

## Awhile vs. A while

Distinguishing the terms awhile and a while can be tricky. This may be due to the fact that both these terms are used to express time and commonly used.

Here's how to avoid the confusion:

While they sound and look very similarly, these terms actually represent different parts of speech. The word awhile is an adverb used to denote "for a short time".

"It clearly will take awhile for Bears offense to take shape"

Chicago Tribune

"Interview: UFC SLC's Jason Novelli: UFC call 'took awhile to actually set in'"

Bloody Elbow

"What Is The Joker's Real Name? You Might Have To Wait Awhile To Find Out"

Bustle

In all three examples, awhile is used to refer to the amount of time it took or people waited for a certain condition or event to happen.

On the other hand, a while is a two-word expression used as a noun phrase consisting of the article a and the noun while. The phrase a while generally means "a period, length or interval of time".

"Bowled in a T20 tie at Chepauk after quite a while and it felt nice: Balaji"

Times of India

"Trump and Clinton Will Go Down in History — For a While"

Wall Street Journal

"Apple iPhone estimates raised for the 'first time in a while' at UBS"

MarketWatch

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It is important for you to remember that a while can and often follows a preposition such as for and in as you can see from the examples above. Meanwhile, awhile can never follow a preposition since it functions as an adverb.

We waited awhile before the food was served.

We waited for a short time before the food was served.

His heart stopped for a while before he was resuscitated.

His heart stopped for a period of time before he was resuscitated.

Now, can you come up with your own sentences using a while and awhile?