

AP Language – Tone Words

1. **Abscond:** to depart suddenly and secretly, as for the purpose of escaping arrest.
2. **Abhorrent:** causing repugnance; detestable; loathsome; utterly opposed, or contrary, or in conflict.
3. **Acerbic:** harsh or severe, as of temper or expression
4. **Agitation:** the act or process of agitating; state of being agitated
5. **Allusive:** having reference to something implied or inferred; containing, abounding in, or characterized by allusions.
6. **Aloof:** indifferent, disinterested
7. **Amalgamate:** to mix or blend together in a homogeneous body
8. **Ambiguous:** doubtful, uncertain from obscurity or indistinctiveness
9. **Ambivalent:** uncertainty or fluctuation, esp. when caused by inability to make a choice or by a simultaneous desire to say or do two opposite or conflicting things
10. **Anguish:** excruciating or acute distress, suffering, or pain
11. **Antagonistic:** hostile, unfriendly
12. **Antipathy:** a natural, basic, or habitual repugnance; aversion
13. **Apprehensive:** uneasy or fearful about something that might happen
14. **Ardent:** having, expressive of, or characterized by intense feeling; passionate; fervent
15. **Audacious:** extremely bold or daring; recklessly brave; fearless
16. **Austere:** severe in manner or appearance; uncompromising; strict; forbidding
17. **Banal:** pointless and uninteresting
18. **Bantering:** to speak to in a playful or teasing way; good-humored, playful conversation
19. **Baroque:** elaborate; ornamental
20. **Belligerent:** aggressively hostile; warlike
21. **Bemused:** preoccupied; deep in thought
22. **Benevolent:** characterized by or expressing goodwill or kindly feelings
23. **Bewildered:** completely puzzled or confused; perplexed
24. **Bleak:** bare, desolate, and often windswept; a bleak plain; without hope or encouragement; depressing; dreary
25. **Blithe:** joyous, merry, glad
26. **Bombastic:** pompous; haughty
27. **Callous:** unfeeling, insensitive to others
28. **Candid:** frank; outspoken; open and sincere
29. **Cogent:** convincing; reasonable
30. **Colloquial:** characteristic of or appropriate to ordinary or familiar conversation rather than formal speech or writing; informal
31. **Conceited:** having an excessively favorable opinion of one's abilities, appearance, etc. vain, proud, egotistical, self-important, self-satisfied.
32. **Condescending:** showing or implying a usually patronizing descent from dignity or superiority
33. **Contemptuous:** showing or expressing disdain; scornful, sneering, insolent, arrogant, supercilious, haughty; showing disrespect.
34. **Contentious:** tending to argument or strife; quarrelsome
35. **Conventional:** lacking spontaneity, originality, and individuality
36. **Convoluted:** complex or complicated
37. **Credulous:** willing to believe or trust too readily, esp. without proper or adequate evidence; gullible; showing a lack of judgment or experience
38. **Crepuscular:** having to do with shadowy areas (usually has to do with humanity)
39. **Cultured:** enlightened; refined; the quality in a person or society that arises from a concern for what is regarded as excellent in arts, letters, manners, scholarly pursuits, etc.
40. **Cynical:** distrusting or disparaging the motives of others; showing contempt for accepted standards of honesty or morality by one's actions, esp. by actions that exploit the scruples of others; bitterly or sneeringly distrustful, contemptuous, or pessimistic; sarcastic
41. **Derisive:** contemptuous; mocking; jeering; expressing ridicule; causing or deserving scorn
42. **Derogatory:** tending to lessen the merit or reputation of a person or thing; disparaging; depreciatory

