The main purpose of a dictionary is to give information about words. One looks with some "word" in mind and either finds it exists by noting a boldface alphabetical entry for it; or, not finding it, concludes it does not exist. The latter conclusion is dangerous since the chosen dictionary may have elected to regard the word as too rare or obscene, it may have been missed, or the word sought is too new. There seems little excuse, however, for not listing words that in fact are given in boldface in the work. As this list proves, there are probably more words in your dictionary than you ever imagined.

A dictionary Hidden Word is a word not found at or near its expected alphabetical position. Often these are known as "hard to find" words. These were discussed briefly in the February 1971 Word Ways (mainly from Webster's Second Unabridged) and in the February 1972 Word Ways (some extreme examples from Webster's Third). The most widely known and often quoted is the word SUEY, found only in the combination CHOP SUEY. The word MEIN is not hidden in Webster's Second, for there is a separate entry for it; but it is hidden in Webster's Third in the combination CHOW MEIN.

The purpose of this work was to uncover Hidden Words in Webster's Third. The final list comprises an astonishing 3540 words. These will appear in Word Ways in installments starting with this issue.

A word is defined as a grouped combination of boldface letters not listed as an abbreviation or combining form. Noted separately at the end will be the hidden numbers, letter groups, and number-letter combinations, some of which are in fact words. We are not concerned with "words" such as OFF-PREMISES used only in the definition of OFF-SALE and YOU-UNS in the quotation used to illustrate UN.

It is hidden if it may not be found immediately at or near its expected alphabetical position. Webster's Third does not ordinarily show a cross-reference entry for variants or inflectional forms if less than five columnar inches from the main entry. However, the word BOSTRICES, for example, is included here since one would have to look for it on the following page under BOSTRYX. Thus the 5-inch rule is interpreted subjectively in this list. It is still assumed one will look near the expected place for the wanted word. Webster's Third violates its own rule many times -- the extreme case being CIPPI "pl of CIPPUS" being listed on the line immediately preceding "CIPPUS, n. pl".
CIPPl". The extra entries do no harm, but oh those missing entries!

Our intent is not to correct the dictionary. Since most recreational linguistics involves knowing whether a given letter combination exists, one example is sufficient. The physical appearance of the word, not its meaning, determines its allowability. For example, ET and THORO from A MENSA ET THORO are not hidden, for there are separate entries although different meanings for these two letter groupings. But MULLER and MASSE are hidden and hence included despite entries for MULLER and MASSE since they differ in diacritics. If you feel we are overly arbitrary in this, see if you could determine the meaning of COLUMNIST in FIFTH COLUMNIST from the basic entry, or PALLED as the past of PAL rather than from PALL.

Apparent exceptions to this physical appearance proviso are words having a stated lower order of capitalization (cap, usu cap, often cap, sometimes cap). For example, the often capitalized PRAECOCES is bettered in the combination DEMENTIAE PRAECOCES with a lower case spelling. Some, such as SUNDAY in QUADRAGESIMA SUNDAY, may well be errors. Cross-reference entries not having an indication of capitalization were usually assumed to have that of the main entry. Higher orders of capitalization were not considered; e.g., the usually capitalized LUNG in CH' IEN LUNG is bettered in the common word LUNG. To simplify the list these words are not specially designated; the reader must determine why they were included.

By far the most common reason in most people's minds for a word to be hidden is that it is the non-initial word of a multiword combination. The large majority of these are Latin or neo-Latin, with law and medicine the predominant subjects. Naturally the French are represented with food and sex, and the Italians with art and music. A special case of the non-initial word aspect is a hyphenated or compact word (TREE- ANT and POWER PLANT) separately listed in another form (TREE ANT and POWERPLANT). There are a surprisingly large number of these, indicating sloppy editing of the dictionary. Indeed, there are perfectly good English words appearing in phrases not separately listed in any form; HOLY- ROSE and HOLYWORT, for example.

