

# Writing Jokes With Homophones



Homophones are words which sound the same as each other - they have 'one' ('homo') 'sound' ('phone') - but have at least two different meanings. They can be very useful when you're writing a joke. People laugh when they are surprised, and you can pull the rug of expectation out from under the feet of your audience by making them think you are talking about one thing, then revealing your word or phrase had a different meaning to the one that they thought. Like suddenly turning right and walking into a water balloon fight.

For example. "You have to beat them all up" is a terrible thing to hear about people, as it sounds like a fight is being ordered, but a vital thing to hear when making a cake.

So. Have a look at this list, and pick your homophones. Can you think of a sentence that you could say out loud, centred around one of these words, that could have more than one meaning? Then think about how you could add in more detail to set the scene, so the listener mistakenly believes they know what is happening... before revealing your twist!

"And then Paul told me – 'you have to beat them all up'. I did [sobs], and it was horrible. [mimes making a fist to hold a spoon, and waving it in circles] Carnage. Stuff splattering EVERYWHERE. That's when I knew I wasn't cut out for the Great British Bake Off."

Tone of voice and the faces you pull can also help to set the scene, as can physically acting the words out. They will make the twist all the more surprising, when it comes!

ade – drink type, as in  
lemonade

aid – to help or assist  
aide - assistant

affect - change  
effect – result or  
consequence

air – atmosphere (the stuff  
we breathe)  
err – to make a mistake

aisle - walkway  
I'll – I will  
isle - island

allowed - permitted  
aloud – out loud

arc - curve  
ark – Noah's boat

ate – chewed up and  
swallowed

eight – number after seven

bare - uncovered  
bear – grizzly animal

berry – fruit from a bush  
bury – to put underground

base – bottom part  
bass – deep or low

be – to exist  
bee – buzzing insect

beach – sandy shore  
beech – type of tree

beat - to pound  
beet – type of edible plant

berth – tie up  
birth – to be born

bite - nibble  
byte – 8 bits (computer  
data)

blew – past of blow  
blue – colour of ocean

boar - pig  
bore – not interesting bore  
- to drill

borough – area or district  
burrow – dig through  
burro – small donkey

bough - branch  
bow – bend or curtsy

buoy - floater  
boy – young man

brake – stop pedal  
break – smash

bread – bakery food  
bred – form of breed

broach - mention  
brooch - pin

brows - eyebrows  
browse – look around

buy - purchase  
by - beside  
bye - goodbye

cell - compartment  
sell – offer for sale

cent – penny coin  
sent – did send

cereal – breakfast food	fair - equal	halve – cut in two parts
serial – sequential	fare - price	have - possess
Chile – country in South America	fairy – elflike creature with wings	hay – animal food
chili – bean stew	ferry - boat	hey – interjection to get attention
chilly – frosty	faze - impact	heal - mend
chord – musical tone	phase - stage	heel – back of foot
cord - rope	feat – achievement	hi - hello
cite - quote	feet – plural of foot	high – up far
site - location	fir – type of tree	hoarse - croaky
sight - view	fur – animal hair	horse – riding animal
complement – enhance; go together	flea – small biting insect	hole - opening
compliment - praise	flee - run	whole - entire
council - committee	flew – did fly	holey – full of holes
counsel - guidance	flu – illness	holy - divine
creak - squeak	flour – powdery, ground up grain	wholly - entirely
creek – stream of water	flower – blooming plant	hour – sixty minutes
crews - gangs	for – on behalf of	our – belonging to us
cruise – ride on a boat	fore - front	knead - massage
dear - darling	four – one more than three	need - desire
deer – woodland animal	forth - onward	knight – feudal horseman
dew – morning mist	fourth – number four	night - evening
do - operate	knew – did know	knot – tied rope
due - payable	new – not old	not - negative
die – cease to exist	gorilla – big ape	know – have knowledge
dye - color	guerrilla - warrior	no – opposite of yes
doe – female deer	grease - fat	lead – metal
dough – uncooked bread	Greece – country in Europe	led - was the leader
dual - double	groan - moan	lessen – make smaller
duel - battle	grown – form of grow	lesson - class
ewe – female sheep	hair – head covering	loan - lend
you - second-person personal pronoun	hare – rabbit-like animal	lone - solitary
eye – sight organ	hall - passageway	made – did make
I - me	haul - tow	maid - servant
		mail - postage
		male – opposite of female

meat – animal protein	rap - tap	to - toward
meet - encounter	wrap – drape around	too - also
none – not any	real - factual	toe – foot appendage
nun – woman who takes special religious vows	reel - roll	tow – pull along
oar – boat paddle	right – correct; not left	vary - differ
or - otherwise	write - scribble	very - much
ore - mineral	ring - encircle	wail - howl
oh – expression of surprise	wring - squeeze	whale – huge swimming mammal
or awe	role - function	waist – area below ribs
owe – be obligated	roll - rotate	waste - squander
one - single	rose - flower	wait – kill time
won – did win	rows - lines	weight – measurable load
pail - bucket	sail – move by wind power	war - battle
pale – not bright	sale – bargain price	wore – did wear
pain - hurt	scene - landscape	warn - caution
pane – window glass	seen - viewed	worn - used
peace - calm	sea – ocean segment	way - path
piece - segment	see – observe with eyes	weigh – measure mass
peak – highest point	seam – joining edge	we - us
peek - glance	seem - appear	wee - tiny
plain - ordinary	sew – connect with thread	weak – not strong
plane – flight machine	so – as a result	week – period of seven days
plane – flat surface	sow - plant	weather - climate
pole - post	soar - ascend	whether - if
poll - survey	sore – hurt place	which - that
poor – not rich	sole - single	witch – sorcerer
pour – make flow	soul - essence	your – belonging to you
pray – implore God	some – a few	you're – you are
prey – quarry	sum - amount	
principal – most important	steal - swipe	
principle – belief	steel - alloy	
rain – water from sky	tail – animal's appendage	
rein - bridle	tale - story	
reign - rule of a monarch	their – belonging to them	
	there – at that place	
	they're – they are	