

24. WORD FORM ERRORS

Notice in the sentences below how changing the form of the word *educate* (by adding endings) changes the word from a verb to an adjective or noun.

- *Educated citizens are the basis of a healthy democracy.* (Adding *-ed* to the verb *educate* creates an adjective.)
- *The government has a responsibility to provide education to all citizens.* (Adding *-ion* to the verb *educate* creates a noun.)

Many words in English need to change their form when they are used as verbs, adjectives, adverbs, or nouns.

There are three main types of errors with word forms:

- wrong word endings
- missing word endings
- confusion between *-ed* and *-ing* adjective endings.

ERROR	INCORRECT	CORRECT	REMEMBER
Wrong word ending	<p><i>Until recently, the Hudson river contained <u>danger</u> levels of pollutants.</i></p> <p>(<i>Danger</i> is a noun ending in <i>-er</i>, but the word is being used as an adjective.)</p>	<p><i>Until recently, the Hudson river contained <u>dangerous</u> levels of pollutants.</i></p> <p>(<i>Dangerous</i> is an adjective, and so it has a typical <i>-ous</i> adjective ending.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ If you do not give a word the correct ending, you change the word into the wrong part of speech.
Missing word ending	<p><i>The governor, a <u>determine</u> man, cleaned the river in record time and gained more votes.</i></p> <p>(<i>Determine</i> is a verb form, but the word is being used as an adjective.)</p>	<p><i>The governor, a <u>determined</u> man, cleaned the river in record time and gained more votes.</i></p> <p>(Now the word has the adjective ending it needs.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The ending of a word often determines whether a word is a noun, verb, adjective, or adverb. ■ If you leave off an ending, you may be using the wrong part of speech.
Confusion between <i>-ed</i> and <i>-ing</i> endings	<p><i>Joseph was <u>interesting</u> in the story of the Hudson River clean-up.</i></p> <p>(The story had an effect on Joseph, so the <i>-ed</i> ending should be used.)</p>	<p><i>Joseph was <u>interested</u> in the story of the Hudson River clean-up.</i></p> <p>(The <i>-ed</i> ending is correctly used to describe an effect.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use <i>-ing</i> if you are describing a cause. ■ Use <i>-ed</i> to describe an effect.