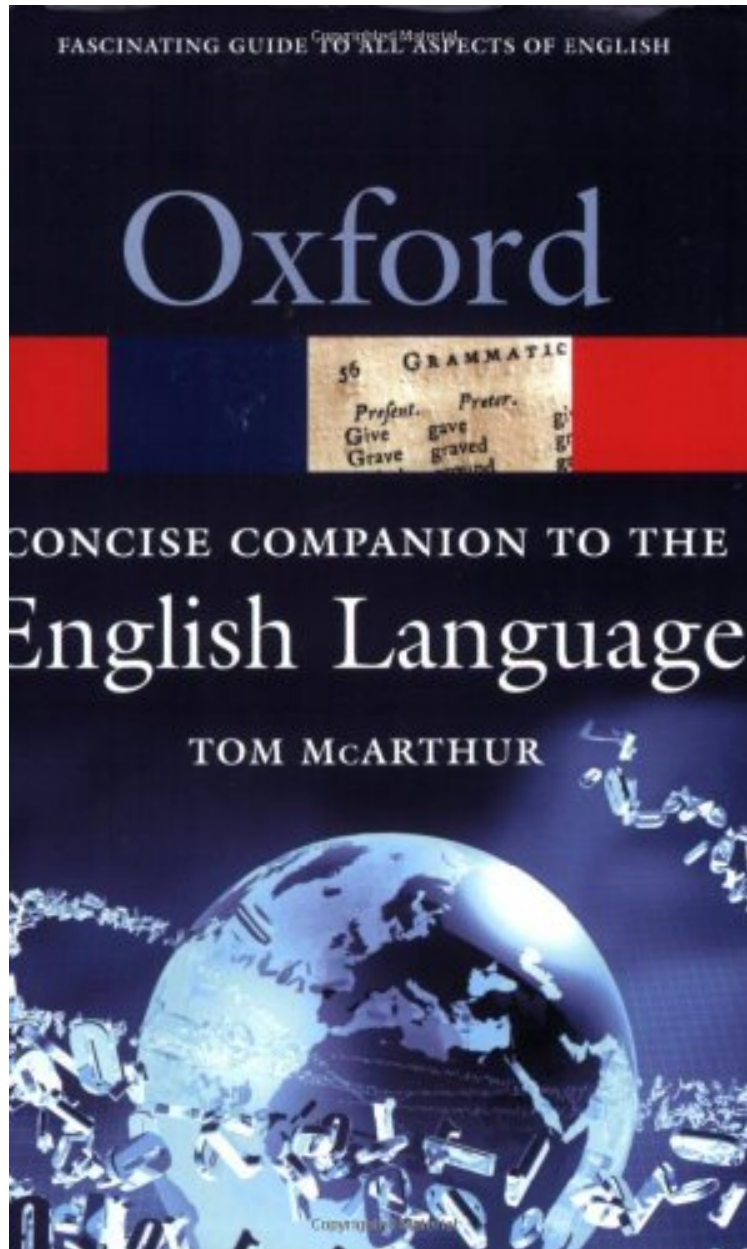


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Oxford Companion to the English Language (Oxford Quick Reference):

