



Oxford Dictionary of English



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Angus Stevenson

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For many speakers and learners of English, the word "Oxford" spells authority about language. The second edition of the *Oxford Dictionary of English* is no exception. Any dictionary which comes from Oxford University Press (whose origins lie in the Middle Ages, the foundation of the university and the dawn of printing) tends to be in a different league from its competitors. Based on the "Oxford English Corpus", language databases, which amount to "hundreds of millions of words of written and spoken English in machine-readable form", this hefty single-volume dictionary has four million words of text. That includes 355,000 words phrases and definitions, 12,000 encyclopaedic entries and 68,000 explanations. The statistics are mind blowing. Like all good dictionaries it's bang up to date. "Greasy spoon", "data smog" and "WMD" are all here, scrupulously glossed. So, of course are wonderful, old, near-obsolete words like "editrice" and "bouffant". Plenty of proper names get in too. Did you know that a "Queensland blue" is a cattle dog with a dark speckled body as opposed to a "Queensland nut" which is another name for the macadamia nut? Like other new dictionaries the *Oxford Dictionary of English* provides boxed usage notes which point up, say, the difference between "pedal" and "peddle" or discuss the vexed old question of whether infinitives may be split. More unusual are the 14 detailed appendices on, for example, English in electronic communications, collective nouns and proof-reading marks. Most useful of all is probably the "Guide to Good English" which manages to be both admirably concise and immaculately clear. --*Susan Elkin* Pressestimmen

The Oxford Dictionary of English is more than a dictionary. Every school should own one. El Gazette

Kurzbeschreibung

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