

牛津
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学习词典

Learner's Thesaurus
*a dictionary
of synonyms*

商務印書館
THE COMMERCIAL PRESS

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Oxford Learner's Thesaurus
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出版说明

《牛津英语同义词学习词典》(*Oxford Learner's Thesaurus: A Dictionary of Synonyms*)是牛津系列学习词典的新成员,是世界上第一部学习型同义词词典,适合我国广大英语教师以及中高级英语学习者使用。

本词典收录2000余组英语同义词,详解17000个单词和短语,全面提供释义、例证、搭配、注释、辨析、反义词、派生词、用法标签、语域说明等。借助本书,使用者既可回顾已知词汇,又能学习新词新义,“温故”与“知新”并举,“学习”与“运用”兼重。除用时检索以外,也可闲时翻阅,借以扩展词汇量,加深对词语意义及用法的理解,提高听、说、读、写、译的能力。

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序 言

庄 绎 传

到书店看看，外语工具书专柜琳琅满目，从国外引进的专为帮助非英语国家的学子学习英语的辞书不一而足，虽然各具特色，但均属同一类型，大同小异。唯有这本同义词词典*Oxford Learner's Thesaurus*一枝独秀。

谈起同义词词典，过去国外也出版过一些。有的简略，只列举若干意思相近的词语，不加解释；有的详尽，细论词义之间的差别。但这些辞书都是为本国人编写的，并不考虑非英语国家的人学习、工作的需要。唯有*Oxford Learner's Thesaurus*独树一帜。

这本词典是为什么人编写的呢？

编者开宗明义，把Learner's一词放在书名中，就是为了突出本书的特色，它是专为learners编写的。编者在前言中提到learners时，是与native speakers相对而言的，指的是不以英语为母语的人，也就是我们这些非英语国家中学习英语的人了。

这本词典是怎样为读者服务的呢？

首先，它以最常见的词立条，词目下面把本条要讨论的同义词用黑体醒目地罗列出来，接着用一句话简单说明这几个词共同的含义是什么。这样的编排可以起到一个小目录的作用，让读者一看便知本条要讨论哪些词语。另一方面，这也方便水平较高的读者查阅，因为他们掌握的词汇量大，只是有些词一时想不起来，提醒一下就够了。

第二，它以近乎公式的形式介绍本条涉及的同义词语所常用的句型和搭配。读者在什么情况下会查同义词词典呢？阅读时一般只顾读下去，不大可能会停下来考虑词义的差别。对话时没有时间可能也没有条件停下来查词典。因此，只有在写作或笔译时使用同义词词典的几率最大。在这种情况下，要查的这个词是用在什么场合，上下文是什么，和什么词连用，就显得十分重要。另外，既然是要落笔，白纸上写黑字，这个词应该用在怎样的句子结构，也是不容忽视的。在这方面，词典作了详细的说明。

例如动词act及相关的同义词，后面可以跟介词against，可以跟不定式to do sth，可以跟副词immediately或quickly。

再如形容词beautiful及相关的同义词，先分两大类，一类用来描述人，一类用来描述景物，然后分别介绍。哪几个可以用来形容女人和女孩，哪几个可以用来形容男人和男孩，哪几个可用于脸庞，哪几个可用于体形，可以与之连用的副

词有哪一些。用于景物的形容词也作了类似的介绍。这就为读者提供了很大的方便，读者可以根据自己的上下文很快找到所需的词，而且比较准确地加以使用。

同义词在意思和用法方面既有相似之处，也存在着差异。以上所说这本词典每一条的前两部分说的是相似之处，接下去就要讨论差异了。

第三，它将相关的同义词逐个加以整理，先给定义，接着以大量的例句说明用法。这是每个词条的最主要部分，内容丰富。

1 定义前面有关于使用场合的说明。既是同义词，定义就大同小异。因此关于使用场合的说明显得特别重要。还是以act一词为例。在同义词do something定义前加了*phrase (rather informal, especially spoken)*，在同义词take action定义前加了*phrase (especially journalism)*，在同义词take steps定义前加了*phrase (especially written)*，在move定义前加了*(especially journalism)*。可见这一组同义词，有的较为正式，多见于书面语，有的较为非正式，多见于口语，有的多见于新闻体，其差异一目了然。定义后面都有一个乃至数个例子，如何使用，在什么情况下使用，就更清楚了。

