Spelling: Common errors / Homophones

Many words in the English language sound identical when spoken (in certain accents) so we commonly pick the wrong one when writing. Although the **sounds** of these words are **similar**, the **meanings** can be radically **different**.

We use software spell checks. They check for spelling, NOT meaning. This means your essay can be FULL of mistakes that your computer has signed off on.

Using the Correct Word

Word A	Meaning	Word B	Meaning
Then	Relates to time. *Then I left.*	**Than**	Comparison. *Better than you*.
They're	Abbreviation (they are). *They're going*	**There**	Position. *Over there*
		Their	Possession. *Their money*
Affect	Verb. *Alcohol affects the liver*	**Effect**	Noun. *The effects of alcohol…*
Too	Also / excess. *I'm going too. Too far.*	**To**	Preposition. *I'm going to work.*
Of	Possession. *In a glass cage of emotion.*	**Off**	Not on / Position. *Turn your phone off. Off limits*
Whose	Possession. *Whose car is that?*	**Who's**	Abbreviation (who is). *Who's that?*
Decent	Not bad. *My hair looks decent today.*	**Descent**	Going down. *I began my descent of the stairs.*
Its	Possession. *The cat licked its paw*	**It's**	Abbreviation (it is). *It's important.*
In to	Movement. *Jump in to the pool*	**Into**	Transformation. *Turn into stone*
Your	Possession. *Your problem*	**You're**	Abbreviation (you are). *You're correct.*
Principle	Moral code. *I live by my principles*.	**Principal**	Leader of the school. *The Principal was kind*
Whole	Complete. *I saw the whole thing*	**Hole**	An opening. *I fell into a deep hole of despair*
Lead	(rhymes with need) Direct/take charge	**Led**	Past tense. (the *metal* 'lead' sounds like led)
Loose	Not tight	**Lose**	You can't find it. *Try not to lose your marbles*
I.e.	In other words	**E.g.**	For example
Illusion	Magic.	**Allusion**	Reference to. *Lucy made an allusion to The Bible*
Except	Apart from. *Everyone except me*	**Accept**	Take it. *I accept your compliment*
Cite	Mention / quote	**Site**	Area of land / position
		Sight	Vision
Coarse	Rough	**Course**	Play golf here / take a few lessons
Bear	Scary animal / cuddly toy	**Bare**	Uncovered / forgot your clothes
Break	Damage / a gap	**Brake**	Stops your car
Allowed	You have permission to do it	**Aloud**	You can hear it
Witch	With the pointy hat	**Which**	Identifying. *Which of these cars is fastest?*
Weather	Sunshine, clouds and so on	**Whether**	Choice. *Whether you like it or not*
Peace	Not fighting. *Give peace a chance*	**Piece**	A wee bit. *I want a piece of the action*
Stationary	Not moving	**Stationery**	Pens, paper, **E**nvelopes

An exhaustive list of easily confused words: http://www.grammar-monster.com/easily_confused_words.htm

Words & Phrases That Are Not Words or Phrases

Invented word	What you meant	What it actually means
Relatable	Something to which you can easily relate	It's easy to explain as a story
Could of	Could have	Nothing at all
Would of	Would have	Ditto
Should of	Should have	Nada
Upto	Up to	Zero