

ESL 词典
非本族英语学习者使用

兰登书屋
韦氏美语学习词典

RANDOM
HOUSE
WEBSTER'S
DICTIONARY
of American English

完全根据美国英语编写

50000余词条

以国际音标和美语词典音标注音

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**Random House
Webster's Dictionary
of American English
兰登书屋
韦氏美语学习词典**

**Edited by
Gerard M. Dalgish, Ph.D.**

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ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THIS DICTIONARY

adj.	adjective	N	north, northern
adv.	adverb	n.	noun
Brit.	British	nom.	nominative
cm	centimeter(s)	obj	object
conj.	conjunction	obj.	objective
def.	definition	part.	participle
defs.	definitions	pl.	plural
E	east, eastern	poss.	possessive
Eng.	English	pp.	past participle
esp.	especially	prep.	preposition
Fr.	French	pres.	present
ft.	foot, feet	pron.	pronoun
Ger.	German	pt.	preterit (past tense)
in.	inch(es)	S	south, southern
interj.	interjection	sing.	singular
It.	Italian	Sp.	Spanish
km	kilometer(s)	Syn.	Synonym (Study)
m	meter(s)	v.	verb
mi.	mile(s)	W	west, western
mm	millimeter(s)	yd.	yard(s)

Guide to the Dictionary

Random House Webster's Dictionary of American English is designed for anyone who is learning or studying English as a second or foreign language. Its primary focus is current American English, but information on British English is also provided. It is based on the Random House family of dictionaries, known and used widely for the clarity of their definitions. This dictionary has

been specially designed to enable students and learners of English to unlock some of the more difficult features of English meaning, grammar, spelling, pronunciation, idiom, and usage. Studying and using this book is a good way to further one's knowledge of English, as well as to provide a bridge to more advanced reference books used by native speakers of English.

The Main Entry

The main entry is printed in large boldface type and extends to the left of the rest of the text. Main entries are listed in strict alphabetical order, regardless of whether they are single words, compounds, abbreviations, prefixes, or suffixes.

Variant forms and variant spellings of the main entry are also printed in boldface type. Variants are placed to show whether they apply to all definitions of an entry or only to specific meanings. A variant that applies to only one definition will be placed after the definition number. Variants are introduced by the words "or," "also," or "Also called".

Single-word entries have centered dots to show where the word can be

es·say·ist (es'ā ist) /'eseyst/ *n.* [count] a writer of essays.

ESL, an abbreviation of: English as a second language.

go·fer or **go·fer** (gō'fər) /'gowfər/ *n.* [count] *Slang.* an employee whose chief duty is running errands.

goose·flesh or **goose·flesh**, *n.* [noncount] a bristling of the hair on the skin, as from cold or fear. Also called **goose·pim·ples**, **goose·bumps**. [count; plural]

ea·gle (ē'gəl) /'iygəl/ *n.* [count] a large, powerful, broad-winged bird having a large

divided into syllables. This is a guide to where to add a hyphen at the end of a line. Detailed rules for appropriate end-of-line hyphenation can be found in most English style manuals. In multiple-word or hyphenated main entries, individual words are not usually syllabified if they are also entered at their own alphabetical places.

bill and claws to catch its prey.

exchange rate, *n.* [*count*] the ratio at which a unit of the currency of one country can be exchanged for that of another country.

Pronunciation

This dictionary provides the pronunciation for any main entry that is not a combination of two or more other main entries. A pronunciation key representing the two systems of symbols used to represent sounds in this book appears at the beginning.

It is important to note the differences between these two systems — one a diacritical system, much like those that are standard in most American monolingual dictionaries, and the other a version of the well-known International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA). A primary distinction between the two systems rests in their origins, IPA is based on the sound-spelling correspondences of the European languages that are derived from Latin. This is particularly evident in the system of vowels. A diacritical system, on the other hand, is based on English spellings, which is why it is sometimes referred to as “orthographically motivated.” In other words, it is designed to focus learners on *English* sound-spelling correspondences, including those that reveal sound pat-

terns among related words in English — patterns that would be hidden in IPA. For example, the stressed vowels in the words **divine** and **divinity** are both pronunciations for the letter *i*; in the diacritical system, the sounds are written as (ī) and (i), and the learner of English can clearly see that both of these sounds are ways of pronouncing the letter *i*. These same vowels would be rendered in IPA as /ay/ and /i/.