43. **Despiteful**: malicious; spiteful; contemptuous; insolent; showing malicious ill will and a desire to hurt
44. **Despondent**: feeling or showing profound hopelessness, dejection, discouragement, or gloom
45. **Detached**: separated; impartial or objective; disinterested; unbiased
46. **Detestable**: abominable; hateful; execrable, abhorrent, loathsome, odious, vile; offensive to the mind
47. **Didactic**: intended for instruction; instructive; inclined to teach or lecture others too much
48. **Diffident**: lacking confidence in one's own ability, worth, or fitness; timid; shy; restrained or reserved in manner
49. **Discursive**: moving pointlessly from one subject to another; rambling
50. **Disdainful**: contemptuous, haughty, scornful; expressing extreme contempt; having or showing superiority
51. **Distressed**: to cause strain, anxiety, or suffering to; mental anxiety
52. **Eccentric**: departing from norms or conventions
53. **Erudite**: learned, polished, scholarly
54. **Esoteric**: understood by or meant for only the select few who have special knowledge or interest; private; secret;
55. **Euphoric**: feeling of great happiness or well-being; a feeling of happiness, confidence, or well-being
56. **Evocative**: having the ability to call forth memories or other responses
57. **Exasperated**: to irritate or provoke to a high degree; annoy extremely
58. **Facetious**: playfully jocular; humorous: facetious remarks; not meant to be taken seriously or literally
59. **Farcical**: comedic with high exaggeration
60. **Fervent**: having or showing great warmth or intensity of spirit, feeling, enthusiasm; ardent
61. **Flippant**: frivolously disrespectful, shallow, or lacking in seriousness; characterized by levity
62. **Foreboding**: a strong inner feeling or notion of a future misfortune, evil; presentiment
63. **Forthright**: directly frank without hesitation
64. **Giddy**: frivolous; lighthearted
65. **Gothic**: noting or pertaining to a style of literature characterized by a gloomy setting, grotesque, mysterious, or violent
66. **Grave**: serious or solemn; sober; threatening a seriously bad outcome or involving serious issues; critical
67. **Grotesque**: odd or unnatural in shape, appearance, or character; fantastically ugly or absurd; bizarre, distorted, deformed
68. **Haughty**: disdainfully proud; snobbish; scornfully arrogant; supercilious; contemptuous
69. **Iconoclastic**: inclined to attack cherished beliefs and emotions
70. **Idiomatic**: peculiar to or characteristic of a particular language or dialect
71. **Imperious**: arrogantly domineering; overbearing
72. **Incredulous**: indicating or showing unbelief; disinclined or indisposed to believe; skeptical
73. **Indignant**: feeling, characterized by, or expressing strong displeasure at something considered unjust
74. **Ingenuous**: free from reserve, restraint, or dissimulation; candid; sincere; innocent; naïve; frank, straightforward
75. **Insipid**: without distinctive, interesting, or stimulating qualities; vapid; bland, flat, dull, uninteresting
76. **Insolent**: boldly rude or disrespectful; contemptuously impertinent; insulting; brazen; contemptuous
77. **Introspective**: consider one's own internal state or feelings; to look into or examine (one's own mind, feelings, etc.).
78. **Jocund**: cheerful; merry; gay; blithe; glad; joyous, blithesome; sprightly and lighthearted in disposition
79. **Laudatory**: containing or expressing praise; complimentary, commendatory
80. **Lethargic**: drowsy; sluggish; lazy, indolent, torpid
81. **Literal**: the primary or strict meaning of the word or words; not figurative or metaphorical
82. **Loathsome**: disgusting; revolting; repulsive; offensive, repellent, detestable, abhorrent, abominable
83. **Loquacious**: extremely talkative
84. **Lucid**: easily understood; clear
85. **Ludicrous**: ridiculous; laughable; outlandish; silly
86. **Lugubrious**: mournful, dismal, or gloomy, esp. in an affected, exaggerated, or unrelieved manner
87. **Malicious**: full of, characterized by, or showing malice; malevolent; spiteful; deliberately harmful
88. **Melancholy**: a gloomy state of mind; depression; sober thoughtfulness; pensiveness; mournful
89. **Mirthful**: joyous; gay; jolly; full of gladness and gaiety
90. **Morose**: gloomily or sullenly ill-humored, as a person or mood; moody, sour, sulky, melancholy
91. **Mundane**: ordinary; common; everyday

