

A What dictionaries do I need?

A **bilingual** dictionary [using two languages] is easy for you to understand, and quick and easy to use. A dictionary in English will give you reading practice in English and many more examples of how words are used. If possible, use both. These are good dictionaries in English for your level, and most of them are available online:

Cambridge Learner's Dictionary
Longman Active Study Dictionary

Oxford Wordpower Dictionary
Macmillan Essential Dictionary

B Information in dictionaries

If you **look up a word** [find a word in a dictionary] using the *Cambridge Learner's Dictionary*, the information is shown like this:

The screenshot shows the dictionary entry for 'fun'. Annotations point to various parts of the entry:

- pronunciation using phonemic symbols (see page 247)**: Points to the phonetic transcription /fʌn/.
- a definition explains the meaning**: Points to the first definition: 'enjoyment or pleasure, or something that gives you enjoyment or pleasure'.
- bold italics show common word partners (see Unit 74)**: Points to the example sentence 'She's **great fun** to be with.'
- part of speech (= noun)**: Points to the word 'noun' in the header.
- [U] tells you that fun is uncountable (see Unit 86)**: Points to the symbol '[U]'.
- fixed phrases using the word are shown in bold (see Units 75-6)**: Points to the phrase 'Have **fun**!'.
- examples are in italics**: Points to the example sentence 'The other children at school used to *make fun of his hair*.'

3.1 Correct the spelling mistakes. Use a dictionary to check your answers.

- | | | | |
|----------------|---------------|----------------|--|
| 1 allways | <i>always</i> | 6 confortable | |
| 2 really | | 7 accomodation | |
| 3 unfortunatly | | 8 beautifull | |
| 4 expecially | | 9 unbeleivable | |
| 5 cloths | | 10 neccesary | |

3.2 In the word *island* /'aɪlənd/, the letter 's' is silent (not pronounced). Use your dictionary to find the silent letters in these words.

- 1 knee 2 comb 3 castle 4 salmon 5 receipt



C Defining words

'Defining words' are words that dictionaries use when they **define** [explain] the words in the dictionary. Some of these are quite common.

emphasise [give something more attention and importance], e.g. My teacher has always emphasised the importance of writing down new words in a notebook.

relating to or connected to/with [having a relationship with someone or something], e.g. *musical* is connected with / related to *music*

amount [how much there is of something], e.g. £5 million is a large amount of money.

official [done by the government or someone in authority], e.g. A passport is an official document.

behave [do or say things in a particular way], e.g. People can behave strangely when they're nervous.

Exercises

3.3 Complete the dictionary definitions using words from the box.

connected with emphasise relating to behave official amount

- 1 **industrial** / in'dʌstriəl/ 1 adjective *connected with* industry
- 2 **sum** /sʌm/ noun [C] an of money
- 3 **pretend** /prɪ'tend/ verb [I,T] to as if something is true when it is not
- 4 **certificate** /sə'tɪfɪkət/ noun [C] an document that gives details to show something is true
- 5 **not at all** /nɒt ət ɔ:l/ used instead of 'no' or 'not' to what you are saying: I'm not at all happy about it
- 6 **legal** /'li:gəl/ adjective the law

D

Using a dictionary

- When you use a dictionary to check the meaning of a word, put a **tick** (✓) next to it. Each time you return to a page with a tick, **see** [find out] if you remember the word.
- When you meet a new word or phrase in a text, first try to **guess the meaning** [try to think of the meaning when you don't know it]. Then, use a dictionary to see if your **guess** was correct.
- Don't just read the dictionary definition. Example phrases and sentences show you how a word or phrase is used, and they help you to understand the meaning more clearly.
- If you look up a word in a bilingual dictionary and get two or three different translations, check these words in an English dictionary to see which translation is the best one for the situation.
- Remember that many words have more than one meaning. The first meaning in the dictionary is not always the one you want. You may need to read through the different meanings.

3.4 Answer the questions, and use an English dictionary to check the answers.

- 1 What does *puppy* mean? *It's a very young dog.*
- 2 Is the correct spelling *organize* or *organise*?
- 3 What part of speech is *extremely*?
- 4 What kind of noun is *advice*?
- 5 What preposition follows the verb *rely*?
- 6 Look up *friend*, and then the words in **bold** that are often used with it. Can you complete these phrases? *She's an friend; he's my friend; you friends with people.*

3.5 Match the sentences on the right with the different meanings of **post** on the left.

post¹ /pəʊst/ noun

1 System [no plural] UK (US mail) the system for sending letters, parcels, etc <i>Your letter is in the post.</i> <i>I'm sending the documents by post.</i>	3 Job [c] formal a job <i>A part-time post.</i> <i>A teaching post.</i>
2 Letters [u] UK (US mail) letters, parcels, etc that you send or receive <i>Has the post arrived/come yet?</i>	4 Pole [c] a long, vertical piece of wood or metal fixed into the ground at one end. <i>I found the dog tied to a post.</i>

- 1 He's applied for a post overseas.
- 2 Did you send the cheque by post?
- 3 I tied the flag to a post.
- 4 We haven't had any post yet.