Before reading further in this article, the reader is invited to ponder the title. What is unusual about it—what property do the words have that is shared by relatively few other words?

The answer, of course, is that each word contains the five vowels A, E, I, O and U exactly once. Most people know that facetious and abstemious are the two commonest English words containing the five vowels in their natural order; fewer are aware that unoriental is the commonest English word containing the five vowels in reverse order. In Language on Vacation (Scribner's, 1965), Dmitri Borgmann lists additional words with the vowels in natural and reverse order, and also examines the problem of finding the shortest possible word containing all five vowels (sequoia). If one admits Y as a sixth vowel, it is easy to find an English word containing all six vowels in natural order (facetiously), but the reverse problem is much harder. Perhaps the best solution is given by Alan Wachtel in the November 1968 Word Ways; he suggested Yuloidea (an obsolete name for the superfamily of millipedes) or Crypturoidea (a coined name for the family of tinamous, partridge-like South American birds).

All this activity suggests a new topic for logological research. There are 120 different ways that the five vowels A, E, I, O and U can be arranged in a word. For how many of these can English words be found? In the table below, I have listed one or more words for 104 of these arrangements. The unstarred words were found in Webster's Collegiate Dictionary (fifth or seventh edition); the starred words were obtained from a variety of sources, principally Webster's Unabridged Dictionary (third edition), Walker's Rhyming Dictionary of the English Language, Dolby and Resnikoff's The English Word Speculum, and Levine's List of Words Containing No Repeated Letters (I am indebted to Dmitri Borgmann for searching the last-named reference work). I have not included words ordinarily capitalized.

Can any reader of Word Ways come up with suggestions for one or more of the remaining patterns?
AEIUO facetious, abstemious, arsenious
AEIUO
AEOIU praseodymium, pandemonium
AEOU haemofuscin paternal
AEUO maleruption preruptive
AEUOI aneuploid aneuploid
AIEOU ambidextrous, glaireous, calciferous
AIEUO antineutron
AIOEU carillonneur
AIOUE grandiloquent, anxiousness
AIUEO antineucleon
AIUOE radiculose radiculose
AOEUI apothecium, androecium
AOEUI allotellure allotellure
AOIUE amortisseur amortisseur
AOUUE accoutering accoutering
AOUIE tambourine, favourite
AUEIO aculeiform* aculeiform*·
AUEOI auromycin, aureolin*·
AUIEO
diagram
AUIOE albuminose, auctioned, cauliflower
AUOEI autosexing
AUOIE staurolite, glauconite, authorize
EAIOU precarious, behaviour, tenacious, nefarious
EAIUO
EAOUU crematorium, pelargonium
EAOUI revoicing·, beclamouring··
EAUO exhaustion
echolocating·
EAUOI tentaculoid·, keraunoid·
EIAOU pedimano*·
EIAUO semiuto*·
EIOAU pleiosaur
EIOUA ventriloqual
EIUAO gesticulatory
EIUAI semicupola*·
EOAII endocardium
EOAUI serosin·
EOIAI neostriatum·
EOIUA dentulous
EOUAI expostulating, encouraging
EOUIA dentosurgical
EUAIIO education, regulation, equation, persuasion, deputation
EUAIOI euharmonic*·
EUIAO denunciatory, repudiator

THE JOURNAL OF RECREATIONAL LINGUISTICS
EUOA equinoctial, equivocal
EUOA pseudoclassic, neuropathic
EUOA sequoia, euphoria, pneumonia
IAEO intravenous, micaceous
IAEOU citharoedus
IAUEU dialogue, miaoued
IAUEO disaccustomed
IAUEO tricephalous
IEAUO diesophagus
IEOUA intercolumnar, interocular
IEUAO interpulmonary
IOAEU lithofracteur
IOAUE isopaque
IOEAU micrometallurgy, hippocentaur
IOEUA incommensurably, isopleural
IOUAEO inoculate, discourage, misconjugate, importunate
IOUEA isonuclear
IUAEOL linguiform
IUAEOE fistulatome
IUAEOA vituperator
IUUAEO insupportable
IUUEOA immunotherapy
OAEIU hypotrachelium
OAIEUI
OAIEU odalisque, portraiture, contrafissure
OAIUE
OAUEI novaculae, consanguine
OEAIU overpainful
OEAIU overvaluing, overhauling
OEIAU proventricular
OEUAI conceptualism, postneuralgic
OEUIA obsequial, nonpecuniary
OIAEU popliteaus
OIAUE foliature, ovicapsule
OIEAU moineau
OIEUA ovicellular
OUIAE continuable, contributable

WORD WAYS
Unsociable Housemaid Discourages Facetious Behaviour

OIJUEA solifugean*
OUAEI outcapering*
OUAIE commutative, outpatient, tourmaline
OUESA outreaching, countermanding, housemaid
OUESA volumetrically
OUIAE communicate, concubinage, outdistance
OUIEAI bountihead*

UAEIIO quaternion
UAEOI quatrofoil
UAEOI ultraviolet, unsanctioned
UAOEI ultramodernism, turacoverdin*
UAEIO ultraconfident, uvarovite
UEAIOA numeration
UEAOI unreasoning
UEIAO successional, questionably
UEOAIA undemocratic
UEOAIA unmethedical
UIAEI multianode*
UIEIOA quindecagon
UIEOA unipersonal
UIOAE unimportance, juniorate
UIOEA undiscoverably, musicotherapy*
UIOAEI sulphophthaleins*
UIOEAIE sufucative, unconstrained, unorganized
UEOAI suboceanic
UEOAI unsongenial, unpoetical
UEOIA unsociable, subordinate, unmotivated
UEOIAI unoriental*, duoliteral*, quodlibet*

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