92. **Naïve:** having or showing a lack of experience, judgment, or information
93. **Nostalgic:** a sentimental yearning for the happiness of a former place or time; bittersweet longing for the past
94. **Obscure:** not clearly expressed; ambiguous or vague
95. **Obsequious:** polite and obedient in order to gain something
96. **Ominous:** portending evil or harm; foreboding; threatening; inauspicious
97. **Onerous:** burdensome, oppressive, or troublesome; causing hardship
98. **Optimistic:** disposed to take a favorable view of events or conditions and to expect the most favorable outcome
99. **Outspoken:** uttered or expressed with frankness or without reserve; free or unreserved in speech
100. **Paranoid:** exhibiting or characterized by extreme and irrational fear or distrust of others
101. **Patronizing:** displaying or indicative of an offensively condescending manner
102. **Pedantic:** overly concerned with minute details or formalisms, esp. in teaching; didactic, doctrinaire
103. **Pensive:** dreamily or wistfully thoughtful; expressing or revealing thoughtfulness
104. **Pessimistic:** gloomy; despairing, hopeless
105. **Petulant:** moved to or showing sudden, impatient irritation, esp. over some trifling annoyance; irritable,
106. **Poignant:** full of play or fun; sportive; frolicsome; keen or strong in mental appeal; affecting or moving the emotions
107. **Pompous:** characterized by an ostentatious display of dignity or importance; pretentious
108. **Pretentious:** characterized by assumption of dignity or importance; making an exaggerated outward show; ostentatious
109. **Provocative:** inciting, stimulating, irritating, or vexing;
110. **Quizzical:** odd, eccentric, amusing
111. **Rancorous:** bitter, long-lasting resentment; deep-seated ill will; showing deep-seated resentment
112. **Remorseful:** feeling or expressing pain or sorrow for sins or offenses; contrite, regretful, penitent
113. **Repugnant:** distasteful, objectionable, or offensive; opposed; making opposition; averse; antagonistic, adverse, hostile
114. **Repulsive:** causing aversion; tending to drive away; cold; forbidding; loathsome, disgusting, offensive, distasteful
115. **Ribald:** offensive in speech or gesture, scurrilous
116. **Sanguine:** cheerfully optimistic, hopeful, or confident
117. **Sarcastic:** biting, cutting, mordant, bitter, derisive, ironic, sardonic, cynical, sneering, caustic
118. **Sardonic:** characterized by bitter or scornful derision; mocking; cynical; sneering; biting, mordant, contemptuous, sarcastic
119. **Satiric:** exposing human folly to ridicule; sardonic, ironical, taunting, cutting, mordant, biting, ridiculing to show weakness
120. **Scathing:** bitterly severe, as a remark; harmful, injurious, or searing; to attack with severe criticism.
121. **Scornful:** derisive; contemptuous; disdain felt toward a person or object considered despicable or unworthy
122. **Serene:** calm, peaceful, or tranquil; unruffled; undisturbed, imperturbable, unperturbed, composed
123. **Sinister:** ominous; bad, base, or wicked; unfortunate; disastrous; unfavorable; inauspicious, portentous
124. **Skeptical:** having doubt; unbelieving
125. **Spiteful:** pertaining to the spirit or soul; vengeful, mean, cruel, rancorous
126. **Solemn:** grave, sober, or mirthless, as a person, the face, speech, tone, or mood; gravely or somberly impressive
127. **Somber:** shadowy; extremely serious; grave; lugubrious, mournful, doleful, melancholy.
128. **Stark:** plain; harsh; bleak or grim
129. **Stolid:** having or revealing little emotion
130. **Strident:** loud, harsh, and unpleasantly noisy
131. **Sullen:** showing irritation or ill humor by a gloomy silence or reserve; persistently and silently ill-humored; morose
132. **Taunting:** to reproach in a mocking, insulting, or contemptuous manner; scornful remark; jeer; derisive
133. **Tentative:** in an unsure state of mind
134. **Terse:** neatly or effectively concise; brief and pithy, abruptly concise; curt; brusque; succinct, compact, neat, concentrated
135. **Timorous:** full of apprehensiveness; timid; full of fear; fearful, cowardly
136. **Trepidation:** tremulous fear, alarm, or agitation; perturbation; trembling, fright
137. **Trite:** lacking in freshness or effectiveness because of constant use repetition; stale, ordinary; common; everyday

138. **Turgid**: inflated, overblown, or pompous;
bombastic, excessively ornate or complex in style or
language;
139. **Urbane**: having the polish and suavity regarded as
characteristic of sophisticated social life in major
cities
140. **Vain**: excessively proud; conceited; egotistical, self-
complacent, vainglorious, proud, arrogant,
overweening
141. **Vehement**: zealous; ardent; impassioned;
characterized by rancor or anger; violent; strongly
emotional
142. **Vengeful**: desiring or seeking vengeance; vindictive;
revengeful; spiteful
143. **Verbose**: characterized by the use of many or too
many words; wordy
144. **Vilify**: to defame; to characterize harshly
145. **Vitriolic**: very caustic; scathing; bitter
146. **Vivacious**: lively; animated; spirited; brisk
147. **Verbiage**: use of many words without necessity
148. **Whimsical**: given to whimsy or fanciful notions;
capricious; erratic; unpredictable
149. **Wistful**: characterized by melancholy; longing;
yearning; reflective, musing, meditative, forlorn
150. **Wrathful**: very angry; irate, furious, raging,
incensed, enraged
151. **Wry**: satiric; bitter
152. **Zealous**: ardently active, devoted, or diligent;
enthusiastic, eager, fervid, fervent, intense,
passionate