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Introduction

What is Oxford Word Skills?

Oxford Word Skills is a series of three books for students to learn, practise, and revise new vocabulary.

Basic:	elementary and pre-intermediate (CEF levels A1 and A2)
Intermediate:	intermediate and upper-intermediate (CEF levels B1 and B2)
Advanced:	advanced (CEF levels C1 and C2)

There are over 2,000 new words or phrases in each level, and all of the material can be used in the classroom or for self-study.

How are the books organized?

Each book contains 80 units of vocabulary presentation and practice. Units are between one and three pages long, depending on the topic. New vocabulary is presented in manageable quantities for learners, with practice exercises following immediately, usually on the same page. The units are grouped together thematically in modules of five to ten units. At the end of each module there are further practice exercises in the review units, so that learners can revise and test themselves on the vocabulary learned.

At the back of each book you will find:

- vocabulary building tables
- an answer key for all the exercises (other than personalized exercises)
- a list of all the vocabulary taught, with a phonetic pronunciation guide and a unit reference to where the item appears

There is a CD-ROM at each level with oral pronunciation models for all the vocabulary taught, and further practice exercises, including listening activities.

What vocabulary is included?

At advanced level, the vocabulary includes:

- a wide range of topics, e.g. behaviour, competitive sport, medical advances
- a range of concepts, e.g. problems and solutions, truth and lies, old and new
- different fields of academic English, e.g. literature, science, technical English
- an increased focus on different styles of English, e.g. informal English, newspaper journalism, formal letters
- a wide range of idiomatic expressions, with a particular focus on figurative uses of language
- various aspects of language, e.g. compounds, discourse markers, prepositional phrases

The series includes almost all of the words in the Oxford 3000™, which lists the 3,000 words teachers and students should prioritize in their teaching and learning. The list is based on frequency and usefulness to learners, and was developed by Oxford University Press using corpus evidence and information supplied by a panel of over 70 experts in the fields of teaching and language study. In addition, we have included a wide range of high frequency phrases, e.g. *at the last minute*, *for the time being*, as well as items which are extremely useful in a particular context, e.g. *in danger of extinction* when discussing wildlife conservation, or *remanded in custody* when discussing the law.

We have taken great care to ensure that learners will be able to understand the meaning of all the new words and phrases as used in the particular contexts by supplying a clear illustration or glossary definition. Learners should be aware that many English words have more than one meaning, and they should refer to an appropriate learner's dictionary for information on other meanings.

How can teachers use the material in the classroom?

New vocabulary at this level is presented primarily through different types of text, but also through tables, and where appropriate, through visuals. The meaning of new vocabulary is explained in an accompanying glossary unless it is illustrated in visuals or diagrams. Important items, or those that require additional information, are highlighted by means of 'spotlight' boxes.

Here is a procedure you could follow:

- Students study the presentation for 5–10 minutes (longer if necessary).
- You answer any queries the students may have about the items, and provide a pronunciation model of the items for your students where necessary.
- Students do the first exercise, which they can check for themselves using the answer key, or you can go over the answers with the whole class.
- When you are satisfied, you can ask students to go on to further exercises, while you monitor them as they work individually or in pairs, and assist where necessary.
- When they have completed the written exercises, students can often test themselves on the new vocabulary using the cover card enclosed with the book. The material has been designed so that students can usually cover the glossary definitions while they look at the target items, and test themselves; or cover the items and look at the definitions. This is a simple, quick, and easy way for learners to test themselves over and over again, so there is no pressure on you to keep searching for different exercises.
- After a period of time has elapsed, perhaps a couple of days or a week, you can use the review exercises for further consolidation and testing.
- You will often notice the headings 'About you' or 'About your country'. These indicate personalized exercises which give learners an opportunity to use the new vocabulary within the context of their own lives. Students can write answers to these, but they make ideal pair work activities for learners to practise their spoken English while using the new vocabulary. If you use these as speaking activities, students could then write their answers (or their partner's answers) as follow-up.

