

EXTREMELY IMPORTANT ENGLISH CONFUSING WORDS FOR SSC CPO AND CGL EXAM

1. Bring and Take

Bring shows movement TO the speaker; take shows movement AWAY FROM the speaker:

For eg.

(a) Could you bring me a fork from the kitchen?

= bring a fork from the kitchen to here

(b) Could you take the mail to the post office?

= take the mail from here to the post office

2. Compliment / Complement

These two words are pronounced the same, but they are spelled differently and have different meanings.

Compliment can be both a noun and a verb. A compliment is a positive comment about someone or something, for example: "You have beautiful eyes!"

And the verb compliment (or the expression "pay someone a compliment") means to make a positive comment:

(a) He complimented me on my web design skills.

(b) He paid me a compliment on my web design skills.

The adjective complimentary means "free":

(c) At this hotel, breakfast is complimentary.

(d) You get a complimentary cookie when you order coffee at that cafe.

Complement can also be a noun or a verb. If two things complement each other, it means they go well together; they make each other appear better.

(e) That necklace is the perfect complement to your outfit

(f) My business partner and I really complement each other.

The adjective complementary means that two things are different, but go together well.

3. Discreet / Discrete

These words are pronounced the same, and they are both adjectives.

Discrete means separate, distinct, individual:

(a) The two companies have a partnership, but they are discrete entities.

Discreet describes something that is modest and does not call attention to itself:

(c) The photographer at the funeral remained discreet and respectful.

When you describe a person as discreet, it means that person can handle sensitive topics with tact (good manners and professionalism).

4. Enquire / Inquire

Both of these verbs are used for asking about something or looking for information.

The nouns for the request / investigation are enquiry and inquiry.

Technically, enquire is used for "ask" in general ("He enquired about prices for the products"), and inquire for a more formal investigation ("The police will make an inquiry into the alleged corruption.")

5. Especially / Specially

Use especially when something stands out from all the others (similar to the meaning of "particularly.")

(a) The whole book was terrible – especially the ending.

(b) He loves animals, especially dogs.

Especially can also be used before an adjective with a meaning like "very" or "extremely."

(a) It's especially important to arrive on time for your first day of class.

If something was designed specifically for a special purpose, use specially:

(a) The bus has been specially designed to accommodate passengers in wheelchairs.

6. Former / Previous

Previous means "immediately before," and former means "at any time in the past."

(a) Your former employer means any employer you have had in your past, at any time.

(b) Your previous employer typically means the most recent employer you had in your past.

7. For / Since

Use for with periods of time: I've been studying English for two years.

(a) for...

three years

two weeks

four days

five hours

two centuries

Use since with measuring the time after a specific point in time:

I've been studying English since 2010.

(b) since...

9:00

1970

Monday

last Independent day

I was a child

The advertisement features the Career Power logo at the top, which includes a stylized figure and the text "CAREER POWER AN IIT/IIM ALUMNI COMPANY". Below the logo is a circular emblem with a tree and the letters "SSC". The main text in large, bold, white letters on a dark green background reads "CHALLENGER SERIES SSC CGL TIER -I 2018 @ 349". At the bottom, it says "Bilingual" in a dark green oval and "25 FULL-LENGTH MOCKS" in white text on a dark green background.

8. Ill / Sick

Sick is the less formal word, and it usually describes a more temporary health problem – often nausea, although not always.

(a) If you're feeling sick, you might need to vomit.

Ill is the more formal word, and it usually describes a more serious, more permanent health problem, like cancer.

(c) My uncle has been ill for the past five years.

9. In time / On time

On time means that there is a specific time established when something is supposed/expected to happen, and it is happening at the planned time.

(a) My job interview is scheduled for 4:00 PM.

If I arrive at 4:00 PM, I am on time for the interview.

In time means that something happened at the last moment before it was too late; before something bad would happen.

(a) The accident victim was seriously injured; they got him to the hospital just in time. (If they hadn't arrived at the hospital, he might have died)

10. Such as / As such

Such as means "like" or "for example":

(a) There are lots of things to see in New York City, such as the Statue of Liberty, Central Park, and Times Square.

Note: "For example" is typically used to start a sentence; "such as" (more formal) and "like" (informal) are used in the middle of the sentence.

As such is used to avoid repeating information that was recently stated:

(a) I'm a working mother, and because I'm a working mother, I don't have much free time. This is not ideal because we repeat a phrase

(b) I'm a working mother, and as such, I don't have much free time.