2 例句后面有补充说明。编者预见到只靠定义和关于使用场合的说明也许还不够清楚，因此还在某些例句后面设计了以❶为标记的补充说明。例如act一词的例句后面有这样一句说明：**Act** in this meaning is often followed by an adverb relating to speed or urgency，并举例*They acted at once / immediately / promptly / quickly / swiftly*。再如take steps的例句后面有：Unlike other verbs in this group, **take steps** does not necessarily suggest that sth is very urgent. 这样的说明有助于读者对相关词语的深入了解和准确使用。

3 通过注释对容易混淆的词语进行对比。我们都知道，actor是男演员，actress是女演员。那么actor能不能用于女演员？如果有人这样用，算不算错？如果不算错，与actress又有什么区别？问题很简单，却很不好回答。编者预见到这一类的问题，就在actress这一条下面加了一个NOTE，注文是：**ACTOR OR ACTRESS? An actor can be a man or a woman. Using actor for a woman emphasizes professional acting abilities. Using actress emphasizes that the actor is a woman.** 这样的回答，真是既简洁，又清楚。

此外，查找方便也是本书一大特色。书末有索引，将全书涉及的同义词统一按字母顺序排列，并说明每个词出现在哪一组同义词里，以便查阅。

由于以上这些特点，这本词典虽在定义和例句方面有借助于其他牛津词典之处，但因它大量特有的信息和作用，并不影响它作为同义词词典独立存在的价值。

工具书一般都是放在案头，以备在遇到问题时查阅。而这本同义词词典，除在遇到问题时查阅，平时也不妨把它打开，看上几条。我们往往感到自己能支配的词语有限，想变换说法，就会觉得很困难。这本词典把意思相近的单词和短语一组一组地介绍给你，经常看一看，既会整理你已有的语言知识，又能增强你的

表达能力，真是一举两得。

国人学英语，喜欢跟以英语为母语的老师学地道的英语。把这本同义词词典摆在书房里，宛如一位操英语的老师随时陪在你身边，为你解惑释疑，帮你梳理头绪，使你用词准确，行文流畅，写出漂亮的英文。

庄绎传 我国著名英语教育家、翻译家，北京外国语大学教授、前副校长。长期从事英语教学、翻译和研究工作。曾参加毛泽东、刘少奇、周恩来著作英文版的翻译和修订工作。

PREFACE

'More help with synonyms' has been one of the most frequent requests from students and teachers to us as lexicographers at Oxford University Press. To give genuine help with synonyms we need to do more than just list them; we need to explain exactly when one word can substitute for another and when it cannot. We therefore conceived of a dictionary – or a *learner's thesaurus* – that would do exactly that, and which would be aimed at refining and expanding the active vocabulary of learners at upper-intermediate level and above. For an account of the principles and methodology behind the selection and presentation of synonyms in this thesaurus, please see the introduction that follows.

The *Oxford Learner's Thesaurus* – a dictionary of synonyms is the result of many years of research, experiment and concentrated work by a large number of people. I would first like to thank the small but dedicated team of editors who worked with me on the project: Jennifer Bradbery, Richard Poole and Helen Warren. I am also grateful to Frank Keenan and his team for managing the technical side of things. And I should like to acknowledge Moira Runcie, whose brainchild the *Oxford Learner's Thesaurus* was, and who has been a support and an inspiration throughout.

Penny Stock created the framework for assigning words to areas of meaning and drawing up the synonym groups. The following lexicographers worked on compiling the entries: Andrew Delahunty, Penny Hands, Tim McLeish, Julie Moore, Stella O'Shea and Daryl Tayar. Daniel Barron, Lisa Isenman, Karen Stern and Ashley Wagner were American English consultants.

Finally, thanks are due to the many students and teachers in different countries who have assisted with piloting and research through all stages of the project. It is the input from learners and dictionary users that has enabled us, I believe, to produce the thesaurus that best meets learners' needs.

Diana Lea
December 2007

What is a learner's thesaurus?

According to the *Oxford Dictionary of English* a thesaurus is 'a book that lists words in groups of synonyms and related concepts'. It is typically used by someone who is writing and cannot quite think of the right word to use. The person looks up a word with nearly the right meaning and is offered a list of other words to choose from.

