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The New York Times

**EVERYDAY
DICTIONARY**

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Thomas M. Paikeday, Editor


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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

The New York Times Everyday Dictionary, appropriately enough, is the only dictionary based on a citation file derived principally from *The New York Times* and its electronic edition. Acknowledged as one of the world's leading daily publications in English, *The New York Times* provides an especially authoritative base for current usage.

PREFACE

by Raven I. McDavid, Jr.

Professor Emeritus of English,
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For three centuries, dictionaries of the English language have been best sellers. Originally designed to interpret hard words for the perplexed, they have become, in various ways, rules of conduct, road maps, and historical records. The numbers and kinds multiply in response to special needs. I own at least five dozen.

For a long time dictionaries were made by anonymous publishers' hacks, by entrepreneurs like Noah Webster, or by literary dictators like Samuel Johnson. Now their making is a profession. Editors learn the craft in universities before the years of on-the-job training that develop the industry, artisanship, and artistry that mark the successful lexicographer. Furthermore, though dictionary-makers were once as secretive as the makers of proprietary medicines, editors now fraternize easily at professional gatherings and discuss plans and problems. The resources of the language are available to everyone. Each editor decides how these resources are to be used.

Thomas Paikeday is one of the new school of lexicographers; he is active in meetings of lexicographers and willing to try new ideas. *The New York Times Everyday Dictionary* is evidence of his industry, originality, and ability.

This dictionary of modest size replicates an old model. While Johnson was preparing his monumental dictionary, John Wesley, who prepared a series of pocket books (perhaps we should call them saddlebag books) for circuit riders, edited a small *Compleat English Dictionary* [1753] which he modestly assured the readers was the best in the world. *The New York Times Everyday Dictionary*, somewhat longer than Wesley's, does not make the claims that Wesley made. But like Wesley's it is that rarity among dictionaries—a small book, genuinely unabridged, not cut down from a larger work, but designed afresh and aimed at the common needs of the general reader.

A dictionary of this size cannot provide all the apparatus of the *Oxford*, and, coming down the line, the *Merriam International* series, the *Webster's New World*, or the *Thorndike Barnhart Desk Dictionary*. Realistic editorial decisions are to omit etymologies, indicate pronunciations only when not self-evident, reduce the number of synonyms, eliminate most definitions dealing with special regional and social variants, and sharply curtail the number of encyclopedic entries, both biographical and geographic. Inflectional forms are generally not dignified with independent entries but consolidated under the base form.

These economies allow a somewhat larger word stock than is found in competing works. Though the editor does not disdain the computer, he recognizes its limitations. In the end, human beings must still decide which meanings and words to include. For the audience to which this work is directed Paikeday has chosen well. Explanatory front matter, often ignored by readers, sets a standard for clarity and economy. The typography is clean and attractive. The pronunciation key is simple and useful. From looking at sample pages I find the definitions clear and accurate.

The proof of a dictionary is in its use. I do not know as yet how often I will consult this work, since many other often larger and more specialized dictionaries are at my immediate disposal. But it will hold an honorable place on my shelves.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

The editors have endeavored to make this dictionary as self-explanatory as possible. Answers to questions on spelling, meaning, pronunciation, grammar, and usage may be readily found in the dictionary itself without recourse to a guide, list of abbreviations, or pronunciation key. However, a detailed statement of the principles and practice of our lexicography is provided here for the benefit of dictionary enthusiasts, reviewers, and other specialists.

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I. HOW TO FIND AN ENTRY

Entries are the boldfaced words in alphabetical order at the head of and inside each paragraph.

All entries are printed in boldface type and grouped into convenient paragraphs. A new paragraph normally begins where an entry word is not connected by etymology with the one preceding it. However, the main criterion of paragraphing in this dictionary is not etymology but ease of reference compatible with conservation of dictionary space and convenience of organization of the material.

A. Alphabetical Order

All main entries in this dictionary appear in strict alphabetical order. (See Section C dealing with the listing of subentries under their key words.) Alphabetization is done letter by letter without regard to spaces, hyphens, or punctuation marks.