11. Advice / Advise

Advice is a noun, and advise is a verb:

(a) She gave me some good advice.

(b) She advised me to get some rest.

There's also a pronunciation difference: advice has an "S" sound, and advise has a "Z" sound.

Don't make the common error of saying "advices" – the word advice is uncountable.

However, you can say "pieces of advice":

12. Appraise / Apprise

The verb appraise means to evaluate, especially in an official way in which a grade will be given or the value of something determined:

(a) A car dealership appraises the value of used cars.

The noun form is appraisal, meaning an evaluation:

(a) Please give me your honest appraisal of the book I've written.

The verb apprise means to inform or notify. You can apprise (someone) of (some news).

(a) Please keep me apprised of this situation

13. As far as / As long as / As soon as

Use as long as for:

(a) Time – when talking about a long period:

“I’ll stay with you as long as you want.”

A condition that is a requirement:

(b) “You can go to the party as long as you’re back by 11 PM.”

Use as soon as for:

Time – when one thing happens at the same time as another, or immediately after another:

(a) “The phone rang as soon as I walked into my apartment.”

Use as far as for:

Degree or distance

(a) “I’ll walk with you as far as the corner.”

Opinion (in the expression “as far as I’m concerned”):

“As far as I’m concerned, he owes me an apology.”

14. Assure / Ensure / Insure

Assure means to tell another person something to remove doubt or anxiety.

(a) I assure you that the water here is perfectly safe to drink.

After assure, we always have a person: assure you, assure him/her, etc.

Ensure is something you do to guarantee a specific result.

(a) Please send the document by express mail to ensure that it arrives on time.

Insure is used when you get a financial plan to pay for any damage

or loss to a person or thing. This is related to the word insurance, such as health insurance, car insurance, etc.

(a) Our house is insured against fires, floods, and theft

15. Begin / Start

You can use both start and begin for an activity. “Begin” is more formal than “start”:

(a) I started playing the piano when I was 8 years old.

(b) He’s beginning to read more advanced books in English.

When you turn on a car or vehicle, use “start”:

(a) I had to call a mechanic because my car wouldn’t start.

In general, begin is used for more formal and more abstract ideas:

(a) Scientists are studying how life began on earth.

16. Chance / Possibility / Opportunity

With the verb have, always use opportunity. The word possibility is more often used with “there is”:

(a) There’s a possibility I might move to America next year.

(b) I have the opportunity to work in a reputed company.

Also, possibility is neutral – it means maybe the event will happen, and maybe it will not happen.

The word opportunity is a little more positive, it expresses the possibility for something good. So we can use possibility with good or bad things, but opportunity is usually used only for good things:

(a) I’m worried about the possibility of losing my job.

(b) You should take that job. It’s a great opportunity for your career.

The word chance is more informal, and it can be used for possibilities or opportunities!

(a) Is there any chance of rain this weekend?

= any possibility that it will rain

17. Continuously/ Continually

Continuously means something happens without stopping, without interruption:

(a) A waterfall has water continuously falling over the edge of a cliff.

Continually means something happens frequently/repeatedly.

(a) If you have an old car, it might continually break down - it breaks down very frequently.

18. Decent/Descent/Dissent

The adjective decent describes something good, satisfactory, or civilized:

(a) My job's not very glamorous, but I earn a decent salary.

The noun descent has a few different meanings:

The action of going down:

After reaching the top of the mountain, the hikers began their descent.

Describing family origin:

(a) He is of Spanish descent.

The word dissent can be a noun or a verb, and it means a difference of opinion; to disagree:

(a) After the government's decision to raise taxes, large groups of protestors expressed their dissent.

19. Distinct / Distinctive

The word distinct means:

1 that something is clearly and noticeably different or separate from other things

(a) Three distinct languages are spoken in this region.

2 that something is strong and obvious:

(a) There is a distinct possibility that the flight will be canceled.

The word distinctive means that something has qualities that make it noticeably different and easy to be identified or recognized. While distinct is neutral,

(a) His thoughtful and poetic lyrics are a distinctive characteristic of his music.

20. Enough / Too

Enough means you have what is sufficient/necessary; too means you have more than what is sufficient/necessary. There are a few important details about their word order in the sentence:

too + adjective

This shirt is too expensive.

verb + too much

He complains too much. He has such a negative attitude.

enough + noun (countable or uncountable)

We don't have enough people for a soccer team

verb + enough

I don't exercise enough.

Adjective + enough

you're not old enough to buy alcohol.



