

# Principal vs. Principle

Some people get confused with the terms principal and principle. This is understandable since the two words not only look similar but also sound the same. However, in terms of meaning and use, these two are very distinct from each other.

As a noun, the word principal refers to “the person with the highest authority or most important position in an organization, institution, or group.” This is particularly evident among educational institutions or schools.

Mom invites school principal to take daughter shopping after she was given dress code violations

[AOL](#)

Principal at top girls’ school spends \$19,000 to have a toilet built inside her office – so she doesn’t have to use the staff bathroom

[Daily Mail](#)

Dallas charter school principal under fire over Facebook post blasting Fort Worth mom in viral video

[Dallas News](#)

Principal can also be used as a noun denoting “a sum of money lent or invested on which interest is paid.”

Avesoro Resources: Payment of Debt Principal and Interest, Extension of Waiver and Standstill Agreement

[Junior Mining Network](#)

“Under the standard student loan repayment plan, payments are calibrated so that the principal always equals zero at the end of the repayment period.”

[Forbes](#)

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“By reducing the debt, it allows more of every future payment to go to principal and less to interest.”

[US News Money](#)

The word principal can also be used as an adjective which means “first in order of importance.”

2016 TV Year in Review: Matt Smith, VP and Principal Media Evangelist, Brightcove

[The Drum](#)

“The principal guest on the evening was Barrie Crossley who was accompanied by the Furness and South Lakeland group chairman Peter Schofield.”

[The Westmoreland Gazette](#)

“He was a principal benefactor of the first Irish Famine memorial in Cambridge, Massachusetts, which was dedicated in July 1997 by former Irish President Mary Robinson.”

[IrishCentral](#)

On the other hand, the term principle is used as a noun to refer to “a fundamental truth or proposition that serves as the foundation for a system of belief or behavior or for a chain of reasoning.”

An ancient Chinese principle can help you get comfortable with doing less—and make you happier, too

[Quartz](#)

Principles for examining Nevada policy

[Las Vegas Review Journal](#)

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Buhari and the principle of justice

[The Nation Newspaper](#)

One way to distinguish between the terms is to remember that a principle refers to a rule or standard, while principal as an adjective means the most important and as a noun refers to the most important person in a particular group or organization.