

# Words You Need to Know

## Frequently misspelled words:

across	laboratory
address	laugh
again	league
agreeable	maintenance
allot	minute
already	misspell
answer	noticeable
apparent	occurrence
appearance	often
athlete	parallel
balloon	pastime
believable	possess
bureau	privilege
business	probably
college	ready
commitment	receipt
concede	recommend
conscientious	said
cousin	satellite
debt	schedule
definite	secretary
different	separate
does (v.)	sheriff
eligible	sincerely
embarrass	succeed
exceed	sure
exhilarate	trouble
familiar	truly
February	usually
foreign	vacuum
forty	vegetable
grammar	villain
half	visible
independence	Wednesday
interesting	weird
its	whose
knowledge	

## Homonyms often misused:

accept - except  
aisle - isle  
bare - bear  
born - borne  
capital - capitol  
cash - cache  
ceiling - sealing  
cellar - seller  
censor - censer - senser - sensor  
cereal - serial  
coarse - course  
colonel - kernel  
complement - compliment  
council - counsel  
elicit - illicit  
forth - fourth  
herd - heard

hole - whole  
horse - hoarse  
lean - lien  
led - lead (n.)  
naval - navel  
ought - aught  
principal - principle  
recede - reseed  
right - rite  
sight - site - cite  
stationary - stationery  
straight - strait  
their - there  
ware - wear - where  
weather - whether  
wright - write - rote - wrote  
yore - your

## Commonly confused words:

advice - advise  
allusion - illusion  
amoral - immoral  
affect (v.) - effect (n.)  
averse - adverse  
biannual - biennial  
breath - breathe  
choose - chose  
climactic - climatic  
collaborate - corroborate  
conscience - conscious  
convince - persuade  
desert - dessert  
device - devise  
emigrate - immigrate  
flaunt - flout  
founder - flounder

gambit - gamut  
imply - infer  
irritate - aggravate  
later - latter  
liable - libel  
loose - lose  
marital - martial  
moot - mute  
nauseated - nauseous  
perspective - prospective  
proceed - precede  
proscribe - prescribe  
quiet - quite  
recall - recount  
tenant - tenet  
than - then

# Words from Latin

No language has been more influential in the development of English than Latin. There are two reasons for this. First, when the French conquered England in 1066, their language was very similar to Latin, and French remained England's official language for 200 years. Second, Latin was, until relatively recently, the language of culture, religion, education, and science in the Western world. It is still used today to name newly discovered species of plants and animals and to form some compound words in various scientific and technological fields.

## Study Words

- |    |               |    |                 |
|----|---------------|----|-----------------|
| 1  | inane         | 31 | condolences [4] |
| 2  | relevant      | 32 | benefactor      |
| 3  | impetuous     | 33 | candidate       |
| 4  | ambivalent    | 34 | bugle           |
| 5  | dejected      | 35 | formidable      |
| 6  | postmortem    | 36 | canary          |
| 7  | incriminate   | 37 | subterfuge      |
| 8  | access        | 38 | abdicate        |
| 9  | plausible     | 39 | lunatic         |
| 10 | interrupt [1] | 40 | carnivore [5]   |
| 11 | alliteration  | 41 | gregarious      |
| 12 | refugee       | 42 | ostentatious    |
| 13 | amicable      | 43 | prosaic [6]     |
| 14 | lucid [2]     | 44 | herbivore       |
| 15 | percolate     | 45 | prodigal        |
| 16 | meticulous    | 46 | magnanimous     |
| 17 | fastidious    | 47 | benevolent      |
| 18 | trajectory    | 48 | mercurial       |
| 19 | animosity     | 49 | simile          |
| 20 | implement     | 50 | jovial          |
| 21 | ambiguity     | 51 | ridiculous      |
| 22 | curriculum    | 52 | innate          |
| 23 | omnivorous    | 53 | obstinate       |
| 24 | bellicose     | 54 | discern         |
| 25 | electoral     | 55 | mediocre        |
| 26 | crescent [3]  | 56 | insidious       |
| 27 | obsequious    | 57 | rupture         |
| 28 | transect      | 58 | precipitate     |
| 29 | precipice     | 59 | erudite         |
| 30 | susceptible   | 60 | colloquial      |

- |    |               |     |               |
|----|---------------|-----|---------------|
| 61 | intractable   | 92  | aquatic       |
| 62 | exuberant [7] | 93  | igneous       |
| 63 | ingenious     | 94  | reptile       |
| 64 | retrospective | 95  | providence    |
| 65 | ominous       | 96  | message       |
| 66 | vulnerable    | 97  | foliate       |
| 67 | omnipotent    | 98  | nasal         |
| 68 | consensus     | 99  | opera         |
| 69 | discipline    | 100 | renovate      |
| 70 | alleviate     | 101 | credentials   |
| 71 | spectrum      | 102 | temporal      |
| 72 | prescription  | 103 | canine        |
| 73 | capitulation  | 104 | measure       |
| 74 | incredulous   | 105 | credible      |
| 75 | affinity      | 106 | femininity    |
| 76 | necessary     | 107 | confidence    |
| 77 | adjacent      | 108 | triumvirate   |
| 78 | dissect       | 109 | popularity    |
| 79 | conjecture    | 110 | diary         |
| 80 | imperative    | 111 | humble        |
| 81 | predicate     | 112 | vivisection   |
| 82 | corporal      | 113 | strict        |
| 83 | patina        | 114 | prosecute     |
| 84 | Capricorn     | 115 | contiguous    |
| 85 | participant   | 116 | ductile       |
| 86 | library       | 117 | gradient      |
| 87 | cognition     | 118 | current       |
| 88 | primal        | 119 | perfidy       |
| 89 | filament      | 120 | fidelity      |
| 90 | unity         | 121 | incorruptible |
| 91 | ventilate     |     |               |

### Challenge Words

- |   |                |    |               |
|---|----------------|----|---------------|
| 1 | soliloquy      | 8  | belligerent   |
| 2 | accommodate    | 9  | vernacular    |
| 3 | pernicious [8] | 10 | infinitesimal |
| 4 | efficacy       | 11 | recalcitrant  |
| 5 | visceral       | 12 | innocuous     |
| 6 | exacerbate     | 13 | precocious    |
| 7 | indigenous     | 14 | ameliorate    |

