



## Affect vs. Effect

### The Rule of Affect:

*Affect* is a verb that takes an object. Its meaning relates to changing, influencing, causing damage, infecting or attempting to impress.

Examples:     *If I stay up all night before a test, it **affects** my ability to perform.*  
                   *The film **affected** many, moving them to tears.*

### The Rule of Effect:

*Effect* is a noun that means the result of something:

Example:       *A can of Red Bull has a notable **effect** on my energy level.*

*Effect* also refers to personal belongings:

Example:       *The nurse collected the patient's personal **effects**.*

Another meaning is a particular outcome or sensation:

Example:       *The elegant furniture, the rich tapestries, and the gorgeous statuary created an **effect** of grandeur.*

The word *effect* also forms part of certain physical phenomena, such as the Doppler Effect. *Effect* is also used to refer to sound effects, special effects, and optical effects.

### Rare exceptions to the Rule:

As with most English rules, there are exceptions! There are times when *affect* may be used as a noun, and other times when *effect* shows up as a verb.

As a noun, *affect* refers to the state of emotions:

Example: *People who have been through a traumatic experience sometimes seem emotionally blank, rather than having the strong **affect** that you might expect following a crisis.*

As a verb, *effect* can mean to cause or bring about, particularly by overcoming obstacles:

Example: The protest marches may **effect** change in this volatile situation.

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