

# Replacing OVERUSED WORDS



To make your writing more vivid & descriptive, you want to avoid overusing stale words such 'very' and 'great'.

Practice this skill in the exercises below.

Replace the overused words in the spaces below; you cannot use the same word more than once, but you can fill the blanks with more than one word if necessary.

VERY

1. Jane was ~~very~~ \_\_\_\_\_ excited about his visit, but she also felt ~~very~~ \_\_\_\_\_ overwhelmed.
2. It was ~~very~~ \_\_\_\_\_ cold the day my father left; I was ~~very~~ \_\_\_\_\_ worried about him.
3. Jo's eyes were ~~very~~ \_\_\_\_\_ blue; his hair was ~~very~~ \_\_\_\_\_ white.
4. The glass was ~~very~~ \_\_\_\_\_ full, so I made sure to walk ~~very~~ \_\_\_\_\_ slowly.

SAY

1. My uncle ~~said~~ \_\_\_\_\_ that he was retiring; my aunt ~~said~~ \_\_\_\_\_, "About time!"
2. The teacher ~~says~~ \_\_\_\_\_ that we are too young; I want to ~~say~~ \_\_\_\_\_ that we're not.
3. Without ~~saying~~ \_\_\_\_\_ too much, Harry ~~says~~ \_\_\_\_\_ that they must leave immediately.
4. Ken glanced at me and ~~said~~ \_\_\_\_\_ he loved me. "Thank you," was all I could ~~say~~ \_\_\_\_\_.

NICE

1. As Noah handed her the ~~nice~~ \_\_\_\_\_ flowers, she thought, "What a ~~nice~~ \_\_\_\_\_ man."
2. Sure, it was a ~~nice~~ \_\_\_\_\_ pair of shoes, but he wanted something ~~nicer~~ \_\_\_\_\_.
3. "Nice \_\_\_\_\_ words," she thought as she placed the letter on top of the ~~nice~~ \_\_\_\_\_ gift.
4. She was a ~~nice~~ \_\_\_\_\_ student, with ~~nice~~ \_\_\_\_\_ manners.

WENT

1. James ~~went~~ \_\_\_\_\_ to the store, and Sally ~~went~~ \_\_\_\_\_ with him.
2. When the teacher ~~went~~ \_\_\_\_\_ out of the room, the headmistress ~~went~~ \_\_\_\_\_ too.
3. When his wife ~~went~~ \_\_\_\_\_ to Australia, his excitement for life ~~went~~ \_\_\_\_\_ with her.
4. My headache ~~went~~ \_\_\_\_\_ away when the children ~~went~~ \_\_\_\_\_ to bed.

GOOD

1. Baseball last night was fun: it was a ~~good~~ \_\_\_\_\_ game and we had ~~good~~ \_\_\_\_\_ seats.
2. When asked if he had a ~~good~~ \_\_\_\_\_ day, Tim replied, "Well, I watched a ~~good~~ \_\_\_\_\_ movie."
3. I was a ~~good~~ \_\_\_\_\_ child. But then, I suppose, I had ~~good~~ \_\_\_\_\_ parents.
4. A ~~good~~ \_\_\_\_\_ portion of our earnings will be donated to ~~good~~ \_\_\_\_\_ causes.

LOVE

1. I ~~love~~ \_\_\_\_\_ Indian food; it contains such ~~lovely~~ \_\_\_\_\_ flavors.
2. Evan's ~~love~~ \_\_\_\_\_ for music runs deep; he particularly ~~loves~~ \_\_\_\_\_ rock music.
3. My grandmother always ~~loved~~ \_\_\_\_\_ cooking, and I ~~loved~~ \_\_\_\_\_ watching her.
4. Beth ~~loves~~ \_\_\_\_\_ her new iPhone, but I don't ~~love~~ \_\_\_\_\_ the way she is always on it.