The initial word may be hidden if it is relatively short and thereby buried alphabetically according to the next word of the combination. Perhaps the most difficult to find of this category is HY, from the entry HY SPY, listed 12 pages after the abbreviation HY. The word SE in SE TENANT occurs 33 pages later than expected, but it is more readily recognized in PER SE.

Although Webster's Third claims to list as cross-reference entries all alternate spellings and inflectional forms more than five inches away, they cannot be trusted. True, they list ENQUIRE referring to INQUIRE, but there is no such treatment afforded ENQUIRY. Oftentimes they give only a single example perhaps as an illustrative hint; there are a full 9 missing cross references for words based on TSAR from the corresponding CZAR words. Sadly, this is the largest category of Hidden Words. EKELLUNG the main entry

Plural appears there hidden. But note These are you digitize that LIE DOUKL

To save an inflection and then see if you can figure out: LIE MCCA AGAS is not BAlI AGA as hidden.

Remember the fact that these are hidden in this way.

The list which they are not indicated for the fact that the others of such

Hidden in the way

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KEY = the number of
# the
+ p
* f:
( number b
( number a

Words. Even when they try, they fail: MASKALONGE (var of MUSKELLUNGE) is doubly hidden since it does not appear based on either the main entry or the cross-referenced entry "MASKINONGE or MASKALONGE".

Plurals are particularly neglected in the dictionary. Under KINAH appears the alternate QINAH, which, having a separate entry is not hidden. But suppose you were looking for the plurals QINOT or QINOTH? These are hidden under KINAH and hence in the list. Would you imagine that DUKHORBORTSY is the plural of DUKHOBOR, given only under DOUKHOBOR?

To save space it is assumed one will search for any word ending in an inflectional S under the base word, either directly or in this list, and then see if the dictionary gives the S form. This should be done no matter how unlikely: MCCARTHY'S may be found by reference to CHARLIE MCCARTHY and POPULUS under VOX POPULI. The simple word AGAS is not given in the dictionary; it does appear in the combination BALI AGAS; yet being the indicated plural of AGA it is not regarded as hidden.

Remember that a word must appear completely in boldface to be considered. Thus the indicated plurals OOS, RINKALSES, and SOS and indicated forms NETTIER and NETTIEST were not considered despite the fact that there are no alphabetical cross references for them and many others of similar nature.

The listing of Hidden Words is referenced by the initial entry under which they may be found. Hence, NEONATORUM is credited to ICTERUS GRAVIS, having no obvious connection. But this entry does refer to ICTERUS NEONATORUM. Only one reference, usually the shortest or the earliest, is given for Hidden Words having several references. Because of the final S caution a reference showing the S form takes preference.

Hidden Words in the Addenda are treated separately. If they are not hidden in the main body they are not included. No attempt was made, however, to exclude Hidden Words from the main body that are not hidden in the Addenda: AU in AU PAIR GIRL and SHIH in SHIH TZU.

We are indebted to several friends of Word Ways who assisted in the search and encouraged its completion. Any errors should be sent to the editor.

KEY = the word exactly as shown
  # the word approximately as shown, the first six letters at least being identical
  + plus other letters or words
  * from Addenda 1971 printing
  (number before reference) numbered entry for multiple entries of same word when needed for clarity
  (number after reference) numbered definition when needed for clarity