However, since many learners are already familiar with the IPA pronunciation system, and can use knowledge of their own native languages to fix upon the sound each IPA symbol represents, a modified version of this system is also used with each pronounced entry. The two systems together, each supplementing and supporting the other, can provide a learning aid. As one becomes more and more familiar with the target language, English, the diacritical system will become an increasingly valuable guide to the relationships among English sounds and their common spellings.

DIACRITICAL SYSTEM

The pronunciation appears immediately after the entry and is surrounded by parentheses. If more than one pronunciation is possible, the more common one is listed first.

In words of two or more syllables, a primary stress mark (ˈ) follows the syllable having the primary (or greatest) stress. A secondary stress mark (ˈ) follows a syllable that has secondary stress (or stress that is not as strong as primary stress). Syllables are separated either by a stress mark or a space.

IPA

The pronunciation, enclosed in slash marks, immediately follows the standard dictionary pronunciation. The symbols shown reflect the same pronunciations, in the same order, as those shown in parentheses.

In words of two or more syllables, a primary stress mark /ˈ/ precedes the syllable having the primary (or greatest) stress. A secondary stress mark /ˈ/ precedes a syllable that has secondary stress (or stress that is not as strong as primary stress). No spaces separate syllables.

Parts of Speech

Part-of-speech labels refer to a word's grammatical category, or how the word may function in a sen-

tence. The abbreviations used for parts of speech are explained in the chart on page xxv.

If a main entry has more than one grammatical category, a part-of-speech label appears before each group of definitions given for that part of speech.

au·thor (ô'thər) /'ɔθər/ *n.* [count] ① someone who creates a book, article, etc.; writer. ② the maker of anything; creator: the author of the new tax plan. — *v.* [~ + obj] ③ to be the author of: to author a novel.

Inflected Forms

Inflected forms are the changed forms, like plurals of nouns or past tenses of verbs, that a word may have depending on how it is used in a sentence. Inflected forms appear in boldface type after a part-of-speech label or after a grammar code that applies to the entire

entry. This dictionary shows inflected forms for all nouns and verbs that have irregular forms. Also, the dictionary shows inflected forms for regular nouns and verbs whenever there might be confusion about spelling.

For nouns, the inflected plural forms are indicated by the abbreviation *pl.* before them.

de·i·ty (də'ī tē) /'diənti/ *n., pl.* -ties. [count] a god or goddess.

For verbs inflected forms are listed in the following order: the past-tense form, the *-ed/-en* form or past par-

for·give (fər giv') /fər'giv/ *v., -gave* (-gāv') /-ˈgeyv/ -**giv·en**, -**giv·ing**. to grant pardon for (an offense); absolve: [~ + obj]: He has forgiven our sins. [no obj]: Forgive and

ticiples (if it is different from the past tense), and the *-ing* form or present participle.

For adjectives and adverbs, inflected forms are shown for those that form the comparative and superlative with an internal change in form or by adding *-er* and *-est*.

go forward.

halve (hav) /hæv/ *v.* [~ + obj], **halved**, **halv·ing**. to divide into two equal parts; share equally.

hap·py (hapē) /'hæpi/ *adj.*, **-pi·er**, **-pi·est**. delighted; pleased; glad.

good (g ō d) /gʊd/ *adj.*, **bet·ter** (bet'ər) /'betər/ **best** (best) /best/. satisfactory or excellent in quality, quantity, or degree: *She was a good teacher.*

Grammatical Information

This dictionary can tell the learner a great deal about the grammatical behavior of a word. Grammatical information is contained within "grammar codes" that have brackets [] around them. In general, a swung dash (~) within a bracketed grammar code stands for the main entry. For idioms, the swung dash usually stands for the entire idiom.

Grammar codes are placed to show whether they apply to all definitions of an entry or only to specific meanings. If the grammar code applies to only one definition, it is placed after the definition number. If it applies to the entire entry or part of speech, it is placed after the part-of-speech label.

