



Webster's
Intermediate
Dictionary

WEBSTER'S
INTERMEDIATE
DICTIONARY

A NEW SCHOOL DICTIONARY

A Merriam-Webster

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PREFACE

WEBSTER'S INTERMEDIATE DICTIONARY is a new work in the Merriam-Webster series of dictionaries. It is a school dictionary edited for use either as the middle dictionary in a three-dictionary progression, being preceded by *Webster's New Elementary Dictionary* and followed by *Webster's New Students Dictionary*, or as the first of a two-dictionary progression, being followed by *Webster's New Students Dictionary*.

The vocabulary entries in WEBSTER'S INTERMEDIATE DICTIONARY have been selected chiefly on the basis of their occurrence in textbooks and supplementary reading in all subjects of the school curriculum. The definers have had before them this firsthand evidence as well as the millions of examples of usage that underlie *Webster's Third New International Dictionary* and other Merriam-Webster dictionaries. This method of editing ensures the coverage of today's school vocabularies, especially in mathematics, science, and social studies, and at the same time makes certain that the current literary and general vocabulary is not neglected.

This dictionary includes several features of more advanced Merriam-Webster dictionaries. The etymologies, in square brackets, give students a substantial basis for the fascinating study of word origins. The synonymy paragraphs, at the end of definitions, discriminate between words of similar meaning (as *error*, *mistake*, and *blunder*), and antonyms are provided where appropriate. There are more than 700 pictorial illustrations and numerous useful tables (as of the metric system and the Morse code). The back matter includes in columnar form the names with pronunciations of the presidents and vice-presidents of the United States, the states and state capitals of the United States, the provinces of Canada, and the nations of the world. A helpful section on the use of the dictionary comes immediately after this preface and should be read carefully by all users of the dictionary.

This dictionary is the product of a company that published its first dictionary in 1847. It is offered to students with pride and confidence, and with the hope that they will find pleasure and satisfaction in its use.

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USING YOUR DICTIONARY

THIS DICTIONARY will help you to find out several kinds of interesting and useful information about many words of the English language. Using your dictionary efficiently is not a simple matter, however. You need to know where to look for the information you want and how to interpret the various labels, symbols, and printing conventions which you meet in this book and which help to give you what you are seeking. In the few pages which make up this introduction you will learn the skills necessary to make your dictionary one of the most useful and interesting books you own.

FINDING A WORD QUICKLY

Using alphabetical order. To help you find a word quickly, the words in this dictionary follow one another in alphabetical order letter by letter. For example, *poll tax* follows *pollster* as if it were printed *polltax* without space between the words. Words with hyphens also follow as if printed solid:

opening
open-minded
openmouthed
open secret

To find a word quickly, you may need to look at the second letter, or the third, or the fourth, or even beyond. Study the list of words given above. What part is the same in all of them? Which letter determines the listing of *open-minded* after *opening*? of *openmouthed* after *open-minded*?

Words containing an arabic numeral are

listed alphabetically as if they were spelled out:

four-footed
4-H (four-H)
four-o'clock

Dividing the dictionary into thirds. If you divided the dictionary into three almost equal parts, or thirds, you would have targets for finding words quickly. In the front you would find words beginning with *a, b, c, d, e, and f*. In the middle you would see words beginning with *g, h, i, j, k, l, m, n, o, and p*. In the back you would find words beginning with *q, r, s, t, u, v, w, x, y, and z*. Through practice you can quickly find any letter by opening your dictionary at approximately the right place.

Using guide words. Every dictionary page except page 1 and those pages on which a new letter of the alphabet is the first entry has at the top two words printed in boldface type:

faddist

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fake

These words, called guide words, are in general the first and the last of the words entered in alphabetical order on one page of the dictionary. All of the entries on a page fall alphabetically between the guide words, and the guide words themselves are in alphabetical order from page to page.

UNDERSTANDING ENTRY WORDS

Recognizing the main entry. A letter or a combination of letters printed in boldface type at the extreme left of each col-

umn on the page is a main entry, or entry word. The main entry shows the actual spelling of the word.

All the information which follows each boldface entry explains the main entry. The boldface entry plus all the added information is also called an entry.

For the present, consider only the main entries, which may be many different kinds as these examples show:

i (single letter)

-ial (word part called a suffix)

Icelandic (capitalized proper noun)

ice-skate (word with a hyphen)

IOU (capital-letter combination)

imaginary number (compound idea with space)

in- (word part called a prefix)

inalienable (word with both a prefix and a suffix)

Understanding the centered period.

In many entry words you see centered boldface periods. These show points in the word where you may use a hyphen at the end of a line in writing. For example, the word *in-ter-plan-e-tary* may be divided in writing as follows:

terplanetary	in-
planetary	inter-
etary	interplan-
tary	interplane-

Notice that your dictionary shows no centered period between *r* and *y* in this word. Therefore, you should not break the word at this point in writing. It is not good practice in writing or printing to separate one letter only from the rest of the word.