How can students use the material on their own?

The material has been designed so that it can be used effectively both in the classroom or by learners working alone. If working alone, learners should look at the Starter unit first. For self-study, we recommend that learners use the book alongside the CD-ROM, as it gives them a pronunciation model for every item of vocabulary, as well as further practice exercises. They can check their own answers and use the cover card to test themselves. One advantage of self-study learning is that students can select the topics that interest them, or the topics where they most need to expand their knowledge.

Starter: vocabulary at advanced level

Six steps to a wider vocabulary

Here are six ways to help you achieve a wider vocabulary, and become a more effective learner. Each one illustrates a feature of vocabulary learning which is given particular emphasis at the advanced level of *Oxford Word Skills*.

1 Adding new meanings to familiar words

An important part of vocabulary expansion is learning new meanings for familiar words.

What are the different meanings of **still** in these sentences?

(Go to Units 11, 28, and 64 to find or check the answers.)

*Come over here and stand **still**.* _____

*These apples are very nice, but the others are better **still**.* _____

*My arm's very sore after the accident. **Still**, it feels better than it did yesterday.* _____

2 Understanding the figurative meaning of vocabulary items

Many words have a literal meaning and a figurative meaning. For example, the literal meaning of *crawl* is to move forwards on your hands and knees, but we can also describe traffic as *crawling along the road*, which means that it is moving very slowly.

What is the figurative meaning of the words in bold in these sentences?

(Go to Units 39 and 42 to find or check the answers.)



*The contents of the report have already been **leaked** to the press.*



*Thousands of refugees are now **flooding** across the border.*



*The Trade Secretary could find herself under the **microscope**.*

3 Expanding your knowledge of collocation

These are common examples of collocation.

*She's an **old friend**.*

(= a friend I have known a long time)

*I **missed** the bus.*

(= I wasn't able to catch the bus)

*It's **highly unlikely** he'll come.*

(= it's very unlikely he'll come)

In English, we choose to combine certain words in order to express particular meanings. Other languages might choose different words to express the same ideas; for example, many languages would say *I lost the bus* where we say *I missed the bus*. Common collocations appear in all three levels of *Oxford Word Skills*, but in the Advanced there is an even greater emphasis on this aspect of vocabulary learning.

Can you complete the collocations in these sentences?

(Go to Units 4, 9, 45, and 50 to find or check the answers.)

*Last night we had **torrential** _____.*

*His mother is very elderly and needs **constant** _____.*

*If we work together on this, we'll be able to _____ our **resources**.*

*Do you think they'll be able to _____ the **deadlock**?*

4 Using a wider range of idiomatic expressions

At an advanced level you should be able to use a wider range of idiomatic expressions.

Can you complete these idioms? (Go to Units 39, 59, and 61 to find or check the answers.)

*It may seem a lot of money, but really it's just
a drop in the _____.*

*They're bound to win; it's a foregone
_____.*

*She might as well apply for the job; she's got
nothing to _____.*

*First and _____ we must decide what
to do.*

5 Vocabulary building

At the end of a glossary entry for a particular word, we often include related word forms. Here is an example from Unit 53.

Glossary

deteriorate	become worse. deterioration N.
interrogation	the process of asking sb a lot of questions, especially in an aggressive way. interrogate sb v.
catch sb out	make sb make a mistake which shows they have been lying.
humiliated	feeling ashamed because you have lost the respect of other people. humiliate sb v. humiliation N.
needless to say	obviously.

We also provide vocabulary building tables at the back of the book. Building word families is an easy way to expand your vocabulary and increase your range of expression.

Can you complete these sentences with the correct form of the word in capital letters? (Go to Units 36 and 71, and the vocabulary building tables on pages 207–8, to find or check the answers.)