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21. Current / Present

Current and present refer to things happening now (not in the past or future). These two words are usually the same. Sometimes, current is used in the sense of "generally now" and present is often used more in the sense of "immediately now, in this place/moment."

Example- My brother currently lives in New York, but he is in Los Angeles at present.

= in general, he is in New York, but at this very moment, he is in Los Angeles.

At present always means "now." And presently, means "now" or "very soon."

Example- She will be here presently.

= She will be here very soon.

Example- He is presently working on a new project.

= He is working on a new project right now.

22. Affect / Effect

Affect is a verb used for the process of one thing causing another thing to change. Effect is a noun, and it means the end result of some change.

Example- (a) This disease is affecting my ability to breathe.

(b) The medicine had an instant effect on the pain.

23. Allow / Let / Permit

These verbs all have the same meaning. The difference is in their grammatical structure:

LET + PERSON/THING + VERB (base form – without "to")

Examples:

(a) I don't let my kids watch violent movies.

(b) Don't let the advertising expenses surpass \$1000.

The simple past tense of let is also let; there is no change!

The verbs allow and permit are more formal ways to say "let." However, with allow and permit, we use to + verb:

(a) I don't allow my kids to watch violent movies.

(b) Our boss doesn't permit us to eat lunch at our desk.

Permit is the most formal, let is the least formal, and allow is in the middle.

24. Amoral / Immoral

The word immoral means something is against established moral principles:

Example- (a) Many religions consider lying and cheating to be immoral.

The word amoral means something is completely free from moral considerations - it is neither moral nor immoral.

Example- (a) Money itself is amoral - it is simply a tool that can be used for good or for evil.

25. Britain / England / the United Kingdom

These words are different because of their geography:

England is a single country. The capital of England is London.

Great Britain is an island that contains three countries:

England, Scotland, and Wales.

The United Kingdom is a political unit that includes four countries: England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland

26. Change / Switch

The word change means for something to become different. The word switch is more specific – it means to stop using/doing one thing and start using/doing another.

Example- (a) I'm going to change a few things in my life this year.

(b) I wasn't happy with my Nokia cell phone, so I switched to a Samsung.

(I stopped using the Nokia and started using the Samsung)

27. Cloth / Clothes / Clothing

Clothes and clothing refer to the things you wear – shirts, pants, dresses, suits, etc.

Cloth is the material, the fabric. Cotton, wool, silk, etc. are different types of cloth.

Now there is a tiny difference between Clothes and Clothing.

Clothing is more formal, and usually refers to a general category: men's clothing, women's clothing etc.

while clothes refers to the individual items that you wear.

Example- You pack your clothes in your suitcase before going on a trip.

28. Criticism / Critique / Critical

The difference between criticism and a critique is as follows.

Criticism is negative comments - identifying faults or bad points. A critique is simply an evaluation - it can comment on the good points and/or the bad points.

Examples- (a) My project idea received a lot of criticism from my colleagues - they said it would never work.

(b) In his critique of the book, Johnson praises the excellent character development, but says the plot moves too slowly.

The word critical has two meanings. When describing a person, it means the person is finding fault:

Example- (a) My mother was always very critical of my work - she said I would never be a good writer.

When describing a thing or situation, critical means "essential" or "extremely important":

(a) Access to clean water is critical to the health of the population.

29. Deny / Refuse / Reject / Decline

To deny something is to say something is not true, or say that you DID NOT do something:

Example- (a) The teenager denied stealing the DVDs from the store.

To refuse is NOT to do something, or to say firmly that you WILL NOT do something:

(c) The employee was fired after he refused to do what the manager asked.

Note that after deny we use the -ing form or a noun, and after refuse we use the "to" form of the verb.

To reject something is to not accept it – often because it's not good enough, or because you don't believe in it.

(c) He asked her out to dinner, but she rejected him.

To decline is to say "no" politely to a proposal, invitation, or suggestion

(d) The president declined to comment on the political scandal.

30. Economic / Economical

The adjective economic describes things related to the economy:
Example- (a) The country is undergoing a period of strong economic growth.

The field of study of the economy is called economics (always plural):

(a) He is a specialist in economics.

The adjective economical refers to something that saves money; it is an efficient use of money.

(a) Short trips inside the country are more economical than traveling internationally.



31. Chauffeur / Driver

The word driver is more general – anybody who drives a vehicle is a driver. You are a driver when you are driving your car. Some people work as bus drivers and taxi Drivers (the drivers of trains are usually called conductors).

