



Scientific Writing Resources

Compared to - Compared with





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The difference between these two forms is very easy to understand; they have been used for the last 500 years and even Shakespeare used them correctly!

However, we all know how the USA has influenced English over the last 4–5 decades, we also know that the USA has never established what language they speak, at least at the Federal level, even if 3 or 4 states have established their official language. Therefore, the USA has taken many liberties with the English language, which others think are now correct, even if they are not! Don't get me started on the transitive verb **To Enjoy**!

Well, the difference between these two prepositions with the verb **To Compare** are:

To compare with: 2 or more nouns that have the same or very similar attributes, properties or actions they can perform, and we want to identify which are the same, similar or different; this is the main form used.

Example: Let's **compare** this car **with** that car. (here we look all the similarities and differences of the two cars, such as cost, size, performance, capacity)

To compare to: normally used with only 2 nouns, normally dissimilar or completely different, sometimes of completely different constitution, and we want to say that one is "like" the other.

Example: Shakespeare wrote that his love (maybe girlfriend) was **compared to** a summer day. (the girl and the day are completely different and cannot be compared, but the girl is "like" a summer day: warm, beautiful, sweet smelling)

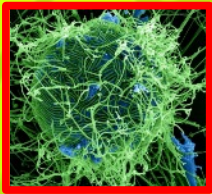


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He **compared** a bike's front wheel **to** the casters on a shopping trolley.
(there is no comparison between size, colour, material, but just that they work in the same way)



Thread viruses have been **compared to** strands of tangled rope, ...
(viruses and rope are completely different and cannot be compared, but they are similar as we all know what rope is like, it helps to make us understand their shape, what they do)

Other examples

- Those numbers are “very low” **compared with** other developed countries...
- **Compared with** old fashioned copper cables...
- Czeisler recently **compared** the sleep patterns of those who read a book on an iPad before bed **with** those who read print.
- We monitored their sleep-wake cycles and **compared** them **to** healthy people of the same age and gender who were also unemployed. *(is this correct?)*
- Experimental barcodes are **compared to** this database...*(is this correct?)*
- ...**compared with** mice in a control group.
- ...*(for example, E50 compared to E40)*... *(is this correct?)*
- ...mutants **compared with** wild-type...
- ...PG **compared with** Mu3...
- ...the first quarter **compared with** the same period last year.