

Opening extract from

Oxford School Spelling Dictionary

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Introduction

This new edition of the *Oxford School Spelling Dictionary* is designed to help students find correct spellings quickly and easily, without the distractions found in a large dictionary. With explanatory footnotes throughout, the *Oxford School Spelling Dictionary* will give you more support than electronic spellcheckers. It has been updated drawing on the Oxford English Corpus, the largest language research programme in the world. This database provides an extensive picture of current English and enables the dictionary to present the most accurate picture of spelling today. This new edition delivers all the KS2 curriculum vocabulary, the most up-to-date words, and recent spelling and hyphenation patterns.

Generally speaking there are three main areas of spelling difficulty for users of English whatever their age.

- Some words are difficult because they have unusual or unpredictable features. Eighth, guard, and niece are often spelled wrongly because they have awkward letter sequences. Disappear and embarrass are confusing because some letters are doubled while others are not. Words such as desperate and separate seem inconsistent because one has an e in the middle where the other has an a for no apparent reason.
- Then there are words that are easily confused. Vain, vein, and vane sound the same but have very different meanings. Some words change their spelling according to how they are used. For example, dependant as a *noun* is spelled with an a, but as an *adjective*, dependent is spelled with an e.
- The third type of difficulty arises when suffixes and endings are added to words. It is not easy to remember to keep an e in changeable, to replace y with i in happily, and not to double the p in galloping.

With increased interest in spelling, reading, and writing in schools today we hope that the *Oxford School Spelling Dictionary* will provide a valuable tool offering useful strategies for dealing with spelling difficulties. We also hope that it will support teachers and parents whose task is to enable young writers to become confident, accurate spellers and to express themselves with a voice of their own.

How to use this book

Entries

Words are listed alphabetically in blue and the part of speech or word class (e.g. *noun*, *verb*, *adjective*) follows in black. If the word has endings (called inflections), these are also listed in black below the headword.

Decide on the first sound of the word you are looking for. Some first sounds can be confusing. If you cannot find the word you are looking for, use the Try also tips which will guide you to other possible spellings.

Footnotes

Some words are marked with a small symbol. These identify words that have a footnote attached to them. The footnotes give extra information to help you check that you are using the correct word. For example, at bite you will find a footnote to tell you that there is another word that sounds like it but is spelled a different way, lbyte. Words that sound the same but are spelled differently are called homophones. Some footnotes also give extra information on usage and grammar.

Panels

There are about 250 panels which highlight particular problems. For example, you may want to know which words are spelled -able like bendable, and which ones are spelled -ible like accessible. Or you may want to know how you form plurals of nouns ending in -f such as calf or roof. Use these information panels to build your knowledge of spelling rules and practices.

It may be useful to keep a spelling jotter for new words. When using a new word, say it aloud several times before you write it down. When you go on to use it in your writing, try not to copy it but to write the word from memory.

alphabetical guide
showing first two letters

see footnote

entry word

se → se

Try also words beginning with **ce-, cl-, cy-, pe-, or se-**

try also

panel

alphabet

highlighted letter

word class
(part of speech)

inflections

212

footnote

do not confuse with

a	seller * noun sellers	sense noun senses	separation noun separations
b	semaphore noun	sense verb senses sensing sensed	September noun Septembers
c	semi- prefix semi- makes words meaning 'half', e.g. semi-automatic , semi-skimmed . A few words are spelt joined up, e.g. semicircle , semicolon , but most of them have hyphens.	senseless adjective senselessly adverb	septic adjective
d		sensible adjective sensibly	sequel noun sequels
e		sensitive adjective sensitive adverb	sequence noun sequences
f		sensitivity noun sensitivities	sequin noun sequins
g		sensitize verb sensitizes sensitizing sensitized	serene adjective serenely adverb
h		sensor noun sensors	serenity noun
i	semibreve noun semibreves	sent verb SEE send	sergeant noun sergeants
j	semicircle noun semicircles	sentence noun sentences	sergeant major noun sergeant majors
k	semicircular adjective	sentence verb sentences sentencing sentenced	serial noun serials
l	semicolon noun semicolons	sentiment noun sentiments	series noun series
n	semi-detached adjective	sentimental adjective sentimentally adverb	serious adjective seriously adverb
o	semi-final noun semi-finals	sentimentality noun	seriousness noun
p	semi-finalist noun semi-finalists	sentinel noun sentinels	sermon noun sermons
q	semitone noun semitones	sentry noun sentries	serpent noun serpents
r	semolina noun	separable adjective	servant noun servants
s	senate noun	separate adjective separately adverb	serve verb serves serving served
t	senator noun senators	separate verb separates separating separated	server noun servers
	send verb sends sending sent		serve noun serves
x	senior adjective & noun seniors		service noun services
y	seniority noun		
z	sensation noun sensations		
	sensational adjective sensationally adverb		