A single letter at the beginning of a word should not be separated either. For that reason, words such as *about* and *April* do not have centered periods in this dictionary.

Distinguishing between entries which are spelled alike. You will sometimes find that one entry has the same spelling as another entry or entries which follow it. Words alike in spelling but different in origin, function, or meaning are called "homographs". Before each homograph you will see a small number placed high and to the left:

¹cap . . . 1: a head covering

²cap . . . 1: to provide with a cap

These two words are related in meaning. The first *cap* is the name of a familiar object. The second *cap* is something you do with the first *cap*.

Homographs may differ in meaning:

¹cape . . . : a point of land jutting out into water

²cape . . . : a sleeveless garment or part of a garment . . .

In this dictionary homographs are listed and numbered in the order in which they came into the English language. The word *cape* meaning a landform was used before *cape* meaning wearing apparel.

Using entries with different spellings or forms. An entry may be followed by the word *or* and another spelling or form. The two spellings or forms are called "variants". When the spellings or forms are in alphabetical order, the two variants are equally good:

cook-le or cooky (two spellings)

Using Your Dictionary

graph-ic . . . or **graph-i-cal** (two forms)

If the variants joined by *or* are not in alphabetical order, they are still both equally good. The first is generally more common than the other:

glam-our or **glam-or** (two spellings)
beg-gar's-lice . . . or **beg-gar-lice**
(two forms)

Sometimes a spelling or form may be joined to the first entry by the word *also*. It is good, but it is used much less often than the first one:

gel-a-tin . . . also **gel-a-tine** (two spellings)
rel-e-vance . . . also **rel-e-van-cy**
(two forms)

Some variants which are not shown with an *or* or *also* after the main entry are listed separately in alphabetical order. When variants are entered separately, the abbreviation *var* for "variant" follows. Some variants may have a label, as *Brit* for *British*. To learn the meaning and the pronunciation of some entries you must refer to the more common spelling or form at its alphabetical place in the dictionary:

mus-tache *var of* MOUSTACHE
nought \ˈnɒt, ˈnɑt\ *var of* NAUGHT
offence chiefly *Brit var of* OFFENSE

A few entries represent an abbreviated form without the label *var of*. You must refer directly to the more complete form or spelling of the entry at its alphabetical place in your dictionary:

B complex . . . : VITAMIN B COMPLEX

For a more common spelling or for a complete form you are sent, or *referred*,

to other entries. Those words printed in small capitals are "cross-references".

Using different kinds of cross-references. A word in small capitals signals you to refer to a main entry at its own alphabetical place. Besides the cross-references preceded by the abbreviation *var of*, you will find many examples like the following:

'best . . . *superlative of* GOOD
geese *pl of* GOOSE
taught *past of* TEACH
been *past part of* BE

Sometimes a cross-reference follows a light dash (—) within the entry and begins with either *see* or *compare*. Such a cross-reference is not itself a definition, but it often appears in connection with one. For example:

im- — *see* IN-
mil-lion . . . **1** — *see* NUMBER table
daf-fod-dil . . . — *compare* JONQUIL

Determining capitalization of the main entry. A capital letter at the beginning of a word indicates that the word is usually capitalized. The entire entry may be capitalized or only certain words. For example:

Al-ba-ni-an
April Fools' Day
Bun-sen burner
California poppy
Ches-a-peake Bay retriever

Some entries are capitalized when used in a special way or when they have a special meaning. Labels will guide you in handling words of this kind:

braille . . . *often cap*

2continental . . . 1 *a* often cap
plaster of paris . . . often cap 2d P

Words which are trademarks protected by law are capitalized:

Le-vi's . . . trademark
Roque-fort . . . trademark

Using entries which are parts of words. Many entries in your dictionary are not whole words but parts of words. These parts of words may appear *before* or *after* the root, or main part, of a word. Word parts before a root are called "prefixes" or "combining forms".

A word part preceding the root of a word is listed in your dictionary like this:

bi- prefix
pre- prefix
astro- comb form
tele- or **tel-** comb form

In the word parts above, the position of the hyphen indicates that something else will follow in a full word. Each prefix and combining form is defined in your dictionary.

Word parts that follow the root of a word are called "suffixes" or "combining forms". For example:

-able also **-ible** . . . adj suffix
-ence . . . n suffix

-gram . . . n comb form
-graph . . . n comb form

In the word parts above, the position of the hyphen indicates that something else will come before the ending. Each suffix and combining form is defined.

Locating run-on entries. At the end of the definitions for a main entry you may often find boldface entries after a light dash (—). Such entries are called "run-on" entries because they are run on after a definition:

fluffy . . . — **fluff-i-ness** . . .
glad . . . — **glad-ly** . . .

Notice that the run-on entries contain the main entry words *fluffy* and *glad*. If you were unsure about the meaning of the run-ons, you would look up the meaning of each suffix: *-ly* and *-ness*. Run-ons of this kind are not defined.