15 commensurate  
16 facetious  
17 prerogative  
18 ubiquitous  
19 egregious

20 aggregate  
21 tertiary  
22 corpuscle  
23 perennial

## Spelling Tips

- 1 One of the hardest things to remember about words from Latin is whether an internal consonant (like rr in interrupt) is doubled. To reinforce your memory of the correct spelling, try to remember related words all together (like interrupt along with interruption or necessary along with necessity).
- 2 The \ü\ sound (as in ooze) is nearly always spelled with u in words from Latin. It typically follows a \d\, \j\, \l\, \r\, or \s\ sound. After other consonants, this sound normally becomes \yü\ (as in bugle, subterfuge, ambiguity, and prosecute and in one pronunciation of refugee).
- 3 Beware of words like crescent in which the \s\ sound is spelled with sc in words from Latin. Other examples include visceral, discern, discipline, susceptible, and corpuscle.
- 4 When you hear within a word from Latin the \s\ sound followed by any of the sounds of e (long, short, or schwa), there's a possibility that the \s\ sound is spelled with c as in exacerbate, access, adjacent, condolences, facetious, and necessary.
- 5 The letter i is a vowel often used to connect two Latin word elements. If the connecting vowel sound is a schwa (\ə\), and you must guess at the spelling of this sound, the letter i might be a good guess: See carnivore and herbivore. Other examples include non-study-list words that end in iform such as oviform and pediform.
- 6 The letter k rarely appears in words from Latin, and its sound is nearly always represented by c as in canary, prosaic, canine, mediocre, Capricorn, cognition, ductile, incorruptible, vernacular, innocuous, and many other words on the list.
- 7 The letter x often gets the pronunciation \gz\ in words from Latin (as in exacerbate and exuberant).
- 8 The combination ious ends many adjectives of Latin origin. When the consonant that precedes ious is c or t, the sound of the final syllable is \shəs\ as in facetious, ostentatious, pernicious, and precocious. It is important to keep in mind that several adjectives from Latin ending with this sound end in eous rather than ious. In such instances, the definitions of the words usually contain phrases such as "consisting of," "resembling," or "having the characteristic of." Examples include non-study-list words herbaceous, cetaceous, and lilaceous.

# Words from Arabic

Words from Arabic have come into English in two different ways. A relative few, in more modern times, have made the jump directly as loanwords. In these instances, Arabic had a name for something that was either unknown in English or lacked a name. The more frequent route of Arabic words into English was in previous eras, often traveling through other languages on the way. For that reason the spelling of Arabic words in English is not consistent, but there are nevertheless a few clues that you can watch out for.

## Study Words

1	azure	27	nabob
2	Islamic	28	giraffe
3	sultan	29	mattress
4	artichoke	30	elixir
5	mummy [1]	31	saffron
6	tarragon	32	cotton
7	adobe	33	albatross [3]
8	mohair	34	zero
9	borax	35	safari [4]
10	talc	36	magazine
11	arsenal	37	zenith
12	lemon	38	alfalfa
13	tuna	39	imam
14	admiral	40	mosque
15	hazard	41	alcohol
16	apricot	42	tariff
17	carmine	43	lilac
18	monsoon	44	alcove
19	average	45	massage
20	gazelle [2]	46	henna [5]
21	crimson	47	alchemy
22	orange	48	sugar
23	sequin	49	taj
24	macrame	50	mahal
25	algebra	51	khan
26	guitar	52	ghoul

## Challenge Words

1	muslin	7	julep
2	camphor	8	marzipan
3	algorithm	9	nenuphar
4	minaret	10	alcazar
5	tamarind	11	tahini
6	carafe	12	Qatari

13	alkali	23	Swahili
14	serendipity	24	serdab
15	nadir	25	mihrab
16	douane	26	salaam
17	fennec	27	mukhtar
18	hafiz	28	khori
19	azimuth	29	foggara
20	bezoar	30	diffa
21	halal	31	coffle
22	alim		

## Spelling Tips

- 1 Double consonants are often seen in words from Arabic. More often than not, they occur in the middle of a word as in mummy, cotton, henna, foggara, coffle, tarragon, and several other words on the list. Their appearance at the end of a word (as in albatross and tariff) is usually because of the spelling conventions of English or some other language that the word passed through to get here.
- 2 A typical word from Arabic has three consonant sounds, with or without vowels between them. Gazelle, safari, talc, carafe, mahal, tahini, alkali, hafiz, and salaam are typical examples.
- 3 Note how many words on this list begin with al: This spelling can be traced to the definite article al ("the") in Arabic, which sometimes gets borrowed along with a word. Most of the time the spelling is al in English, but note el in elixir.
- 4 A long e sound (ē) at the end of a word from Arabic is often spelled with i as in safari and several other words on the list but may also be spelled with y as in mummy and alchemy.
- 5 The schwa sound (ə) at the end of a word from Arabic is usually spelled with a as in henna, tuna, algebra, alfalfa, foggara, and diffa.

## Words from Asian Languages

When English-speaking people—mainly the British—began to trade with the Indian subcontinent and the Far East, it was necessary to find words for many things never before encountered, whether foods, plants, animals, clothing, or events. Many words that were borrowed from Asian languages as a result of trade have become well established in English, and the process continues today. It is difficult to find reliable patterns to help you spell these words because they were borrowed at different times by different people.

### Study Words

1	dugong	4	seersucker
2	guru	5	jungle
3	cushy	6	oolong

- |    |            |    |           |
|----|------------|----|-----------|
| 7  | nirvana    | 21 | gunnysack |
| 8  | bangle     | 22 | chutney   |
| 9  | cummerbund | 23 | karma     |
| 10 | juggernaut | 24 | jute      |
| 11 | pangolin   | 25 | yamen     |
| 12 | mahatma    | 26 | raj       |
| 13 | rupee      | 27 | kama      |
| 14 | mongoose   | 28 | pundit    |
| 15 | shampoo    | 29 | loot      |
| 16 | typhoon    | 30 | kavya     |
| 17 | bamboo     | 31 | jiva      |
| 18 | jackal     | 32 | pandit    |
| 19 | dungaree   | 33 | chintz    |
| 20 | bungalow   | 34 | patel     |

### Challenge Words

- |    |          |    |         |
|----|----------|----|---------|
| 1  | gymkhana | 11 | charpoy |
| 2  | basmati  | 12 | durwan  |
| 3  | gingham  | 13 | mahout  |
| 4  | mandir   | 14 | prabhu  |
| 5  | bhalu    | 15 | Buddha  |
| 6  | gourami  | 16 | topeng  |
| 7  | masala   | 17 | tanha   |
| 8  | raita    | 18 | lahar   |
| 9  | asana    | 19 | jnana   |
| 10 | batik    | 20 | Holi    |

## Words from French

Before the Modern English that we speak today was fully settled, the French of the Middle Ages—a direct offshoot of Latin—was widely spoken in the British Isles, as a result of the conquest of Britain by France in 1066. English is so rich in vocabulary today partly because we often have words with similar or overlapping meanings, one of which came via the Germanic route (that is, from Anglo-Saxon or another Germanic language) and one via French. So, for example, we may call the animal a *hog* (Old English), but the meat it produces is *pork* (from French).

