




Style and usage labels used in the dictionary

ABBREVIATION	a shortened form of a word
APPROVING	praising someone or something
AUSTRALIAN ENGLISH	
CANADIAN ENGLISH	
CHILD’S WORD/EXPRESSION	used by children
DATED	used in the recent past and often still used by older people
DISAPPROVING	used to express dislike or disagreement with someone or something
EAST AFRICAN ENGLISH	
FEMALE	
FIGURATIVE	used to express not the basic meaning of a word, but an imaginative one
FORMAL	used in serious or official language or when trying to impress other people
HUMOROUS	used when you are trying to be funny
INFORMAL	used in ordinary speech (and writing) and not suitable for formal situations
IRISH ENGLISH	
LEGAL	specialized language used in legal documents and in law courts
LITERARY	formal and descriptive language used in literature
MALE	
NORTHERN ENGLISH	used in the North of England
NOT STANDARD	commonly used but not following the rules of grammar
OFFENSIVE	very rude and likely to offend people
OLD-FASHIONED	not used in modern English – you might find these words in books, used by older people, or used in order to be funny
OLD USE	used a long time ago in other centuries
POLITE WORD/EXPRESSION	a polite way of referring to something that has other ruder names
SAYING	a common phrase or sentence that gives advice, an opinion, etc.
SCOTTISH ENGLISH	
SLANG	extremely informal language, used mainly by a particular group, especially young people
SPECIALIZED	used only by people in a particular subject such as doctors or scientists
TRADEMARK	the official name of a product
UK	British English
US	American English
WRITTEN ABBREVIATION	a shortened form of a word used in writing
	Essential: the most common and useful words in English
	Improver: the next level of words to learn to improve your English
	Advanced: words to make your English really fluent and natural

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Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary

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Introduction

Welcome to this new edition of the *Cambridge Advanced Learner’s Dictionary*. Here is some information about its most important features.

New Words

New words are coming into English all the time, and we are constantly working to make sure that our databases are up-to-date. In the three years since the last edition, we have added several hundred new words. Computers and technology are always a rich source (e.g. ego-surfing, vodcast), but many other areas are represented. In particular, concerns about climate change have been reflected in a wealth of new vocabulary (e.g. food miles, season creep). Because students and teachers have told us that they like to stay abreast of new words, we have made a selection of the most interesting ones. You can find them on pages EH18 - EH23 at the end of the book.

Cambridge International Corpus

One of the most important tools we have for tracking both British and American English words is the *Cambridge International Corpus*, a collection of over a billion words of written and spoken (transcribed) language from a huge variety of sources. The corpus is the evidence that underpins everything we say about words in our dictionaries.

Avoiding common mistakes

We also have an invaluable tool in the shape of the *Cambridge Learner Corpus*, which contains over 25 million words of English written by learners. The *CLC* has been developed in partnership with Cambridge ESOL, whose exams are taken by students all over the world. More than 10 million words of the *CLC* have been coded according to the mistakes learners make. For this edition, we have looked at the most common mistakes made by advanced learners, and have added nearly 500 new or revised ‘Common Mistake’ notes to help avoid them. Many of these mistakes will be well-known to teachers. Others may seem a little strange, but are frequent in our corpus. Some teachers’ hearts may sink to think that advanced learners are

still making mistakes which may seem basic, but the evidence of the *Cambridge Learner Corpus* means that our notes are based on real data, not on conjecture or wishful thinking!

Frequency information

The frequency information in this dictionary is special because it shows the relative importance not only of words, but also of their meanings, and of individual phrases. To create this system, researchers used data from the *Cambridge International Corpus*. They extracted all the high-frequency words and then coded examples of them to work out the frequency of their different meanings.

The frequency information is not just a number-crunching exercise though. On the overwhelming recommendation of teachers and academic advisers, the frequency results were adapted to the needs of learners of English. So, for instance, basic grammar vocabulary which is rare in everyday English is included because it is vital for students.

