

Word for Word

Due to or owing to?

Due to and *owing to* are similar phrases, but they are not interchangeable because they have different functions in a sentence.

Due to is an adjectival phrase.

Examples

The rats' dramatic escape from the lab was *due to* the faulty latch on their cage.
We felt certain that the patient's deteriorating condition was *due to* the flu.

In contrast, *owing to* is an adverbial phrase.

Examples

Owing to his love of old books, we had great difficulty getting him out of the library archives.

The patient was referred for rehabilitation therapy owing to her recent back surgery.



Helpful hint: If you can replace *due to* with *caused by* in a sentence without changing the sentence's meaning, then you have used *due to* correctly. Likewise, if you can replace *owing to* with *because of* without changing a sentence's meaning, then *owing to* is used correctly.

Bibliography

American Medical Association. *AMA Manual of Style: A Guide for Authors and Editors*. 10th ed. Iverson C, et al, eds. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007: 387.

— Laura L. Russell

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