Today, English words with French credentials are everywhere in English. Our pronunciation of vowels and consonants is quite different from the modern French of today, but there are many consistent spelling patterns that can help us make educated guesses about how to spell words that come from French.



## Study Words

- |    |             |    |              |
|----|-------------|----|--------------|
| 1  | peloton     | 35 | collage [6]  |
| 2  | barrage     | 36 | amenable     |
| 3  | chagrin [1] | 37 | expertise    |
| 4  | pacifism    | 38 | matinee      |
| 5  | manicure    | 39 | plateau      |
| 6  | altruism    | 40 | sortie       |
| 7  | bureaucracy | 41 | croquette    |
| 8  | mascot      | 42 | physique [7] |
| 9  | parfait     | 43 | elite        |
| 10 | mystique    | 44 | deluxe       |
| 11 | layette [2] | 45 | nougat       |
| 12 | boutique    | 46 | rouge [8]    |
| 13 | dressage    | 47 | escargot     |
| 14 | croquet     | 48 | crochet      |
| 15 | gorgeous    | 49 | regime       |
| 16 | denture     | 50 | doctrinaire  |
| 17 | mirage      | 51 | tutu         |
| 18 | denim       | 52 | bevel        |
| 19 | cachet [3]  | 53 | menu         |
| 20 | neologism   | 54 | egalitarian  |
| 21 | beige       | 55 | quiche [9]   |
| 22 | diplomat    | 56 | fatigue      |
| 23 | motif       | 57 | garage       |
| 24 | suave       | 58 | morgue       |
| 25 | foyer [4]   | 59 | stethoscope  |
| 26 | clementine  | 60 | vogue        |
| 27 | ambulance   | 61 | musicale     |
| 28 | rehearse    | 62 | palette      |
| 29 | leotard     | 63 | flamboyant   |
| 30 | prairie [5] | 64 | baton        |
| 31 | diorama     | 65 | souvenir     |
| 32 | entourage   | 66 | impasse      |
| 33 | fuselage    | 67 | finesse      |
| 34 | boudoir     | 68 | maladroit    |

## Challenge Words

- |   |         |   |            |
|---|---------|---|------------|
| 1 | gauche  | 3 | camouflage |
| 2 | rapport | 4 | genre      |

5	virgule	18	dossier
6	debacle	19	taupe
7	fusillade [10]	20	poignant
8	saboteur	21	garçon
9	renaissance	22	croissant
10	chauvinism	23	ecru
11	recidivist	24	lieutenant
12	chassis	25	protégé
13	détente	26	mélange
14	raconteur	27	blasé
15	mayonnaise [11]	28	fête
16	surveillance	29	ingenu
17	repertoire	30	rendezvous

## Spelling Tips

- 1 French nearly always spells the \sh\ sound with ch, and this spelling of the sound is very common in words from French. Chagrin, chauvinism, and crochet are examples.
- 2 A word from French ending with a stressed \et\ is usually spelled with ette as in layette and croquette.
- 3 A long a sound (\ā\ ) at the end of a word from French can be spelled a number of ways. One of the more common ways is with et as in cachet, croquet, and crochet.
- 4 One way to spell long a at the end of a word from French is with er as in dossier and in foyer. (Most Americans, however, do not pronounce the ending of foyer with a long a.)
- 5 A long e sound (\ē\ ) at the end of a word from French can be spelled with ie as in prairie and sortie. (But see exercise 4 under Now You Try for another spelling of the long e ending.)
- 6 Words ending with an \āzh\ sound are common in French. This sound is spelled age as in collage, mirage, dressage, garage, barrage, camouflage, entourage, and fuselage.
- 7 A \k\ sound at the end of a word from French is often spelled que as in physique, mystique, and boutique.
- 8 The \ü\ sound (as in rouge and many other words on the list) in words from French is usually spelled with ou. Sometimes, however, it is spelled with u as in tutu and ecru.
- 9 When the \sh\ sound occurs at the end of a word from French, there is nearly always a silent e that follows it, as in quiche and gauche.
- 10 Words ending with an \äd\ sound are common in French. This sound is spelled ade as in fusillade.

- 11 French speakers have a number of vowels that English speakers modify in pronunciation. Our way of pronouncing the French *aise* (pronounced \ez\ in French) is usually \āz\.

## Eponyms

Eponyms are words based on a person's or character's name. Sometimes the person's name and the word are exactly the same and the word simply takes on a new meaning. In other cases the person's name is slightly changed. When this happens, the stressed syllable of the new word can also change and you won't always recognize the origin, which might be a somewhat familiar name. Take, for example, *gardenia*. It's really just a man's name (Alexander Garden) with the plant-naming suffix *-ia*. In fact, all of the words in this list that end with *ia* are names for plants and are based on the last names of botanists.

### Study Words

- |    |             |    |              |
|----|-------------|----|--------------|
| 1  | praline     | 19 | samaritan    |
| 2  | magnolia    | 20 | Panglossian  |
| 3  | boysenberry | 21 | quixote      |
| 4  | hosta       | 22 | jeremiad     |
| 5  | poinsettia  | 23 | hector       |
| 6  | macadamia   | 24 | Geronimo     |
| 7  | salmonella  | 25 | shrapnel     |
| 8  | newton      | 26 | vulcanize    |
| 9  | saxophone   | 27 | Frankenstein |
| 10 | tortoni     | 28 | Boswell      |
| 11 | greengage   | 29 | ampere       |
| 12 | angstrom    | 30 | cupid        |
| 13 | gardenia    | 31 | Fletcherism  |
| 14 | melba       | 32 | yahoo        |
| 15 | tantalize   | 33 | diesel       |
| 16 | zinnia      | 34 | bandersnatch |
| 17 | quisling    | 35 | Crusoe       |
| 18 | begonia     | 36 | mentor       |
|    |             | 37 | Dracula      |

### Challenge Words

- |   |            |    |              |
|---|------------|----|--------------|
| 1 | forsythia  | 6  | narcissistic |
| 2 | madeleine  | 7  | dahlia       |
| 3 | bromeliad  | 8  | Baedeker     |
| 4 | mercerize  | 9  | philippic    |
| 5 | Fahrenheit | 10 | guillotine   |

- 11 Bobadil
- 12 mesmerize
- 13 gnathonic

- 14 pasteurize
- 15 Croesus
- 16 braggadocio

## Words from German

English and German are in the same language family, and because of that you might expect that they would look more like each other than they do! While many words of German origin in English have some telltale signs, others have been anglicized (made to look and sound more English). Therefore, you might not know at first glance where they came from. Most English borrowings from German happened relatively early in the history of English, but occasionally there are new arrivals. These tend to become English with fewer spelling changes than the early borrowings did.