* A **seller** is someone who sells something. I **cellar**.
You use **sent** in e.g. *he was sent home*. I **cent**, **scent**.
o A **serial** is a story or programme in separate parts. I **cereal**.

Aa

-a suffix

Most nouns ending in *-a*, e.g. **amoeba**, **gala**, have plurals ending in *-as*, e.g. **amoebas**, **galas**. A few technical words have plurals ending in *-ae*, e.g. **antennae**.

aback *adverb*

abacus *noun*
abacuses

abandon *verb*
abandons
abandoning
abandoned

abbey *noun*
abbeys

abbot *noun*
abbots

abbreviate *verb*
abbreviates
abbreviating
abbreviated

abbreviation *noun*
abbreviations

abdomen *noun*
abdomens

abdominal *adjective*

abduct *verb*
abducts
abducting
abducted

abduction *noun*
abductions

abide *verb*
abides
abiding
abided

ability *noun*
abilities

ablaze *adjective*

able *adjective*
abler
ablest
ably *adverb*

-able and -ible suffixes

You add *-able* to a verb to make an adjective that means 'able to be done', e.g. **bendable** means 'able to be bent'. Some adjectives that have this meaning end in *-ible*, e.g. **accessible**, **convertible**, and **incredible**. You cannot use *-ible* to make new words as you can with *-able*.

