

DUE TO VS BECAUSE OF



In conversational English, we may hear or use sentences in which we present reason for something by using the expression “due to”. While in certain cases, this usage may be grammatically correct.

But in certain other scenarios, it is incorrect. In this post, I will discuss these scenarios. Through this discussion, I will also answer the following question

Q: Can ‘due to’ and ‘because of’ be used interchangeably?

A: No. ‘due to’ is used to modify nouns only. ‘Because of’ is used to modify verbs. Thus, these two expressions cannot be used interchangeably.



What is “Due To” Used for?

RULE 1: The expression ‘due to’ can only be used to modify nouns. Thus, you cannot use this expression to present reason for an action in the clause

Why is it cold

It is cold in Arizona ~~due to~~ the westward storm coming from Pacific.

In sentence 1, use of ‘due to’ is incorrect because it is used to explain ‘why it is cold’. In other words, it is used to explain the reason behind the “verb” or “action” in the clause. This is not idiomatically correct.

Reason for cold wave

Arizona's cold wave is **due to** the westward storm coming from Pacific.

RULE 2: 'Due to' is correct if the sentence makes sense when you replace 'due to' with 'caused by'. If, it does not, then use of 'due to' is not correct

Arizona's cold wave is **due to** the westward storm coming from Pacific.

↓

Arizona's cold wave is **caused by** the westward storm coming from Pacific.

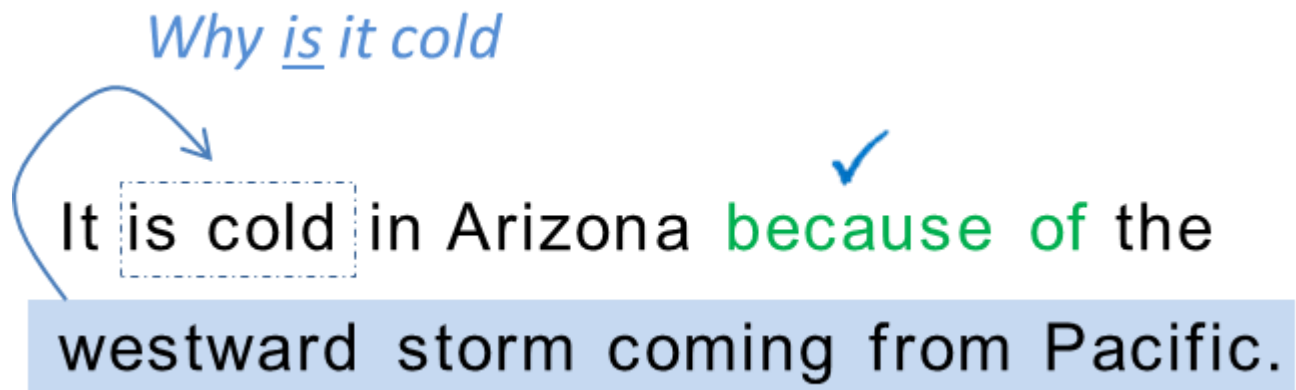
Here when 'due to' is replaced with 'caused by', the sentence makes complete sense. This check proves that usage of 'due to' is correct.

What is “Because of” used for?

Rule 3: The expression 'because of' is used to modify entire clauses. Thus, you can use this expression to present reason for an action in the clause.

Sentence 1 above can be corrected by replacing 'due to' with 'because of'. Now 'because of'

modifies the clause presenting the reason why it is cold in Arizona.



What are correct and incorrect usages of ‘Due to’, ‘Caused by’, & ‘Because of’?

The parent-teacher meeting was canceled due to heavy rains. – INCORRECT

‘Due to’ modifies the action in the preceding clause and hence is not used correctly.

The parent-teacher meeting was canceled caused by heavy rains. – INCORRECT

Note how when “due to” is replaced with “caused by”, the sentence no longer makes sense.

The parent-teacher meeting was canceled because of heavy rains. – CORRECT

‘because of’ modifies the action in preceding clause, indicating why the meeting was canceled.

The cancellation of parent-teacher meeting was due to heavy rains. – CORRECT

‘Due to’ modifies the noun – cancellation.

The cancellation of parent-teacher meeting was caused by heavy rains.- CORRECT

Note how when “due to” is replaced with “caused by”, the sentence makes complete sense.

What are the Key Take-Away Messages?

Use ‘due to’ only to modify nouns.

Usage of ‘due to’ is correct, if the sentence makes sense when ‘due to’ is replaced with ‘caused by’.

Use ‘because of’ to modify verbs.

‘Due to’ & ‘because of’ are not interchangeable.

Official Sentences (Exercises)

Given this framework, let's solve these official questions. But before we give the detailed solution from the standpoint of "due to", "because of", and "because", we want you to take a stab at these. Give us your rationale for making your selection of the correct answer. Be sure to provide a detailed analysis at least for "due to" aspect of the question.

OG12#6

In late 1997, the chambers inside the pyramid of the Pharaoh Menkaure at Giza were closed to visitors for cleaning and repairing due to moisture exhaled by tourists, which raised its humidity to such levels so that salt from the stone was crystallizing and fungus was growing in the walls.

- A. due to moisture exhaled by tourists, which raised its humidity to such levels so that salt from the stone was crystallizing
- B. due to moisture that tourists had exhaled, thereby raising its humidity to such levels that salt from the stone would crystallize
- C. because tourists were exhaling moisture, which had raised the humidity within then to levels such that salt from the stone would crystallize
- D. because of moisture that was exhaled by tourists raising the humidity within them to levels so high as to make the salt from the stone crystallize
- E. because moisture exhaled by tourists had raised the humidity within them to such levels that salt from the stone was crystallizing

GMATPrep

It seems likely that a number of astronomical phenomena, such as the formation of planetary nebulas, may be caused by the interaction where two stars orbit each other at close range.

- A. may be caused by the interaction where two stars orbit each other
- B. may be caused by the interaction between two stars that each orbit the other
- C. are because of the interaction between two stars that orbit each other
- D. are caused by the interaction of two stars where each is orbiting the other
- E. are caused by the interaction of two stars orbiting each other