### Study Words

- |    |             |    |                   |
|----|-------------|----|-------------------|
| 1  | angst [1]   | 27 | rucksack          |
| 2  | pretzel     | 28 | echt              |
| 3  | waltz       | 29 | bratwurst         |
| 4  | haversack   | 30 | knapsack          |
| 5  | nosh        | 31 | feldspar          |
| 6  | sauerbraten | 32 | poltergeist       |
| 7  | hinterland  | 33 | noodle            |
| 8  | verboten    | 34 | spareribs         |
| 9  | liverwurst  | 35 | Meistersinger [3] |
| 10 | streusel    | 36 | pumpernickel      |
| 11 | umlaut      | 37 | Bildungsroman     |
| 12 | wanderlust  | 38 | strudel           |
| 13 | eiderdown   | 39 | bagel             |
| 14 | schnauzer   | 40 | hamster           |
| 15 | lederhosen  | 41 | cobalt            |
| 16 | kohlrabi    | 42 | nachtmusik        |
| 17 | sitzmark    | 43 | vorlage [4]       |
| 18 | langlauf    | 44 | graupel           |
| 19 | autobahn    | 45 | Wagnerian         |
| 20 | Backstein   | 46 | cringle           |
| 21 | inselberg   | 47 | fife              |
| 22 | gestalt     | 48 | glitz             |
| 23 | einkorn     | 49 | homburg           |
| 24 | kitsch [2]  | 50 | kuchen            |
| 25 | gestapo     | 51 | pitchblende       |
| 26 | schloss     | 52 | spritz [5]        |

53 prattle  
54 zwinger  
55 spitz  
56 realschule

57 panzer  
58 stollen  
59 dachshund  
60 seltzer

## Challenge Words

1 schadenfreude [6]  
2 dreidel  
3 weimaraner  
4 ersatz  
5 fräulein  
6 blitzkrieg [7]  
7 gesundheit  
8 pfeffernuss  
9 edelweiss [8]

10 glockenspiel  
11 rottweiler  
12 schottische  
13 anschluss  
14 wedel  
15 springerle  
16 zeitgeber  
17 pickelhaube  
18 schnecke  
19 Weissnichtwo

## Spelling Tips

- 1 Don't shy away from consonant clusters! German words often have combinations of three or more consonants that don't occur in thoroughly English words. Examples include ngst in angst, sch in schadenfreude, schn in schnauzer, and nschl in anschluss.
- 2 2 A \k\ sound in a word from German is usually spelled with k at the beginning of a word or syllable (as in kitsch and einkorn) and often with ck at the end of a word or syllable (as in knapsack and glockenspiel).
- 3 3 A long i sound (ɪ) usually has the spelling ei in words from German, as in fräulein, Meistersinger, zeitgeber, and several other words on the list.
- 4 4 The \f\ sound, especially at the beginning of a word, is sometimes spelled with v in German words as in vorlage. Other examples include the non-study-list words volkslied and herrenvolk.
- 5 5 The letter z is far more common in German than in English. Note that its pronunciation is not usually the same as English \z\. When it follows a t, which is common, the pronunciation is \s\ as in spritz, pretzel, blitzkrieg, and several other words on the list.
- 6 6 The \sh\ sound in words of German origin is usually spelled sch as in schadenfreude, whether at the beginning or end of a word or syllable. In schottische, you get it in both places!

- 7 7 A long e sound (ē) usually has the spelling ie in words from German, as in blitzkrieg and glockenspiel.
- 8 8 The letter w is properly pronounced as \v\ in German, as you hear in one pronunciation of edelweiss and in wedel and Weissnichtwo. Many German words, however, have become so anglicized that this pronunciation has vanished. Most Americans, for example, say "bratwurst," not "bratvurst."

## Words from Slavic Languages

Many people in Eastern Europe and Asia speak a Slavic language such as Czech, Ukrainian, Croatian, or Bulgarian. And that's completely apart from Russian, a Slavic language spoken by more than 200 million people! Some words of Slavic origin that have made their way into English traveled through another language first, reflecting the fact that contacts between English-speaking and Slavic-speaking cultures have not always been direct.

### Study Words

- |    |           |    |          |
|----|-----------|----|----------|
| 1  | gulag     | 21 | vampire  |
| 2  | parka     | 22 | sputnik  |
| 3  | Slav      | 23 | knish    |
| 4  | robot     | 24 | cravat   |
| 5  | samovar   | 25 | babushka |
| 6  | kremlin   | 26 | Soviet   |
| 7  | troika    | 27 | Borzoi   |
| 8  | slave     | 28 | gopak    |
| 9  | mammoth   | 29 | cheka    |
| 10 | Siberian  | 30 | sevruga  |
| 11 | tundra    | 31 | trepak   |
| 12 | Permian   | 32 | babka    |
| 13 | kishke    | 33 | purga    |
| 14 | glasnost  | 34 | baba     |
| 15 | paprika   | 35 | cossack  |
| 16 | sable     | 36 | nelma    |
| 17 | kasha     | 37 | kovsh    |
| 18 | nebbish   | 38 | lokshen  |
| 19 | polka     | 39 | feldsher |
| 20 | Bolshevik | 40 | barabara |
|    |           | 41 | aul      |

## Challenge Words

- |   |             |    |             |
|---|-------------|----|-------------|
| 1 | balalaika   | 6  | apparatchik |
| 2 | kielbasa    | 7  | commissar   |
| 3 | tchotchke   | 8  | tokamak     |
| 4 | barukhzy    | 9  | pogrom      |
| 5 | perestroika | 10 | taiga       |
|   |             | 11 | Beetewk     |

## Words from Dutch

Like German, Dutch is a member of the same language family as English: the Germanic family. Many of the original European settlers in North America came from the country that later became the Netherlands, and those early settlers were one of the sources of Dutch words in American English today.