WALK

1. When Mr. Smith ~~walked~~ \_\_\_\_\_ out of the room, he ~~walked~~ \_\_\_\_\_ with a sense of purpose.
2. As Jimmy ~~walked~~ \_\_\_\_\_ down the boardwalk, I ~~walked~~ \_\_\_\_\_ beside him.
3. My father ~~walks~~ \_\_\_\_\_ down the aisle; I ~~walk~~ \_\_\_\_\_ behind him with a heavy heart.
4. The gang ~~walked~~ \_\_\_\_\_ into the bar; everyone else ~~walked~~ \_\_\_\_\_ out.

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To make your writing more vivid & descriptive, you want to avoid overusing stale words such as 'very' and 'great'.

Practice this skill in the exercises below!

**EXAMPLE**

Replace the overused words in the spaces below; you cannot use the same word more than once, but you can fill the blanks with more than one word if necessary.

VERY  
SAY  
NICE  
WENT  
GOOD  
LOVE  
WALK

1. Jane was ~~very~~ extremely excited about his visit, but she also felt ~~very~~ rather overwhelmed.
2. It was ~~very~~ bitterly cold the day my father left; I was ~~very~~ uncommonly worried about him.
3. Jo's eyes were ~~very~~ intensely blue; his hair was ~~very~~ surprisingly white.
4. The glass was ~~very~~ overwhelmingly full, so I made sure to walk ~~very~~ particularly slowly.

1. My uncle ~~said~~ declared that he was retiring; my aunt ~~said~~ exclaimed, "About time!"
2. The teacher ~~says~~ contends that we are too young; I want to ~~say~~ reply that we're not.
3. Without ~~saying~~ divulging too much, Harry ~~says~~ announces that they must leave immediately.
4. Ken glanced at me and ~~said~~ revealed he loved me. "Thank you," was all I could ~~say~~ remark.

1. As Noah handed her the ~~nice~~ gorgeous flowers, she thought, "What a ~~nice~~ thoughtful man."
2. Sure, it was a ~~nice~~ satisfactory pair of shoes, but he wanted something ~~nicer~~ more suave.
3. "Nice kind words," she thought as she placed the letter on top of the ~~nice~~ pleasing gift.
4. She was a ~~nice~~ affable student, with ~~nice~~ curteous manners.

1. James ~~went~~ strolled to the store, and Sally ~~went~~ meandered with him.
2. When the teacher ~~went~~ dashed out of the room, the headmistress ~~went~~ exited too.
3. When his wife ~~went~~ immigrated to Australia, his excitement for life ~~went~~ vanished with her.
4. My headache ~~went~~ disappeared away when the children ~~went~~ retired to bed.

1. Baseball last night was fun: it was a ~~good~~ eventful game and we had ~~good~~ first-class seats.
2. When asked if he had a ~~good~~ enjoyable day, Tim replied, "Well, I watched a ~~good~~ thought-provoking movie."
3. I was a ~~good~~ well-behaved child. But then, I suppose, I had ~~good~~ wonderful parents.
4. A ~~good~~ substantial portion of our earnings will be donated to ~~good~~ worthy causes.

1. I ~~love~~ have a preference for Indian food; it contains such ~~lovely~~ tasty flavors.
2. Evan's ~~love~~ partiality for music runs deep; he particularly ~~loves~~ enjoys rock music.
3. My grandmother always ~~loved~~ adored cooking, and I ~~loved~~ delighted in watching her.
4. Beth ~~loves~~ takes pleasure in her new iPhone, but I don't ~~love~~ appreciate the way she is always on it.

1. When Mr. Smith ~~walked~~ stormed out of the room, he ~~walked~~ stepped with a sense of purpose.
2. As Jimmy ~~walked~~ sauntered down the boardwalk, I ~~walked~~ followed beside him.
3. My father ~~walks~~ marches down the aisle; I ~~walk~~ plod behind him with a heavy heart.
4. The gang ~~walked~~ charged into the bar; everyone else ~~walked~~ scurried out.