

The three words peak, peek, and pique are homophones, words with the same pronunciation but different meanings, origins, or spelling. This may be the reason why some writers occasionally misuse or interchange these terms. This post will help you determine their differences and how to correctly use them in your writing.

The word peak can be used as a noun referring to “the pointed top of a mountain” or “a projecting pointed part or shape.”

8 Mountain Peaks in Costa Rica Ideal for Hiking Trips

[The Costa Rica Star](#)

Search teams combing Mt. Baldy for hiker, 78, who climbed peak more than 700 times

[Los Angeles Times](#)

Canadian mountain ranges you can see without having to hike

[USA TODAY](#)

It may also be used as a noun meaning “the point of highest activity, quality, or achievement.”

Gold hits 5-mth peak after Trump launches missile strike on Syria

[CNBC](#)

Hong Kong Property Prices Are Near Their Peak: JPMorgan

[Bloomberg](#)

Peak may also function as a verb which means “to reach a highest point, either of a specified value or at a specified time.”

FOREX-Yen hits multi-month peaks vs peers on rising geopolitical tensions

[Nasdaq](#)

Queensland city of Rockhampton's flood peaks at 8.75 metres

[The Guardian](#)

On the other hand, the term peek is usually used as a verb meaning "to look or glance quickly or furtively, especially through a small opening or from a concealed location."

Sneak peek at the 2017 Vancouver Magazine Restaurant Awards

[CBC.ca](#)

NYPD Detective Peeked Through Windows With Flashlight, Exposed Himself to Teenage Girls: Police

[NBC New York](#)

Meanwhile, the word pique is generally used as a verb meaning "to stimulate interest or curiosity."

Broadway Interest Piqued As Former NY Times Drama Critic Charles Isherwood Heads To Web

[Deadline](#)

Kraft's aborted bid for Unilever has piqued interest in the stock

[Proactive Investors UK](#)

People Piqued by Plans to Place LED Lights in Rome

[Smithsonian](#)

Based on the definitions and examples above, these three words may sound alike but are worlds apart in terms of meanings and uses. It is imperative to know their differences in order to avoid misuse and confusion. Remember that if you are referring to the topmost point of a place, activity or achievement, you should use peak. If you mean to glance or take a quick look, you should opt for peek. Lastly, if you want to imply that something or someone stimulated interest or curiosity, the right term would be pique.