*Most people find the treatment very
_____. THERAPY*

*His behaviour was very _____.
PROVOKE*

*They are sure to _____ the results
carefully. SCRUTINY*

*Some people prefer to maintain their
_____. ANONYMOUS*

6 Vocabulary expansion beyond the book

At this level, we have introduced a new feature called **more words**. After you have completed a unit and the review section for that unit, **more words** gives you an opportunity to expand your vocabulary further within the same topic or linguistic area. Here is an example, from Unit 9.

7 On a long walk, why might you alternate between walking and running? _____

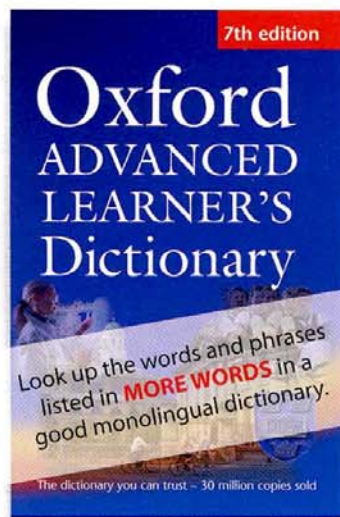
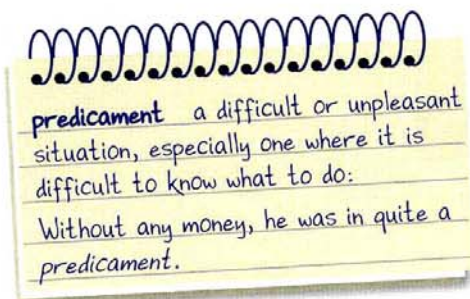
8 What should you do if you feel stiff? _____

A Z more words: *stumble, trudge, shuffle, meander, get a move on, stampede*

Unit 10

Suggested procedure with more words

- Look up the words and phrases listed in **more words** in a good monolingual dictionary. In the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, you will find that the meanings of the phrases are explained at the entry for the word in **bold**, although it may be different in some other dictionaries.
- Write the word or phrase in your notebook, then leave a small gap before adding the meaning of the item. Below the meaning, write an example sentence using the target word or phrase; take one from the dictionary, or write your own. For example:



The CD-ROM and cover card

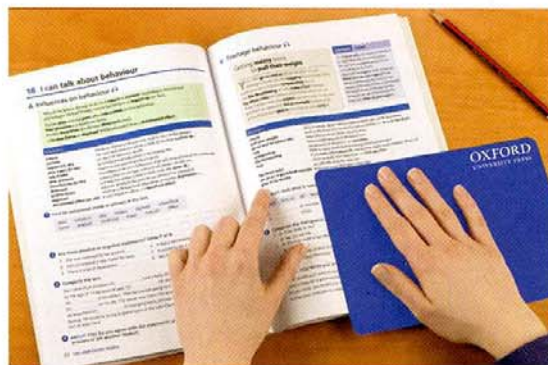
A Walking and running

Word	Example
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- You can use the **CD-ROM** to listen to the texts and dialogues, or to hear the words, and then practise the pronunciation. Or you can look at the **word list** (pages 236–56) to find out how to say the words.



Remember to test yourself



Use the **cover card** to test yourself when you have completed the exercises.

Abbreviations

N	noun	C	countable
V	verb	U	uncountable
ADJ	adjective	PP	past participle
ADV	adverb	AmE	American English
OPP	opposite	BrE	British English
SYN	synonym	sth	something (used in glossaries and tables)
INF	informal	sb	somebody (used in glossaries and tables)
FML	formal	etc.	You use 'etc.' at the end of a list to show there are other things, but you aren't going to say them all.
PL	plural	i.e.	that is
SING	singular	e.g.	for example
USU	usually		

1 I can talk about meaning and style

A Asking about meaning



- A Are the words **phase** and **stage** synonymous?
- B In one **sense**, they're **interchangeable**. They both mean a particular point in a process.
- A It's a bit **ambiguous** to say 'She's a good student', isn't it?
- B Yes, you can **interpret** it in different ways. *Good* can mean well behaved or hard-working.
- A The meaning of **wrapping paper** is **transparent**, isn't it?
- B Yes, it's **self-explanatory** – just paper for wrapping presents and stuff.
- A Can you give me a more **precise** definition of **soul**?
- B Well, it's **virtually** the same as **spirit** – the part of you that is believed to exist after you die. But it can also mean your inner character.