The resulting system gives students a clear guide to the most important words and meanings to learn:

- Meanings marked **E** (Essential) are words that everyone needs to know in order to communicate effectively. They are either extremely common (usually over 400 occurrences per 10 million corpus words), or they express core concepts (e.g. asleep).
- Meanings marked **I** (Improver) are also common in native speaker English (typically between 200–400 occurrences per 10 million corpus words). Like Essential, this band can include less common words which express useful concepts.
- Meanings marked **A** (Advanced) typically occur between 100-200 times per 10 million corpus words, which is still highly significant. Advanced students should aim to be confident with these to make their English more fluent and natural.

Thesaurus panels

When we compare data from the *Cambridge International Corpus* and the *Cambridge Learner Corpus*, we can see that learners use

INTRODUCTION

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certain words far more frequently than native speakers. We have picked out around 200 of the most over-used words and provided thesaurus panels to give learners a selection of more interesting, specific and appropriate words and phrases to use.

Spoken language

Using spoken language in social situations is one of the hardest areas for learners of English. What do native speakers *really* say when they want to turn down an offer politely, or terminate a conversation? The brand new ‘Let’s Talk’ section on pages EH2–EH12 gives hundreds of common and natural-sounding phrases to use in a wide range of situations.

Guidewords

Even for advanced learners, wading through several senses of a word to find the right one can be a chore. In many of our entries you will see signposts – we call them ‘guidewords’ – to help you find the meaning you want more easily.

Pictures

As part of our work, we are constantly talking to students and teachers in many different countries to see what they want from a dictionary, and how we can improve what we are offering. One result of this feedback is that this edition has a new, clearer layout and also hundreds of new illustrations concentrating on small items that are more easily understood in pictures than in words.

The CD-ROM

This dictionary is also available in CD-ROM format. If you have the CD, you can search for words more easily, hear spoken pronunciations, see extra example sentences, access more comprehensive collocation information, practise your English with interactive exercises, and use our unique SMARTthesaurus to turn the dictionary into a thesaurus at the click of a button.

Cambridge Dictionaries Online Extra

The dictionary is also available online. The definitions can be looked at free on our website, or to enjoy the features of

the CD-ROM, why not subscribe to *Cambridge Dictionaries Online Extra* at **www.dictionary.cambridge.org**?

We hope you will enjoy using this new edition of the *Cambridge Advanced Learner’s Dictionary*. Do get in touch with us at **www.cambridge.org** to let us know what you think of it, or to make any suggestions for future editions.

Elizabeth Walter
April 2008

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How to use the dictionary

1 Finding a word or phrase

Words at the beginning of entries are called **'headwords'**. Usually they are black, but the most important words are blue (see section 6, below). Headwords are in alphabetical order.

A headword may have more than one part of speech.

Idioms are shown at the end of the relevant part of speech. Idioms are usually listed at the first important word. If you are not sure where to find them, use the Idiom Finder starting on page EH59.

Phrasal verbs are shown after any ordinary verbs, or at the end of entries where there are no other verbs.

Words which are in the same **word family** as the headword, and which can easily be understood by knowing the headword, are shown at the end of entries.

Compound words (two or more words used together as a single word) have their own entries, in alphabetical order.

Sometimes a word in a compound has brackets around it. This shows that the meaning is the same if you use the word in brackets or not.

If a word has more than one possible spelling, this is shown at the headword.

Other alternative forms are shown in brackets.

Some words include 'the' before the headword, to show that they are always used in this form. They are found in the alphabetical order of the second word.

● **heap** /hi:p/

► **noun** [C] **A** an untidy pile or mass of things: *a heap of clothes/rubbish*

► **idioms** **the bottom of the heap** People who are at the bottom of the heap are poor and unsuccessful and have the lowest position in society. ● **collapse/fall in a heap** to fall down heavily and lie on the ground without moving: *The woman staggered and collapsed in a heap.* ● **a (whole) heap of sth** INFORMAL a lot of something: *I've got a whole heap of work to do.*

► **verb** [T + ADV/PREP] to put things into a large untidy pile: *He heaped more food onto his plate.*

► **phrasal verb** **heap sth on sb** to give someone a lot of praise/criticism, etc: *He deals well with all the criticism heaped on him.*

hapless /'hæp.ləs/ **adjective** [BEFORE NOUN] FORMAL unlucky and usually unhappy: *Many children are hapless victims of this war.* ● **haplessly** /'hæp.lə.sli/ **adverb** FORMAL


haploid /'hæp.lɔɪd/ **adjective** having a single set of CHROMOSOMES (= structures containing chemical patterns)