Other run-on entries are commonly used phrases containing a form of the main entry. They, too, appear after the definitions. Unlike the run-ons just discussed, this kind of run-on is given a definition. For example:

'far . . . — **by far** : GREATLY
'talk . . . — **talk back** : to answer impertinently

PRONUNCIATION SYMBOLS

ə	{	banana	mitten	capital	cotton	suppose	perplex
		bun	lunch	putty	color	supper	pup
		burn	learnt	pert	curl	serpent	purple

[in the words in the first line above, ə (called *schwa* \ˈshwə\) is spoken with very weak force; in the words in the second and third lines ə is spoken with stronger force]

a	ax, map	n	nine, cotton
ā	age, vacation, day	ng	sing, singer, finger, ink
ä	father, cot, cart	ō	low, bone, cooperate
á	[a sound between \a\ and \ä\, as in an eastern New England pronunciation of aunt, half]	ó	moth, law, sort, all
au	out, now	oi	coin, destroy
b	baby, rib	p	pepper, lip
ch	chin, match, nature \ˈnā-chər\	r	rarity
d	did, ladder	s	spice, less
e	less	sh	shy, dish, machine, mission, special
ē	seaweed, any, serial, cereal	t	tight, latter
f	fifty, cuff, phone	th	thin, ether
g	gift, pig, bigger	th	this, either
h	hat, ahead	ü	boot, rule
i	trip	ù	foot, pull
ī	life, buy, my	v	give, vivid
j	job, gem, edge	w	we, away
k	kin, cook, chasm	y	you, yet
l	lily, pool, mortal	yü	few, union, mule, youth
m	murmur	yü	furious
		z	zone, raise
		zh	vision, beige

- \ / slant lines used in pairs to mark the beginning and end of a pronunciation: \ˈpen\
 ' mark at the beginning of a syllable that has primary (strongest) stress: \ˈpen-mən-,ship\
 , mark at the beginning of a syllable that has secondary (next-strongest) stress: \ˈpen-mən-,ship\
 - mark of syllable division in pronunciations [the mark of syllable division in boldface entry words is a centered dot • and the position of the two kinds of division often does not agree, as in **build-ing** \ˈbil-ding\, **spe-cial** \ˈspesh-əl\, **ca-ter** \ˈkāt-ər\
 () parentheses indicate that what is between is present in some utterances but not in others: at *factory*, \ˈfak-t(ə)rē\ = \ˈfak-tə-rē, ˈfak-trē\ or \ˈfak-trē, ˈfak-tə-rē\

PRONUNCIATION SYMBOLS AND LETTERS

The difference between symbols and letters. Most of the symbols on the preceding page look like familiar letters of the alphabet. True, they have the shape of letters, but they are not letters. They are symbols representing the sounds we use in speech.

The symbol $\backslash a \backslash$, for example, is the symbol of a single sound, the sound of the vowel in *mat*, *map*, and *add*.

The letter *a*, on the other hand, represents not only the sound of the vowel in *map*, but also the very different vowel sounds found in *made*, *father*, and *sofa*.

Whereas many of the letters of the alphabet may be used to represent any of several sounds, each pronunciation symbol represents only one sound.

Symbol names. In naming symbols we use the terms *bar*, *one-dot*, *two-dot*, and *plain*; thus \bar{a} is "bar a", \underline{th} is "bar t-h", \ddot{o} is "one-dot o", \ddot{u} is "two-dot u", \bar{a} is "plain a", \underline{th} is "plain t-h". Call \bar{i} "plain i" because the dot is not a diacritical mark. \bar{a} is called *schwa* $\backslash \text{'shw}\bar{a} \backslash$.

Locating the pronunciation symbols. The pronunciation symbols on the preceding page are also listed in part for your convenience in the key lines at the foot of each left-hand page within the vocabulary pages.

After you have used this dictionary for a while, you should not have to glance at the key lines or turn to the front or back of your book to see what a symbol stands for. You should become so familiar with each symbol that you instantly think of the sound it represents.

THE CONSONANT SYMBOLS

$\backslash b \backslash$ The sound represented by the symbol $\backslash b \backslash$ is spelled with the letter *b* as in *boy*, *cab*, and *able*, or with *bb* as in *robber*.

$\backslash ch \backslash$ This is really a $\backslash t \backslash$ sound quickly followed by an $\backslash sh \backslash$ sound. The $\backslash ch \backslash$ sound is usually spelled by several letter combinations: *ch* as in *church*, *tch* as in *watch*, *ti* as in *question*, or *si* as in *pension*. The sound $\backslash ch \backslash$ is heard in *factual* but cannot be referred to the *t* alone.

$\backslash d \backslash$ The sound represented by the symbol $\backslash d \backslash$ is spelled with the letter *d* as in *dad*, with *dd* as in *daddy*, and with *ed* as in *stayed* and *manned*. Refer to the entry **-ed** at its alphabetical place for an explanation of its pronunciation as $\backslash d \backslash$.

In rapid speech the sound $\backslash d \backslash$ is often heard for the letter *t*. Thus *latter* is often spoken the same as *ladder* and *waited* the same as *waded*.

