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Words and phrases that can confuse

As - Like





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These two words appear to be similar, and, in American English, they are sometimes interchangeable. However, they are not, and a correct use will show you understand English grammar and you know how to use them correctly.

As - means in the same way, it “becomes” that.

Like - means similar.

- I work **as** a researcher (I am a researcher).
- I work **like** a slave (I am always a researcher but I am comparing myself to a slave, I am not a slave, just, in some ways, similar).
- This looks **like** a glass (it resembles a glass, I do not know if it is a glass), I will use it **as** a glass (it now becomes a glass, I can pour water into it and use it (as) in the same way that I use a glass).

Such as indicates examples, some possibilities.

Like indicates something similar, not that thing.



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- ...in areas **such as** health, education or climate change.
- ...on factors **such as** temperature and salinity...
- Delhi, **like** Beijing, Mexico City, London and Los Angeles, is struggling to reduce pollution...
- ...and travels **like** a train around the track by constantly advancing in the same direction.
- I have a headache, do you have something **like** Aspirin? (here the meaning is clear, I want something “similar” to Aspirin, but NOT Aspirin; maybe Ibuprofen)