● **'hair gel** **noun** [C OR U] a thick liquid substance which is put in the hair to help the hair keep a particular shape or style

● **hansom (cab)** /'hæn.səm.kæb/ **noun** [C] a two-wheeled CARRIAGE pulled by a horse, used like a taxi in the past

● **Halloween, Hallowe'en** /,hæl.əu'i:n/ ⓘ /-oo-/ **noun** [C OR U] the night of 31 October when children dress in special clothes and people try to frighten each other

handcuffs /'hænd.kʌts/ **plural noun** (INFORMAL **cuffs**) two metal rings joined by a short chain which lock around a prisoner's wrists: *a pair of handcuffs* ○ *She was taken to the police station in handcuffs.*



● **the heebie-jeebies** /ðə,hi:.br'ji:.biz/ **plural noun** INFORMAL strong feelings of fear or worry: *Don't start talking about ghosts - they give me the heebie-jeebies.*

heed /hi:d/ FORMAL

2 Finding and understanding the right meaning

Numbers show the different meanings of a headword.

Where headwords have many meanings, or very different meanings, **GUIDEWORDS** help you find the meaning you need. There can be more than one meaning belonging to a guideword. Entries in this dictionary are ordered by the frequency of the first meaning in each guideword group.

highly /'haɪ.li/ **adverb** **ABOVE AVERAGE** **1** **E** very, to a large degree, or at a high level: *a highly paid job* ○ *a highly profitable line of products* ○ *For our country to remain competitive, we need a highly-skilled, highly-educated workforce.* **2** **think/speak highly of sb** to admire/say admiring things about someone: *He's very highly thought of within the company.* **IMPORTANT** **3** in an important or **INFLUENTIAL** (= having a lot of influence) position: *According to one highly-placed source, the Prime Minister had threatened to resign over this issue.*

If a meaning of a word is always used in a particular **phrase**, but it is not an idiom, that phrase is shown at the beginning of the meaning.

Definitions are written using words that learners of English are likely to know. If we have to use a word that is not on the list, it is in **SMALL CAPITALS**.

Where it is helpful, a short explanation is added after these words.

3 Using words and phrases correctly

Labels in square brackets give you **grammar information**. These labels are explained inside the front cover of the dictionary.

When grammar information is shown before numbered meanings, it is true for all the meanings of the word.

Common grammar patterns are given next to examples that show their use.

When grammar information is shown after a sense number, it is only true for that sense.

Plural forms, verb forms, comparatives and superlatives are shown if they are irregular. If you have the CD of this dictionary, you can see all the inflections of every verb.

HOW TO USE THE DICTIONARY


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Thousands of **example sentences** adapted from the *Cambridge International Corpus* show you how to use words naturally.

Bold words in examples are ‘word partners’, also known as **collocations**. These are words that are used very often with words you are looking up. If you learn these word partners, your English will sound more natural.

Many common words have ‘**Word partner**’ **boxes**, which show the most useful partners for that word.

heavily /ˈhev.i.li/
► **adverb TO A GREAT DEGREE 1 1** to a great degree: *The terrorists are heavily armed.* ◦ *The compound is heavily guarded.* ◦ *She's heavily involved in the project.*
► **WEIGHING A LOT 2** in a way which needs a lot of effort to move or lift: *The news she had received weighed heavily on her* (= worried her). **SOLID 3** in a strong, thick or solid way: *He's a heavily built* (= large and strong) *man.*
► **idiom be heavily into sth** INFORMAL to be very interested in and involved with something: *When I was younger I was heavily into politics.*

 **Word partners for heat**
feel / generate / give out / withstand heat • great / intense / searing heat • a high / low heat

4 Other useful information

Labels in *SMALL SLOPING CAPITALS* tell you about how a word is used, for example if it is informal or humorous. All these labels are explained inside the front cover of the dictionary.

If a word or meaning of a word is used only in British English or only in American English, this is shown with the labels *UK* or *US*.

If a word has a different spelling in American and British English, this is shown.

