A number of words become new words when, contemporaneously, the front letter is looped to the back and the back to the front. The first and last letters must be different, of course, and the result of this double loop is that the first and last letters are exchanged. If the middle letters are palindromic, the pair becomes palindromic.

Dave Morice’s superb *The Dictionary of Word Play* identifies this type of transposal as a *terminal switch*, but that compound seems to stress only the last letter rather than the first and last letters that come into play. We prefer the term *switchable* and hereby place our examples where our mouths are:

Four-letter switchables abound. We’ve asterisked two pairs that are homophonic:

- **AUNT/TOUNA**
- **EATS/SATE**
- *MEAT/TEAM*
- **BLOG/GLOB**
- **FOAL/LOAF**
- *MEET/TEEM*
- **BRAD/DRAB**
- **FURS/SURF**
- **MOOR/ROOM**
- **BRAG/GRAB**
- **GINS/SING**
- **MORN/ROOM**
- **DAIS/SAID**
- **GNUS/SNUG**
- **NAR/YARN**
- **DEAL/LEAD**
- **GRIP/PRIG**
- **NEWS/SEWN**
- *DEAR/READ*
- **GRIT/TRIG**
- **OILS/SILO**
- **DEEP/PEED**
- **GUNS/SUNG**
- **PART/TARP**
- *DEER/REED*
- **HOOP/POOH**
- **PEAR/REAP**
- **DENS/SEND**
- **HOPS/SOPH**
- **PEES/SEEPE**
- **DENT/TEEND**
- **KEEL/LEEK**
- **ROUT/TOUR**
- **DIET/TEED**
- **KEEP/PEEK**
- **RUES/SUER**
- **DINK/KIND**
- **LAIN/NAIL**
- **SEAT/TEAS**
- **DOLT/TOLD**
- **LAIR/RAIL**
- **SENT/TENS**
- **DOOM/MOOD**
- **LEAP/PEAL**
- **SHIT/THIS**
- **DOOR/ROOD**
- **LEER/REEL**
- **SHUT/THUS**
- **DRAG/GRAD**
- **LILT/TILL**
- **SOPHS/HOPS**
- **DROP/PROD**
- **LOOP/POOL**
- **THAW/WHAT**
- **DUES/SUED**
- **LOOT/TOOL**
- **THEWHET**

Rarer five-letter examples, most employing S markers, include:

- **ATOMS/STOMA**
- **EMITS/SMITE**
- **MOTET/TOTEM**
- **AURIC/CURIA**
- **EPICS/SPICE**
- **PLUMS/SLUMP**
- **DATER/RATED**
- **GLANS/SLANG**
- **RAGES/SAGER**
- **DATES/SATED**
- **HOOTS/SOOTH**
- **RAVES/SAVER**
- **DIVER/RIVED**
- **KHANS/SHANK**
- **RHEAS/SHEAR**
- **DOLES/SOLED**
- **LEPER/REPEL**
- **ROBES/SOBER**
DOPER/ROPED  LEVER/REVEL  SINEW/WINES

Reaching for six-letter prizes, we note a pattern in which the letters D and R are transposed and the order, with but one exception, is consonant-vowel-consonant-consonant-vowel-consonant:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DAGGER/RAGGED</th>
<th>DEARER/READED</th>
<th>DIPPER/RIPPED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DAMPER/RAMPED</td>
<td>DIFFER/RIFFED</td>
<td>DUBBER/RUBBED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DANGER/RANGED</td>
<td>DIGGER/RIGGED</td>
<td>DUFFER/RUFFED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DANKER/RANKED</td>
<td>DIMMER/RIMMED</td>
<td>DUMPER/RUMPED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAPPER/RAPPED</td>
<td>DINGER/RINGED</td>
<td>DUSTER/RUSTED</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Beyond this transposal of D and R we find these six-letter specimens:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DASHES/SASHED</th>
<th>LASCAR/RASCAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DISPEL/LISPED</td>
<td>RACKET/TACKER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DOCKET/TOCKED</td>
<td>SESTET/TESTES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DOUSES/SOUSED</td>
<td>SOUGHT/TOUGHS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DUFFEL/LUFFED</td>
<td>TARMAC/CAR MAT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The last example above features a smidgen of semantic kinship (in the manner of DAIS/SAID, EATS/SATE, PEAR/REAP, PEES/SEEP, LEPER/REPEL and DANGER/RANGED), but the open styling of CAR MAT is a drawback.

The D/R transposal characterizes these seven-letter pairs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEBATER/REBATED</th>
<th>DELIVER/RELIVED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DEFILER/REFILED</td>
<td>DECODER/RECODED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DELAYER/RELAYED</td>
<td>DIDDLER/RIDDLED</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

these eight-letter pairs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DECANTER/RECANTED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DECEIVER/RECEIVED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DECLINER/RECLINED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEMANDER/REMANDED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DESERVER/RESERVED</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

and these longer pairs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DENOUNCER/RENOUNCED (9)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DECOMPOSER/RECOMPOSED (10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEOXIDIZER/REOXIDIZED (10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEPROGRAMMER/REPROGRAMMED (12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEMYTHOLOGIZER/REMYTHOLOGIZED (14)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Using the definitions that follow identify seven pairs of longer switchables that do not employ the D/R transposal. The first five pairs are seven letters per word, the sixth pair eight, and the seventh pair nine:

1. fasteners/a small carrying bag
2. hair style/detail/something that provokes excitement
3. an athletic jersey or undershirt/causes a thrilling sensation
4. wastes time/rushed forth
5. shrinks/sexual enticer
6. becomes steadily smaller-obtained something fraudulently
7. confers dignity upon/meant

Their identities can be found in Answers and Solutions.

A POEM

SIR JEREMY MORSE
London, England

NATURAL ORDER

The quaking jungle
Becomes a zone
Of unvexed order
When the lion preys –
A buck dies fighting;
Jackals moan;
Opaque forest
Curves in waxy haze.