

Name: _____ Date: _____

There, Their, and They're

The words **there**, **their**, and **they're** are often confused and misused. Here's what you need to know:

there
Use <i>there</i> to refer to a place or to the existence of something.
Examples: <i>Ann found her book over there, behind the oak tree.</i> <i>There will be free ice cream at Scoops' grand opening.</i>

their
Use <i>their</i> to indicate that something belongs to certain people, animals, or things.
Examples: <i>The Kroebers brought their new baby home today.</i> <i>The dogs played with their tennis balls all afternoon.</i>

they're
Use <i>they're</i> as a contraction of "they are."
Examples: <i>I love hanging out with Kim and Carli. They're so funny!</i> <i>Ben and Gabriel say they're trying out for the team.</i>

Directions: Underline the correct boldface word in each sentence below.

1. The Peters have lived in Madrid for three years, but **there/their/they're** moving back to Seattle next month.
2. Megan already left for the party. Priscilla is meeting her **there/their/they're** after dinner.
3. Anthony carried the twins' birthday cake, and I carried **there/their/they're** presents.
4. Tyler said **there/their/they're** are four kittens sleeping in a box under the porch.

Directions: Write either **there**, **their**, or **they're** on each blank in the paragraph below.

Yesterday, my little sisters challenged me to a game of Scrabble. Usually, I avoid playing games with them because _____ terrible cheaters. But _____ pleading wore me down, and it was raining, so I agreed. We set up the board on the dining room table, removing Princess, the cat that likes to sleep _____. Then we picked our tiles. _____ are only two blank tiles, and I got them both! Things were looking good. The girls obviously didn't like _____ tiles: They kept trying to sneak _____ hands into the tile bag for new ones. _____ is not much else to say about the game, except that it went on and on and on. When it finally ended, I was more than ready to get out of _____.

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Repairing Run-ons and Ramblers

A run-on sentence combines two or more independent clauses incorrectly. (An independent clause is a group of words that contains a subject and a verb, and expresses a complete thought—in other words, a sentence.) Consider the following run-on sentence:

Gray clouds rolled in, darkening what had been a bright-blue sky, we still had fun.

"Gray clouds rolled in, darkening what had been a bright-blue sky" and "we still had fun" are both independent clauses—each can stand on its own as a sentence. A comma is not enough to join the two clauses.

Here are three ways to correct a run-on sentence:

Divide it into separate sentences:

Gray clouds rolled in, darkening what had been a bright-blue sky. We still had fun.

Use a comma and a conjunction such as *for, and, nor, but, or, yet, or so*:

Gray clouds rolled in, darkening what had been a bright-blue sky, but we still had fun.

Use a semicolon and a transitional word or phrase such as *however, moreover, furthermore, as a result, meanwhile, first, next, finally, or in addition*:

Gray clouds rolled in, darkening what had been a bright-blue sky; however, we still had fun.

Directions: Read each sentence below. If it is a run-on, write "RO" next to it. If it is not a run-on, make a check (✓) next to it.

- _____ 1. Phil has never eaten pineapple before, he is in for a treat.
- _____ 2. We thought that Oscar, my grandparents' dog, was upstairs, but actually he was in the living room sampling the snacks my grandma had put out for the guests.
- _____ 3. You might not expect Kevin and Seth to be friends, they don't seem to have much in common, they are extremely close, almost like brothers.
- _____ 4. Shelby forgot her lunch, I gave her half of mine.

Directions: Rewrite the following run-on sentences, using one of the solutions on page 1 of this activity.

5. I would love to have a cat or a dog, I'm allergic to their fur.

Correct: _____

6. I go to sleep very late on Saturday nights, I am always really tired on Sundays.

Correct: _____



Related to run-on sentences are rambling sentences. Rambling sentences may technically follow the rules of grammar, but they are still a problem because they ramble—that is, they go on and on in an aimless way. They are hard for the reader to follow. For example:

My dad and I went hiking on Saturday, and when we started, the sun was shining and it was a beautiful day, but around 12:30 some dark clouds started to appear, and pretty soon it started to rain, so my dad, who is always prepared for anything, quickly put on his rain gear, but I had not packed mine, so I got really wet, but at least it wasn't too cold outside.

Oof! That's an awful lot to pack into one sentence! It would be much easier to read if you turned it into a few shorter sentences. Here's one way to do it:

My dad and I went hiking on Saturday. When we started, the sun was shining and it was a beautiful day. Around 12:30, however, some dark clouds started to appear, and pretty soon it started to rain. My dad, who is always prepared for anything, quickly put on his rain gear. I had not packed mine, though, so I got really wet. At least it wasn't too cold outside.

Directions: Rewrite the following rambling sentences.

7. After school, Bridget rides the bus home, and when she gets there, she walks her dog, Fluffy.

Correct: _____

8. Yesterday was my school play, *Peter Pan*, and I had a really big part, I was Peter Pan, and I did a great job.

Correct: _____

9. Louisa loves reptiles, so it's no surprise that she has a pet snake, but her brother Brian hates snakes and he wishes Louisa would trade in her snake for a fuzzier pet, like a rabbit or a hamster, but that is never going to happen, for Louisa loves Mr. Smith, her snake, a lot.

Correct: _____