Language learners need synonyms too. They need to be able to express themselves in more precise and interesting ways. They need to choose language of an appropriate register for the context. But the needs of learners when consulting a thesaurus are actually much more complex than those of native or expert speakers of the language. Native speakers have a large bank of language stored in their brains; the thesaurus, for them, is simply a means of accessing this information. It reminds them of words that they already know but cannot bring to mind. Their chief requirement from a thesaurus is that it should offer as wide a choice as possible. The *New Oxford Thesaurus of English* gives 37 different words for *fast* as an adjective, but that is all it gives: no definitions, minimal usage information and no way of distinguishing between the words on offer.

Language learners, on the other hand, need not only range but depth. They need to learn new words; and they also need to be able to choose more effectively between words that they have met before, where their knowledge of the exact meaning and usage of the words was previously incomplete. They need a thesaurus that will not only enable them to access information, but will also teach them things.

How are synonyms presented in the Oxford Learner's Thesaurus?

In the course of researching and compiling the *Oxford Learner's Thesaurus* we established a number of principles governing the information that should be included and how it should be presented. This thesaurus is intended to help learners at upper-intermediate level and above with their writing and speaking in English. This means that all the words and expressions included are such as might reasonably form part of a learner's active vocabulary. How did we decide whether or not a word qualified for inclusion? Synonym groups were based around key words, mostly drawn from a 3,000-word core vocabulary for learners. As many synonyms as possible were gathered for each key word. The words in each group were then ordered according to frequency across a range of corpora. (A *Corpus*, in this context, is a database of millions of words of running English text, from which it is possible to call up, view and count all occurrences of any given word, in context. This makes it possible to establish the overall frequency of any word within the corpus.

It is often said that there are no absolute synonyms in English: that there is always some difference of nuance, register or collocation, that makes one word choice better, or at least different, from another. These differences may be very slight; they may not matter in every context. But it is a frustrating experience for learners at any level to be prevented from saying exactly what they mean by lack of the appropriate vocabulary. And as learners progress with their English it becomes increasingly important for them to be aware of the nuances of words, to be sure that the meaning conveyed to the reader or listener is the one that was intended.

Therefore we designed a new kind of thesaurus: a *learner's* thesaurus. It does not just offer lists of synonyms, but is a true dictionary of synonyms. Words of similar meaning are grouped together, as in a thesaurus, but they are also given definitions and example sentences, and grammar and usage information, as in a learner's dictionary. Words within each group are compared and contrasted, in terms of their meanings, use and collocations, in special notes that pinpoint the exact differences between them. There are over 17,000 synonyms and opposites explained in these pages, which is a large number of words and expressions for anyone's active vocabulary. (It has been estimated that English native-speaking university graduates know around 20,000 word families, but that includes both active and passive vocabulary.) However, the entry structure of this thesaurus has been carefully designed to enable learners to find the precise information they want as quickly and easily as possible.

In the case of words with more than one meaning, we of course counted the frequency only of the relevant meaning in each case. We used corpora of written and spoken British and American English, plus a corpus of business English.) Less frequent words were rejected. The aim was to present learners with manageable groups of between three and ten synonyms. In a few cases the upper limit was extended to twelve; a few entries present just a pair of synonyms, when there simply was not a third synonym to add to the number.

The frequency ranking was also used to order the synonyms within the entries. The idea was that learners still at upper-intermediate level could focus on the more frequent and general words near the top of the entry; more advanced learners could skip straight to the less well-known expressions near the bottom. Consultation with teachers and practical research with students showed how important it was for learners to be able to find what they want quickly, without always having to read through the

whole entry. The list of synonyms at the top of each entry serves as a menu. Within the body of the entry, each synonym is treated separately. The main definition for each word is kept as short as possible. Examples are carefully chosen to show the most typical and distinctive usage patterns. Essential grammar and usage information precedes each definition, in the form of short codes and labels. These will already be familiar to users of the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, but they are explained on the pages 1006–7 just inside the back cover of this book. Irregular plurals are given, but irregular forms of verbs are listed in the table on pages 1004–5. The aim was to keep the entries as far as possible uncluttered by information on form, in order to enable learners to focus more easily on meaning, register and collocation.

The definitions in the entries have to work hard, conveying as much meaning as possible, clearly, in as few words as possible. When two close synonyms have definitions that are nearly the same, but not quite, this is not an accident.