GRAMMAR CODE

EXPLANATION

EXAMPLE

NOUN GRAMMAR CODES

[count]	This is a count noun; it can be counted and has a plural. It can be used with the word <i>a</i> or <i>an</i> before it.	as·sign·ment (ə sin'mənt) /ə'saynmənt/ <i>n.</i> [count] ❶ something assigned: <i>the homework assignments.</i> ❷ a position to which one is appointed: <i>an assignment as ambassador to France.</i>
[noncount]	This noun does not have a plural. It can be used with the word <i>much</i> or the phrase <i>a lot of</i> , but cannot be used with the word <i>a</i> or <i>an</i> . Mass nouns or abstract nouns belong in this group.	laugh·ter (laf'tər) /'læftər/ <i>n.</i> [noncount] the action or sound of laughing: <i>much laughter in the classroom.</i>
[count]... [noncount]	Some English nouns are both countable and uncountable, depending on their use. If one definition covers both count and noncount senses, the count grammar code appears before the count example, and the noncount grammar code appears before the noncount example.	en·mi·ty (en'mi tē) /'enmɪti/ <i>n., pl. -ties</i> . a feeling of bitter hostility or hatred; ill will: [noncount]: <i>Despite the truce, enmity remains between the two countries.</i> [count]: <i>tribal enmities that go back hundreds of years.</i>
[plural]	This noun is only used in the plural with a plural verb.	en·trails (en'trālz, -trəlz) /'entreylz, -trəlz/ <i>n.</i> [plural] the inner organs of a body, esp. the intestines: <i>The entrails of the chicken are removed before cooking.</i>

- [*singular*] This noun is only used in the singular with a singular verb. It can be used with *a* or *an* before it.
- [*the* + ~] This noun is used with the word *the* before it. When adjectives are used as nouns they generally take *the* before them.
- free·hand**, *n.* [count; *singular*] unrestricted freedom or authority: *They gave the director a free hand to cut the budget where ever she wanted.*
- lime·light** (līm'lit) /'laym,lait/ *n.* [non-count; *the* + ~] a position at the center of public attention: *always trying to steal the limelight.*
- lat·est** (lā'tist) /'leytst/ *n.* [noncount; *the* + ~] the most recent news, development, etc.: *Here's the latest from our news bureau.*

VERB GRAMMAR CODES

- [~ + *obj*] This is a transitive verb. It is followed by an object, usually a noun or pronoun. The example sentence or phrase will sometimes have a passive construction, in which the subject receives the action expressed by the verb.
- [~ + *obj* + *obj*] This verb is followed by an indirect object and then a direct object.
- [*no obj*] This is an intransitive verb. It is not followed by an object.
- [~ + *prep.* + *obj*] This verb is followed by a prepositional phrase consisting of a preposition and its object. The grammar code will specify the correct or appropriate preposition. If there are parentheses around the preposition and its object, the prepositional phrase may be left out.
- [~ + *to* + *verb*] This verb is followed by the word *to* and then by another verb in its infinitive form.
- [~ + *obj* + *to* + *verb*] This verb is followed by a noun or pronoun, then by the word *to*, and then by another verb. The last verb is in its infinitive form.
- [~ + *clause*] This verb is followed by a clause. In clauses beginning with the word *that*, this word can be left out if it is shown in parentheses.
- [~ + *obj* + *prep.*] For some phrasal verbs that take an object, the object can either follow the verb or fol-
- earn** (ɜrn) /ɜrn/ *v.* [~ + *obj*] to receive in return for one's labor or service: *to earn a living as a waiter.*
- en·cum·ber** (en kum'bər) /en'kambər/ *v.* [~ + *obj*] to weigh down; burden: *The hiker was encumbered by a heavy backpack.*
- buy** (bi) /bay/ *v.*, **bought** (bɔt) /bot/ *buy·ing.* to get possession of (something), esp. by paying money; purchase: [~ + *obj*]: *She bought a new computer.* [~ + *obj* + *obj*]: *She bought him a new computer.*
- e·vap·o·rate** (i vep'ə rāt) /i'væpə'reyt/ *v.*, **-rat·ed**, **-rat·ing.** [*no obj*] to disappear; vanish: *His hopes evaporated.*
- em·bark** (em bārk') /em'bark/ *v.* ① [*no obj*; (~ + *on* + *obj*)] to board a ship, aircraft, or other vehicle: *The passengers embarked on the ship at noon.* ② [~ + *on* + *obj*] to start or participate in an enterprise: *to embark on a business venture.*
- choose** (chōōz) /tʃuɪwz/ *v.*, **chose** (chōz) /tʃowz/ **cho·sen** (chō'zən) /tʃowzən/ **choos·ing.** [~ + *to* + *verb*] to prefer or decide (to do something); to choose to *speak.*
- in·struct** (in strukt') /m'strakt/ *v.* [~ + *obj* + *to* + *verb*] to give (someone) orders or directions; direct; order; command: *She instructed us to leave one by one.*
- con·ceive** (kan sēv) /kan'siɪv/ *v.*, **-ceived**, **-ceiv·ing.** [~ + *that clause*] to hold as an opinion; think; believe: *I can't conceive that it would be of any use.*
- look** (lōk) /lʊk/ *v.* ① [*no obj*] to turn one's eyes toward something or in some direction in order to see: *I'm looking at this book.* ② **look after**, [~ + *after* + *obj*] to