## Study Words

- |    |            |    |           |
|----|------------|----|-----------|
| 1  | cockatoo   | 23 | bluff     |
| 2  | keelhaul   | 24 | stipple   |
| 3  | harpoon    | 25 | floss     |
| 4  | furlough   | 26 | cruiser   |
| 5  | bowery     | 27 | hustle    |
| 6  | easel      | 28 | klompen   |
| 7  | holster    | 29 | polder    |
| 8  | freebooter | 30 | bundle    |
| 9  | waffle     | 31 | catkin    |
| 10 | trawl      | 32 | splice    |
| 11 | uproar     | 33 | Flemish   |
| 12 | beleaguer  | 34 | grabble   |
| 13 | cruller    | 35 | huckster  |
| 14 | yacht      | 36 | frolic    |
| 15 | wiseacre   | 37 | ravel     |
| 16 | brackish   | 38 | tattle    |
| 17 | decoy      | 39 | scum      |
| 18 | caboose    | 40 | trek      |
| 19 | buckwheat  | 41 | scrabble  |
| 20 | walrus     | 42 | clapboard |
| 21 | howitzer   | 43 | gruff     |
| 22 | crimp      | 44 | isinglass |

- |    |              |    |             |
|----|--------------|----|-------------|
| 45 | excise       | 63 | hock        |
| 46 | blister      | 64 | boodle      |
| 47 | rabbit       | 65 | guy         |
| 48 | package      | 66 | daffodil    |
| 49 | muddle       | 67 | loiter      |
| 50 | handsome     | 68 | potash      |
| 51 | foist        | 69 | scow        |
| 52 | staple       | 70 | wintergreen |
| 53 | gulden       | 71 | trigger     |
| 54 | mart         | 72 | stripe      |
| 55 | screen       | 73 | bruin       |
| 56 | guilder      | 74 | skipper     |
| 57 | etch         | 75 | waywiser    |
| 58 | Netherlander | 76 | spoor       |
| 59 | dune         | 77 | mizzle      |
| 60 | croon        | 78 | school      |
| 61 | ticket       | 79 | pickle      |
| 62 | buckwagon    | 80 | snuff       |

## Challenge Words

- |   |           |    |             |
|---|-----------|----|-------------|
| 1 | mynheer   | 10 | voortrekker |
| 2 | waterzooi | 11 | uitlander   |
| 3 | flense    | 12 | hollandaise |
| 4 | muishond  | 13 | galjoen     |
| 5 | witloof   | 14 | schipperke  |
| 6 | springbok | 15 | apartheid   |
| 7 | maelstrom | 16 | hartebeest  |
| 8 | bobbejaan | 17 | keest       |
| 9 | keeshond  | 18 | wainscot    |
|   |           | 19 | roodebok    |

## Words from Old English

Old English was the language spoken in Britain before the French arrived in 1066. If you could listen to a conversation in Old English, you would probably be scratching your head a lot. A few of the words would make sense, but most of them wouldn't. Like plants and animals, languages evolve—keeping the things that they find useful, discarding others, and picking up new things along the way. This study list represents some of the real success stories in English: words coined long ago that have not lost their usefulness over dozens of generations!



## Study Words

- 1 quell [1]
- 2 barrow
- 3 dearth
- 4 bower
- 5 paddock
- 6 blithe
- 7 keen
- 8 mongrel
- 9 reckless
- 10 alderman
- 11 whirlpool
- 12 belay [2]
- 13 cleanser
- 14 dreary [3]
- 15 bequeath
- 16 sallow [4]
- 17 dross
- 18 lithe
- 19 gristle
- 20 earwig
- 21 fickle
- 22 nestle [5]
- 23 fennel
- 24 nostril
- 25 abide
- 26 behest
- 27 slaughter [6]
- 28 gospel
- 29 furlong
- 30 linseed
- 31 nether
- 32 fathom
- 33 nightingale
- 34 farthing
- 35 threshold
- 36 kith
- 37 wanton
- 38 loam [7]
- 39 yield
- 40 mattock
- 41 hawthorn
- 42 tithe
- 43 behoove
- 44 forlorn
- 45 quiver
- 46 hustings
- 47 aspen
- 48 mermaid
- 49 anvil
- 50 barley
- 51 linden
- 52 hassock
- 53 orchard
- 54 hearth [8]
- 55 watery
- 56 fiend
- 57 goatee
- 58 earthenware
- 59 windily
- 60 dealership
- 61 bookkeeping
- 62 fiery
- 63 learned
- 64 nosiest
- 65 creepy
- 66 errand
- 67 daily
- 68 gnat
- 69 broadleaf
- 70 stringy
- 71 dairy
- 72 workmanship
- 73 newfangled
- 74 timely
- 75 dogged

76 mootable  
77 womanly  
78 manhandle  
79 folksiness  
80 worrisome  
81 roughhewn  
82 knavery

83 hurdle  
84 kipper  
85 hundredth  
86 icicle  
87 pinafore  
88 yieldable  
89 hue

## Challenge Words

1	heifer	5	Wiccan
2	mistletoe	6	shrieval
3	salve	7	chary
4	kirtle		

## Spelling Tips

- 1 Old English likes double consonants following short vowels, especially if the vowel is in a stressed syllable. Examples include quell, paddock, mattock, sallow, fennel, hassock, errand, barrow, kipper, and Wiccan.
- 2 A long a sound ( $\text{\v{a}}$ ) at the end of words from Old English is nearly always spelled ay as in belay.
- 3 Long e ( $\text{\v{e}}$ ) at the end of an adjective or adverb from Old English is nearly always spelled with y. Examples include dreary, watery, windily, fiery, creepy, daily, stringy, timely, womanly, and chary.
- 4 Long o ( $\text{\v{o}}$ ) at the end of words from Old English is typically spelled with ow as in sallow and barrow. By contrast, a long o at the end of a word in many languages that English has borrowed from is simply spelled with o.
- 5 When the syllable  $\text{\v{s}\v{e}l}$  ends words from Old English, it is nearly always spelled stle, with the t being silent (as in gristle and nestle).
- 6 Silent gh after a vowel is common in words from Old English, as in slaughter. Silent gh usually appears after i in words like plight (not on the study list) and nightingale, and it signals that the vowel is pronounced  $\text{\v{i}}$ .
- 7 The vowel combination oa in words from Old English is nearly always pronounced as long o ( $\text{\v{o}}$ ) as in loam and goatee. Examples not on the study list include shoal, boastful, and gloaming.
- 8 Silent e on the end or not? For words from Old English that end in either hard th ( $\text{\v{th}}$ ) or soft th ( $\text{\v{th}}$ ), remember this: More often than not, soft th will have a silent e at the end of

the word. Consider, for example, bequeath, dearth, kith, hearth, and hundredth versus blithe, lithe, and tithe. Interestingly, the word blithe can be pronounced both ways.