How to use the Oxford Learner's Thesaurus

The *Oxford Learner's Thesaurus* can be used in a number of different ways. It is expected that the most frequent uses will be to find a synonym for a particular word, and to check on the exact differences between two particular words. Entries are ordered alphabetically by headword, the headword being the most frequent word in each synonym group. To find any word or expression in any entry (whether it is the headword or not), use the alphabetical index at the back of the book. The first two pages of the

The Oxford Learner's Thesaurus CD-ROM

The accompanying CD-ROM contains the full text of the *Oxford Learner's Thesaurus*. The information in the thesaurus is even more accessible on CD-ROM: just key in the word, choose from the index menu and it will take you straight to the entry you need. Navigating around entries is also even easier: you can click straight from the list of synonyms at the top of the entry to the word or expression that interests you. The split screen feature enables you to look at two different parts of the same entry, or two different entries, at the same time. You can choose to hide or reveal the collocation information and notes, depending on whether you want a quick overview of the synonyms or an in-depth analysis. You can also choose to see extra example sentences for many of the synonyms. You can add your own notes and translations to any of the entries. You can print out any of the entries, or cut and paste from entries into your own documents.

The 'Topics' feature offers quick access to all the entries from the 30 topics; the 'My Topics' feature

The difference in wording means something: it signals a slight but distinct difference in meaning or use, which will usually be reflected in the choice of example sentences. The definitions and examples for *gift* and *present* in the entry for *gift* are a good example of this. It was not our intention, however, to make learners puzzle over the differences between two very similar definitions. With very close synonyms the individual definitions and examples are backed up by a note in a tinted box, which explicitly compares and contrasts two or more synonyms in terms of meaning, register, collocation and whatever else may distinguish them. Again, there is a typical example on 'Gift or present?' in the entry for *gift*. Notes preceded by a **ⓘ** symbol, on the other hand, give extra information about one particular word or expression.

For a more detailed survey of all the elements in an entry, see the Guide to the Entries inside the front cover, and the Thesaurus Trainer, which also includes lots of practical examples and exercises.

Thesaurus Trainer give detailed instructions on how to use the index.

It is also possible to search the thesaurus by topic, if, for example, you are interested in building vocabulary in a particular topic area. The Topic Index lists entries under 30 different topics. Further help with building and using topic vocabulary is provided by the Topic Maps, with accompanying exercises. The Study Pages offer practice in a variety of topic areas through a number of different tasks, aimed especially at students preparing for exams.

enables you to create your own topics, using any of the entries from the thesaurus. The Topic Maps are available in full colour and give you instant access to the related entries. All the study material from the printed book is included as PDFs that you can print out, write on, photocopy and use with classes. In addition, the CD-ROM contains over 250 extra short practice exercises testing word choice, opposites, register and pragmatics, each focusing on a different entry. The Games module offers a more light-hearted approach to practising synonyms.

All in all, the book and CD-ROM together offer a complete guide to using, practising and teaching English synonyms. It is hoped that this thesaurus will be of use not only to language students, but also to teachers preparing classes, as well as to translators and people writing in English for academic purposes: in fact to anyone wishing to improve their own, or their students', fluency and precision in written and spoken English.

These pages explain how the *Oxford Learner's Thesaurus* works. They will show you how to find the right entry, and then how to find your way around that entry so that you can find exactly the information you need.

There are exercises on each page to practise looking up words and extracting information from entries. The key to these exercises starts on page 913. See also the quick **Guide to Thesaurus Entries** inside the front cover.

Finding the Right Entry

The *Oxford Learner's Thesaurus* contains over 17,000 words and expressions in over 2,000 entries. In order to find a particular word you first need to know which entry it is in. All the words and expressions are listed in the **alphabetical index** on pages 921-1003.

Here, for example, you can see that **accuse** *verb* is in the entry at **accuse**. This means that it is the most important and frequent word in its synonym group and is the headword of the entry:

accurate *adj.*
 ▶ EXACT
accusation *noun*
 ▶ CHARGE
accuse *verb*
 ▶ ACCUSE
 accustomed to *adj.*
 ▶ USED TO STH
ache *noun*
 ▶ PAIN

accuse *verb*

accuse • charge • prosecute • indict • impeach • cite
 These words all mean to say that sb has done sth wrong or committed a crime and must appear in court.

Accusation, on the other hand, is one of the synonyms in the entry at **charge** *noun*:

charge *noun*

charge • accusation • indictment • impeachment • recrimination

These are all words for a claim that sb has done sth wrong or is guilty of sth.

A Look up the following words in the index. In which entries will you find them?