A chauffeur is a person who is employed to drive a car for a private individual. Rich people often have chauffeurs so that they do not have to take public transportation, or drive themselves.

All chauffeurs are also drivers; not all drivers are chauffeurs.

32. Collect / Gather

The word gather simply means to bring together or come together:

For Example- (a) I gathered all my books and put them into my backpack.

(b) A crowd gathered around the TV to watch the World Cup game.

If something is getting faster or stronger, you can say it gathers momentum or gathers strength:

To collect means you accumulate things and keep them as a hobby:

For Example- (a) I collect coins from different countries.

The word collect is also used for getting and keeping things in general:

(b) The government is collecting data from its citizens' phone calls.

(c) We're collecting donations for the animal shelter.

The word collect emphasizes the close ending point of the things - you are keeping them close to each other, in order to use them in the future.

33. Cure / Treat / Heal / Recover

The verb treat is used for giving medical aid; making efforts to help a sick or injured person get better:

For Example- (a) The doctor treated the girl with antibiotics.

Heal is typically used for injuries and wounds (not diseases), when the injury gets better naturally by the body's own processes:

For Example- (a) It was just a minor cut, it healed in a day or two.

Cure is typically used for diseases - meaning when medicine completely eliminates the disease and restores the person to health. It can be both a noun and a verb:

For Example- (a) The doctors said her cancer was cured after many weeks of chemotherapy.

The verb recover describes the process of a person resting and getting back to full health after a disease, injury, or surgery:

For Example- (a) It took him a month to recover from the injuries he suffered in the car crash.

34. **During / While / Meanwhile / Meantime**

All of these words describe when two things are happening simultaneously (at the same time). Let's start with during and while.

Use during before a noun:

For Example (a) The people sitting in front of me were talking during the movie.

Use while before a subject + verb:

For Example (a) We'll buy the tickets while you wait in line for the popcorn.

Sometimes, when the subject of the two actions is the same, we eliminate the second mention of the subject:

For Example (a) I like to listen to music while I'm exercising.

= I like to listen to music while exercising.

We cannot do this when the subjects of the two actions are different:

Example- (a) I chopped the vegetables while my brother prepared the meat.

Two different subjects for the actions - "I" and "my brother"

Meanwhile is the same as while, but it is used only at the beginning of a sentence - and usually when there are two different subjects doing the two actions:

For Example (a) I was watching TV while my brother was studying.

= I was watching TV. Meanwhile, my brother was studying.

In the meantime usually implies you are doing an action while waiting for something else to happen.

Example. (a) I will send you the text for the brochure tomorrow. In the meantime, you can start working on the graphics.

35. **Regard / Regards / Regardless**

Regard (v.) is to consider or to have an opinion about something:

For Example-(a) I don't regard this as a problem; I regard it as an opportunity.

Regards (n.) is a greeting:

Example- (a) Please give my regards to your parents when you see them.

The phrases regarding and in/with regard to mean "related to / concerning the following topic":

Example- (a) Have you read the report regarding the economic crisis?

Regardless (adv.) means one thing is not affected by something else:

Example- (a) A champion keeps going, regardless of the difficulties.

Don't use the word "irregardless" - it doesn't exist; it is a common error in English.

36. Resolve / Solve

Do you solve a problem or resolve a problem?

The answer is both. Solve and resolve do have slightly different meanings, though.

To resolve something means to deal with and finish it in a satisfactory way:

Example- (a) resolve an argument

(b) resolve differences between two people or two opinions

To solve something means to find the CORRECT answer, or to fix it successfully:

Example- (a) You solve a math problem (find the right answer)

Problems can be solved or resolved depending on their nature. When there are multiple opinions and points of view that must be reconciled, we usually use resolve:

Example- (a) The Human Resources department is trying to resolve the problem between the manager and his employees.

When there is probably a correct answer, a successful solution that will eliminate the problem, we usually use solve:

37. Review / Revise

If you review a document, it means you read it and examine it (and maybe have some ideas to improve it) - but you don't make any changes.

If you revise a document, it means you change the text to correct errors or make improvements.

When preparing for a test, it's a good idea to study the material again in order to refresh your memory

38. Wary / Weary

Wary means "suspicious" or "cautious," and weary means "very tired."

For Example. (a) \$1000 for a new car? I'm wary of that offer – it sounds too good to be true.

(b) Every parent has days when they become weary.

There is a small pronunciation difference between wary and weary.

39. Already / Yet

Both yet and already are used with the present perfect tense.