$\backslash f \backslash$ This sound may be spelled with the letter *f* as in *fan*, with *ff* as in *offer*, with *ph* as in *telephone*, or with *gh* as in *cough*.

$\backslash g \backslash$ The sound represented by $\backslash g \backslash$ may be spelled with the letter *g* as in *go*, with *gg* as in *egg*, with *gh* as in *ghost*, or with *gu* as in *guard*; and $\backslash g \backslash$ is the first of the two sounds $\backslash gz \backslash$ spelled with *x* as in *exact*.

$\backslash h \backslash$ This sound is spelled with the letter *h* as in *hat*. The sound occurs only at the beginning of syllables, even when the spelling is *wh*, as in *whale* $\backslash \text{'hw}\bar{a}l \backslash$. The pronunciation $\backslash hw \backslash$ is shown for most words like *whale*, but some

speakers have no \h\ sound in these words, pronouncing *whale* the same as *wail*.

\j This is really a \d\ sound quickly followed by a \zh\ sound. The sound \j\ may be spelled with the letter *j* as in *jam* and *reject*, with *g* as in *gem*, with *g* as in *page*, with *dge* as in *judge*, with *dj* as in *judgment*, or with *di* as in *soldier*. The sound \j\ is heard in *graduation* but cannot be referred to the *d* alone.

\k This sound may be spelled with the letter *k* as in *kite*, with *c* as in *cat*, with *ck* as in *pick*, with *ch* as in *chemist*, with *che* as in *ache*, with *q* as in *quite*, with *qu* as in *antique*; and \k\ is the first of two sounds \ks\ spelled with *x* as in *tax*.

\l The sound represented by the symbol \l\ is spelled with the letter *l* as in *lap* and *pal*, or with *ll* as in *pull*.

\m The sound represented by the symbol \m\ may be spelled with the letter *m* as in *made*, *dismay*, and *him*, with *mm* as in *accommodate* and *trimmer*, with *mn* as in *autumn* and *column*, or with *mb* as in *bomb* and *climb*.

\n The sound represented by \n\ may be spelled with the letter *n* as in *net* and *ten*, with *nn* as in *winner*, with *gn* as in *gnaw*, with *kn* as in *knight*, or with *pn* as in *pneumonia*.

\ng The sound \ng\ may be spelled with the letters *ng* as in *sing* and *singer*, and in both syllables of *ringing*, or with *n* as in *finger*, *longer*, *rink*, *lynx*, *anchor*, *uncle*, and *conquer*.

\p The sound represented by the symbol \p\ is spelled with the letter *p* as in *pan* and *nup* or with *pp* as in *happen*.

\r The sound \r\ is spelled with the letter *r* as in *rat*, *brass*, *parade*, and *deer*, with *rr* as in *merry*, with *rh* as in *rhubarb*, or *wr* as in *write*.

Most Americans and Canadians have as many \r\ sounds in their pronunciation of a word as there are letters *r* or letter groups *rr* in the spelling. Such speakers may be called *r-retainers*. But speakers in southeastern United States, in eastern New England, in New York City, and in southern England frequently do not have \r\ sounds before consonants or pauses. Such speakers are called *r-droppers*. The pronunciations used by *r-droppers* are as correct as those used by *r-retainers*.

R-droppers do one of several things: (1) they simply omit the \r\, saying \ˈbæn-ə\ instead of \ˈbæn-ər\ for *banner* and saying \ˈfɔ̃m-yə-lə\ instead of \ˈfɔ̃rm-yə-lə\ for *formula*; (2) they use \ə\ instead of \r\, saying \ˈpɔ̃t-ə-bəl\ instead of \ˈpɔ̃rt-ə-bəl\ for *portable*; (3) they omit the \r\ but prolong the vowel that precedes in *r-retainers'* speech, saying \ˈfää\ instead of \ˈfär\ for *far* (the doubled symbol shows a longer lasting sound than the same symbol used singly); or (4) they use instead of vowel plus \r\ a single vowel different in quality from the vowel of *r-retainers*, saying \ˈfa\ instead of \ˈfär\ for *far*.

Even *r-retainers* sometimes drop an *r* when a word contains one or more other *r*'s. An *r* that even an *r-retainer* may drop is shown in parentheses.

\s This sound may be spelled with the letter *s* as in *say*, with *ss* as in *miss*, with *sc* as in *scene*, with *ps* as in *psychology*, with *c* as in *cent*, or with *z* as in *quartz*; and it is the second of the two sounds **\ks** spelled with *x* as in *tax*. Refer to the entry **-s** at its alphabetical place for an explanation of its different pronunciations.

\sh The sound represented by **\sh** may be spelled with the letters *sh* as in *ship*, *fish*, with *s* as in *sure*, with *ssi* as in *mission*, with *ci* as in *special*, with *ti* as in *nation*, or with *ch* as in *machine*. This sound is not a combination of **\s** and **\h**, but a single sound, different from both **\s** and **\h**.

\t The sound **\t** may be spelled with the letter *t* as in *tap* and *sat*, with *tt* as in *attack*, or with *ed* as in *walked*. Refer to the entry **-ed** for an explanation of its pronunciation as **\t**.

