



Shorter Oxford English Dictionary: Sixth Edition

By William R. Trumble

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Editorial Review

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In hardcover it takes up two thick volumes, but on CD-ROM you get the same 7.5 million words of text (with half a million definitions and 83,000 quotations) on a thin compact disc. The computerized *New SOED* is a great pleasure. It readily accomplishes the simple task of looking up a word, providing definition, usage, and simple etymology. But the program also searches by anagram and by rhyme, by quotation and by etymology. Perusing the headword group is like flipping the pages. In this fashion, I ran across "nesh" (soft--in consistency, mind, or morals), "convell" (refute completely) and "xoanon" (primitive carved statue of a deity). My Scrabble game is getting less nesh all the time. --*Stephanie Gold*

From Library Journal

The contents of this disc match that of its print counterpart of the same name (edited by Lesley Brown, 1997). Having said that, it's hard to believe this is a "shorter" dictionary: there are 7.5 million words on the disc, 500,000 definitions, and 83,000 quotations to illustrate meanings in context. You can approach these words in four ways: simple search (type in your word for a definition), index search (to look for headwords, derivatives, abbreviations, phrases and compound words, uses and references, and other word forms), full-text search (to search all text, etymological text, definitions, or quotations), and special search (to search for anagrams, rhymes, and phonetics). It may take a bit of hunting under those four groups to find a form-specific search that suits, but how remarkable that Oxford has made it possible within just two levels of looking. Nice features include two wildcards (*) and (?) that work at the beginning, end, or middle of words, as well as a link feature that lets you use the dictionary within several word processors such as MS Word for Windows 6 and 7, WordPerfect 6.0 and 6.1, and Ami Pro 3.1. Bottom Line: What's extraordinary about this disc is how well it will serve all types of users, from those with the most casual reference question to the scholarly student of the English language. It is highly recommended for all types of libraries and personal collections.

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Review

'Review from previous edition The Shorter demands a shelf, but one very close to the desk of anyone who cares about words.

Daily Telegraph

'The Shorter is the Matterhorn to the great OED's Everest - elegant, awesome and marvelous to behold, differing only in size. A stupendous achievement.

Simon Winchester, author of *The Professor and the Madman*

'It may be difficult to carry, but not to read

Erich Segal, *Times Literary Supplement*

'It must be difficult trying to come up with a bright marketing technique to sell the fifth edition of the Shorter Oxford English Dictionary ...but the OUP seems to have managed it. On the box housing the two volumes of this mighty enterprise is a picture of a white-bearded gentleman in a

cloak who, at first blush, appears to be J. K. Rowling's Albus Dumbledore. However, it is Sir James Murray (1837-1915), the first Editor of the real, 21-volume Oxford English Dictionary, of which the Shorter is an honest abridgement. More than half a million definitions are presented in clear type, set big enough for all but the most long-sighted.

Chris Campling, Times

‘. . . truly a dictionary of global English.

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‘Even at a fraction of its original bulk, the premier collection of English words manages to squeeze in over a third of the original's content, including its hallmark: minute etymological details.

US News and World Reports

‘The Shorter is a mine of information'

Toronto Star

‘. . . astonishingly good value . . . the new SOED is all that one would expect of it.

Keith Waterhouse, Daily Mail

‘It is a dictionary with zest . . . a rare treasure.

Frank Devine, The Australian

‘The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary redefines hip.

The New York Post

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Cheryl Stone:

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