## Words from New World Languages

The people of the tribes and nations who lived in the New World before the arrival of European explorers were like people everywhere: They had a name for everything! Often, the language of the newly arrived people simply absorbed the native term, imposing changes on it that would make it fit in better with the newcomers' language. Some of these terms jumped directly to English from a native language. Others traveled through some other language along the way. Though Hawaiian isn't a true New World language, it is included here because Hawaii is now a part of the United States.

### Study Words

- |    |               |    |               |
|----|---------------|----|---------------|
| 1  | condor        | 24 | hickory       |
| 2  | iguana        | 25 | cacao         |
| 3  | hurricane [1] | 26 | kona          |
| 4  | kahuna        | 27 | malihini      |
| 5  | hogan         | 28 | wikiwiki      |
| 6  | jerky         | 29 | Tuckahoe      |
| 7  | muskrat       | 30 | pecan         |
| 8  | hominy        | 31 | chipotle      |
| 9  | wigwam        | 32 | skunk         |
| 10 | pampas        | 33 | woodchuck [4] |
| 11 | caribou [2]   | 34 | chocolate     |
| 12 | toboggan      | 35 | muumuu        |
| 13 | persimmon     | 36 | puma          |
| 14 | quinine       | 37 | tomato        |
| 15 | powwow        | 38 | maraca        |
| 16 | bayou         | 39 | petunia       |
| 17 | coyote [3]    | 40 | jaguar        |
| 18 | tamale        | 41 | buccaneer     |
| 19 | poi           | 42 | llama         |
| 20 | cashew        | 43 | succotash     |
| 21 | luau          | 44 | caucus        |
| 22 | totem         | 45 | wampum        |
| 23 | mahimahi      | 46 | mole          |
|    |               | 47 | toucan        |

## Challenge Words

- |   |             |   |          |
|---|-------------|---|----------|
| 1 | opossum     | 6 | jacamar  |
| 2 | terrapin    | 7 | ipecac   |
| 3 | ocelot      | 8 | menhaden |
| 4 | hoomalimali | 9 | sachem   |
| 5 | coati       |   |          |

## Spelling Tips

- 1 Remember that words settling down in English are often spelled according to English word patterns. If you're completely unsure of how to spell a word from a New World language, you can try just "sounding it out." This strategy would work for hurricane, muskrat, wigwam, and several other words on the list.
- 2 Take note of the language(s) a word may have traveled through on its way to English, for the path to English often gives a clue about spelling. For example, if it had been up to an English speaker, the \u028a\ sound at the end of caribou would probably have been spelled oo; but the influence of French gives us the current spelling because French usually spells this sound ou.
- 3 Coyote shows evidence of having passed through Spanish on its way to English: The voiced final e is often seen in Spanish words. Two other examples on this list are tamale and mole.
- 4 Remember what folk etymology is? Words that entered English from New World languages were prime candidates for this process. If parts of a native word sounded familiar, they were often spelled by the settlers in a familiar way, as in woodchuck. Muskrat is also probably a result of folk etymology.

## Words from Japanese

Japanese is a relative latecomer among the languages that have influenced English, making it a welcome language of origin for spellers: Recently borrowed words are spelled more consistently than are those from languages that English has been borrowing from for centuries. Japanese is written in English according to the sound of Japanese words and is not influenced by the Japanese writing system, which uses symbols for words rather than letters.

## Study Words

- |   |            |    |            |
|---|------------|----|------------|
| 1 | ninja      | 9  | sashimi    |
| 2 | sushi [1]  | 10 | tsunami    |
| 3 | tofu       | 11 | haiku [3]  |
| 4 | shogun     | 12 | futon      |
| 5 | honcho     | 13 | mikado [4] |
| 6 | karate [2] | 14 | hibachi    |
| 7 | samurai    | 15 | origami    |
| 8 | teriyaki   | 16 | geisha [5] |

- 17 wasabi
- 18 ramen
- 19 kudzu
- 20 banzai
- 21 tycoon
- 22 sumo
- 23 koan
- 24 satori
- 25 tatami
- 26 kami

- 27 sukiyaki
- 28 kuruma
- 29 Meiji
- 30 Romaji
- 31 odori
- 32 miso
- 33 Kabuki
- 34 geta
- 35 sayonara

## Challenge Words

- 1 karaoke
- 2 nisei
- 3 sansei
- 4 issei
- 5 kibe

## Spelling Tips

- 1 A long e sound (Ē) is very common at the end of Japanese words and is usually spelled with i as in sushi, teriyaki, wasabi, Meiji, odori, and several other words on the list.
- 2 In some Japanese words, long e is spelled simply with e (not i) as in karate and karaoke.
- 3 An ū sound is also a common way to end Japanese words and is spelled with u as in haiku, tofu, and kudzu.
- 4 Long o (ō) at the end of a word from Japanese is spelled with o as in honcho, mikado, sumo and miso.
- 5 A long a sound (ā) heard in geisha is spelled ei in some words from Japanese. Four of the challenge words have this spelling of the long a sound and **contain the word element sei, which means "generation."**

## Words from Greek

The words in this list are all related to words that were used 2500 years ago! English gets an important part of its vocabulary from the language of ancient Greece. Classical Greek, as it is called, is quite different from but closely related to the language spoken in Greece today. The ancient Greeks provided the foundation for many important ways of looking at the world and for living in society that are still important today; that is one reason their language has remained so influential. It is still used today, for example, when scientists need a word to describe something newly created or discovered.

## Study Words

- 1 lethargy
- 2 android
- 3 chronic
- 4 biopsy
- 5 irony
- 6 automaton
- 7 enthusiasm
- 8 synopsis
- 9 homogeneous
- 10 odyssey
- 11 megalopolis
- 12 acme [1]
- 13 synonym
- 14 orthodox
- 15 aristocracy
- 16 calypso
- 17 patriarch
- 18 hierarchy
- 19 character [2]
- 20 isobar
- 21 asterisk
- 22 eclectic
- 23 melancholy
- 24 stoic
- 25 chronology
- 26 eulogy
- 27 didactic
- 28 cosmetic
- 29 Spartan
- 30 geothermal
- 31 cynical [3]
- 32 homonym
- 33 cryptic
- 34 hypothesis
- 35 academy
- 36 pentathlon
- 37 antibiotic
- 38 diatribe
- 39 etymology
- 40 hydraulic [4]
- 41 trauma
- 42 hygiene
- 43 semantics
- 44 thesaurus
- 45 phenomenon [5]
- 46 cosmos
- 47 protagonist
- 48 acronym
- 49 paradox
- 50 synchronous
- 51 misanthropy
- 52 sarcasm
- 53 ephemeral
- 54 polygon
- 55 nemesis
- 56 syntax
- 57 eureka
- 58 topography
- 59 panic
- 60 apostrophe
- 61 geranium
- 62 metaphor
- 63 spherical
- 64 xylophone [6]
- 65 dynamic
- 66 myriad
- 67 epiphany
- 68 apathy
- 69 synergy
- 70 amnesia
- 71 philanthropy
- 72 democracy
- 73 strategy [7]
- 74 diagnosis
- 75 topical
- 76 matriarch
- 77 endemic