abloom *adjective*

abnormal *adjective*
abnormally *adverb*

abnormality *noun*
abnormalities

aboard *adverb & preposition*

abode *noun*
abodes

abolish *verb*
abolishes
abolishing
abolished

abolition *noun*

abominable *adjective*
abominably *adverb*

aboriginal *adjective*

Aborigine *noun*
Aborigines

abort *verb*
aborts
aborting
aborted

abound *verb*
abounds
abounding
abounded

about *preposition*

above *adverb*

abrasive *adjective*

abreast *adverb*

abroad *adverb*

abrupt *adjective*
abruptly *adverb*

abscess *noun*
abscesses

abseil *verb*
abseils
abseiling
abseiled

absence *noun*
absences

absent *adjective*

absentee *noun*
absentees

absent-minded *adjective*
absent-mindedly *adverb*

absent-mindedness *noun*

absolute *adjective*
absolutely *adverb*

absorb *verb*
absorbs
absorbing
absorbed

absorbent *adjective*

absorption *noun*

abstract *adjective & noun*
abstracts

abstract *verb*
abstracts
abstracting
abstracted

a

b

c

d

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i

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l

m

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o

p

q

r

s

t

u

v

w

x

y

z

a	absurd <i>adjective</i> absurdly <i>adverb</i>	access <i>verb</i> accesses accessing accessed	account <i>noun</i> accounts
b	absurdity <i>noun</i> absurdities	accessibility <i>noun</i>	account <i>verb</i> accounts accounting accounted
c	abundance <i>noun</i>	accessible <i>adjective</i>	accountancy <i>noun</i>
d	abundant <i>adjective</i> abundantly <i>adverb</i>	accession <i>noun</i> accessions	accountant <i>noun</i> accountants
e	abuse <i>verb</i> abuses abusing abused	accessory <i>noun</i> accessories	accumulate <i>verb</i> accumulates accumulating accumulated
f	abuse <i>noun</i> abuses	accident <i>noun</i> accidents	accumulation <i>noun</i>
g	abusive <i>adjective</i> abusively <i>adverb</i>	accidental <i>adjective</i> accidentally <i>adverb</i>	accuracy <i>noun</i>
h	abysmal <i>adjective</i> abysmally <i>adverb</i>	acclaim <i>verb</i> acclaims acclaiming acclaimed	accurate <i>adjective</i> accurately <i>adverb</i>
i	abyss <i>noun</i> abysses	accommodate <i>verb</i> accommodates accommodating accommodated	accusation <i>noun</i> accusations
j	academic <i>adjective</i>	accommodation <i>noun</i>	accuse <i>verb</i> accuses accusing accused
k	academy <i>noun</i> academies	accompaniment <i>noun</i> accompaniments	accused <i>verb</i>
l	accelerate <i>verb</i> accelerates accelerating accelerated	accompanist <i>noun</i> accompanists	ace <i>noun</i> aces
m	acceleration <i>noun</i>	accompany <i>verb</i> accompanies accompanying accompanied	ache <i>noun</i> aches
n	accelerator <i>noun</i> accelerators	accomplish <i>verb</i> accomplishes accomplishing accomplished	ache <i>verb</i> aches aching ached
o	accent <i>noun</i> accents	accomplished <i>adjective</i>	achieve <i>verb</i> achieves achieving achieved
p	accent <i>verb</i> accents accenting accented	accomplishment <i>noun</i> accomplishments	achievement <i>noun</i> achievements
q	accept * <i>verb</i> accepts accepting accepted	accord <i>noun</i> accords	acid <i>noun</i> acids
r	acceptable <i>adjective</i> acceptably <i>adverb</i>	accordance <i>noun</i>	acidic <i>adjective</i>
s	acceptance <i>noun</i>	according <i>adverb</i> accordingly	acidity <i>noun</i>
t	access <i>noun</i> accesses	accordion <i>noun</i> accordions	acknowledge <i>verb</i> acknowledges acknowledging acknowledged
u			
v			
w			
x			
y			
z			

.....
★ To **accept** something is to take it. **I except.**

acknowledgement *noun*
acknowledgements
acne *noun*
acorn *noun*
acorns
acoustic *adjective*
acoustics *plural noun*
acquaint *verb*
acquaints
acquainting
acquainted
acquaintance *noun*
acquaintances
acquire *verb*
acquires
acquiring
acquired
acquisition *noun*
acquisitions
acquit *verb*
acquits
acquitting
acquitted
acquittal *noun*
acquittals
acre *noun*
acres
acrobat *noun*
acrobats
acrobatic *adjective*
acrobatically *adverb*
acrobatics *noun*
acronym *noun*
acronyms
across *adverb & preposition*
act *noun*
acts
act *verb*
acts
acting
acted
action *noun*
actions
activate *verb*
activates
activating
activated

active *adjective*
actively *adverb*
activity *noun*
activities
actor *noun*
actors
actress *noun*
actresses
actual *adjective*
actually *adverb*
acupuncture *noun*
acute *adjective*
acutely *adverb*
Adam's apple *noun*
Adam's apples
adapt *verb*
adapts
adapting
adapted
adaptable *adjective*
adaptation *noun*
adaptor *noun*
adaptors
add *verb*
adds
adding
added
adder *noun*
adders
addict *noun*
addicts
addicted *adjective*
addiction *noun*
addictions
addictive *adjective*
addition *noun*
additions
additional *adjective*
additionally *adverb*
additive *noun*
additives
address *noun*
addresses
address *verb*
addresses
addressing
addressed

adenoids *plural noun*
adequate *adjective*
adequately *adverb*
adhere *verb*
adheres
adhering
adhered
adhesive *noun*
adhesives
adhesive *adjective*
Adi Granth *noun*
adjacent *adjective*
adjective *noun*
adjectives
adjourn *verb*
adjourns
adjourning
adjourned
adjournment *noun*
adjudicate *verb*
adjudicates
adjudicating
adjudicated
adjudication *noun*
adjudicator *noun*
adjudicators
adjust *verb*
adjusts
adjusting
adjusted
adjustment *noun*
adjustments
administer *verb*
administers
administering
administered
administration *noun*
administrations
administrative *adjective*
administrator *noun*
administrators
admirable *adjective*
admirably *adverb*
admiral *noun*
admirals
admiration *noun*

