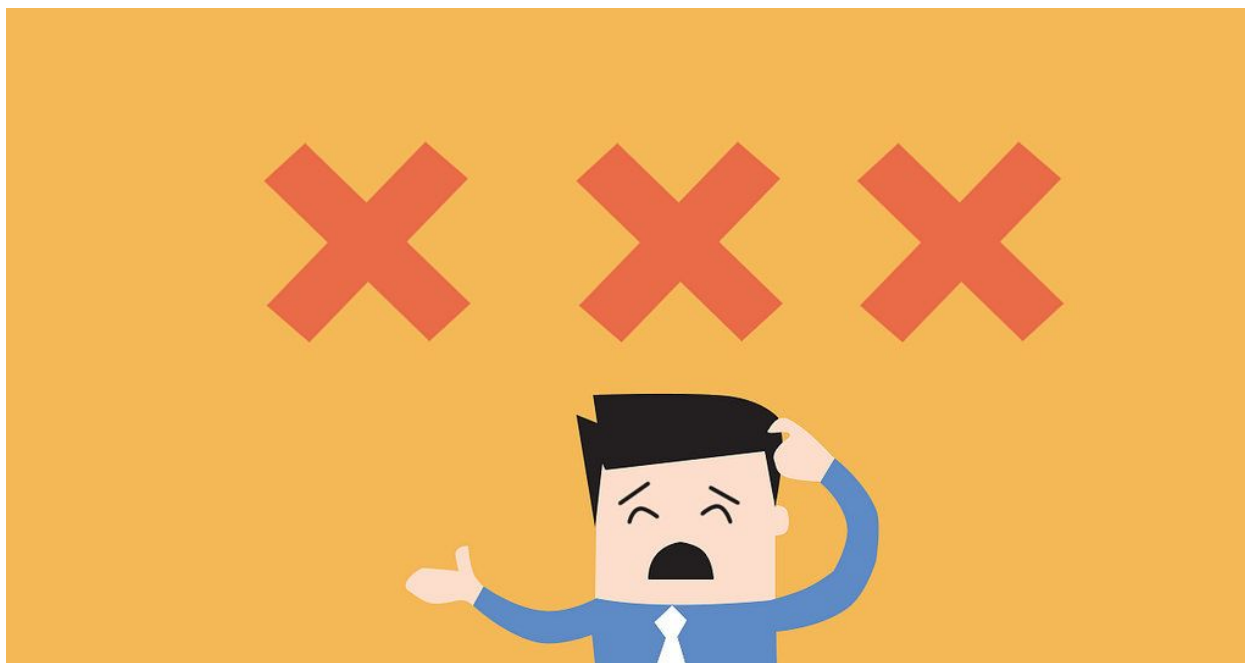


# The Most Typical Writing Mistakes Made By Both Non-Native and Native Speakers

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*by Lucy Adams*



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We all makes mistakes, regardless of the level of one's education. Nevertheless, a literate grammar is an indicator of your status and seriousness of intentions. Some errors may cost a lot; at least, they may form a negative opinion on your abilities in the eyes of potential partners and other important things for you and your career people. Thus, regardless if you're writing an essay or a business email, you must write it correctly, or get the help of professionals like those [here](#).

I started a writing career a few years ago. It didn't take too long to [become a grammar Nazi](#), but long enough to get rid of almost all common mistakes. I hope this paper will help you to take your English to the next level. So, let's start.

## #1 Who vs. Whom

If you are not sure about which form to use, please note the fact that **who** is used if it can be replaced by *he/she/it/we/they*, while **whom** can be replaced by the pronouns of a genitive case – for example, *him or them*.

**Who** refers to the subject and **whom** refers to the object. **Whom** is rarely used in modern colloquial English, although it is generally accepted in writing, especially the [formal version of the language](#).

For example:

- **Who** was playing the piano? **He** was playing the piano.
- I saw Peter at the football match. **Whom** did you see at the football match? I saw **him** at the football match.

## #2 Which vs. That

At first glance, the meaning of these words is the same, but they do have nuances. **That** can be used to refer to objects and subjects. In turn, **which** is not used to refer to subjects.