78 analysis [8]  
79 rhetoric  
80 eponym  
81 agnostic  
82 dogma  
83 idiom  
84 thermal  
85 dyslexia  
86 Olympian  
87 allegory  
88 pragmatic  
89 adamant  
90 protocol  
91 tragic  
92 hydrology  
93 polymer  
94 notochord  
95 biblical  
96 ergonomic  
97 mathematics  
98 tachometer

99 protein  
100 rhinoceros  
101 hyphen  
102 autopsy  
103 pyre  
104 herpetology  
105 angelic  
106 tritium  
107 androcentric  
108 demotic  
109 geode  
110 hedonism  
111 periscope  
112 geponics  
113 asthmogenic  
114 monotonous  
115 amphibious  
116 symbiosis  
117 macron  
118 periphery

## Challenge Words

1 dichotomy  
2 misogynist  
3 hypocrisy  
4 diphthong  
5 mnemonic  
6 anomaly  
7 zephyr  
8 hippopotamus  
9 euphemism  
10 anachronism  
11 metamorphosis

12 hyperbole  
13 arachnid  
14 paradigm  
15 Eocene  
16 gynarchy  
17 pneumatic  
18 Hemerocallis  
19 cynosure  
20 philhellenism  
21 euthanasia  
22 philately  
23 cacophony

## Spelling Tips

- 1 In a few words from Greek, e appears at the end of a word and has long e sound \ē\:  
Some examples are acme, apostrophe, and hyperbole.

- 2 A \k\ sound in English often represents a sound from Greek that we don't actually use, and the most common spelling of this sound in English is ch: See anachronism, arachnid, character, chronic, chronology, dichotomy, hierarchy, matriarch, melancholy, patriarch, synchronous, notochord, tachometer, and gynarchy.
- 3 The most frequent sound that y gets in words from Greek is short i (\i\ ) as in acronym, calypso, cryptic, cynical, dyslexia, eponym, homonym, myriad, Olympian, synchronous, synergy, synonym, synopsis, syntax, symbiosis and polymer.
- 4 A long i sound (\i:\ ) in a word that comes from Greek is sometimes represented by y, especially after h, as in hydraulic, hydrology, hygiene, hyperbole, hyphen, hypothesis, dynamic, cynosure, gynarchy, xylophone and pyre.
- 5 In ancient Greek, the letter phi (pronounced \f\i\ ) represented a breathy or "aspirated" version of the sound that is represented in English by f. Speakers of Roman-alphabet languages did not have this sound or a corresponding letter, so they substituted the \f\ sound but memorialized the original sound of phi by using ph to spell it. As a result, the English \f\ sound almost always appears as ph in words of Greek origin. Consider, for example: amphibious, apostrophe, cacophony, diphthong, epiphany, euphemism, hyphen, metamorphosis, metaphor, periphery, phenomenon, philanthropy, philately, philhellenism, spherical, topography, xylophone, and zephyr. Hundreds of words in English derived from Greek show this spelling.
- 6 The letter o is the vowel most often used to connect two Greek word elements. If the connecting vowel sound is a schwa (\ə\ ) as in xylophone, notochord, orthodox, ergonomic, geonics, and asthmogenic and you must guess at the spelling of this sound, the letter o is a very good guess. The non-study-list words hypnotist, geometric, and electrolyte are among the many, many words made of Greek word elements connected by o.
- 7 The \j\ sound is always spelled with g in words from Greek. Why? When the \j\ sound appears in words of Greek origin, it does so as an anglicized pronunciation of a root originally pronounced with a hard g. Note that no j appears in any of the words on this list!
- 8 A schwa in words from Greek is occasionally spelled with y: See analysis, etymology, misogynist, odyssey, and zephyr.

## Words from Italian

The words in this list are all related to words that were used 2500 years ago! English gets an important part of its vocabulary from the language of ancient Greece. Classical Greek, as it is called, is quite different from but closely related to the language spoken in Greece today. The ancient Greeks provided the foundation for many important ways of looking at the world and for living in society that are still important today; that is one reason their language has



remained so influential. It is still used today, for example, when scientists need a word to describe something newly created or discovered.

## Study Words

- |    |               |    |              |
|----|---------------|----|--------------|
| 1  | staccato      | 35 | virtuoso     |
| 2  | ballot        | 36 | harmonica    |
| 3  | confetti [1]  | 37 | maestro      |
| 4  | semolina      | 38 | bravura      |
| 5  | influenza     | 39 | fresco       |
| 6  | cavalry       | 40 | stucco [5]   |
| 7  | piazza        | 41 | inferno      |
| 8  | cadenza       | 42 | ballerina    |
| 9  | pistachio     | 43 | malaria      |
| 10 | spinet        | 44 | grotto       |
| 11 | cantata       | 45 | harpsichord  |
| 12 | incognito [2] | 46 | allegro      |
| 13 | vendetta      | 47 | virtuosa     |
| 14 | contraband    | 48 | spaghetti    |
| 15 | mascara       | 49 | piccolo      |
| 16 | graffiti      | 50 | ravioli      |
| 17 | credenza      | 51 | vibrato      |
| 18 | parapet       | 52 | pesto        |
| 19 | falsetto      | 53 | aria         |
| 20 | ditto         | 54 | bambino      |
| 21 | provolone [3] | 55 | salami       |
| 22 | extravaganza  | 56 | Parmesan     |
| 23 | scampi        | 57 | oratorio     |
| 24 | belladonna    | 58 | finale       |
| 25 | gondola       | 59 | scenario     |
| 26 | rotunda       | 60 | contrapuntal |
| 27 | cauliflower   | 61 | illuminati   |
| 28 | galleria      | 62 | concerto     |
| 29 | regatta       | 63 | macaroni     |
| 30 | crescendo [4] | 64 | palmetto     |
| 31 | balcony       | 65 | bandit       |
| 32 | portfolio     | 66 | fiasco       |
| 33 | antipasto     | 67 | cameo        |
| 34 | libretto      | 68 | sonata       |
|    |               | 69 | coloratura   |