- 1 become *verb* _____
- 2 calendar *noun* _____
- 3 daring *noun* _____
- 4 daring *adj.* _____

More than One Meaning

Accurate, **accusation** and **accuse** each have just one meaning and appear in just one entry. Some words, however, such as **act** *noun*, have more than one meaning, and each meaning has a different set of synonyms. **Act** appears in four different entries, with a different meaning in each entry.

The index entry for **act** shows the four entries that it appears in (**action**, **performance**, **pretence** and **rule**). It also gives a short example to show which meaning of **act** is treated in each entry.

act *noun*
 ▶ ACTION (an act of kindness)
 ▶ PERFORMANCE (a circus act)
 ▶ PRETENCE (put on an act)
 ▶ RULE (the Higher Education Act)

B Look up the index entry for **fix** *verb*. In which entry will you find synonyms of **fix** in the meaning used in each of the following sentences?

- 1 Can I **fix** you a sandwich?

- 2 We need to **fix** a time when we can meet.

- 3 The chairs were all **fixed** to the floor.

- 4 This should **fix** it. Let me know if you have any more problems.

Very Frequent Words

Some very frequent words, such as **get**, **give**, **go** and **good**, not only have more than one meaning, each with a different set of synonyms, but are the most important word

in each of two or more groups. Thus, the entry for **get** begins with a brief menu that shows the five different meanings of **get** that are treated in this entry with their synonyms:

get *verb*

- 1 get tickets/a job/some sleep
- 2 get a letter/shock
- 3 Go and get help.
- 4 We got there at 9.
- 5 get the bus

1 See also the entry for **GAIN** 1

get • obtain • acquire • take • pick sth up • take sth out • get hold of sth

These words all mean to do sth in order to make sure you have sth.

In the index, numbers are used to show which synonym group is meant in entries that have more than one.

Different meanings of **receive** are treated in the second synonym group in the entry for **get**, and the third synonym group in the entry for **have**, as well as in the entries for **get**, **let sb in** and **respond**.

receive *verb*

- ▶ GET2 (receive a letter)
- ▶ GREET (be received as an honoured guest)
- ▶ HAVE3 (receive attention)
- ▶ LET SB IN (be received into the Church)
- ▶ RESPOND (well received by critics)

Phrasal Verbs and Idioms

Phrasal verbs are often very important as synonyms and are given equal status with all other verbs. They are listed in the index, in alphabetical order with all the other synonyms.

goal *noun*

- ▶ TARGET
- go along with *phrasal verb*
- ▶ AGREE2
- go around *phrasal verb*
- ▶ SPIN
- go away *phrasal verb*
- ▶ GO AWAY
- go back *phrasal verb*
- ▶ RETURN 1
- go back on *phrasal verb*
- ▶ BREAK4
- go-between *noun*
- ▶ NEGOTIATOR

C Find the entry and synonym group that includes the **bold** words in each of the following sentences. You will need to look for the base form of the word (for example **bring** not 'brought', **man** not 'men'). There is a table of irregular verbs on pages 1004-1005.

- 1 This fruit has a **sharp** flavour.
entry _____ number _____
- 2 Are you sure the branch will **hold** your weight?
entry _____ number _____
- 3 **Jo** led the way and we all followed.
entry _____ number _____
- 4 Do you **play** any musical instruments?
entry _____ number _____

Idioms and phrases are listed under the main words in the idiom or phrase, so that **pay attention** is listed at **pay verb** and **attention noun**, and **think twice** is listed at **think** and **twice**:

think *verb*

- ▶ THINK (I think it looks good.)
- ▶ CONSIDER (I'll think about it.)
- ▶ EXPECT (It took longer than we thought.)
- ▶ IMAGINE (Just think how nice it would be.)
- ▶ **think twice** HESITATE

twice *adv.*

- ▶ **think twice** HESITATE

D Look up these phrasal verbs in the index. In which entries will you find them?

- 1 Give it some more thought. I'm sure you'll **come up with** something.

- 2 Can we **go over** the procedure one more time?

- 3 If you're not sure what it means, **look it up** in the dictionary.

- 4 It's not fair. I'm always **getting told off**.

E Look up these phrases and idioms in the index. In which entries will you find them?

- 1 It's a pleasant way to **earn a living**.

- 2 We can all **play a part** in protecting the environment.

- 3 That noise is **driving me mad**.

- 4 He suddenly **lost his temper** with them all.