\th The sound represented by **\th**, called plain t-h, is the sound spelled with the letters *th* in *thing* and *breath*. The sound represented by **\th̄**, called bar t-h, is the sound spelled with the letters *th* in *these* and *breathe*. Both the **\th** and **\th̄** sounds are single sounds, quite different from either the **\t** or the **\h** sound. The **\th̄** is voiced (uttered with the vocal cords close together and vibrating) whereas **\th** is voiceless (uttered with the vocal cords wide apart and not vibrating).

\v The sound represented by the symbol **\v** is spelled with the letter *v* as in *very*, *save*, *never*, with *f* as in *of*, or with *ph* as in *Stephen*.

\w The consonant sound **\w** may be spelled with the letter *w* as in *wait* and *twist*, with *u* as in *queer* and *persuade*, or with *o* as in *choir*. This sound occurs only before vowels.

\y The consonant sound **\y** may be spelled with the letter *y* as in *yes* or with *i* as in *onion*. This sound is also the first of two sounds with *ue* in *cue*, with *ew* in *few*, and with *eu* in *feud*.

\z The sound **\z** may be spelled with the letter *z* as in *zone*, *wizard*, *whiz*, with *zz* as in *buzz*, or with *s* as in *wise*, *busy*, *wins*. Refer to the entry **-s** for an explanation of its pronunciation as **\z**.

\zh The sound **\zh** may be spelled with the letters *si* as in *vision* or with *ge* as in *rouge*. The sound **\zh** is heard in *azure* and *leisure* but cannot be referred to the *z* or *s* alone. The **\zh** sound is a single sound, different from either **\z** or **\h**.

THE VOWEL SYMBOLS

\ə One of the most frequent sounds in English is the sound called schwa, represented by the symbol **\ə**. When stressed, this sound may be spelled with the letter *u* as in *cut* and *hurt*, with *e* as in *herd*, with *i* as in *bird*, with *oo* as in *blood*, or with *o* as in *front* and *word*. When unstressed, schwa may be spelled with any of the vowel letters, as in *about* **\ə-ˈbaʊt**, *silent* **\ˈsɪ-lənt**, *capital* **\ˈkæp-ət-əl**, *collect* **\kə-ˈlekt**, and *suppose* **\sə-ˈpōz**. In some words like *chasm*, *rhythm*, nothing in the spelling corresponds to schwa.

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\a **\ā** The four "a" symbols are:
\a, called plain a, which represents the sound of the a in *fat* and *carry*; **\ā**, called bar a, which represents the sound of the a in *age*, the ai in *main*, the ei in *vein*, the ea in *break*, the ay in *day*, the ey in *prey*, and the au in *gauge*; **\ä**, called two-dot a, which represents the sound of the o in *cot* and *bother*, and also the sound used by most American speakers for the a in *cart* and *father*; and **\ă**, called one-dot a, which represents the vowel sound used by some speakers in *aunt* and *cart* and in the first syllable of *father*.

\e The symbol **\e**, called plain e, represents the vowel sound in *met*, *said*, *says*, *death*, *friend*, and *berry*.

The symbol **\ē**, called bar e, stands for the vowel sound in *he*, *feed*, *seat*, *field*, *key*, and *eve*, in the stressed syllable of *people*, *deceive*, and *machine*, and in the unstressed syllable of *react* and *city*.

\i The symbol **\i**, called plain i, represents the vowel sound in *sit*, *build*, *hymn*, and *sieve*, and in the stressed syllable of *busy* and *women*. The first vowel in *excite*, *exaggerate*, and *encourage* is usually pronounced **\i**.

The symbol **\ī**, called bar i, stands for the vowel sound in *light*, *height*, *try*, *buy*, *bite*, and *aisle*.

\ō The symbol **\ō**, called bar o, represents the sound of the vowel letter or letters in *go*, *coat*, *though*, and *beau*, of the o in *cone*, of the ew in *sew*, and of the ow in *bowl*.

The symbol **\ò** called one-dot o, stands for the vowel sound in *soft*, *corn*, *saw*, *all*, *caught*, *fought*, and *broad*. Speakers in some parts of the country make no consistent distinction between **\ò** and **\ä**, and this lack of distinction may be correct for your speech.

\ü The two "u" symbols are: **\ü**, called two-dot u, which stands for the vowel sound in *flu*, *school*, *blue*, *youth*, *rule*, and *crew*; and **\ú**, called one-dot u, which represents the vowel sound in *pull*, *wood*, and *sugar*. In a word such as *few*, the **\ü** sound is preceded by the consonant sound **\y**: **\fyü**. In a word such as *security*, the **\ú** sound is preceded by the consonant sound **\y**: **\si-'kyür-ət-ē**.

In words in which *u*, *ue*, *eu*, or *ew* in a stressed syllable is immediately preceded by *t*, *d*, *n*, or *th*, pronunciation is not uniform in the United States. Both **\ü** and **\yü** occur in the following words: *tune*, *due*, *neutral*, *enthuse*, *news*. The pronunciation with **\y** is especially common in the South.