Alphabetization of entries containing arabic numerals and symbols such as "&" is done as in the pronunciation of the entry. Thus we have:

| | | | |
|---------------------|-------------|------------------|----------------|
| four-flush | plod | rand | Wed. |
| fourfold | PL/1 | R & B | we'd |
| 4-H (club) | plop | R & D | wed |
| Four Hundred | plot | random | wedding |

Compound names of persons and places are alphabetized by their most frequently used components. Thus:

Man, Isle of.
Michigan —Lake Michigan
Peter, St.
Webster 1 Daniel.
2 Noah.
Whitney, Mount.

Note the different treatment of "St.," based on written usage, in indivisible names such as:

Saint Bernard (dog)
Saint Valentine's Day
St. Lawrence River
St. Louis (city)

B. Main Entries

Main entries start with a boldfaced headword and are followed by a formal definition. Main entries may be at the head of a paragraph or inside it.

The following are the types of main entries to be found in strict alphabetical order:

1. solidly written and hyphenated forms:

time *n.*

—*v.*

—*adj.*

time-honored

timekeeper

2. inflected forms and derivatives with specialized meanings:

timeless

timely

timer

times

timing

3. open noun compounds referring to a single concept or unit such as the following:

master of ceremonies

negative income tax

nice Nelly

no man's land

piece of eight

Saturday night special

time sharing

X ray

Open compounds are distinguished from phrases which, together with idioms (see Section C) always form subentries. Note the distinction between a compound such as **piece of eight** and phrases such as **piece of one's mind** and **piece of the action**.

C. Subentries Under Key Words

Subentries are the less important entries in the dictionary, entered under the main entries to which they belong grammatically or semantically, hence not

necessarily in strict alphabetical order. Groups of subentries such as verb phrases follow alphabetical order within the group, as **get along** through **get up** under the main entry **get**.

If the entry you are looking for is not in its strict alphabetical place, it is probably a subentry entered a few lines above or below, under its key word. Thus **soupspoon** will be found under **soup**, *n.* 1 (not between **soupçon** and **soupy**); **piece of one's mind** is under **piece**, *n.* 1 (not between **piece of eight** and **piece-work**), and **stick one's neck out** is under **neck**, *n.* (not between **stickler** and **stickpin**).

The key words for inflectional forms and derivatives are their base words. Thus **aging** and **rosiness** should be looked for under **age** and **rosy** respectively. Frequently, the location of a subentry under the key word to which it belongs has been used to indicate its precise meaning without going the way of a formal definition. Thus **admittance** is distinguished from **admission** by its placement under **admit**, *v.* 1. The entry **saloonkeeper** follows **saloon**, *n.* 1 to show that it is not applicable to **saloon**, *n.* 2 as in "dining saloon."

Subentries are of the following types:

(a) inflected forms and derivatives

| <i>subentry</i> | <i>key word</i> |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| cagier, cagiest | cagey |
| espies, espied | espy |
| ordines | ordo |
| sagged, sagging | sag |
| solvency | solvent |
| tetanic | tetanus |
| thalami | thalamus |
| thematic | theme |
| warier, wariest | wary |

(b) phrases and idioms

| <i>subentry</i> | <i>key word</i> |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| take care of | care |
| diamond in the rough | diamond |
| go ape | go |
| go the whole hog | hog |
| in the negative | negative |
| rest on one's oars | oar |
| pat on the back | pat |
| piece of one's mind | piece |
| take place | place |

take cover
on time
go to waste

take
time
waste

(c) words defined in context (see also IV, B)

| <i>subentry</i> | <i>key word</i> |
|-------------------|-------------------------------|
| coconut milk | coconut |
| " oil | " |
| " palm | " |
| employment agency | employment |
| exhilarating | exhilarate |
| noise pollution | noise |
| oral history | oral |
| outboard motor | outboard |
| sleeping car | sleeper |
| slot car | slot, <i>n.</i> & <i>v.</i> 1 |
| soup spoon | soup, <i>n.</i> 1 |
| talcum powder | talc |

Note that all noun compounds are entered under their first components.