prep. + *obj*] low the preposition or adverb. For other phrasal verbs, the object must follow the preposition or adverb. A pronoun object must follow the verb. The grammar code will specify the correct or appropriate preposition.

[*not*; *be* + *~*-*ing*] This verb is not used in the progressive tense; that is, it cannot appear in the *-ing* form following a form of the verb *be*.

[*~* + *verb*-*ing*] This verb is followed by another verb in the *-ing* form.

take care of: a *babysitter* to look after the kids. ❶ **look over**, to examine, esp. briefly: [*~* + *over* + *obj*]: *I looked over your term paper*. [*~* + *obj* + *over*]: *I looked it over*.

ab·hor (ab hōr') /æb'hɔr/ *v.* [*not*; *be* + *~*-*ing*; *~* + *obj*], **-horred**, **-hor·ring**. to hate very much; detest: *Gandhi abhorred violence all his life*.

hate (hāt) /hey't/ *v.*, **hat·ed**, **hat·ing**. [*~* + *verb*-*ing*] to be unwilling; dislike: *I hate getting up early*.

ADJECTIVE GRAMMAR CODES

[*before a noun*] This adjective (or noun used like an adjective) must come before the noun it refers to; it cannot appear after a form of the verb *be*.

[*be* + *~*] This adjective must follow a form of the verb *be* and cannot appear before the noun it refers to.

e·mol·lient (i mol'yant) /i'molyant/ *adj.* [*before a noun*] having the power to soften or soothe: *an emollient lotion for the skin*.

im·i·ta·tion (imī tā'shan) /imī'teyfan/ *adj.* [*before a noun*] designed to imitate a genuine or superior article or thing: *imitation leather*.

li·a·ble (līə bəl) /'layəbəl/ *adj.* [*be* + *~*] ❶ legally responsible: *You are liable for the damage*. ❷ exposed or subject to something generally negative: *If you jump, you're liable to hurt yourself*.

Definitions

A single sequence of numbered definitions includes all parts of speech, phrasal verbs, and idioms.

Definitions that serve as cross references to another part of the alphabet, where the entry with the full definition is shown, are displayed in small capital letters.

When transitive and intransitive meanings of a word are similar, often one definition will cover both uses. The grammar codes and examples will clarify the differences.

Usually, the most common or frequently occurring meanings appear first among the definitions.

mercy killing, *n.* EUTHANASIA.

es·thet·ics (es the'tiks) /es'tetiks/ *n.* AESTHETICS.

e·lon·gate (i lōnggāt, i long-) /'lɒŋgeɪt, 'lɒŋ-/ *v.*, **-gat·ed**, **-gat·ing**. to (cause to) lengthen or extend: [*~* + *obj*]: *Intense heat elongated the metal bar*. [*no obj*]: *The metal bar elongated under the intense heat*.

Examples

Example sentences or phrases inform the reader about the meaning of the word, how the word behaves

Examples clarify the grammar codes and definitions. However, they are most useful in showing which kinds of words regularly combine with the word being defined.

Phrasal Verbs

Phrasal verbs (sometimes known as two-word verbs) combine a verb and one or more prepositions or adverbs. Phrasal verbs are listed in

The bracketed grammar code following a phrasal verb or its definition will show whether it is transitive or intransitive. A swung dash (~) in the grammar code stands for the main entry.

