

The difference between listen and hear

Created: Monday, 30 March 2015 12:37 | Published: Sunday, 12 April 2015 15:28 | Written by [Shailja Varma](#) | [Print](#)

Do you get confused when it comes to using “listen” and “hear”? Although, they may appear to be the same, but they are two different words with two different meanings. It’s time to understand the basic difference between the two. When your ear receives any sound, which is noted by the brain, then it means you have heard it. Whereas, when you make a conscious effort to hear something, it is referred to as listening. Still confused? Let’s go with an explanation followed by examples.

Listen

Listen (verb) means to pay attention to the sounds coming into your ears, or to make an effort to hear someone or something.



Example:

- Are you listening to him?
- Are you paying attention to him?

Therefore, Listen = Pay attention

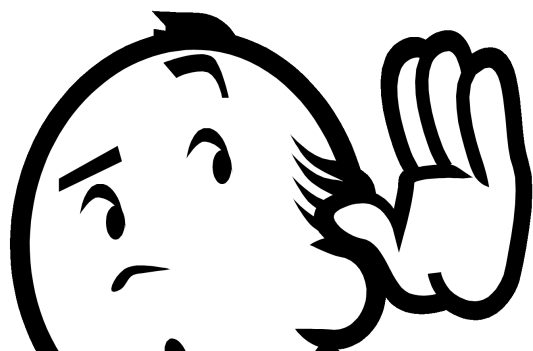
- We listened carefully to the Prime Minister’s speech.

When listen has an object you use “to” – You “listen to” something or someone.

Example:

1. I like listening TO music!
2. She is listening TO you!
3. Listen TO me!
4. Do you like to listen to songs?

Here, in the above examples, you will find “to” with the object. You can’t write listen me or do you like listen song. Listen is often used with to.



want to listen to the sound but your ear will hear the sound, whether you want to or not.

1. Can you hear me?
2. I heard a noise outside.
3. My grandfather is getting old. She can't hear very well.
4. What did you say? I can't hear you. You'll have to speak up.

Hear can also be used to talk about the result of listening or when you want to talk about something you experienced or listened to:

1. I hear what you're saying but I don't agree with you (means I've just finished listening to you)
2. I heard a great song on the radio yesterday (means I was listening to the radio yesterday)

When talking about news that you have heard, read, or seen on TV, you can use hear with a (that) clause:

1. I hear (that) you're expecting a baby.
2. I hear (that) you've bought a new house.

One important thing that you must notice is 'hear' can be used in place of 'listen' sometimes, but 'listen' cannot be used in place of 'hear'.

Hence, if you are learning English, then focus on these words to improve your spoken English skills. You can join an [online spoken English course](#) to learn in-depth about these concepts.

About Eagetutor:

eAgeTutor.com is the premier online tutoring provider. eAge's world-class faculty and ace communication experts from around the globe help you to improve in an all round manner. Assignments and tasks based on a well-researched content developed by subject matter and industry experts can certainly fetch the most desired results for [improving spoken English](#) skills. Overcoming limitations is just a click of mouse away in this age of effective and advance communication technology. For further information on online English speaking course or to experience, the wonders of virtual classroom fix a demonstration session with our tutor. Please visit www.eagetutor.com. Contact us today to know more about our [spoken English program](#) and experience the exciting world of e learning.

-By Shailja Varma

Related topics:

1. [How to create a promotion letter in a professional format setting?](#)
2. [Tips for an extempore speech in English](#)
3. [What are vowels and Consonants?](#)
4. [How to talk to your boss for the first time?](#)
5. [Learn about prepositions of time](#)

Category: [Spoken English](#) / [English Grammar](#)

[Joomla SEF URLs by Artio](#)