\au In the word *out* **\'aüt** two vowel sounds occur in succession as part of a single syllable.
\oi Such a succession of two vowel sounds is called a diphthong.

This dictionary uses two diphthong symbols: **\au**, representing the vowel sounds of *cow* and *sound* and of both *au*'s in *sauerkraut*; and **\oi**, representing the vowel sounds of *join* and *boy*.

The sound of the words *eye* and *I*, represented by **\ī** in this dictionary, is really a diphthong, too, consisting of **\ä** and **\i** or of **\ă** and **\i**.

Locating the pronunciation at the entry. Two slanted lines mark the beginning and end of a pronunciation, which usually appears just after the main entry word:

ant \ˈɑnt\

As in the case of the word *ant*, the pronunciation may sometimes look very much like the entry word. Usually, however, the pronunciation looks more or less different:

bug \ˈbʌg\

As you have learned in your language study, many words have more than one form, depending upon the way they are used. When the spelling and pronunciation of these different forms do not follow a so-called "regular" pattern, your dictionary gives you help. For example:

fly \flī\ . . . **flew** \flū\; **flown** \flōn\
fly-ing
knife \nīf\ . . . *pl knives* \ˈnīvz\

Understanding the purpose of the hyphen in pronunciations. Many words have more than one of the units of pronunciation called "syllables". In the pronunciation of such words the syllables are separated by hyphens. The hyphen shows syllable division in saying a word, not in writing the word.

The syllables in the pronunciation and the divisions shown by the centered periods in the boldface entry spelling may correspond:

chop-stick \ˈchɒp-,stɪk\
in-struct \ɪn-'strʌkt\

Often, however, the divisions are not the same, and the hyphens do not correspond

with the centered periods in the entry. For example:

fran-tic \ˈfrɑnt-ɪk\
po-si-tion \pə-'zɪʃ-ən\
Interpreting the purpose and position of stress marks. Some syllables of a word are spoken with greater force, emphasis, or loudness than others. Your dictionary calls this relative loudness "stress" and shows vertical marks *before* the syllable to alert you to the pronunciation of that syllable. Three degrees of stress are shown in this book: primary (or strong), secondary (or medium), and weak.

Primary stress is indicated by a high vertical mark at the beginning of the syllable:

vote \ˈvot\
clip-per \ˈklɪp-ər\ (primary \ˈklɪp-\
re-cite \rɪ-'sɪt\ (primary \-'sɪt\)

This dictionary shows primary stress before one-syllable words to indicate that they may be stressed in speech. As you say this sentence, notice the stress you give to *vote*: It is the duty of each citizen to vote.

Secondary stress is indicated by a low vertical mark at the beginning of the syllable:

lip-stick \ˈlɪp-,stɪk\ (secondary \-,stɪk\
shop-keeper \ˈʃɒp-,kē-pər\ (secondary \-,kē-\
A syllable without either of these marks in front of it has weak stress:

hes-i-tate \ˈhez-ə-,tāt\ (weak \-ə-\
Using variant pronunciations given in full or in part. Different pronunciations may be given at some words to show that not all educated speakers pronounce them

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the same way. *All* pronunciations shown are acceptable. The one given first may be heard more often than a second or others following, but it need not be. Pronunciations vary because of personal preference, regional practice, and other speech habits. Never assume that a pronunciation given after the first is therefore inferior. One pronunciation has to come first on the page in any case.

A second pronunciation may be given in full, as in these entries:

sloth \ˈslóth, ˈslóth\
ha-rass \hə-ˈras, ˈhar-əs\
 \

A variant pronunciation may not be shown in full. In a long word the difference between two pronunciations may be confined to only a part of the word. For such words the second pronunciation may be indicated for only the part of the word where the difference is. The rest of the second pronunciation is the same as that for the first pronunciation, as in these entries:

en-force \in-ˈfɔrs, -ˈfɔrs\
goose-ber-ry ˈgü̯s-,ber-ē, ˈgüz-\
pla-nar-ia \plə-ˈnar-ē-ə, -ˈner-\
 \

The full second pronunciations for these words are:

\in-ˈfɔrs\ \ˈgüz-,ber-ē\ \plə-ˈner-ē-ə\
 \

In such partial second pronunciations only whole syllables are recorded and there is always at least one hyphen. A hyphen at the beginning of a partial pronunciation means that the first part is missing and is to be supplied from a preceding pronunciation within the same slant lines or from the pronunciation of a preceding entry. The hyphen before \ˈfɔrs\ means

that there is something that goes ahead of it: \in\. Other examples are:

mər-can-tile \ˈmər-kən-,tél, -tī\
par-a-dise \ˈpar-ə-,dis, -diz\
 \

A hyphen at both the beginning and the end of a partial pronunciation means that both the first and the last parts of the pronunciation are missing. The missing parts are to be supplied from a pronunciation that precedes within the same slant lines. The hyphens with \-ˈner-\ after *pla-nar-ia* tell you that something goes ahead of this syllable and something comes after it.

