

FORMER

VS

LATTER

They both are used when talking about one of the two things, but which refers to which?

DEFINITION

FORMER refers to **the first** thing.

EXAMPLES

- I drink tea and coffee but I prefer the former.
- Of the two suggestions, I prefer the former.
- Did he go there by air or by train? The former seems more likely.
- Of swimming and football, he much preferred the former.
- The former certainly is true, but the latter is not.
- Of the two possibilities, the former seems more likely.

DEFINITION

LATTER refers to **the second**.

EXAMPLES

- Did he walk or swim? The latter seems unlikely.
- I've met both Mark and Amy but I've only become friends with the latter.
- He tracked down his cousin and uncle. The latter was sick.
- One can travel there by ship or plane. Most people choose the latter.
- He presented two solutions. The latter seems much better.
- She offered me more money or a car and I chose the latter.



To help you remember this difference, here's a small trick: "former" and "first" both start with "f", while "latter" and "last" also start with the same letter. One more thing to remember is that you can't use these words when your list contains more than two items.