

A DOUBLE WORD SQUARE CONTEST

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Most readers of Word Ways know that a double word square is one in which the vertical words differ from the horizontal ones. The following 5-by-5 double word squares all consist of common words which can be found in the New Merriam-Webster Pocket Dictionary:

S C A L E	C H A S M	S P A C E	A P P L E
P A G A N	L A T H E	L E M O N	R E L A X
I R A T E	A S T E R	I N E P T	O R A T E
T O T E M	S T A I R	M A N S E	M I N E R
E M E R Y	P E R K Y	E L D E R	A L E R T

Surely, it should not be too difficult to construct a 6-by-6 double word square to the same specifications -- words all coming from Webster's Pocket Dictionary. Or should it? In Language on Vacation (Scribner's, 1965), Dmitri Borgmann gives only one example of a 6-by-6 double square; although he comments that it is one of the better ones thus far constructed, it contains such rare words as ADIATE (in Roman Dutch law, to accept as heir under a will), ECTENE (certain Eastern Church prayers led by a deacon), and PIRITE (a reformed spelling of pyrite).

To encourage the search for a Pocket Webster 6-by-6 double word square, I will pay fifty dollars (\$50.00) in cash to the reader who succeeds at this task. Only words fully spelled out in the Pocket dictionary may be used. To remove all ambiguity, readers of Word Ways can obtain from me (at 62 Vanderveer Station, Brooklyn, N. Y. 11210) a book containing all six-letter words listed alphabetically and positionally by sending 18 cents in postage. This contest closes with a postmark of August 31, 1973. Should more than one reader find such a square, the one containing the fewest E's will win; if there are ties after counting the E's, then the one with the fewest T's will win; and so on. (Further letters are judged according to the printer's frequency table beginning ETAOINSHRDLU...) Any 6-by-6 word squares consisting solely of words from the Pocket Dictionary will be published in Word Ways.