When one syllable of a word can be pronounced two ways and another syllable can also be pronounced two ways, the total number of possible pronunciations is four. Thus *washroom* \ˈwɔsh-,rüm, ˈwäsh-,rüm\ may be pronounced \ˈwɔsh-,rüm, ˈwäsh-,rüm, ˈwɔsh-,rüm, ˈwäsh-,rüm\
 \

Using variant pronunciations indicated by parentheses. A variant pronunciation is not always given in full or by syllable omission. Instead, a symbol, symbols, or stress mark may be enclosed within parentheses () to save space. The sound or stress within the parentheses may be used by some speakers and not used by others. Or it may be said at one time and not at another by the same speaker:

dense \ˈden(t)s\ (pronounced \ˈdens\ or \ˈdents\
 \
fire \ˈfī(ə)r\ (pronounced \ˈfīr\ or \ˈfīər\
 \
in-for-mal \(')in-ˈfɔr-məl\ (pronounced \in-ˈfɔr-məl\ or \in-ˈfɔr-məl\
 \
in-dus-try \in-(,)dəs-trē\ (pronounced \in-dəs-trē\ or \in-,dəs-trē\
 \

In the pronunciation of the main entry or of another form of the same entry a variation in the number of syllables is indicat-

ed by schwa and a hyphen within parentheses:

ad-e-noid \ˈad-(ə-),nɔɪd\ (pronounced \ˈad-ə-,nɔɪd\ or \ˈad-,nɔɪd\
nes-tle \ˈnes-əl\ . . . **nes-ting** \-(ə-)lɪŋ\
 (**nes-ting** pronounced \ˈnes-ə-lɪŋ\ or
 \ˈnes-lɪŋ\)

Using variant pronunciations in special context or usage. Some words may have special pronunciations which are shown by italicized, or slanted-type, labels or by explanatory notes within slanted lines. Sometimes such a pronunciation is used for a particular definition, or sense, within the entry, as follows:

gon-do-la \ˈgän-də-lə (usual for sense 1),
 ɡän-ˈdō-\ . . . 1 : a long narrow boat with a high prow and stern used on the canals of Venice
con-tract \kən-ˈtrakt, *oftenest for 2* ˈkän-\
 . . . 2 : to undertake by contract . . .

A variant pronunciation may show how a word is pronounced in a certain region of the United States or in a part of the English-speaking world other than the United States. For example:

great \ˈgrāt, *in South also* ˈgre(ə)\
prog-ress \ˈpræg-rəs-,res, *chiefly Brit* ˈprō-gres\
 ,gres\

Pronouncing words without pronunciations or with other kinds of partial pronunciations. The pronunciation of many run-on entries is not given because you can easily determine it for yourself. Use the pronunciation at the main entry and look up the pronunciation of the one or more suffixes if you need help in saying the run-on entries.

eat \ˈēt\ . . . — **eat-er** . . .
safe \ˈsāf\ . . . — **safe-ly** . . . — **safe-ness** . . .

tape-re-cord . . . — **tape recorder** . . .
 — **tape recording** . . .
worship . . . — **wor-ship-er** or **wor-ship-per** . . .

You have learned that variant pronunciations are often partial. You will also find partial pronunciations at many run-on entries:

healthy \ˈhel-thē\ . . . — **health-i-ly**
 \-thə-lē\ . . . **health-i-ness**
 \-thē-nəs\ . . .

In a few cases a part of a compound entry may not also occur as a separate entry with pronunciation at its own alphabetical place. You will find a pronunciation for that part, as in the following examples:

Green-wich time \ˈgrɪn-ij-, ˈgrɛn-, -ɪch-\
Gre-go-ri-an calendar \grɪ-ˌgōr-ē-ən-,
 -gōr-\

Some entry words with full pronunciations may be followed by other entry words with only partial pronunciations. The examples below show that there is an identically spelled, identically pronounced word part common to the first and succeeding entries:

rain-mak-ing \ˈrān-,mā-king\
rain-proof \-,prūf\
rain-storm \-,stōrm\
 \

Some entries whose parts are separated by one or more spaces may have no pronunciation given. If you cannot pronounce any one of the parts of such entries, you should refer to that word at its alphabetical place in your dictionary:

graph paper
gross national product

Usually no pronunciation is given at run-on phrases. Any word in the phrase can be found at its alphabetical place:

fall \fɒl\ . . . — **fall flat** . . . — **fall for** . . . — **fall from grace** . . . — **fall on or fall upon** . . . — **fall short** . . .

The pronunciation of most homographs is given only for the first entry if their pronunciations and boldface divisions are the same:

comment \kəm-ent\ . . . **1** : an expression of opinion . . .
comment . . . : to make a comment . . .

FUNCTION AND FORMS OF WORDS

Recognizing the labels which indicate the function of a word. An English word performs a definite function within its sentence, and some words can be made to perform different functions in different sentences. See how differently *back* operates in these sentences:

She went to the store an hour ago, but she has not come *back* yet.