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andrew saint =
andrew's saint = cross
angaeae jus =
angelean los #
angeles los #
angle-rack turret = tool
anglicanae opus #
anglicanum opus =
aminalis carbo =
amino con anima
ammel's queen = lace
anni annus mirabilis
annorum apocata triumph =
annualer ground =
annum per =
ansatae crux #
ansestina cutis =
ansestinae cutis #
anthony's saint = cross
antico nero =
anti-lewisite british =
antiqua ars =
antonian san =
antonio san =
apo = koinou
apokatastases apokatastasis
apollonius circle of =
aponeurotica galea
apparencies heir #
apso llasa =
aquarium filum aquae
arabia saudi =
aranta arunta
archs-boutants arc-boutant
arden enoch =
areata alopecia =
arie aria
armis vi et =
aromeric bole =
aromatica aqua =
aromaticae aqua #
arquebusier harquebusier
arteriosi conus #
arteriosus bulbus =
arthur port =
aritculo in = mortis
artiun ars =
atixan artisan
arurae aurora
aruspices haruspex
aruspicy haruspicy
ashraf sharif
asinorum pons =
asuang aswang
asportatis de bonis =
asithmaticus status =
atkins tommy =
at-large large
atzeret shemini #
atzereth shemini =
au baba
augustine saint = grass
augustine's saint austin's summer
auris columella
austin's saint = summer
australēs aurora #
australis aurora =
aut ad vitam = culpam
auto-oxidize autoxidize
autre pur = vie
avant en =
avis rara =
avises rara avis
avivum calcar avis
aviv tel =
avivian tel =
axemaster axmaster
axemen axman
azar kala =
azeret shemini atzereth
baal-ha-batim balabos
baal-ha-bostab balabosta
b'ab tishah =
babies' baby's breath
baboo babu
bachelor's-button yellow =
bachurim bahur
baculo a =
badawin bedawi
baer law of von =
baer's von = law
bagsful bagful
bahada bajaran
bajocchi baiocco
balebosta balabosta
balistae ballista
balli silver =
ballet's buys = law
bananes crème de =
bandsmen bandsman
ba-omer lag b'omer
baptist's saint john the = day
law