The meaning of many combinations of words established by usage, treated as collocations rather than compounds and phrases, may be gathered from the italicized sentences and phrases illustrating their components.

| <i>subentry</i> | <i>key word</i> |
|----------------------------|-----------------|
| double whammy | whammy |
| hamburger with the works | hamburger |
| hand in the till | till |
| objective test | objective |
| organic architecture | organic |
| out of tune | tune |
| overhead projector | overhead |
| peace offensive | offensive |
| public works department | works |
| sign of the zodiac | zodiac |
| stock option | option |
| take up the slack | slack |
| team teaching | team |
| textured vegetable protein | textured |
| time loan | time |
| triple jump | triple |
| twin bill | twin |

D. Cross-References

Cross-references help in locating main entries and subentries when they are too far removed from their alphabetical places to be easily spotted by a consulter.

apices see APEX.

dying See DIE.

extrovert same as EXTRAVERT.

millpond, millrace, millstone, millstream, mill wheel See ¹MILL, *n.* 1.

packsaddle See PACK, *n.* 1.

pied See ³PIE.

pine nut See PIÑON.

slily same as SLYLY.

those *pl.* of THAT.

E. Sound-Spelling Chart

If you still cannot find the entry word you want, and you happen to know the word only by its pronunciation, then check its spelling using the sound-spelling chart on page xvi. A word that you hear as (KEE) may be actually spelled **quay**, what sounds like (ILE) may be **aisle** or **isle** depending on context, and the animal's name heard as (LEP.urd) is listed before **leotard**, not after **leper**, as one might expect.

II. SYLLABICATION AND SPELLING

1. Entry words of more than one syllable are divided into syllables at their first entry in the dictionary as a boldfaced word, using centered dots except where a hyphen is part of the spelling. Open compounds and phrases follow the syllabication shown for their component words in their own alphabetical places. Abbreviations and word parts such as affixes and combining forms are normally not syllabicated.

Ne·an·der·thal

neanderthal

Ne·a·pol·i·tan

Neapolitan ice cream

socio-

sociol.

so·ci·ol·o·gy

talk

talk·a·tive

talking book

talk·ing-to

2. When two spellings separated by "or" are given for the same entry, they should be considered nearly equal in currency and frequency of usage.

extraversion or extroversion

Medicaid or medicaid

saltpeter or saltpetre

3. A less frequently used form is usually placed at the end of its entry or definition.

naïveté or **naïveté** . . . also **naivety**.

No . . . also **Noh**.

sluice . . . also **sluice gate**.

splenetic 1 . . . also **splenic**.

wintry . . . also **wintery**.

4. Parentheses are sometimes used to abbreviate equal variants which should be read as shown in the following examples:

enlarge (up)on = **enlarge on** or **enlarge upon**

enrol(l) = **enrol** or **enroll**

entom(ol) = **entom.** or **entomol.**

equals, equal(l)ed, equal(l)ing = **equals, equaled** or **equalled, equaling** or **equalling**

in (or out of) order (not) working properly = **in order** working properly; **out of order** not working properly

permanent (wave) = **permanent** or **permanent wave**

salvo(e)s = **salvos** or **salvoes**

savio(u)r = **savior** or **saviour**

vacuum bottle (or flask or jug) = **vacuum bottle, vacuum flask, or vacuum jug**

wait at (or on) = **wait at** or **wait on**

Wilton (rug or carpet) = **Wilton, Wilton rug, or Wilton carpet**

5. Inflected forms of nouns, verbs, adjectives, and certain derived entries are frequently shortened using a hyphen. The shortened forms should be read as shown to the right below:

aes-thet-ic or **-i-cal** *adj.* = **aes-thet-i-cal**

cap-il-lar-y *n., pl.* **-il-lar-ies** = **cap-il-lar-ies**

per-mis-si-ble-ness or **-bil-i-ty** *n.* = **per-mis-si-bil-i-ty**

war-y *adj.* **war-i-er, -i-est** = **war-i-est**

wea-ry *adj.* **-ri-er, -ri-est** = **wea-ri-er, wea-ri-est**

weath-er-ize *v.* **-iz-es, -ized, -iz-ing** = **weath-er-iz-es, weath-er-ized, weath-er-iz-ing**

III. PRONUNCIATION

This dictionary uses pronunciation respellings that require no key or decoding because the respellings simply use the most typical spellings of English words that you learned to recognize for their regular sound values when you learned to read English.

