These three words are called homophones, meaning that they sound alike even though they historically come from different sources and have different meanings.

*To* is the word we use when we talk about going *towards* something. It might help you to remember its spelling, if you think of it as the beginning letters of *towards*. We also use *to* as part of infinitive verbs as when we say such things as *to run, to rain, to consider, to tell*. People who make *TO DO* lists (they write down all the thing that need *to do*) have a head start in remembering this sense.

*Too* is used to mean more than enough, as in, “I am *too* tired to stay for refreshments.” Some people remember this spelling by thinking that the two o’s in its spelling are *too* many.

*Two* is the way to spell the name of the number 2. One way to remember that the word with the w in it is the number is to think of other words starting with tw that mean *two*. *Twins* is one such word, and so it *twice* and *twain*. *Tweezers* have two parts, *twilight* has light from the day and the night, and if you are *betwixt* and *between*, you are caught between *two* choices.

**PRACTICE EXERCISE**

In the following sentences that tell the story of an ill-fated shopping trip, write the correct *two, too, or to* in the blank spaces.

1. The other day I went ________ the post office.

2. While I was there I bought a shirt and ________ pairs of shoes.

3. I went ________ the cash register ________ pay and to have the items put in a bag.

4. As I was leaving the store the bag broke open because it was ________ thin.
5. _________ store employees ran over _________ help me but it was _________
late.

6. The shoes and shirt fell through the hole in the bottom of the bag and crashed
onto the floor. Customers tried _________help, but there was nothing they
could do when someone accidentally stepped on the shirt and got it dirty.

7. The manager came over_________ talk _________ me and explain that their
new plastic bags are _________ thin ________ use for heavy items like shoes.

8. He said it was a good idea _________ double-bag bigger packages.

9. Now when I go _________ the mall to shop, I am always ready _____ make
sure that the employees use ______ bags instead of one, just _________be
safe.

Answers: 1. to, 2. two, 3. to, to, 4. too, 5. two, to, too, 6. to, 7. to, to, too, to, 8. to, 9. to, to, two, to.

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