

## How to Use this Spelling Dictionary

Correct spellings, and misspellings, are arranged in alphabetical order down the left-hand column of each half of the page. Each misspelling (printed in **RED**) has its correct spelling (printed in **BLACK**) alongside it in the right-hand column.

### *First Step*

- To make it easier to find the word the Quartiles (4 parts) of the dictionary, A–D, E–M, N–S and T–Z, are highlighted by a coloured tint on the page edge.
- Think of the first two letters or first syllable (chunk) of the word you are looking for and look for the correct part of the alphabet in the *Dictionary*.
- Go down the left-hand columns until you find the word you are looking for.
- If the word is written in **red**, then your spelling is wrong.
- You need to look across to the right hand column to find the correct spelling of the word in **black**.

### *Second Step*

- If the word you are looking for has a number or a symbol after it, look down at the **KEYS** at the bottom of the pages so you can find out what the number or symbol stands for.
- The numbers give you more help in spelling other forms of the word.
- The stars \* are used when there are two or more words that look or sound alike. After a \* you will find a descriptor [brief meaning] so you can choose the correct spelling to use.
- A plus sign + in the right hand column means that you will find more information about the word when you look it up in its correct place in the alphabet.

### *Third Step*

- Sometimes you need to add a word ending or another word. When there is just a tilde (~) between the main word and the next part, you simply put the two parts together (without a space or hyphen):  
For example:  
careful ~ly ~ness

Add **ly** to **careful** to spell **carefully**.

Add **ness** to **careful** to spell **carefulness**.

When there is a tilde and a hyphen (~-), you put a hyphen in between the two parts:

For example:

pay ~-off

semi ~-final

Add **-off** to **pay** to spell **pay-off**.

Add **-final** to **semi** to spell **semi-final**.

When there is a tilde and a vertical line (~|), you keep the two words separate:

For example:

hot ~| dog

false ~| alarm

Keep **hot** and **dog** as separate words to write **hot dog**.

Keep **false** and **alarm** as separate words to write **false alarm**.

**Remember the Symbols Keys at the bottom of every page are there to refer to. They are also printed on the last page of the book.**

### *Correct Spelling of Suffixes*

The Numbers Key gives you the rules for adding suffixes (the letters on the ends of words which make new words).

~**ing** is used to form the present participle of regular verbs.

~**ed** is used to form the past tense or past participle of regular verbs.

~**er** and ~**est** are used to form comparative and superlative adjectives.

~**er** is also used to form operators (e.g. report ~er = reporter).

~**ly** is used to form adverbs.

~**ness** is used to form nouns.

### *Correct Spelling of Plurals*

You can add 's' to any noun to make a plural unless different information is given.

For example:

octopus<sup>5</sup>

The 5 after the word means you must add **es** to make the correct plural of **octopuses**.

The only time the plural is given is when the plural of a word does not follow any of the rules given in the KEYS.

For example:

curriculum curricula  
crisis crises

### *Words that Can be Confused with Others*

People confuse some words because:

#### **The words sound exactly the same.**

For example:

**there** and **their**

“I saw him place the plank over **there**.”

“We gave them **their** money back.”

#### **The words sound similar.**

For example:

**beside** meaning **at the side of**

**besides** meaning **as well as**

By spelling a word wrongly, you may accidentally write another word that sounds the same but has a quite different meaning.

For example:

**byte** for **bite**

**brood** for **brewed**

### *Use of \* and Descriptors*

When two words could be confused you will find them next to each other, with a star and a simple descriptor. The descriptor gives you a pointer to help you pick the word you want to use.

For example:

bite \*[teeth]

byte \*[data]

brood<sup>1</sup> \*[think, family]

brewed \*[beer, coffee]

### *Becoming a Successful Dictionary User*

The *Dictionary of Perfect Spelling* has proved in the past that it can motivate poor spellers to check words independently. You can improve your spelling by using whatever basic knowledge you have. As you become used to following the Keys, you will soon learn the rules. Learning to spell correctly often means the difference between passing or failing an exam, getting a higher grade, or getting your job application to the top of the pile! Just remember, this special spelling dictionary is much easier to use on your own than a normal dictionary. Not only do you have many special features to help you get word endings correct, but you also have several chances of finding what you are looking for instead of only one!