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. The Title Really Does Say It All ...By RayThis is really a unique and useful book if you ever wish to learn, or check up on, nearly anything related to the English language. Its not a dictionary of words, nor is it really an encyclopedia (although it takes on the encyclopedic format), but is rather a surprisingly comprehensive and excellently presented discussion into all things English. Entries cover everything from linguistic terms and concepts, history of the language, key persons, terminology, lexical terms, and much more. Do you want to know what an "inflected" language is? Its here. Need a refresher on "Ablative" and "Dative" cases? Its here. Want to more fully understand the subjective mood? Its here. The Queen's English Society? Shibboleth? Cryptography? Cleft Sentence? Stative Verbs? They're all here, and much, much more. The entires for each of these topics are very well written, with just the right balance between theoretical and applied information so that you can both understand the concept and see how it is applied. As one might expect from a work written by Oxford on the subject of the English language, the entries are extremely well written, with excellent clarity that is nevertheless not watered down to meet some common denominator. Its a great reference book for whenever you need to look up a term or concept that you wish to understand more fully, but, in reality, the book is so well written and covers such an expansive set of knowledge that it can also be used just for picking up, flipping open to a random page, and then reading an entry. The learning you can achieve can be done so with a great amount of enjoyment. I bought this book when it first came out in 1992, and when it was running about \$20 for the paperback edition. It's a large book (1,100 pages), and so the price seemed reasonable, and I was never disappointed I had picked up the text. I see that now used copies of the book can be picked up for almost nothing at all (and that includes both the hardback and the paperback editions). If you are interested in English, need a companion reference, or just wish to play around and extend your learning about the subject, this is one of the best places to start. Five stars. Some More of the Entries in the Book (there are over 3,500 total entries) ...- Apronym- Bible- Bloomfield, Leonard- Canadian English- Celtic Languages- Clipping- Eye rhyme- Geminatio- Grimm's Law- Humor- Johnsonian- Language Teaching- Lingua Franca- Magazine- Mumbo Jumbo- Pitch- Vowel Quality- Word- ZeugmaSee Also:Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Sixth EditionThe Chicago Manual of Style, 16th Edition0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A guide for the literate, who perhaps already know much of itBy ((Marco Buendia))This book covers just about all areas of linguistics: historical, grammatical, social, regional etc, as they are instanced specifically in the English language. Material is brought in, as well, from those languages that have exercised more or less direct influence on English. Moreover, it extends its reach from that base into literature in a way that would have seemed, at one time, unproblematically appropriate to educated speakers of English who were, in addition, literate. At one time, education and literacy went together, but now, for younger people in the English-speaking countries, probably not. These younger people might now be uniformly bored by the book for the same reason their parents were uniformly entertained. In any event, we get Caxton, the Bible, Macaulay, Gothic and more in such directions. There is a slight specifically British orientation, but not more than was characteristic of Oxford in those days (1996), and it will only bother the intellectual progeny of Colonel McCormick. I am usually of the mind that when something is good, more is better (at least in books), but I'm inclined to say that this "Concise" version is more usable and entertaining than the larger work from which it presumably sprang. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. For Those Who Love Our LanguageBy Anne MillsA one-volume encyclopedia of the English language. It is called a "companion", but is most accurately a one-volume encyclopedia -- more so than David Crystal's "Cambridge Encyclopedia of the EL", which is really a survey. The Oxford version has hundreds of short articles, alphabetically arranged, over a wide range of linguistic topics, general as well as particular to English. (The Cambridge version has longer articles, and is thematically arranged). The Oxford is more useful for specific reference: the Cambridge for browsing. Both are very good books, and both belong in the libraries of language mavens.

The Concise Companion to the English Language is a language lover's dream. Tom McArthur unveils a thousand-page cornucopia covering virtually every aspect of the English language as well as language in general. He covers a variety of topics, from Abbreviations to split infinitives, and includes substantial entries on key subjects such as African English, etymology, Pidgin, poetry, sexism, and slang. In addition, the Companion provides bibliographies for the larger entries, generous cross-referencing, etymologies for headwords, a chronology of English from Roman times to 1990, and an index of peopple who appear in entries or bibliographies. Packed with delightful surprises, the Companion will be an invaluable resource and a fascinating read for anyone with an interest in the English Language.

From Library JournalIf a telephone reference caller asks what deconstructionism is--or for the difference between a spondee and a dactyl, or for a clarification of Nice-Nellyism or the Gunning Fog Index--this is the source to reach for. The range here is wonderfully broad: language history, dialects, grammar, style, rhetoric, and so forth. A typical Oxford "Companion," this is both authoritative and fun. Articles are thorough, concise, and signed; cross-referencing is excellent; the ancient and au courant receive equal treatment; and the scope is global. Some will quibble (yes,

quibble has an entry, but it's a cross reference to pun); e.g., sundry authors who "influenced the shape or study of language" have entries, so that Mary Wollstonecraft is listed but Ruskin is not (although "Pathetic Fallacy" is). And the occasional bibliographies are perfunctory afterthoughts. Nevertheless, this is a fine book for reference and browsing. Highly recommended.- Robert E. Brown, Onondaga Cty. P.L., Syracuse, N.Y. Copyright 1992 Reed Business Information, Inc. Praise for The Oxford Companion to the English Language: "This is one of the big dreams for most writers, for an addition to their research shelf. It's the ultimate in authority for spelling, definition, and first use."--The San Diego Tribune "A superb survey."--Library Journal "Invaluable."--Choice About the Author Tom McArthur, former Professor of English at the University of Quebec, is editor of the journal English Today and the full Oxford Companion to the English Language.