For example:

- I can recommend you products **that** I use. **That** has a restrictive connotation; it is used when the emphasis is put on the noun as a specific category.

As for **which**, it rather defines than separates (at the same time, **which** can be used instead of **that** when a restrictive hue is supposed):

- I can recommend you products, **which** you can buy at this store.

## #3 May vs. Might

**May** and **might** are modal verbs, in addition to *would*, *should*, *could*, and others. Modal verbs are different from others in that they do not represent the action but the attitude of the speaker to the action. Different modal verbs in the same sentence change its meaning.

The difference between **may** and **might** is very slight as both modal verbs express an assumption based on uncertainty. However, **may** expresses a greater likelihood of the action while **might** is more uncertain. For example:

- "We **may** lose the game if you continue to play so bad" – in this case, we're talking about a very real possibility.
- "We **might** be arrested" – not as a specific outcome.

Speaking about the difference between **may** and **might**, we must be aware of the two exceptions:

1. **Might** is the past tense form of **may**. Therefore, **might** is used when we express the action in the past. Even if you know that person is likely to go to a concert, "he may have gone to the concert" is not correct because we need to express not the degree of probability in comparison with **may** but the probability in the past.
2. It is recommended that **might be** used when speaking about the action that probably will not happen (regardless of the degree of probability). For example, if you are not sure whether he will go to a concert and you express it like, "he may not go to the party," then the reader may misunderstand you, taking **may** as a prohibition. This applies particularly to written text, where voice and facial expressions can't help one to convey certain feelings. "He might not go to the party" can be understood only as the probability of failure of the action. Therefore, **might** is a win-win.

## #4 Whether vs. If

Many believe these words are interchangeable. Actually, **whether** involves two or more alternatives while **if** indicates a condition when there are no alternatives.

For example:

- I don't know **whether** I'm able to win the game.
- Call me **if** you receive the letter.



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## #5 Fewer vs. Less

**Fewer** is the comparative degree of the adjective **few**. It is used with countable nouns that can be calculated (for instance, one dog – two dogs).

**Less** is the comparative degree of the adjective **little**. It's used with uncountable nouns (for example, money, sand, water).

For example:

- An assistant makes **less** money than a director.
- There were **fewer** goals in the match than we had expected.

## #6 Farther vs. Further

**Farther** refers to the distance that can be measured while **further** is used in the case when there are no measuring units; for example, when you move on in some case.

For example:

- Moscow is **farther** away than Kiev.
- For **further** instructions, please turn the page.

## #7 Lay vs. Lie

**Lay** is a transitive verb that requires an object and a subject of the action. **Lie** is an intransitive verb that does not need objects. The main confusion appears when a person needs to use a form of **lie** (lay) in the past tense but uses a past form of **lay** (laid).

For example:

- I **laid** the book on the table.
- The path **lay** between two valleys.

## #8 Continual vs. Continuous

**Continual** is used to describe an event that occurs at a certain interval while **continuous** is used when there is no interruption or pause in the action.

For example:

- **Continual** rain – the rain that renews from time to time.
- **Continuous** rain – the rain that goes without interruptions.

## #9 Bring vs. Take

In order to understand which of these words to use, please imagine the action.

If the object is moving towards the subject, then use **bring**:

- **Bring** me the dish, please.

If the object is moving away from the subject, then use **take**:

- **Take** these notes, please.

## #10 Nauseous vs. nauseated

Quite often, people try to use that word when they want to say they feel sick from something. In fact, it means that the object of the conversation makes people sick: not "it makes me nauseous," but "it is nauseous." If you want to say that you are sick, please use the word *nauseated*.



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*Of course, there are a lot more mistakes made by both non-native and native speakers. To deal with them, the best way is to visit English courses that correspond to your level of knowledge.*

Bio:

Lucy Adams is far from being a grammar Nazi. Well, she is quite confident in her writing. If you're willing to add some value to your blog, feel free to provide Lucy with your best ideas. Fast response guaranteed. Don't miss the chance to [hire essay writers at Buzzessay.com](https://www.buzzessay.com) at the lowest price.