

Definite vs. Definitive

The English language has some words that not only look similar in their spellings but also in their meanings. This is why the words definite and definitive cause confusion to some writers. Not only do they look almost the same but their meanings are closely related as they both pertain to having certain limits and boundaries but with different degrees. This post aims to distinguish between the two to be able to help you use them properly in your writing.

The term definite is used as an adjective meaning “clearly stated or decided; not vague or doubtful,” “having distinct or certain limits,” or “so clearly expressed as to leave no doubt about the meaning.”

Trump “Curtsy Or Bow” Memes & Tweets Is The Definite Debate Of The Century
[Bustle](#)

Steve Agnew blasts referee Martin Atkinson after Middlesbrough are denied ‘definite’ penalty at Anfield
[Mirror.co.uk](#)

Joe Root says England are definite Champions Trophy contenders
[SkySports](#)

On the other hand, the word definitive is used as an adjective which means “of a conclusion or agreement done or reached decisively and with authority” or “serving to provide a final solution or to end a situation.” In a sense, definitive takes the meaning of definite further by referring to something as conclusive or authoritative.

The definitive book about the Trump administration was written in 1951
[Washington Post](#)

The definitive ranking of Johnny Depp’s ‘Pirates of the Caribbean’ movies
[USA TODAY](#)

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Moody's assigns definitive Aaa rating to debt issued by Muskrat Falls/Labrador Transmission Assets Funding Trust and Labrador-Island Link Funding Trust; outlook stable

[Moody's.com](https://www.moodys.com)

The same difference holds true with their adverb counterparts, definitely and definitively. The adverb definitely means "without doubt" or "in a definite manner."

Bill Gates once said 'definitely send me a résumé' if you finish this fiendishly difficult book

[Business Insider](https://www.businessinsider.com)

Meanwhile, the adverb definitively means "decisively and with authority" or "conclusively."

Pitt study definitively shows faster treatment of sepsis saves lives, prevents hospital deaths

[Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](https://www.post-gazette.com)

Hopefully, this post helped you identify the differences between definite and definitive to avoid confusion in using them in your sentences.