Glossary

synonymous	having the same, or nearly the same, meaning. synonym N.
sense	the meaning of a word or phrase.
interchangeable	if two things are interchangeable you can use one instead of the other and the effect will be the same.
ambiguous	not clear; able to be explained in different ways. ambiguity N.
interpret sth	decide that sth has a particular meaning. interpretation N.
transparent	(of language) easy to understand. opp opaque .
self-explanatory	easy to understand and not needing more explanation.
precise	clear and accurate. syn exact . precision N.
virtually	almost; very nearly (virtually the same/impossible/certain).

1 Is the meaning the same or different? Write S or D.

1	The meaning's virtually the same.	The meaning's opaque.	
2	This is the final phase of the project.	This is the final stage of the project.	
3	These two words are synonymous.	These two words mean the same.	
4	These phrases are self-explanatory.	These phrases are interchangeable.	
5	The meaning is ambiguous.	The meaning is exactly the same.	
6	What she said was quite transparent.	What she said was quite precise.	
7	The soul lives on after the body dies.	The spirit lives on after the body dies.	
8	The word <i>leg</i> has several senses.	The word <i>leg</i> has several meanings.	

2 Complete the sentences with the correct form of the word in capitals at the end.

- 1 If you want to make something clear, it's better to avoid _____. **AMBIGUOUS**
- 2 She always expresses herself with accuracy and _____. **PRECISE**
- 3 *Hide* and *conceal* are very similar, but not completely _____. **SYNONYM**
- 4 In most contexts, *get better* and *improve* are _____. **CHANGE**
- 5 I think this sentence is open to _____. **INTERPRET**
- 6 The instructions were _____; a child could understand them. **EXPLAIN**



B Explaining meaning and style

Word	Example	Meaning
irony <small>N</small> ironic <small>ADJ</small>	'Thank you, Sam,' she said, with heavy irony . In fact, Sam had hardly helped at all.	the use of words to say the opposite of what you mean, often humorously (a trace/hint of irony = a little irony).
sarcasm <small>N</small> sarcastic <small>ADJ</small>	'I've broken your CD.' 'Oh, that's just great,' was her sarcastic reply.	the use of words to say the opposite of what you mean in order to be unpleasant to sb or make fun of sb.
figurative	Slim is used figuratively in the sentence <i>Many firms are slimmer than they were.</i>	(of words) not used with their literal (= usual) meaning.
literary	<i>Heart</i> can be used in a literary way, e.g. <i>She put her hand on her heart.</i>	used of the kind of language you find in stories and poems.
disapproving	The dictionary marks <i>stupid</i> as ' disapproving '.	(often used in dictionaries) showing that sth is bad or wrong.
old-fashioned	<i>Spiffing</i> means 'great', but it's very old-fashioned .	no longer modern or fashionable. <small>SYN dated. OPP in current use.</small>
slang	In slang , <i>wicked</i> means 'very good'.	very informal words which are not suitable in formal situations.
pejorative	His pejorative comments about my essay upset me.	FML expressing disapproval or criticism. <small>SYN derogatory.</small>
insulting insult sb <small>V</small>	He called Mark an 'old woman': how insulting !	rude or offensive (deliberately/highly insulting).

spotlight **make fun of someone**

If you **make fun of** or **poke fun at** someone or something, you make jokes about them in an unkind way. To **mock** someone means to make fun of them, often by copying what they say or do.
Stop **making fun of** her! He's always **mocking** her country accent.