A list of abbreviations is given in the *back* of your dictionary.

You should go around the house and come in through the *back* door.

He decided to *back* the better of the two candidates for mayor.

In the first sentence *back* is an adverb, in the second a noun, in the third an adjective, and in the fourth a verb. We call each of these functions a *part of speech*. If you look at the numbered homographs spelled *back* on page 52, you will see that each has a different part-of-speech label given in italic print (*n*, *adv*, *adj*, *vb*). Here are the eight part-of-speech labels used in your dictionary:

able . . . *adj* (adjective)
ably . . . *adv* (adverb)
al-though . . . *conj* (conjunction)
alas . . . *interj* (interjection)
ab-a-cus . . . *n* (noun)
in . . . *prep* (preposition)
he . . . *pron* (pronoun)
beat . . . *vb* (verb)

Some entries have a double part-of-speech label:

abeam . . . *adv or adj*

Recognizing other italicized labels.

The function of the main entry may be indicated by other labels, some of which are shown with the pronunciation and the part of speech while others are not. Examples of such entries follow:

astro- *comb form* (combining form)
-gram \grəm\ *n comb form* (noun combining form)
ab- *prefix*
-less \ləs\ *adj suffix* (adjective suffix)
-an or -ian also -ean *n suffix* (noun suffix)
-an or -ian also -ean *adj suffix*
-dom \dəm\ *n suffix*
gee \jē\ *imperative verb*

In other instances the main entry may be followed by the label *abbr* for *abbreviation*, a shortened form of a word or phrase. Abbreviated entries appear in their alphabetical place. Since the use of periods varies widely, most abbreviations are shown without them:

FD *abbr* fire department (no definition, just the expanded, or full, form)
DC *abbr* **1** da capo **2** direct current **3** District of Columbia (more than one expanded form)
hf *abbr* **1** half **2** high frequency (lowercase, more than one expanded form)
P.I. *abbr* Philippine Islands (expanded form with periods)

Using the dictionary for finding the plurals of nouns. Most nouns in the English language have their plural forms made by simple addition of the letters *-s* or *-es* to an unchanged singular. For example: *boy, boys; house, houses; lunch, lunches*. The plurals of such nouns are said to be "regular" and therefore easy to spell and to pronounce. They are not shown in this dictionary unless there is a chance they might be mistaken or misspelled, as in these examples:

val-ley . . . *n, pl valleys* (not *vallies*)
jour-ney . . . *n, pl journeys* (not *journies*)

Nouns which form their plurals in any other way than by the addition of *-s* or *-es* to an unchanged singular are said to be "irregular". Such plurals are always given in your dictionary. For example:

alum-nus . . . *n, pl -ni* (Latin plural)
cri-sis . . . *n, pl cri-ses* (Greek plural)
dai-sy . . . *n, pl daisies* (change *-y* to *-i* before *-es*)
knife . . . *n, pl knives* (change *-f-* to *-v-* before *-s*)
man . . . *n, pl men* (root change)
moth-er-in-law . . . *n, pl moth-ers-in-law* (first part adds *-s*)
sheep . . . *n, pl sheep* (*sheep is and sheep are*)

Understanding nouns with more than one plural. Some nouns, like *hippopotamus*, may have more than one plural. Others, like *fish*, may be used collectively or have a regular plural.

If the plurals are joined by *or*, they are equally common in usage. If the plurals are joined by *also*, the second form is less common than the first. Study these examples:

bass . . . *n, pl bass or bass-es* (fish)
bus . . . *n, pl bus-es or bus-ses*
dwarf . . . *n, pl dwarfs . . . also dwarves*

Words that come into English from a foreign language may have both an English and a foreign plural spelling. Usage may vary, and the plural forms may be shown in full or in part. For example:

cri-te-ri-on . . . *n, pl -ria . . . also -rions*
pla-teau . . . *n, pl plateaus or plateaux*
se-nor or se-ñor . . . *n, pl senors or se-ño-res*
stra-tum . . . *n, pl stra-ta . . . also stratums*

Understanding nouns with special kinds of plurals.

Some nouns are used only in the plural and are followed by a plural verb:

en-vi-rons . . . *n pl (environs are)*
over-alls . . . *n pl (overalls are)*

In addition, other plural nouns are not always used in plural construction. The word *news*, for instance, takes a singular verb. Others, like *politics*, are used in both the singular and the plural. Such nouns are labeled in the dictionary as follows:

ath-let-ics . . . *n sing or pl*
dy-nam-ics . . . *n sing or pl*

Locating irregular plural forms in alphabetical order. Irregular plural forms are entered in their own alphabetical places if they fall more than a column away from the main entry. You will find *teeth*, for example, listed between *teeterboard* and *teethe*, as well as at *tooth*. You will not find *oxen* in its alphabetical place because it would not be more than a column away from the word *ox*.

Irregular plurals entered in their alphabetical places cross-refer you to another main entry, as follows:

mice *pl of MOUSE*
geese *pl of GOOSE*