If the word you have looked up is used only in British English, and a different word is used in American English, this is shown.

‘**Common mistake**’ boxes show you mistakes which learners of English often make, and help you avoid them. These notes are based on the *Cambridge Learner Corpus*.

Common mistake: home
Warning: to talk about movement towards or away from someone's own home, you do not need a preposition.
Don't say 'go/come/arrive/leave to/at home', say **go/come/arrive/leave home**:
When I arrived to home, I realised my bag was missing.
When I arrived home, I realised my bag was missing.
To talk about someone moving towards or away from a home that is not their own, it is usual to use a preposition:
You are welcome to come to my home.

‘Other ways of saying...’ boxes give more interesting words to use for very common words.

Other ways of saying hit

Whack means the same as ‘hit’ but is slightly more informal:
*She **whacked** him in the mouth.*

Bash is an informal word that means to hit someone or something hard:
*The ball **bashed** him in the face.*

Strike can be used when someone hits a person or thing hard:
*She had been **struck** on the head with a baseball bat.*

If someone hits someone or something repeatedly, you could use the word **beat**:
*He was cruel to his dog and **beat** it with a stick.*

Cross references help you learn more vocabulary connected with a word.

hardback /'hɑ:d.bæk/ ⓘ /'hɑ:d-/ **noun** [C OR U] (US ALSO **hardcover**) a book which has a stiff cover: *His latest novel will be published in **hardback** later this month.*

• Compare **paperback**; **softback**

If you have the CD of this dictionary, you can use the **SMART thesaurus** to look up synonyms and related words for every meaning of every word in this dictionary.

5 Pronunciation

British and American pronunciations of a word are shown after the headword. These are written using the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA). See inside the back cover of the dictionary for full information about the phonetic symbols.

harbinger /'hɑ:.bɪn.dʒə/ ⓘ /'hɑ:r.bɪn.dʒə/ **noun** [C] LITERARY someone or a thing that shows that something is going to happen soon, especially something bad: *a **harbinger** of doom*

At entries for compounds, stress marks show you which part or parts you should stress when you say it. The full pronunciation for each word in the compound is shown at the entry for that word.

'hair ,spray **noun** [C OR U] (UK ALSO **hair lacquer**) a sticky liquid which is sprayed onto someone's hair to keep it in a particular shape

6 Frequency

Many words in this dictionary appear in blue and have the labels, E, I or A. These are the most important and useful words to learn. For more information on these labels, see the Introduction.

hall /hɔ:l/ ⓘ /hɑ:l/ **noun** [C] BUILDING ➞ 1 E a building or large room used for events involving a lot of people: *the Royal Albert Hall* ○ a **concert hall** ○ *the school sports hall* ○ *I'm playing in a concert at the **village/church** hall.*

ENTRANCE ➞ 2 1 (ALSO **hallway**) the room just inside the main entrance of a house, apartment or other building which leads to other rooms and usually to the stairs: *I've left my bags in the **hall**.*

If you have the CD of this dictionary, you can find extra example sentences for these frequently used words.

Numbers that are used as words

You will sometimes find these numbers used like ordinary words in English, especially in newspapers or on the Internet. This page tells you what they mean and how they are pronounced.

- 0800 number** /əʊ.ertˈhʌn.drəd.nəm.bə/ *noun* [C] in the UK, a free telephone number that begins with 0800, provided by companies or other organizations offering advice or information

0898 number /əʊ.ertˈhʌn.ert.nəm.bə/ *noun* [C] in the UK, an expensive telephone number that begins with 0898 that is provided by companies offering services such as CHATLINES

101 /wʌn.əʊˈwʌn/ *adjective* MAINLY US HUMOROUS relating to the most basic knowledge about a subject: *You should know how to boil an egg -- that's cooking 101.* ○ *Helping people get to the polls is a basic lesson of politics 101.*

12A /ˌtwelvˈeɪ/ in the UK, a symbol that marks a film that cannot be legally watched alone by children who are under twelve years old

15 /fɪfˈtiːn/ in the UK, a symbol used to mark a film that cannot be legally watched by children who are under fifteen years old

18 /eɪˈtiːn/ in the UK, a symbol used to mark a film that cannot be legally watched by children who are under eighteen years old