3 Circle the correct word(s). Sometimes both words are correct.

- The **literal** / **literary** meaning of curtain is 'a piece of cloth which covers a window'.
- The curtain fell on her career is **figurative** / **dated**, meaning 'her career ended'.
- I hate people **making** / **poking** fun of my pronunciation.
- She told him his acting was brilliant without a **hint** / **trace** of irony.
- He uses **sarcasm** / **old-fashioned** language as a way of insulting people.
- I got upset when my teacher **mocked** / **insulted** the way I pronounced 'castle'.
- He was being **ironic** / **sarcastic** – he didn't mean any harm.
- Telling me I was a second-rate journalist was **highly** / **deliberately** insulting.

4 Complete the sentences with a suitable word.

- The word *racist* has a negative meaning and is marked '_____ ' in the dictionary.
- Her written work is very _____: it's a bit like reading a novel by Charles Dickens!
- The children _____ fun of Josie because of her red hair; it was very cruel of them.
- My brother's lived abroad for years. He tends to use a lot of informal language and _____ which is not in _____ use, so some of his speech sounds rather _____.
- Does this phrase have a positive meaning, or is it _____?
- I know the literal meaning of *flood*, but what does it mean when it's used _____?

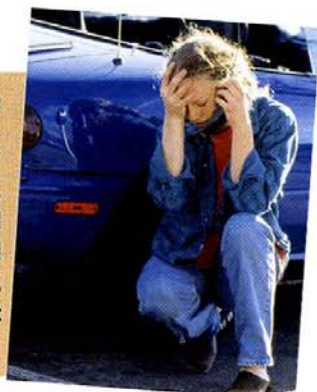


2 I can use familiar words in a new way

A Phrases and figurative meaning

Familiar words may appear with an unfamiliar meaning (often a figurative meaning), or surrounded by other words that form an idiom or set phrase.

As I **crawled** along the motorway, I was **having second thoughts** about staying with Marcus. I'd **been in two minds about** going in the first place, but it was **sweet of** him to invite me, and I **wasn't tied up**, so I said, 'Yes'. But now it **dawned on** me that he may have had an **ulterior motive**: he wanted to go out with me! How could I be so **thick**? Marcus was very nice, but a romantic relationship **was the last thing on my mind**. How can I **get out of** this, I wondered? Just as the traffic started to speed up, something went into the back of me and **sent** the car **flying** off the road. Dazed but OK, I pulled my mobile out of my bag. 'Is that you, Marcus? Listen, **you're not gonna believe this**, but ...'



Glossary

crawl	(of a vehicle) move very slowly.
have second thoughts	start having doubts about a decision you have made.
be in two minds about sth	be unable to decide what to do about sth.
sweet (of sb)	kind (of sb).
be tied up	be busy and unable to do other things.
dawn on sb	If sth dawns on you, you begin to realize it for the first time.
ulterior motive	a reason for doing sth that you keep hidden.
thick	INF stupid.
be the last thing on sb's mind	be the thing that sb is least likely to be thinking about.
get out of sth	avoid doing sth.
send sth/sb flying	make sth/sb move quickly and without control.
you're not gonna believe this	used to introduce surprising and often unwelcome news (gonna INF = going to).

1 Complete the dialogues with a word or phrase.

- Do you still want to go? ~ Actually, I'm having _____.
- Are you thinking of getting married? ~ That's the last thing _____!
- Do you want to go to the wedding? ~ No, but I can't _____ it.
- You're not gonna _____, but ... ~ You've lost my keys again! How could you?
- Did he bump into you? ~ Yes, he sent me _____ across the room.
- Are you going or not? ~ I'm afraid I'm still in _____ about it.
- I'm sure it's just an innocent request. ~ Mm. I think he has an _____ motive.
- Could we talk about it this morning? ~ I'm afraid I'm _____ this morning.

2 Complete the sentences using words from the glossary with their more common meanings.

- She's only eight months old, so she's still _____ across the living room floor.
- It's a very _____ book: almost 1,000 pages.
- These oranges are lovely; they're very _____.
- The men were _____, with both hands behind their backs.
- The morning _____ with a clear blue sky after the storm.

