

Alphabetical Order

Since the words in a dictionary are entered in alphabetical order, your speed in locating any one of them will depend on how well you know your alphabet. You are not through with alphabetical order when you find the section of words beginning with a particular letter. The words within each section are entered according to the order of the first letter, the next letter, and so on. For example, *pen* comes after *pat*, because *e* follows *a*. In words like *about* and *absent*, you have to go to the third letter in order to place the word.

EXERCISE 1. Arranging Words in Alphabetical Order.

Number your paper 1–5. Working as rapidly as you can, put each of the following rows of words in dictionary order after the proper number.

- | | | | | |
|-------------|--------|-----------|---------|----------|
| 1. bottom | butter | boil | bread | build |
| 2. even | envy | evil | ever | event |
| 3. carriage | callow | cartwheel | carried | careful |
| 4. dome | dog | doll | doltish | dominion |
| 5. ski | slight | skillful | sky | skin |

Phrase Entries

Most of the entries in a dictionary are single words. Sometimes, however, two or more words are used together with a special meaning (*plum pudding*, *baker's dozen*, *Roman numeral*, etc.). Such words are entered in the dictionary as though they were spelled as one word. For example, *Roman numeral* comes after *romance* but before *romantic* because the *n* in *numeral* comes after *c* but before *t*. In this case, it is the sixth letter that decides.

Abbreviations

Some dictionaries include abbreviations in the main body of the book, while others group all of them in a special section at the back. It is likely that the dictionary you are using this year defines abbreviations right along with other words. If this is the case, you will find an abbreviation in the place it would naturally fall in alphabetical order. That is, you will find *lb.*, the abbreviation for *pound*, right after *lazy*.

EXERCISE 2. Arranging Words in Alphabetical Order.

Number your paper 1–24 and arrange the following words in alphabetical order.

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|----------|-------------|------------|-----------|
| dryer | anthem | boiler | quill |
| another | village | threadbare | threat |
| quilt | jackknife | position | nose dive |
| latitude | dry cell | Dr. | thresh |
| nosy | jack rabbit | no. | villager |
| lately | nuclear | already | dry goods |