The Individual Synonyms

The entry now takes each individual synonym, *in order of frequency*, and gives each a mini-entry of its own, including all the information that you need about

meaning, grammar, register and use. Mini-entries include example sentences, and sometimes special collocations are highlighted in **bold**.

Meaning

Look at the entry for **discussion** on page 209 and read the mini-entries for **discussion** and **conversation**.

- A Which of these two words, **discussion** or **conversation**, is more frequent?
- B What is the difference in *meaning* between the two words?
- C Choose the best word, **discussion** or **conversation**, for each of these sentences:

- 1 A chance **discussion/conversation** led to a brilliant new career for the young scientist.
- 2 She could hear him over the buzz of **discussion/conversation** and laughter.
- 3 The company has been in **discussion/conversation** with companies in Italy and Greece.
- 4 The two governments are to hold **discussions/conversations** on the border issue.

Grammar

Grammar information is given in square brackets before the definition. For example, verbs can be labelled [I] (intransitive – takes no object), [T] (transitive – takes an object) or both: [T, I] or [I, T].

refuse [I, T] to say that you will not do sth that sb has asked you to do, or that you do not want sth that has been offered to you; to decide not to accept or consider sth; to say that you will not give sb sth that they want or need: *Go on, ask her. She can hardly refuse.* ◊ *She refused to accept that there was a problem.* ◊ *He flatly refused to discuss the matter.* ◊ *We invited her to the wedding but she refused.* ◊ *The job offer was simply too good to refuse.* ◊ *The government has refused all demands for a public enquiry.* ◊ *They refused him a visa.* ◊ *She would never refuse her kids anything.* **OPP** agree → AGREE 2, **accept** → TAKE 5, See also **refusal** → REFUSAL

reject [T] to decide or say that you will not accept or consider sth; to decide not to accept sb for a job or position: *He urged the committee to reject the plans.* ◊ *The proposal was rejected as too costly.* ◊ *I've been rejected by all the colleges I applied to.* **OPP** approve → AGREE 2, **accept** → LET SB IN

- D Which of these two verbs, **refuse** or **reject**, *cannot* be used without an object?

The object of a verb can be a noun, a noun phrase or a clause; some verbs can take both a direct and an indirect object; some can combine with a particular preposition. For example:

- to **reject a plan**
- to **refuse sth as too costly**
- to **refuse to accept sth**
- to **reject sth in favour of sth else**
- to **refuse sb permission**

The grammatical structures and prepositions are shown in **bold**, either in the PATTERNS AND COLLOCATIONS section, or within the example sentences for that verb.

- E Choose the correct word, **refuse** or **reject**, for each of these sentences:
 - 1 All our suggestions were **refused/rejected** as 'useless'.
 - 2 Gerard flatly **refused/rejected** to cooperate.
 - 3 She offered to help and it seemed churlish to **refuse/reject**.
 - 4 You surely wouldn't **refuse/reject** me this simple favour?

For a full list of grammar labels for nouns, verbs and adjectives, and what they mean, see page 1007.

Register

Sometimes words can be close in meaning, but different in register: that is, one of the words is more formal or informal than the other. Often it is important to choose a word of the right level of formality for the context, for example academic writing or

everyday conversation. A synonym may have a register label before its definition. If there is no label, the word is neither formal nor informal and can usually be used in a wide range of situations.

F Look up the entry for **popular** and complete this table with the synonyms in the entry:

<i>slang</i> (= very informal)	<i>informal</i>	<i>rather informal</i>	neither formal nor informal	<i>rather formal</i>	<i>formal</i>
			popular		

G For each of the sentences below, choose the synonym that best matches the register of the sentence. Look at the entries in SMALL CAPS to help you.

- 1 Yuk! What **an odour/a stink!** ODOUR
- 2 You might be entitled to **get/receive** compensation. GET 2
- 3 This is a **desirable/hot** property in an exclusive residential district. POPULAR
- 4 All that sugary stuff is really **damaging/bad** for you. HARMFUL
- 5 Don't buy stuff from the street traders – you'll get **defrauded/ripped off**. DEFRAUD

Register labels can also show whether a word is used only or especially in spoken or written English. In general, informal words are used more in speech, and formal words more in writing, but this is not always the case. For example, some words are used mainly in writing (especially in stories) without actually being formal:

Her face was white with fury.

And some expressions are used mainly in formal speech:

I beg your pardon. I must have the wrong room.