## Challenge Words

- |   |               |    |             |
|---|---------------|----|-------------|
| 1 | scherzo [6]   | 10 | fantoccini  |
| 2 | adagio        | 11 | mozzarella  |
| 3 | segue         | 12 | garibaldi   |
| 4 | zucchini [7]  | 13 | ocarina     |
| 5 | capricious    | 14 | prosciutto  |
| 6 | archipelago   | 15 | trattoria   |
| 7 | charlatan     | 16 | vivace      |
| 8 | maraschino    | 17 | cappelletti |
| 9 | paparazzo [8] | 18 | pizzicato   |
|   |               | 19 | intaglio    |

## Spelling Tips

- 1 Long e (\ē\ ) at the end of a word from Italian is usually spelled with i as in confetti, graffiti, zucchini, fantoccini, cappelletti, and many other words on the list. In Italian, a final i usually indicates a plural form. This is not always true, however, of Italian words in English.
- 2 Long o (\ō\ ) at the end of an Italian word is spelled with o as in incognito, stucco, virtuoso, concerto, prosciutto, pizzicato, vibrato and many other words on the list.
- 3 A long e sound (\ē\ ) at the end of a word from Italian can be spelled with e as in provolone, finale, and one pronunciation of vivace, although this spelling of the sound is less common than i.
- 4 The \sh\ sound has various spellings in words from Italian; a spelling it usually doesn't have is sh! It can be spelled sc as in crescendo and prosciutto or ch as in charlatan and pistachio. The spelling of the \sh\ sound in capricious is also seen in words that come from Latin—the ancestral language of Italian.
- 5 The \k\ sound can be spelled cc when it comes before long o (\ō\ ) as in stucco or when it comes before \ä\ as in staccato.
- 6 Another Italian spelling of \k\ is ch as in scherzo.
- 7 The sound \ē-nē\, common at the end of Italian words (it forms diminutives), is usually spelled ini (as in zucchini and fantoccini).
- 8 The double consonant zz is typically pronounced \ts\ in words from Italian, as in paparazzo, mozzarella, pizzicato, and one pronunciation of piazza.

## Words from Spanish

England and Spain had some opportunities for word exchanges through war and trade. The real crossroads for Spanish and English, however, has been North America, starting as early as the 15th century when Spanish explorers first came to the New World. This crossroads is as busy today as ever, for Spanish is the second-most-frequently spoken language in the United States. Because of the long border we share with Mexico and the large number of Americans whose origins go back eventually to Mexico, American English has many words that come directly from Mexican Spanish.

## Study Words

- |    |                |    |              |
|----|----------------|----|--------------|
| 1  | burrito        | 31 | mesa [5]     |
| 2  | embargo [1]    | 32 | ramada       |
| 3  | chimichanga    | 33 | junco        |
| 4  | gazpacho       | 34 | cafeteria    |
| 5  | mariachi [2]   | 35 | bongo        |
| 6  | sombrero       | 36 | castanets    |
| 7  | alligator      | 37 | mantilla [6] |
| 8  | canasta        | 38 | oregano      |
| 9  | bonanza        | 39 | lariat       |
| 10 | chinchilla     | 40 | chalupa      |
| 11 | machismo       | 41 | buffalo [7]  |
| 12 | enchilada      | 42 | renegade     |
| 13 | pueblo         | 43 | langosta     |
| 14 | hacienda       | 44 | alamo        |
| 15 | fandango       | 45 | barrio       |
| 16 | quesadilla [3] | 46 | cedilla      |
| 17 | flotilla       | 47 | Argentine    |
| 18 | tornado        | 48 | bolivar      |
| 19 | flamenco [4]   | 49 | amarillo     |
| 20 | vigilante      | 50 | cordovan     |
| 21 | adios          | 51 | desperado    |
| 22 | cabana         | 52 | empanada     |
| 23 | gordita        | 53 | tomatillo    |
| 24 | peccadillo     | 54 | diablo       |
| 25 | filibuster     | 55 | pochismo     |
| 26 | tortilla       | 56 | sierra       |
| 27 | vanilla        | 57 | olio         |
| 28 | cilantro       | 58 | bolero       |
| 29 | fiesta         | 59 | junta        |
| 30 | anchovy        | 60 | duenna       |

## Challenge Words

- |   |              |    |              |
|---|--------------|----|--------------|
| 1 | sassafras    | 7  | novillero    |
| 2 | punctilio    | 8  | picaresque   |
| 3 | sarsaparilla | 9  | conquistador |
| 4 | comandante   | 10 | rasgado      |
| 5 | embarcadero  | 11 | vaquero      |
| 6 | rejoneador   | 12 | caballero    |

## Spelling Tips

- 1 A long o sound (\ō\ ) at the end of a word is often a mark of Spanish origin, and it is nearly always spelled simply with o as in embargo and many other words on this list.
- 2 A long e sound (\ē\ ) at the end of a word of Spanish origin is usually spelled with i as in mariachi.
- 3 The \k\ sound is sometimes spelled with qu in words of Spanish origin. This is especially true when the vowel sound that follows is long a (\ā\ ), long e (\ē\ ), or short i (\i\ ). Quesadilla and conquistador (in its pronunciations with and without the \s\ sound) are examples from our list.
- 4 It is much more common for the \k\ sound to be spelled with c in words of Spanish origin. This is almost invariable when the vowel sound that follows is a schwa \ə\ as in canasta and embarcadero; short a (\a\ ) as in castanets and caballero; or long o (\ō\ ) as in flamenco and flamenco and junco.
- 5 A schwa at the end of a word from Spanish is very common and is usually spelled with a as in mesa, bonanza, and several other words on the list.
- 6 The combination ll in Spanish words is traditionally treated as a single letter and is pronounced as consonant \y\ in American Spanish. When such words enter English, sometimes that sound persists. At other times it is pronounced just like ll would be in an English word: that is, as \l\ . Some words—such as mantilla, tomatillo, amarillo, and caballero—even have two pronunciations in English. Quesadilla, tortilla, and novillero always have the \y\ pronunciation in English; chinchilla, flotilla, vanilla, peccadillo, cedilla, and sarsaparilla always have the \l\ pronunciation. Be on the lookout!
- 7 Note that, except for ll, double consonants in words from Spanish are not very common. Buffalo and peccadillo represent exceptions. In Spanish, buffalo has only one f and peccadillo has only one c. English spelling rules prefer two consonants as a signal that the previous vowel is short, as is the case in these words.