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caballed cabal
caballing cabal
cabinett ed #
cabinetting #
cabri t cabree
caderas mal de =
caeca cecum
cae n = stone
c aenogenetic cenogenetic
caenogenetically cenogenetic
cateria et cetera
calabar calabos
calamo currente =
calci s os =
caliente tierra =
callipered caliper
callipered caliper
callum gillie =
calmette-guérin bacillus =
calycal calyceal
campanular #
campbell khaki =
camphorae aqua =
canalled canal
cancellation #
cancel ler #
can cera canc rum oris
capella a cappella
canonicum j us =
cantante basso =
cantante basso #
can ter ed #
cantering #
cantorum schola =
capax doll =
capellen kapelle
capello cobra de =
capiendo de excommunicato =
capitale #
capitatae crux #
capite tenant in =
capos da capo
cappadocia oak of =
cappella a =
captandum ad =
carana caranna
cardaca *corpus #
cardiacum *corpus =
carey's mother = chicken
cariosa terra =
carlo *monte = method
carlos san =
carnosus panniculus =
car nying carney
caroliner #
carto ticum glomus
carré en =
carrée partie =
carrobeen red carabeen
carta magna charta
casehardening reverse =
casei lactobacillus = factor
caseosa vernix
casta dum =
castellati altocumulus #
castile olive-oil = soap
castus agnus =
castuses agnus #
catabases katabasis
catachromases katachromasis
catholic #
catholicly #
cats-a-mountain cat-a-mountain
caudati versus =
cav *air =
cavernosa corpus #
cavernosum corpus =
cayubaba cayuvava
cayubahan cayuvavan
cedendarum beneficium = actionum
celerationis lex loci =
celebre cause =
celeste voix =
celomic coelomic
cementa #
cenobia coenobium
cerebello ten torium
cerebri acervulus =
cerka bessy =
cervier loup-cervier
cessans lucrum =
cetera et =
cha trung =
chalutza halutz
chalutzim halutz
chalutzot halutz
chalutzoth halutz
chambre valet de =
champêtre fête =
ch'ang = shan
chango presto =
channelled #
chantants café #
composting sheet =
compressa faex =
compuet quod =
conceputi =
concilia =
concrete musique =
concreto culpa levis in =
conditio = sine qua non
conductimetric =
condy condy's fluid
coneworm spruce =
conferred =
conferring =
confessiones =
confesso pro =
confiscata bona =
congenita amyotonia =
congesti cumulus =
congestus cumulus =
conique flute =
conjugately =
conjugateness =
connivens valvula =
conniventes valvula =
conrubii jus conubii =
conscientiae in foro =
conservanda nomen =
conservandum nomen =
consound saracen's comfrey
constituenda pactum de = dote
constituto pactum de =
consulta senatus =
consultum senatus =
contagiosa molluscum =
contagiosum molluscum =
contendere nolo =
contracta vena =
contractae vena =
contractu quasi ex =
contradicente nemine =
contrario a =
contumaciam in =
conubia conubium =
conubii jus =
conveniens forum non =
convexaplane =
convict's poor = oath
copertank copintank
copulatrix bursa =
coralita corallita
corda sursum =
cordiale entente =
cornett =
cornae placita =
corporales res =
corporis tinea =
corpuscula =
corsak corsac
corsiva cancellaresca =
cori cell of =
cortices cortex
cotelet bois =
cotelette bois =
couchance levance and =
courte rime =
coverley roger de =
cowper gland of =
cozzes coz
crabapple southern =
cramming cram
cran'e'bill field =
cranii columella
crapeau johnny crapaud
crases crasis
créance lettre de =
credere del =
creeing cree
creset cresset
creux en =
cri = de coeur
cribrosa lamina =
cribrosae lamina =
criminis socius =
crissa crissum
criticus apparatus =
croo = monkey
crotala =
crowism jim =
crusis tinea =
crush-dress 1 crush 8
cruz santa =
crystallize =
crystalling =
cuerpo in =
cuvivre rouge de =
culpam ad vitam aut =
cumuliformes stratus =
cumuliformis stratus =
cunei cuneus
cunni cunnus
curiam per =
curlycue curlicue
curran curn
curtly curtal ax
curvy
cuthbert's saint = beads
cuvier duct of =
cy = pres
cyclades cyclas
cyclone piperonyl =
cymbalum ocotea = oil
cyrn pre cyl
d' action ballet =
d'affaires charge =
dagge dag
dai cao =
daisies push
d'alene coer =
d'althea rose =
damnata terra =
damnationem legacy by #
damnée âme =
damno injuria absque =
damocles sword of =
d'amore oboe =
d'amour fleur =
d' ananas creme =
d' ancestor mort =
d' ange peau =
d' angleterre point =
d'appui point =
d'arc bois =
d'archet coup =
d'arco a punta =
d'argent champagne =
d'armes maître =
d'art objet =
darwish darvesh
d'aubaine droit =
david magen =
davis's jefferson = birthday
dawnist millennial =
days' nine = wonder
dealism new =
defdeath's death
d'eau château =
debab el =
debeat nihil =
debeat constitutum =
debito ex = justitiae
debtors poor = oath
decatur eight from =
decidendi ratio =
decisis stare =
d'école chef =
decussata crux =
decussatae crux #
deditio noxae =
defectiva scriptio =
defectum propter =
deferens vaes =
deferentia vaes #
definiendo circulus in =
deformans osteitis =
d'égise serpent =
dehydracetic #
dei advocatus =
deiers cell of =
d'elegance concours =
deliberandi jus =
delicti corpus =
delicto ex =
d'elite corps =
delivering #
dell' alpi flor =
dell' arte commedia =
delle flora = alpi
deminutione capitis #
dendra dendron
d'entrée carte =
deo = volente
deposita # miserabile
deppe repple =
der van = waals forces
descemet membrane of =
d'espagne point =
despatcher dispatcher
d'esprit jeu =
d'essai ballon =
destillata aqua =
destillatae aqua #
d'estime succès =
destra mano =
d'estat coup =
d'est drap =
d'ètre raison =
deu te =
deu ç =
devilled devil
devilling devil
devil-weed mexican =
d'horrie point =
d'honneur cour =
d'hôte table =
d'hôtel maître =

JOHN CAL
Ontario, Canada

In the reviewed number name.
Of zeros in the number.
As a prefix, we have done so of the per.
Before the strata,
and so on.

EXTEN