For a full list of register labels and what they mean, see page 1006.

Use

Some words are used only or especially in British or American English. Some are used mainly in a particular field of study or activity, for example business or journalism. Some words show a particular attitude, either of approval or disapproval. All these restrictions on use are shown by labels before the definition.

H The following words are British or especially British. What words could you use in American English? Look up the entries in SMALL CAPS to help you.

- 1 **pip** *noun* GRAIN
- 2 **burgle** *verb* ROB
- 3 **scruffy** *adj.* SCRUFFY
- 4 **packet** *noun* PACKET

I In which particular subject areas or fields of activity might you hear or use the following words?

- 1 **impact** *verb* AFFECT
- 2 **estate** *noun* LEGACY
- 3 **rupture** *verb* EXPLODE
- 4 **mass** *noun* WEIGHT

J Are the following words approving or disapproving? For each one find another word that has the same basic meaning but shows a more negative/positive attitude.

- 1 **cramped** *adj.* CRAMPED
- 2 **innocence** *noun* IGNORANCE
- 3 **cultured** *adj.* INTELLECTUAL 2
- 4 **solitude** *noun* PRIVACY

For a full list of style and usage labels and what they mean, see page 1006.

Examples

Every synonym has one or more example sentences, which show how the word is most commonly used. In particular a synonym's examples show the patterns and contexts where this is the only or best word to use, and none of the other synonyms in the group will do as well. Collocations that are unique to this word are highlighted in **bold**.

A Look at the entry for **action** on pages 5-6 and read the example sentences for **measure**, **step**, **act** and **move**. Then choose the best word to complete each of the sentences. Use each word once.

- 1 In a/an _____ of sheer desperation, she turned to face her pursuers.
- 2 Neither of them wanted to be the one to make the first _____.
- 3 This arrangement is simply a temporary _____ until we appoint a new director.
- 4 These talks are a first _____ towards a global agreement on carbon trading.

B Some of these sentences are correct, but some contain a wrong choice of word. Use information from the example sentences in the entries in SMALL CAPS to help you correct the sentences that are wrong.

- 1 There wasn't a **speck** of dust to be seen anywhere. MARK *noun*
- 2 Let's take the scenic **way**. WAY *3*
- 3 I was never very good at playing the trumpet for the **simple** reason that I never practised. PLAIN *adj. 2*
- 4 The United Nations imposed an arms **boycott** on both countries. BAN *noun*
- 5 The **bargain** fell through when they could not agree a price. AGREEMENT *1*
- 6 I **get** the message – you'd rather not be involved. UNDERSTAND *1*
- 7 I don't know, but I'm willing to **venture** a guess. DARE
- 8 I was so tired I felt ready to **collapse**. COLLAPSE *2*

Notes

Entries contain two different kinds of note. Notes marked **1** give you extra information about a particular word or expression. This extra information can be about anything to do with a word's meaning or use.

countryside [U] land outside towns and cities, with fields, woods and farms: a little village in the French countryside ◊ You can walk through miles and miles of unspoilt countryside. **1** Countryside is usually used when you are talking about the beauty or peacefulness of a country area. See also **nature** → NATURE *2*

terrain /tə'reɪn/ [U, C] (written) land: Make sure you have equipment that is suitable for the terrain. ◊ There were several miles of difficult terrain to be covered. **1** Terrain is used when you are describing the natural features of an area, for example if it is rough, flat, etc.

A Which is the best word to use in these sentences, **countryside** or **terrain**?

- 1 The surrounding **countryside/terrain** is magnificent.
- 2 The truck bumped its way over the rough **countryside/terrain**.

- 3 The cottage backs directly onto glorious open **countryside/terrain**.
- 4 They walked for miles across steep and inhospitable **countryside/terrain**.

Notes marked **NOTE** compare and contrast two or more very close synonyms to help you understand the differences between them.

NOTE GIFT OR PRESENT? Gift is more formal than present and is used especially in business contexts: a store will advertise its Christmas gift ideas; the people who buy them will talk about the Christmas presents they have bought for family and friends. A present is usually given by and to an individual; a gift may be given by a company (a corporate gift) and/or to an organization. A present is usually an object, but a gift may be a sum of money, or sth such as the gift of love/life: funded-by-a-present-of-£50-000 ◊ She gave me the present of love. Especially in American English, however, gift is not always so formal and is sometimes used in personal contexts instead of present: The watch was a gift/present from my mother.