nephew?”
4. sun (*star in the sky*) / son (*male child*)
“Apply sunscreen before you go out in the sun!” / “My son just started first grade.”
5. buy (*to purchase*) / by (*next to*)
“I have to buy some milk later on.” / “He is sitting by the pool.”

Common homophones [1 of 3]

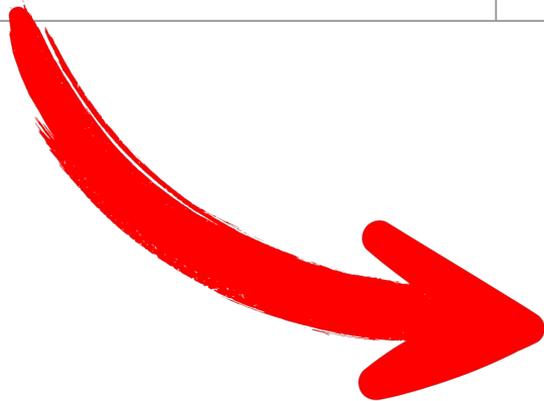
Homophone pair	Meaning 1	Meaning 2
pair/pear	Two matching items	A type of fruit
flour/flower	Baking ingredient	A plant that blooms
see/sea	To look	Large body of water
meat/meet	Food from animals	To come together
write/right	To make letters on a page	Correct or direction
sun/son	Star in the sky	Male child
hear/here	To listen	In this place
buy/by	To purchase	Next to
break/brake	To destroy	To stop a car

Common homophones [2 of 3]

Homophone pair	Meaning 1	Meaning 2
ate/eight	Past of 'eat'	The number 8
night/knight	Time after sunset	Medieval soldier
no/know	Negative word	To be aware of something
one/won	Number 1	Past of 'win'
hour/our	60 minutes	Belonging to us
toe/tow	Part of the foot	To pull something
aloud/allowed	Spoken out loud	Permitted
hole/whole	An empty space	Complete or entire
peace/piece	Calm or no war	A part of somethin

Common homophones [3 of 3]

Homophone pair	Meaning 1	Meaning 2
plain/plane	Simple or not fancy	Flying vehicle
hair/hare	On your head	Fast animal (like a rabbit)





Thank you for your support.

YouTube: @elucidatedenglish