Idioms

Idioms are expressions whose meanings cannot be predicted from the usual meanings of their component words. Idioms are listed alpha-

A swung dash (~) in the bracketed grammar code following an idiom usually stands for the entire idiom.

Run-on Words

Run-on words (sometimes called derivatives) are words that are closely related to the main entry. They are created or formed from the main entry without great differences in meaning or spelling. Run-on

grammatically in a sentence, and the attitudes that speakers have toward the word.

fruit (fr ūt) /fruwt/ *n.*, *pl.* **fruits**, (*esp. when thought of as a group*) **fruit**. the part of a plant that is developed from a flower, *esp. when used as food*; [*noncount*]: *Fruit provides vitamins.* [*count*]: *Apples and oranges are fruits.*

boldface type in a single alphabetical group after all other verb definitions.

break (brāk) /breyk/ *v.*, **broke** (brōk) /browk/ **bro · ken** (brō'kan) /'browkan/ **break · ing**. ① to smash, split, or divide into parts violently: [~ + *obj*]: *He took the vase and broke it open.* [*no obj*]: *The vase broke.* ② **break down**, **a.** [*no obj*] to stop working; fail: *The car broke down on the highway.* **b.** to cause to collapse or stop working: [~ + *down* + *abj*]: *to break down resistance.* [~ + *obj* + *down*]: *to break it down.*

betically in boldface type as the final numbered definitions in an entry. They are preceded by the label — **Idiom**.

end (end) /end/ *n.* [*count*] ① the last part; extremity: *the two ends of a rope*; *the west end of town.* — **Idiom**. ② **put an end to**, [~ + *obj*] to terminate; finish: *Let's put an end to this constant arguing.*

words are typically formed by adding a suffix. The meaning of a run-on word can be understood by combining the senses of its root word and suffix, taking into account the part of speech. The suffix will

be listed in the dictionary as a main entry, where its meaning will be explained.

Run-on words appear in boldface type at the end of an entry, following the last definition but before usage or other supplementary notes.

en·light·en (en lit'n)/en'layt/ *v.* [~ + obj] to give intellectual understanding or knowledge to; instruct: to *enlighten* students. — **en·lighten·ment**, *n.* [noncount] — **-ment**, *suffix.* *-ment* is attached to verbs to form nouns that refer to a state or condition resulting from the action of a verb: *enlighten* + *-ment* → *enlightenment*.

English Roots

This dictionary includes as main entries several hundred common English roots, primarily from Latin and Greek, that form the base of many words in English. These roots have a boldface dash (-) before and

after them so the reader understands that they are not words, just parts of words. A knowledge about the meaning of roots may help the learner to understand the meaning of an otherwise unfamiliar word.

Each root entry lists several English words that are built from the root. The dictionary entries for these words will have cross references to the root entry.

-fac-, *root.* *-fac-* comes from Latin, where it has the meaning "do; make." This meaning is found in such words as: **BENEFAC**TOR, **DE** **FACTO**, **FACSIMILE**, **FACT**, **FACTION**, **FACULTY**, **MANUFACTURE**. See **-FEC-**, **-FIC-**.

fac·tion (fak'shan) /'fæksjən/ *n.* [count] a group within a larger group: *several factions of the Liberal Party*. See **-FAC-**.

Word Families

Word families are related words formed from the same root but having meanings that might be

confused. They have different parts of speech.

Word families are discussed in notes at the end of selected entries in the dictionary. These notes are preceded by the label —**Related Words**. Words discussed in these notes may be separate main entries or run-on words.

en·thu·si·as·tic (en thōōzē as'tik) /en-θuwziy'æstik/ *adj.* greatly interested in or deeply involved; *an enthusiastic hockey fan*. — **en·thu·si·as'tic·al·ly**, *adv.* — **Related Words.** **ENTHUSIASTIC** is an adjective, **ENTHUSIASM** and **ENTHUSIAST** are nouns: *They gave us an enthusiastic welcome. We were welcomed with enthusiasm. There were some waterpolo enthusiasts in the group.*