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admire *verb*
admires
admiring
admired
admirer *noun*
admirers
admission *noun*
admissions
admit *verb*
admits
admitting
admitted
admittance *noun*
admittedly *adverb*
ado *noun*
adolescence *noun*
adolescent *noun*
adolescents
adopt *verb*
adopts
adopting
adopted
adoption *noun*
adoptive *adjective*
adorable *adjective*
adorably *adverb*
adoration *noun*
adore *verb*
adores
adoring
adored
adorn *verb*
adorns
adorning
adorned
adornment *noun*
adrenalin *noun*
adrift *adjective & adverb*
adult *noun*
adults
advance *noun*
advances

advance *verb*
advances
advancing
advanced
advanced *verb*
advantage *noun*
advantages
advantageous *adjective*
advent* *noun*
Advent* *noun*
adventure *noun*
adventures
adventurous *adjective*
adventurously *adverb*
adverb *noun*
adverbs
adversary *noun*
adversaries
adverse *adjective*
adversely *adverb*
adversity *noun*
adversities
advertise *verb*
advertises
advertising
advertised
advertisement *noun*
advertisements
advice *noun*
advisable *adjective*
advise *verb*
advises
advising
advised
adviser *noun*
advisers
advisory *adjective*
advocate *noun*
advocates
advocate *verb*
advocates
advocating
advocated

aerial *adjective & noun*
aerials

aero- *prefix*
You use *aero-* to make words to do with the air or aircraft, e.g. **aerobatics**. If the word is a long one you spell it with a hyphen, e.g. **aero-engineering**.

aerobic *adjective*
aerobatics *plural noun*
aerobics *plural noun*
aerodrome *noun*
aerodromes
aerodynamic *adjective*
aeronautical *adjective*
aeronautics *noun*
aeronaut *noun*
aeronauts
aeroplane *noun*
aeroplanes
aerosol *noun*
aerosols
aesthetic *adjective*
aesthetically *adverb*
affable *adjective*
affably *adverb*
affair *noun*
affairs
affect* *verb*
affects
affecting
affected
affection *noun*
affections
affectionate *adjective*
affectionately *adverb*
affirm *verb*
affirms
affirmed
affirming

.....
* Use a capital A when you mean the period before Christmas.
* **Affect** means 'to make something change'. **Effect**.

