

CAN YOU TRANSLATE ESPERANTO?

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Esperanto is a language that was created in 1887 by Ludovic Lazarus Zamenhof, a Polish polyglot who sought to facilitate communication among the many nations of the world by creating a new language made up of bits and pieces of several existing (mostly European) languages. Though the use of Esperanto never became as widespread as Zamenhof had hoped, more than ten million people around the world speak and understand it, and thousands of books, newspapers, and magazines have been (and continue to be) published in it.

Since English has borrowed so many words from each of the languages Zamenhof used in the creation of Esperanto, it follows that users of English should have some skill in deciphering the meanings of Esperanto words. Below are 40 English words and 40 Esperanto words. Match as many as you can, drawing on intuition, recognition of phonological similarities, and paying attention to relationships of meaning. Some knowledge of various Romance and Germanic languages will come in handy, but even people who have no such knowledge typically recognize about 30 of the words. The correct answers can be found in Answers and Solutions.

1. dummy	21. pencil	-- kvincendro	-- maralgo
2. handbag	22. knight	-- idiotimuna	-- velizo
3. first aid	23. foolproof	-- liberfolia	-- kolbasbulko
4. knuckle	24. pecan	-- melon-capelo	-- kavaliro
5. dive	25. tight	-- gasakvo	-- hermetika
6. life-size	26. conjure	-- mansaketo	-- unua helpo
7. mineral water	27. suitcase	-- fiancamiko	-- strikta
8. nickel	28. best man	-- dramisto	-- angulmezurilo
9. pentagon	29. backhand	-- karbo	-- kserografio
10. mah-jongg	30. loose-leaf	-- fingrartiko	-- prestidigiti
11. long-winded	31. not at all	-- plongi	-- naturgranda
12. loath	32. xerox	-- obtuza	-- manekeno
13. eraser	33. dull	-- malkonciza	-- kvinangulo
14. highfalutin	34. untrue	-- hikorio	-- malvera
15. hot dog	35. punctual	-- arlekeno	-- skrapgumo
16. airtight	36. coal	-- mandorsa	-- markadeto
17. bowler	37. harlequin	-- tute ne	-- krajono
18. midshipman	38. seaweed	-- akurata	-- magango
19. dealer	39. playwright	-- malinklina	-- taglumo
20. daylight	40. protractor	-- bombasta	-- vendisto