180 /wʌnˈeɪ.ti/ *noun* [C USUALLY SINGULAR] US INFORMAL a sudden change from one particular opinion, decision or plan to the opposite one: *Jack's done a 180 and agreed to come on the trip.*

2:1 /tuːˈwʌn/ *noun* [C] (ALSO upper second) a degree qualification from a British university that is below a first and above a 2:2

2:2 /tuːˈtuː/ *noun* [C] (ALSO lower second) a degree qualification from a British university that is below a 2:1 and above a third

20/20 vision /ˌtwen.tiˌtwen.tiˈviːʒ.ən/ *noun* [S] the ability to see perfectly, without needing to wear glasses or CONTACT LENSES: *You're so lucky to have 20/20 vision, Dom.*

.22 /ˌpɒmt.tuːˈtuː/ *noun* [C] a type of gun that fires small bullets, used especially for hunting small animals

24/7 /ˌtwen.tiˌfɔːˈsev.ən/ ⓘ /-tʃiˌfɔː-/ *adverb, adjective* INFORMAL twenty four hours a day, seven days a week; all the time: *We're open for business 24/7.* ○ *We offer 24/7 internet access.*

24-hour clock /ˌtwen.tiˌfɔːˈraʊəˈklɒk/ *noun* [S] the system of using 24 numbers instead of 12 to refer to the hours in the day

3-D /θriːˈdiː/ in a 3-D film or picture, the objects look real and solid instead of looking like a normal flat picture: *a 3-D effect* ○ *These computer games rely on 3-D graphics.* ○ *The picture looks great because it's in 3-D.*

3G /θriːˈdʒiː/ *adjective* relating to technology that is new and improved, especially mobile phones on which you can use the Internet, watch television, etc.. 3G is short for 'third generation': *They invested heavily in 3G mobile phone networks.*

3Ws /θriːˈdʌb.l.juːz/ *noun* something you can say to represent 'www' at the beginning of a website address: *The dictionary website is 3Ws dot dictionary dot cambridge dot org.*

.45 /ˌfɔː.tiˈfaɪv/ ⓘ /ˌfɔːr.ti-/ *noun* [C] a type of large PISTOL (= small gun)

4WD /ˌfɔː.wɪˈdraɪv/ *noun* [C OR U] WRITTEN ABBREVIATION FOR **four-wheel drive**: a vehicle that has power supplied by the engine to all four wheels so that it can travel easily over difficult ground

4x4 /ˌfɔː.bɑːˈfɔː/ ⓘ /ˌfɔːr.bɑːˈfɔːr/ *noun* [C OR U] ABBREVIATION FOR **four-wheel drive**: a vehicle that has power supplied by the engine to all four wheels so that it can travel easily over difficult ground

\$64,000 question /ˌsɪk.stiˌfɔːθəʊ.zəndˈdɑːləˈkwes.tʃən/ *noun* [C USUALLY SINGULAR] (ALSO **million dollar question**) an important or difficult question, on which a lot depends: *The \$64, 000 dollar question is, can we repeat last year's success?*

7/7 /ˈsevənˈsevən/ used to refer to July 7, 2005, when four SUICIDE BOMBERS killed themselves and 52 other people in attacks on London's public transport system

800 number /ertˈhʌn.drəd.nəm.bə/ ⓘ /-bə/ *noun* [C] in the US, a free telephone number that begins with 800, provided by companies or other organizations offering advice or information

900 number /ˌnʌmˈhʌn.drəd.nəm.bə/ ⓘ /-bə/ *noun* [C] in the US, an expensive telephone number that begins with 900, provided by companies offering services such as CHATLINES

911 /ˌnaɪn.wʌnˈwʌn/ the telephone number used in the US to call the emergency services

9/11 /ˌnʌm.rɪˈlev.ən/ September the eleventh, written in US style: the date of the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon in the US in 2001: *Since 9/11 there has been more co-operation between Russia and America.*

999 /ˌnʌm.nʌmˈnʌm/ the telephone number used in Britain to call the emergency services: *a hoax 999 call* ○ *There's been an accident - dial 999 and ask for an ambulance.*
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