### Style and usage labels used in the dictionary

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<td>CHILD’S WORD/EXPRESSION</td>
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<tr>
<td>LITERARY</td>
<td>used by older people, or used in order to be funny</td>
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<tr>
<td>MALE</td>
<td>used a long time ago in other centuries</td>
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<tr>
<td>NORTHERN ENGLISH</td>
<td>a polite way of referring to something that has other ruder names</td>
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<tr>
<td>NOT STANDARD</td>
<td>extremely informal language, used mainly by a particular group,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OFFENSIVE</td>
<td>especially young people</td>
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<tr>
<td>OLD-FASHIONED</td>
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<td>the official name of a product</td>
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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 **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 **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 **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
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](http://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](http://www.cambridge.org) to let us know what you think of it, or to make any suggestions for future editions.

Elizabeth Walter
April 2008
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 /hɛp/ noun [C] a untidy pile or mass of things: a heap of clothes/rubbish

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.

(whole) heap of sth informal a lot of something: I’ve got a whole heap of work to do.

Heaped more food onto his plate.

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

heap sth on to put things into a large untidy pile: He heaped more food onto his plate.

The woman staggered and collapsed in a heap.

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

happless /ˈhæp.ləs/ adj bad and unhappy: Many children are hapless victims of this war.

haplessly /ˈhæpli.əli/ adv very bad and unhappy.

haploid /ˈhæplɔɪd/ adj of 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

Halloween, Hallo’ween /ˈhæləʊˌwen/ noun [C] the night of 31 October when children dress in special clothes and people try to frighten each other

handcuffs /ˈhæn.dɔks/ plural noun (informal) 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 /ˈhi.bi.ji.biz/ noun informal strong feelings of fear or worry: Don’t start talking about ghosts - they give me the heebie-jeebies.

heed /hiːd/ verb [T] to give careful thought to: She heeded his advice on how to make a cake.
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.

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.

**highly** /ˈhaɪ.li/ **adverb** **ABOVE AVERAGE**

1. 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/to 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.
**How to use the dictionary**

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.

### 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.
how to use the dictionary

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

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

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 on the phonetic symbols.

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.

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.

If you have the CD of this dictionary, you can find extra example sentences for these frequently used 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** /ˌeɪˈtiːˈtiː.hæn.ˈdrɔd.ˌnæm.ˈbɔː/ **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** /ˌeɪˈtiːˈnɪn.ˈeɪm.ˌnæm.ˈbɔː/ **noun [C]** in the UK, an expensive telephone number that begins with 0898 that is provided by companies offering services such as chatlines.

**101 /ˌwʌl.ˈbʌr.wɔː/ 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 /ˌtwɛnˈtiːˈtiːz/ in the UK, a symbol that marks a film that cannot be legally watched alone by children who are under fifteen years old.**

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

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

**180 /ˌwʌtˈtiːˈtiː/ **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 /ˌtwɛntɪˈtiː/ **noun [C] (ALSO UPPER SECOND) a degree qualification from a British university that is below a first and above a 2:2.***

**2.2 /ˌtwɛntɪˈtiː/ **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** /ˈtiːv.ˌtɪːnˈtiːv.ˈvɜːn/ **noun [S] the ability to see perfectly, without needing to wear glasses or contact lenses: You’re so lucky to have 20/20 vision.***

**20/20/20 vision** /ˈtiːv.ˌtɪːnˈtiːnˈtiːnˈtiːn/ **noun [S] the ability to see perfectly, without needing to wear glasses or contact lenses: You’re so lucky to have 20/20/20 vision.***

**24/7** /ˌtiːwɛnˌtiːˈtiːnˌseɪv.ˈvɜːn/ **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** /ˌtiːwɛnˌtiːˈrɔːrˈklaʊk/ **noun [S] the system of using 24 numbers instead of 12 to refer to the hours in the day.***

**3-D /ˌtiːˈtiːdi/ 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 /ˌtiːˈtiːdʒ/ 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 /ˌtiːˈtiːdʒ.ˈjuːz/ **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 /ˌfɪfˈtiːˈtiː/ **noun [C] a type of large pistol (“small gun”)***

**4WD** /ˌfɪfˈtiːˈtiːd/ **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.***

**$64,000 question** /ˌseɪt.ˌsɪlˈeɪˌbi.ˈeɪdˌtiːˈtiːˈtiːnˈtiːnˌkwɛst.ˈsʌn/ **noun [C] (USUALLY SINGULAR) (ALSO million dollar question) an important or difficult question, on which a lot depends: The $64,000 question is, can we repeat last year’s success?***

**9/11** /ˌnaɪˈtiːˈtiːl/ **written abbreviation for 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 /ˈnaɪˈtiːˈnɪnˈnaɪ/ 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.***