How To Use This Dictionary To Learn American English

Using this dictionary can help you learn American English. First, the dictionary itself and the suggested activities provided here can help you improve your vocabulary and learn new words. You will also discover new definitions for words you already know. Second, using this dictionary can help you improve your reading comprehension. Because this book includes prefixes, suffixes, and roots, you can use it to expand your vocabulary and make intelligent guesses about words you don't know. Third, since this book contains grammar codes, lists of irregular nouns and verbs, style or status labels, and groups of word families or related words, you can avoid some common errors that

learners make in acquiring English. Fourth, this book can help you use the language more fluently by enabling you to gain practice with idioms and verb phrases, two very important parts of learning English. Fifth, this book can help you become more aware of American English pronunciation and its relationship to spelling. It shows you pronunciations according to a system based on the International Phonetic Alphabet, but it also includes pronunciations based on a system used in dictionaries for native speakers of English. Combining these skills can help you become better at reading, writing, and speaking American English.

Improving your vocabulary and learning new words

Since this dictionary is designed for the learner, it does not include many highly technical or scientific words that would be unfamiliar to a general audience. But there are still many words in common use that a learner may not know, and this book will help you learn them. For example, words like *coxcomb*, *voluntarism*, and *wreak* are not necessarily everyday words, nor are they highly technical or scientific. You can look them up in this dictionary. When you come across such difficult words, we suggest that you write them in a notebook or on flashcards.

You should also be aware that some words have meanings that extend beyond the simplest or most basic meaning of the word, and that some of these extended meanings have become commonplace in American English. For instance, the basic meanings of *woolly* are "*of or resembling wool*" and "*covered with wool*"; however, a common figurative meaning exists, that of "*unclear; disorganized*." Careful attention to all the definitions of a word will greatly improve your vocabulary and knowledge of American English.

You can also improve your vo-

cabulary by learning the new meanings that certain "old" words have gained recently. This dictionary includes additional definitions for commonplace words to cover these new meanings. For example, the word *input* was for some time simply a noun meaning "something that is put in" and "contribution of information or ideas." However, the word has gained a new meaning in American English, "information or data to be stored in a computer," and, more recently, it is used as a verb meaning "to put data into a computer for storage." In this dictionary you will find new meanings for many words, because the English language is constantly growing. So, be sure to read all the defini-

tions of a word you look up; you may be surprised to find out how many different meanings it has.

You can also improve your vocabulary by noticing that many definitions contain synonyms for the word being defined. For example, at the word *popular*, a full definition is given, followed by a semicolon and two synonyms: "looked on or thought of with approval or affection by people in general; well-liked; admired." One definition of the word *maneuver* also provides synonyms: "a clever movement, action, or trick; a crafty tactic; a ploy." Studying such synonym groups will greatly improve your vocabulary.

Improving your reading comprehension by making intelligent guesses at the meanings of words

Because this dictionary includes prefixes, suffixes, and roots, you can use it to expand your vocabulary and make intelligent guesses about words you don't know. Among the regular list of words in this book are common roots of English words, for example, the root *-port-*, which has the basic meaning "carry." You might be able to discover the meanings of many of the words that are built from *-port-* by examining the prefixes and suffixes that go with them, and remembering the common meaning, namely that each word has some sense of "carry": *deport* (*de-* + *-port-*), *export* (*ex-* + *-port-*), *importance* (*im-* + *-port-* + *-ance*), *passport*

(*pass* + *-port-*), *porter* (*-port-* + *-er*), *report* (*re-* + *-port-*), *support* (*sup-* + *-port-*), and *transport* (*trans-* + *-port-*). Similarly, if you learn that the root *-jud-* has the meaning of "judge; law," then you might guess the meaning of such words as *adjudicate*, *injudicious*, and *prejudice* if you did not already know them. We suggest that whenever you encounter a root, or a reference to a root, that you make a note of its meaning and of the words that are built from it, and that you attempt to discover how the combination of roots, prefixes, and suffixes "adds up" to the meaning of the word.

