

## A Library 'Essentials' Guide

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**OED Online** is the searchable online version of the Oxford English Dictionary, the accepted authority on the evolution of the English language over the last millennium. It is an unsurpassed guide to the meaning, history, and pronunciation of over half a million words, both present and past. It offers access to the complete text of the 20-volume second edition and the three Additions Series volumes, together with between one and two thousand new and revised entries each quarter.

### Accessing the database

Access the Library's Home Page at: <http://www.exeter.ac.uk/library>. Click on **Access to resources** and then **E-Resources**, on the left hand side of the screen. Enter your IT Services account username and password and click on **Log in**, if required. Set the subject area to all subjects and the resource type to all types of resources, then click on the **Find resources** button. Scroll down the list and click on **Oxford English Dictionary Online**.

### Word searching

A word search finds OED main entries only, which include spellings, etymology, definitions and examples illustrated by quotations. Type a word in the box at the top right of the screen and click on **Find Word**.

### Full text searching

This search finds any word or phrase anywhere in the database. Click on [Simple search](#) at the bottom left of the screen and type a word in the search box. Click on the **Start search** button.

### Quotation author searching

This searches for quotations by author's name. Click on [Simple search](#) at the bottom left of the screen and type a name in the search box. Click in the box containing the words full text and from the drop-down menu select **quotation author**. Click on the **Start search** button.

### Abbreviations

Most of the authors cited are represented by their surnames plus initial(s), or in some cases by their surname only. A few, oft-cited authors are given in abbreviated form, e.g. Shakespeare is abbreviated to **Shakes**. There are separate lists for author names, work titles, Shakespearean plays etc. To consult the abbreviations lists click on [Help](#) at the bottom right of the screen and then search the Index under **A** for **Abbreviations**.

### Other search areas

As well as **full text** and **quotation author** searches the drop-down menu mentioned above allows you to limit your search to other areas such as **first cited date**, **definitions**, **etymologies**, and **quotation work**.

### Advanced searching

This offers full text searching of the entire dictionary text with additional options and greater flexibility. Click on [Advanced search](#) at the bottom left of the screen. Choose from the tabs whether you want to retrieve **Entries** or **Quotations**. The currently selected tab is red. Choosing **Entries** means that the results will consist of entries containing the term(s). Choosing **Quotations** means that the results will consist of quotations containing the term(s). Type the word or phrase you want to find in the first box. Choose your search area. Click on the **Start search** button.

## Search tips

Use the wildcard symbol ? to substitute for one character, e.g. **wom?n** retrieves both **woman** and **women**.

Use the truncation symbol \* to find words beginning with the same word stem, e.g. **environment\*** retrieves **environment**, **environments**, **environmental** etc.

Boolean operators allow you to refine, broaden or narrow your search. The three primary operators are **AND**, **OR** and **AND NOT**:

**AND** retrieves records containing both search terms

**OR** retrieves records containing either or both search terms

**AND NOT** retrieves records containing the first term but not the second

## Viewing search results

### 1. Find word results

A message at the top right of the entry will show you from which edition your results originate (e.g. SECOND EDITION 1989).

Buttons for **Pronunciation**, **Spellings**, **Etymology**, **Quotations** and **Date chart** are located at the top of the screen. There are additional buttons at the bottom of the screen: these include [List by date](#) (which places the entry in its chronological context with other words introduced in that period),

[List by entry](#) (which displays the words that precede and follow the current entry in the dictionary), and

[Simple search](#) and [Advanced search](#).

If there is more than one result to a **Find Word** search these are listed in the results list. Each result is numbered and listed on a single line. Click on the line to open up an entry. To view the next and previous entries click [◀ Entry ▶](#). To return to the results list click [◀ Results ▶](#).

### 2. Full text search results

You can either click on the Entry Name to go to the top of the entry, or click on your search's match to open the entry directly at the match point. In the entry window your search term is highlighted in red.

**See 1. above for the available buttons and how to move between entries.**

## Downloading search results

**To save to a file:** display the entry to be downloaded. Click on [Print](#). This opens up a new window containing the printable version of the entry. Select your browser's **File** menu and save the information as a text file, e.g. **myfile.txt**.

**To email:** you can email a link to an entry. Open the entry you wish to link to. Click on [Mail](#). There are **From** and **To** boxes to insert your email address and the recipient's email address. Note you can also email a link to a colleague whether they subscribe to **OED Online** or not. The link allows access to the entry for three days.

**To print:** you can print an entry or the current page of results. Display the entry or the page of results. Click on [Print](#). This opens up a new window containing the printable version of the entry. Click the **Print** button on your browser. If you are printing an entry, the entire entry is printed. If you are printing the results list, only the current page of results is printed out.

## Help

Click on [Help](#) on the bottom right of the screen. You can either search for a help topic or find it via the **Help text index**. A linked list of contents is always displayed on the right-hand side of the help pages, and at the bottom are links to the index.

## Logging off

When you have finished searching click on [Sign out](#) which is located at the bottom right of the screen.

**For more Essentials guides see: <http://www.exeter.ac.uk/library/guides/essentials/>**

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