

FREE RESOURCE · COMMON ENGLISH WORDS

Common English words 121 to 130

The common English words in this set are write, same, lot, great, try, leave, number, both, own, part. Together they are a mix of useful verbs, determiners and nouns for describing amounts, ownership and parts of things. Number, part and both are useful for describing data in Writing Task 1 and for explaining ideas clearly in Task 2.

The words

WORD	SOUND	MEANING	EXAMPLE
write verb	/raɪt/	To put words or numbers on a surface, or to compose a text such as a letter, an essay or a book.	<i>In the exam, you must write at least 250 words for Task 2.</i>
same adjective, pronoun	/seɪm/	Not different; exactly like another.	<i>My sister and I went to the same school, but we studied different subjects.</i>
lot noun	/lɒt/	A large amount or number: used in 'a lot' and 'lots'.	<i>A lot of people in my city use bicycles for short journeys.</i>
great adjective	/greɪt/	Very good; or very large, important or strong.	<i>Rivers have always been of great importance to the growth of cities.</i>
try verb	/traɪ/	To make an attempt to do something; or to test something to see if you like it.	<i>I always try to speak English with my neighbours at home.</i>
leave verb, noun	/li:v/	To go away from a place; to let something stay where it is; or to stop being part of a group, a job or a school.	<i>Many young people leave their villages to look for work in the city.</i>
number noun	/ 'nʌmbə/	A word or symbol for a quantity; also the total of people or things.	<i>The number of students studying abroad has risen steadily since 2000.</i>
both determiner, pronoun	/bəʊθ/	The two; used for two things or people together.	<i>Both parents work, so the children often cook their own meals.</i>
own adjective, verb	/əʊn/	Belonging to you; or to have something as property.	<i>Many students prefer to have their own room, even if it is small.</i>
part noun, verb	/pɑ:t/	A piece of a whole; or a role in an activity.	<i>Learning to listen is an important part of learning a language.</i>

Exercises

1. Yesterday I _____ a long email to my manager.
a. written

- b. wrote
- c. write
2. The number of visitors _____ risen this year.
- a. has
- b. have
- c. are
3. A number of students _____ late for the lecture.
- a. is
- b. were
- c. being
4. This phone is the same _____ mine.
- a. than
- b. as
- c. with
5. Find the mistake and write the right form: (1) There was (2) an alot (3) of noise (4) outside.
6. Which word sounds the same as 'write'?
- a. right
- b. rate
- c. wrist
7. Put the words in order (one or more words are not needed): of / parents / my / Both / them / a / hospital. / work / in
8. Correct this: *The number of students are rising.*
9. Which syllable is stressed in **number**? num · ber

Listening items (1) are online only and are not included in this list.

Practise online, free: hear every example and check your answers at www.ielts-laboratory.co/free-resources/common-english-words-121-130/practice/

IELTS tip. In Writing Task 1, 'the number of' is one of the most useful phrases for describing data, but remember the singular verb. In Speaking, 'on my own' and 'a lot of' sound natural in personal answers.

FOR TEACHERS · COMMON ENGLISH WORDS

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AIM	Students understand, pronounce and use the common English words write, same, lot, great, try, leave, number, both, own, part, and avoid the typical mistakes noted for each word.
TIME	20 minutes
LEVEL	B1 to B2 (IELTS 5 to 6.5)
MATERIALS	This worksheet, one copy per learner; the free online practice for the audio

Warm-up

Write the ten words on the board in random order. Students say which ones they use most often in English and what they think each word does in a sentence.

Lesson steps

1. Present the ten words with their British IPA. Model each word, then students repeat chorally and in pairs, paying attention to weak forms and stress.
2. Students read the example sentences aloud, cover them, and make a new sentence about their own life with each word.
3. Students describe a simple table with the number of and a large number of, then check each verb with a partner.
4. Run the quiz as a class. For each wrong answer, ask the student to read the watch-out note and explain the rule in their own words.

Extension

Students write a short note to a friend with the same, own, both and a lot of at least once each.

Answer key

1. b) wrote. The past tense of write is wrote.
2. a) has. The number of takes a singular verb.
3. b) were. A number of takes a plural verb.
4. b) as. The same as is the correct pattern.
5. Part 2: *an alot* → **a lot**. A lot is written as two words.
6. a) right. Write and right are homophones.
7. Both of my parents work in a hospital. Both of + possessive + plural noun.
8. The number of students is rising. The number of takes a singular verb.
9. **NUM**ber. Number is stressed on the first syllable: NUM-ber.

Questions learners often ask

Does the number of take is or are? The number of is followed by a singular verb: 'The number of visitors is rising'. A number of is followed by a plural verb.

Is alot correct? No. A lot is always two words.

How do I remember write and right? They sound the same but the spelling and meaning are different. Write is for words on a page and right means correct or the opposite of left.

Sources

- Browne, C., Culligan, B. & Phillips, J. (2013). The New General Service List (NGSL) 1.2. newgeneralservicelist.com. CC BY-SA 4.0.
- Swan, M. (2016). Practical English Usage (4th ed.). Oxford University Press.
- Wells, J. C. (2008). Longman Pronunciation Dictionary (3rd ed.). Pearson Longman.

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