Avoiding common errors in English

You can learn to avoid some common errors that learners make in acquiring English if you use this dictionary carefully. One way is to pay close attention to the notes titled *Related Words* that appear at the end of many entries. These notes give you a quick look at how related words behave differently according to their part of speech (noun, adjective, verb, adverb, etc.). For example, under the entry *angry* you are provided with a note to remind you that *angry* is an adjective, while the related word *anger* is a noun, and *angrily* is an adverb. The note gives you an example of how each word is used: "They were very angry with you. He keeps his anger locked up inside. He stalked angrily out of the room." Another troublesome word is *annoy*; the note in the body of the dictionary is shown for you below:

ANNOY is a verb, ANNOYING is an adjective, ANNOYANCE is a noun: *That music annoys me. It is annoying music. Another annoyance was when the train was late.*

Another way to avoid common errors is to study the notes titled *Usage* that appear at the end of many entries. Most of these notes discuss common errors that learners are likely to make. For example, under the entry *travel* there is a note that explains the difference between the word *travel* and the related word *trip*:

Compare TRIP and TRAVEL. For a particular amount of traveling, the noun TRIP is usually used: *I hope you had a pleasant trip. The trip took ten hours.* The word TRAVEL

is more often used as a noncount noun to refer to the general idea of traveling: *She's interested in travel and tourism.* When TRAVELS is used, it refers to a journey or trip that has many stops or involves many places: *In all my travels I've never met so many helpful people.*

You can also learn a great deal by consulting the lists in the back of the dictionary. One list contains *Irregular Verbs* (come-came-come, make-made-made, grow-grew-grown, and many others), which are often troublesome for learners and native speakers alike. The other list is *Nouns with Irregular or Alternate Plurals*. Referring to these lists will help you catch mistakes.

This book also provides grammar codes for nearly every entry. Grammar codes warn you that a word's grammatical behavior may be unexpected. For example, one of the definitions of the word *reverse* has a grammar code that tells you the word *the* should come before it: [noncount; the + ~] *the opposite or contrary of something: His answer was the reverse of what we expected.* Grammar codes also tell you which prepositions are used with certain verbs. So, the code [~ + to/ toward + obj] after the verb *gravitate* means that this verb is sometimes followed by the preposition *to* or *toward*. It is important to pay attention to all of the grammar codes.

Certain labels used in this dictionary help you choose the right word for the right situation. Status or style labels, such as *Informal* or *Disparaging*, will help you become more aware of the difference between words that are similar in

meaning. It would certainly be useful to know that the more polite and even respectful word *police officer* is used in certain situations, while the more informal synonym *cop* is

acceptable in other contexts. Once again, attention to all the information in these entries will help you avoid embarrassing errors.

Knowledge of idioms and verb phrases

This dictionary includes many idioms and verb phrases, which in English must be learned as a whole because they do not usually mean what each of the parts might mean. Look up the main entry word, and you will see the idiom or verb phrase printed in boldface. This dictionary not only defines the idiom or verb phrase, but it usually provides important grammatical information and examples of its use.

The phrase *crack up* is one example of a verb phrase that this dictionary will help you master. Look up the word *crack*, and after all the definitions of the verb you will find *crack up* in boldface type. The definition provided for this phrase is "to (cause to) *laugh hard without being able to stop*." Furthermore, this dictionary shows you how this phrase behaves by giving you grammatical information, along with examples: [*no obj*]: *He cracked up at the sight of her in those frumpy pajamas.* [*~ + up +*

obj]: *That joke cracked up the audience.* [*~ + obj + up*]: *That joke cracked him up.*

You would work the same way with the idiomatic phrase *off the cuff*. This is found under the entry *cuff*, where the idiom *off the cuff* is given in boldface, followed by the label *Informal*, and then the meaning "without preparing; extemporaneously; on the spur of the moment." Once again, there is an example sentence: "The speaker made a few remarks off the cuff and then began his prepared speech."

You can greatly expand your knowledge of idioms and verb phrases by thinking about the main word, looking up that word, searching the entire entry for the idiom or phrase, reading the meaning, taking note of the grammatical information, and of course examining the example sentences to get a feeling of how the idiom or verb phrase is used.

American English pronunciation and its relationship to spelling

This dictionary provides you with pronunciations in two systems for every word that is pronounced. First, it shows a pronunciation based on a system used in *Random House's* family of dictionaries for native speakers. That system re-

flects the relationships between sound and spelling in English; it is designed for ease of use by native speakers of English who have learned the spelling and sound system of American English. However, we recognize that in many countries