affix <i>verb</i> affixes affixing affixed	aggravate <i>verb</i> aggravates aggravating aggravated	Aids <i>noun</i>	a
afflict <i>verb</i> afflicts afflicting afflicted	aggravation <i>noun</i>	ailing <i>adjective</i>	b
affliction <i>noun</i> afflictions	aggression <i>noun</i>	ailment <i>noun</i> ailments	c
affluence <i>noun</i>	aggressive <i>adjective</i> aggressively <i>adverb</i>	aim <i>verb</i> aims aiming aimed	d
affluent <i>adjective</i>	aggressor <i>noun</i> aggressors	aim <i>noun</i> aims	e
afford <i>verb</i> affords affording afforded	agile <i>adjective</i>	aimless <i>adjective</i> aimlessly <i>adverb</i>	f
affordable <i>adjective</i>	agility <i>noun</i>	air * <i>noun</i> airs	g
afforestation <i>noun</i>	agitate <i>verb</i> agitates agitating agitated	air <i>verb</i> airs airing aired	h
afield <i>adverb</i>	agitation <i>noun</i>	airborne <i>adjective</i>	i
afloat <i>adjective & adverb</i>	aglitter <i>adjective</i>	air conditioned <i>adjective</i>	j
afraid <i>adjective</i>	agnostic <i>noun</i> agnostics	air conditioning <i>noun</i>	k
afresh <i>adverb</i>	ago <i>adverb</i>	aircraft <i>noun</i> aircraft	l
African <i>adjective & noun</i> Africans	agonizing <i>adjective</i>	airfield <i>noun</i> airfields	m
after <i>preposition</i>	agony <i>noun</i> agonies	air force <i>noun</i> air forces	n
aftermath <i>noun</i>	agoraphobia <i>noun</i>	airgun <i>noun</i> airguns	o
afternoon <i>noun</i> afternoons	agree <i>verb</i> agrees agreeing agreed	airline <i>noun</i> airlines	p
afterwards <i>adverb</i>	agreeable <i>adjective</i> agreeably <i>adverb</i>	airlock <i>noun</i> airlocks	q
again <i>adverb</i>	agreement <i>noun</i> agreements	airmail <i>noun</i>	r
against <i>preposition</i>	agriculture <i>noun</i>	airman <i>noun</i> airmen	s
age <i>noun</i> ages	agricultural <i>adjective</i>	airport <i>noun</i> airports	t
age <i>verb</i> ages ageing aged	aground <i>adverb & adjective</i>	airship <i>noun</i> airships	u
aged <i>adjective</i>	ahead <i>adverb</i>	airstream <i>noun</i> airstreams	v
agency <i>noun</i> agencies	ahoy <i>interjection</i>	airtight <i>adjective</i>	w
agenda <i>noun</i> agendas	aid <i>noun</i> aids		x
agent <i>noun</i> agents	aid <i>verb</i> aids aiding aided		y
			z

.....
* You can use a plural in the phrase *to put on airs*.

5

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x
y
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airy *adjective*
airier
airiest
airily *adverb*
aisle* *noun*
aisles
ajar *adverb & adjective*
alarm *verb*
alarms
alarming
alarmed
alarm *noun*
alarms
alas *interjection*
albatross *noun*
albatrosses
album *noun*
albums
alcohol *noun*
alcoholic *adjective & noun*
alcoholics
alcoholism *noun*
alcove *noun*
alcoves
alert *verb*
alerts
alerting
alerted
alert *adjective & noun*
alerts
algebra *noun*
algebraic *adjective*
alias *noun*
aliases
alibi *noun*
alibis
alien *adjective & noun*
aliens
alienate *verb*
alienates
alienating
alienated
alienation *noun*

alight *verb*
align *verb*
aligns
aligning
aligned
alike *adjective & adverb*
alive *adjective*
alkali *noun*
alkalis
alkaline *adjective*
alkalinity *noun*
all *adjective & pronoun*
Allah *noun*
allegation *noun*
allegations
allege *verb*
alleges
alleging
alleged
allegedly *adverb*
allegiance *noun*
allegiances
allegorical *adjective*
allegory *noun*
allegories
allergic *adjective*
allergy *noun*
allergies
alley *noun*
alleys
alliance *noun*
alliances
allied *adjective*
alligator *noun*
alligators
alliteration *noun*
allocate *verb*
allocates
allocating
allocated

allot *verb*
allots
allotting
allotted
allotment *noun*
allotments
allow* *verb*
allows
allowing
allowed
allowance *noun*
allowances
alloy *noun*
alloys
all right *adjective & adverb*
all-round *adjective*
all-rounder *noun*
ally *noun*
allies
ally *verb*
allies
allying
allied
almighty *adjective*
almond *noun*
almonds
almost *adverb*
aloft *adverb*
alone *adjective & adverb*
along *preposition*
alongside *preposition & adverb*
aloud° *adverb*
alphabet *noun*
alphabets
alphabetical *adjective*
alphabetically *adverb*
alpine *adjective*
already *adverb*
also *adverb*
altar* *noun*
altars

.....
★ An **aisle** is a passage in a church or cinema. **I** **isle**.
° **Allowed** means to be permitted to do something. **I** **aloud**.
° **Aloud** means 'in a voice that can be heard'. **I** **allowed**.
★ An **altar** is a raised surface in religious ceremonies. **I** **alter**.