

# Pens vs. pencils compare contrast



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You are in the middle of writing the best story of your life. Every word is rolling out of you with ease; you feel as if nothing could stop this continuous flow of ideas, and then snap! That's the sound of your pencil lead breaking. You get up to sharpen the utensil, but find that you have no way of doing so. You get out a small pocket knife and begin frantically whittling the end, hoping to see some sign of the soft graphite showing, so that you may continue your story, which is quickly evaporating from your brain.

As you wait in the hospital emergency room, blood dripping from your punctured hand, you realize that you will never remember the end of the story you were writing, and you think to yourself, " Could anything be worse? Would a pen have saved my finger? " Well, my answer: Maybe. You make many decisions throughout your life, but one quandary that presents itself on a daily basis is the decision between writing with a pen or a pencil. Although both a pencil and pen function in very nearly the same way, there exist some key differences between the two. Pens and pencils are similar in a large number of ways.

First, they both are used for writing and are essentially the same cylindrical shape. Also, they will both eventually, if used enough, be rendered useless: the pen by running out of ink, the pencil by running out of lead. Both a pen and a pencil can be relatively cheap to purchase also, and both can be erased, although the mark of a pen is often more difficult to remove. Recognizing all of these similarities, one may begin to think that pens and pencils are nearly the same, but this is far from true. One major way in which a pen and pencil differ is in the length of usage.

Many pencils are quick to break, requiring sharpening again and again, while you are forced to watch helplessly as your new pencil quickly transmutes into an embarrassing stump of a writing utensil. Pens, on the other hand, never require sharpening, and they will often last days and days longer than even the best of pencils. This is not even to mention the annoyance of losing a brand new pencil eraser the first time you use it, because it decides, instead of yielding neatly and doing its job of effacing the misplaced mark, to completely snap off when the lightest of pressures is applied.

Surely, the reader is familiar with this hazard and can see that the longer length of usage provided by a pen far outweighs the, some might say, advantage of the erasability of pencils. The major difference that can be noticed between these two utensils is more subtle. In regards to the feeling in the hand of the movement of the writing utensil, the difference between writing with a pen compared with using a pencil is nearly the same as the comparison between writing with a smooth, brand new Expo marker and scraping your sharpened nails down a two hundred-year-old crusty chalkboard.

One is smooth, the other is not, and gratingly so. Many people prefer pens for exactly this reason: the smooth feeling of writing with one. Where pencils can be rough and, if poorly sharpened, irritatingly dull, pens rarely fail to provide a smooth writing experience. Pens and pencils, though seemingly very similar, in fact, have a few major differences, and these differences show the advantages of using a pen. A pen will not normally break and will last a lot longer than a pencil.

Pens also provide a smoother writing experience and do not give a feeling of scraping a chiseled piece of rock against your work. So, next time you have the decision to make between a pen and pencil, choose wisely, and remember these words if you make the wrong decision and end up in the hospital with your whittling knife stuck in the pad of your hand with the best story you have ever contrived slowly erasing itself from your mind.