Already is usually used in positive sentences.

Yet is usually used in questions and negative sentences.

For Example:

(a) Have you bought the tickets yet?

(b) Have you packed the bags yet?

It shows that yet is used at the end of the question.

Now see the following Examples.

(a) Yes, I've already bought the tickets.

(b) No, I haven't packed the bags yet.

Use already in the positive answers, and yet in the negative answers.

There is one time you can use already in questions: it's when something happens earlier than expected.

"Have you already finished your homework?!" because you were expecting it to take more time.

40. Also / As well / Too

These words are all used to show similarity or sameness:

- (a) Jerry plays soccer. Harry plays soccer, too.
- (b) Jerry plays soccer. Harry also plays soccer.
- (c) Jerry plays soccer. Harry plays soccer as well.

The only difference is in their placement in the sentence.

Too and as well are used at the end of a sentence. (As well is more formal than too). "Also" usually goes before the verb or adjective.

The pears are also delicious.

The pears are delicious, too.

The pears are delicious as well.

Now you see, there are many correct ways to say the same thing!

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41. Amount / Number / Quantity

Use amount with uncountable nouns – things that cannot be separated or counted.

For example

- (a) This recipe requires a small amount of wine.
- (b) I have a huge amount of work to do this week.

Use number with countable nouns – words that can be counted and made plural:

- (a) A number of my friends are teachers.

The word quantity is a more technical/formal word for number or amount, and it is used for things you can measure (usually objects, not people).

- (a) We have a limited quantity of special-edition hats for sale.

hats = countable

- (b) They need a large quantity of cement for the construction.

(or: a large amount of cement)

cement = uncountable

42. Belong to / Belong with / Belong in

Belong to means ownership or possession:

- (a) That's our neighbors' dog. = That dog belongs to our neighbors.

Belong with means that things/people are similar and should be together

For example "You belong with me," it is like saying that it is destiny for the two people to be together.

You can also use belong with or belong in for putting an object into a category with other, similar objects:

- (a) That book about humans traveling to Mars doesn't belong in the history section. It belongs with the other science fiction books.

An object belongs IN a category, and belongs WITH other similar things.

43. Ceiling / Roof

The upper interior surface of a room is called the ceiling. The upper exterior surface of a building is called the roof.

A tall apartment building has many ceilings inside it, but it only has one roof, at the very top.

44. Close to / Near / Next to

If two things are next to each other, it means they are immediately beside each other:

Example: There's a bank next to my house.

With the word "next," we always use "to":

If two things are near or close to each other, it means they are in the same local area (but not immediately beside each other).

45. Good / Well

Good is an adjective; it describes nouns:

(a) That's a good idea!

(b) The food at that restaurant is really good.

Well is an adverb; it describes verbs:

(a) She performed well in the competition.

Use good before the noun (good idea) or after a form of the verb "to be" (the food is good; the drinks are good; the party was good).

Use well after the verb - He sings well, they dance well, I didn't sleep very well.

46. Insight / Incite

Insight is a noun that means an in-depth understanding:

(a) The biography offered many insights into the life of a famous artist.

Incite is a verb that means to provoke to action. It is often used for provoking violent actions such as hatred, riots, and rebellion.

(a) The community leader's angry words incited a riot.

47. Made of / Made from

Use made of to talk about the material of an object – wood, plastic, glass, crystal, etc. – which has not gone through very much processing.

(a) This table is made of wood.

(b) This shirt is made of cotton.

Use made from to talk about one object that came from another, different object:

(a) This purse is made from recycled plastic bags.

(b) Cheese is made from milk.

48. Of / From

OF is used for POSSESSION – Who does it belong to?

(a) A friend of mine

(b) The color of that car

FROM is used for ORIGIN – Where did it come from?

(a) I'm from the United States.

(b) I got this book from the bookstore.

49. defect / fault / flaw

A flaw is a problem or error (small or large) that makes something less effective or valuable. The word flaw can be used for problems in objects, ideas, or people's character.

For e.g. (i) This diamond is less expensive because it contains several flaws.

(ii) There's a major flaw in your plan – it will never work.

The word defect also refers to a problem, usually when a mechanical or manufactured item was produced with the problem. We often use the adjective defective.

For e.g. Defects in the machinery caused several fires to break out in the factory.

The word fault refers to responsibility for a problem or mistake. It's usually used with "my/your/his/her fault" or to say that a person/company is "at fault" for the problem.

For e.g. The car accident was his fault because he drove through a red light.

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