Than vs. Then

Like other words that sound and look similar, the terms than and then are often misused by writers. However, these two have very distinct uses and functions. This post will help you distinguish between the two and allow you to use them in sentences correctly.

Than is a term used as a conjunction introducing the second element in a comparison.

> "The EU has more to lose from hard Brexit than the UK, Mark Carney says"
> The Telegraph

> "NBA All-Star Game voting update: Pachulia still getting more votes than Cousins, Davis"
> CBS Sports

> "Nine Times More Busloads Of Protesters Than Supporters Will Greet Trump At Inauguration"
> PoliticusUSA

It may also be used as a conjunction in expressions introducing an exception or contrast.

> "Of Course Amazon Destroys More Jobs Than It Creates, That's The Whole Darn Point"
> Forbes

> "13 ways you're better at adulthood than you think"
> Business Insider

> "It's Way More Fun To Watch This Elaborate Trick Shot Than Create It"
> Huffington Post

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Meanwhile, the word then is mostly used as an adverb which means "at that time" or "at the time in question."

> "New biz group chief on Trump criticism: 'That was then, this is now'"
> The Hill

> "We were all "Young Guns" then: George Michael and the early days of Wham!, the coolest band in London"
> Salon

> "We have to know what went on back then"
> The Times

It can also be used as an adverb meaning "afterward" or "in addition."

> "Steelers' Le'Veon Bell envisions success, then speaks it 'into existence'"
> ESPN

> "Republicans Used To Care About Cabinet Disclosures. Then Trump Won"
> Huffington Post

> "'You got me so good!': Man stages an elaborate fake wedding for another couple to fool his girlfriend – then PROPOSES during the ceremony"
> Daily Mail

To better remember which term should be used in a sentence, you can use a simple trick. If you are trying to make a comparison, you should use the word than since both comparison and than have an a in their spelling. On the other hand, you should use then if you are trying to indicate a certain time since both then and time have an e in their spelling.