

THE
POCKET
OXFORD
DICTIONARY

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THE
POCKET OXFORD
DICTIONARY
OF CURRENT ENGLISH

First edited by
F. G. and H. W. Fowler

SEVENTH EDITION
EDITED BY R. E. ALLEN

DELHI

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Preface to the Seventh Edition

This edition results from the most thorough and far reaching revision yet of the smallest of the dictionaries originally conceived by the Fowler brothers. In its six previous editions the *Pocket* has changed little in overall concept and method, representing the utmost in the compression of a great deal of information in a small space by means of the rigorous application of space saving devices and conventions. Now however considerations of clarity and ease of use have led to this completely redesigned seventh edition.

Readers familiar with earlier editions will find many changes of concept and presentation, all of these implemented in the interests of making the information more quickly retrievable without compromising the generally formal approach to presentation that distinguishes this work from others of the same size. The swung dash of earlier editions has been entirely dispensed with. The listing of vocabulary has been completely restructured with a main entry assigned to every defined item that is spelt as one word while genuinely compound items and phrases are still listed with their root words, where they surely belong. Greater clarity and ease of reference are thereby achieved without allowing the structure and intricate relationships of the vocabulary to disintegrate in a plethora of main entries in the manner of some modern small dictionaries.

Much thought has been given to the ordering of senses, with the result that these are now regularly arranged in order of comparative familiarity with the most important and current senses first and those that are evidently less so arranged in descending order thereafter. As a further aid to use, all compounds and phrases are assembled at the end of each entry leaving the main senses of the headwords clearer and less congested. Much of the more detailed constructional information hitherto attending explanations of words such as *draw* and *get* and *rub* (and on a smaller scale those such as *pretend* and *resolve*) has been reduced and simplified in the belief that a dictionary such as the *Pocket* is used chiefly to establish the sense of a word found in or known from a particular context rather than to construct contexts from notional bases (for 'decoding' rather than 'coding' in the language of modern lexicography).

Of great importance is the use of the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA: see the introductory *Guide* at 2.1), newly adopted in this edition in the interests of greater precision and consistency

These are some of the features of this the most authoritative dictionary of its size

- More than 49,000 entries, dealing with in 900 pages
- Clear layout and presentation with the minimum of special abbreviations and symbols
- Definitions arranged in order of comparative familiarity and importance
- Pronunciations given in the International Phonetic Alphabet, the system which gives the greatest precision and is used throughout the world
- Guidance on uses that are disputed or controversial
- Extensive treatment of idioms and phrases
- Generous coverage of terms used in technology and the information sciences