The syllabication given for each boldfaced entry word is the first clue to its correct pronunciation. Thus if **Xanthippe** is a new word to you, the syllabified form **Xan·thip·pe** shows the word is pronounced as three syllables, which would rule out a pronunciation such as (ZAN·thip). (An English reader will not normally use the "ks" sound of X in the beginning of a word.) Possible English pronunciations then would include (ZAN·thip·ay), (ZAN·thip·ee), and (zan·THIP·ay). But the dictionary respelling (zan·TIP·ee) settles the question beyond a doubt for the average dictionary user.

As in the examples above, the capitalized syllable in a pronunciation respelling shows the stressed syllable. However, since it is a natural and normal tendency for speakers of English to stress the initial syllable of words of more than one syllable, an initial stress is usually not shown in our respellings. Thus, for **Soc·ra·tes**, the partial respelling (-ruh·teez) should suffice. But **So·crat·ic** has a change of stress which is indicated by (-CRAT).

The pronunciation of only those parts of a word that do not follow regular patterns of English spelling is indicated within parentheses. A word such as **pros·ta·glan·din** (-GLAN-) needs only the indication of the stressed syllable for its correct pronunciation. On the other hand, **sin·is·ter** needs no pronunciation respelling at all, the syllabication alone being sufficient. The partial respelling occasionally given for a particular entry may be completed if necessary by glancing back at a preceding entry on which it may be based, often as a derivative. Thus the pronunciation given for **pre·fec·ture** (-chur) implies that the first two syllables of the word are pronounced as in **pre·fect** (PREE-).

More than one respelling given within parentheses and separated by commas indicates more than one acceptable pronunciation of the same word. Thus **sta·tus** (STAY-, STAT-) means the word may be pronounced (STAY·tus) or (STAT·us). Note that the syllabication of pronunciation does not necessarily correspond to that of the spelling.

No pronunciation is given for affixes, abbreviations, symbols, etc. that have no distinctive pronunciations of their own. Derivatives and obvious compounds whose pronunciation may be derived from their component parts are also not respelled within parentheses.

The key spellings most frequently used in the pronunciations are listed in the second column below. The other typical spellings given for each sound are less frequently used; their main purpose is to help in determining the written form of a word from its spoken form.

SOUND-SPELLING CHART

| The Alphabet | Key Spellings Illustrating English Sounds | Other Typical English Spellings |
|-----------------|--|--|
| A | paid | pay, take, eight, break, hey, buffet, gauge, gaol |

| | | |
|---|-----------------|---|
| | pat | aunt, plaid, path, laugh |
| | pair | parent, where, their, wear, prayer, marry |
| | part, <i>ah</i> | heart, serjeant, father, adios |
| B | bed | rubber |
| C | chip | catch, cello, righteous, question, nature, niche |
| D | did | ladder, loved, could |
| E | peel | beer, equal, easy, either, aegis, people, key, quay, busy |
| | pend | bread, any, friend, bury, guest, aesthetic, said, says |
| | peril | ... |
| F | fun | puff, rough, photo, calf |
| G | gone | guess, egg, rogue, ghost |
| H | hat | whole |
| | "hw" | wheat |
| I | dye, ice | fire, eye, aisle, height, die, guile, buy, by, aye, high |
| | did, "di-" | effect, courage, been, sieve, women, hymn, build, busy |
| J | job | gem, exaggerate, judge, soldier, verdure |
| K | kit, cat | accord, choir, yolk, sack, lacquer, acquire, liquid, antique |
| L | lot | tell, llama, islet |
| M | man | hammer, dumb, hymn, salmon, phlegm, drachm |
| N | nip | runner, knight, gnu, mnemonic, pneumatic |
| | sing | tongue, think |
| O | oh | hoe, oak, over, own, beau, sew, yeomen, though, broach, chauffeur |
| | pot | water |
| | port | roar, pour, door |
| | Paul, paw | all, walk, law, ought, broad, Utah, off, auto |
| | oil, boy | ... |
| | out, owl | bough, frau |
| P | pin | pepper |
| Q | "kw" | quick |
| R | run | merry, rhyme, wrist |
| S | sun | miss, cent, scent, ice, psalm, schism |
| | she | mission, nation, sure, chic, schist, ocean, conscience, mansion, racial, fuchsia, pshaw |
| T | ton | matter, kissed, thyme, ptomaine |
| | thin | ... |