

# A CLASSIFICATION OF METALLEGES

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According to Dmitri Borgmann's Language on Vacation, **metallege** is a psychological term which has been adapted by logology to describe word pairs such as SALVE and SLAVE, or SKATE and STAKE. Perhaps a more descriptive term would be **letter-swap transposals**.

Consideration of metalleges shows that they can be classified in two ways: by the length of the words involved, and by the relative positions in the words of the letters swapped. In the examples above, both are five letters long, but the swapped letters in each pair are in different relative positions: SALVE-SLAVE is a 2-3 metallege (the letters in positions 2 and 3 are swapped), but SKATE-STAKE is a 2-4 metallege.

I decided to investigate metalleges up to 10 letters in length. For how many of the different possible swapping arrangements could real examples be found? The remainder of this short article presents my finds, as well as the various gaps. If **Word Ways** readers can fill any of the gaps, please do; or if they can extend the collection to words of 11 letters or more, again please do.

1-2	ON-NO	1-2	ACTION-CATION
		1-3	MARBLE-RAMBLE
1-2	APT-PAT	1-4	DANGER-GANDER
1-3	DOG-GOD	1-5	SAMITE-TAMISE
2-3	EAT-ETA	1-6	LASCAR-RASCAL
		2-3	CERATE-CREATE
1-2	ERST-REST	2-4	SNATCH-STANCH
1-3	NEST-SENT	2-5	UNBARE-URBANE
1-4	DENT-TEND	2-6	ICE-CAP-IPECAC
2-3	BARN-BRAN	3-4	CASUAL-CAUSAL
2-4	DENY-DYNE	3-5	DOGATE-DOTAGE
3-4	TAEL-TALE	3-6	CANTOR-CARTON
		4-5	SALIVA-SALVIA
1-2	INTER-NITER	4-6	LEADEN-LEANED
1-3	GAMMA-MAGMA	5-6	ALBINO-ALBION
1-4	PHASE-SHAPE		
1-5	DATES-SATED	1-2	NUCLEAR-UNCLEAR
2-3	SALVE-SLAVE	1-3	RETRAIN-TERRAIN
2-4	SKATE-STAKE	1-4	DEALING-LEADING
2-5	SLEET-STEEL	1-5	EMPRISE-IMPRESE
3-4	GODLY-GOLDY	1-6	LIMBATE-TIMBALE
3-5	LEAPT-LEPTA	1-7	HOBBIISM-MOBBISH
4-5	TILDE-TILED	2-3	CARVING-CRAVING

- 2-4 GATEWAY-GETAWAY  
 2-5 BILTONG-BOLTING  
 2-6 BESTRID-BISTRED  
 2-7 SCRAPIE-SERAPIC  
 3-4 PARTIAL-PATRIAL  
 3-5 URANITE-URINATE  
 3-6 OBSERVE-OBVERSE  
 3-7 TEAMING-TEGMINA  
 4-5 INFARCT-INFRACT  
 4-6 PENNATE-PENTANE  
 4-7 MISDEAL-MISLEAD  
 5-6 HIGHEST-HIGH-SET  
 5-7 TRIACID-TRIADIC  
 6-7 GRANDAM-GRANDMA  
  
 1-2 ALTITUDE-LATITUDE  
 1-3 MONARCHY-NOMARCHY  
 1-4 DORMANCY-MORDANCY  
 1-6 LAMENESS-NAMELESS  
 1-6 FERRITIC-TERRIFIC  
 1-7  
 1-8 DECEIVER-RECEIVED  
 2-3 PERVIOUS-PREVIOUS  
 2-4 LEVIABLE-LIVEABLE  
 2-5 PANNICLE-PINNACLE  
 2-6 SALICINE-SILICANE  
 2-7  
 2-8  
 3-4 REINFORM-RENIFORM  
 3-5 DENOTATE-DETONATE  
 3-6 UNLEASED-UNSEALED  
 3-7 RECOURSE-RESOURCE  
 3-8  
 4-5 OCHEROUS-ochreous  
 4-6 CARCAJOU-CARJACOU  
 4-7 ASSERTOR-ASSORTER  
 4-8  
 5-6 MALIGNER-MALINGER  
 5-7 ANTIMONY-ANTINOMY  
 5-8 OVERDEAR-OVERREAD  
 6-7 ALTERANT-ALTERNAT  
 6-8 TETRACID-TETRADIC  
 7-8  
  
 1-2 RUINATION-URINATION  
 1-3 CERTITUDE-RECTITUDE  
 1-4 ENCURTAIN-UNCERTAIN  
 1-5 RECUSANCE-SECURANCE  
 1-6 LIGHTNESS-NIGHTLESS  
 1-7  
 1-8  
 1-9 SETTER-OUT-TETTEROUS  
 2-3 PALUSTRAL-PLAUSTRAL  
  
 2-4 SCAPELESS-SPACELESS  
 2-5 COSTUMERS-CUSTOMERS  
 2-6  
 2-7 FIRESTONE-FORESTINE  
 2-8  
 2-9  
 3-4 THERENESS-THREENESS  
 3-5 EXCEPTANT-EXPECTANT  
 3-6 DESERTION-DETERSION  
 3-7 RECOURSES-RESOURCES  
 3-8  
 3-9  
 4-5 MARITALLY-MARTIALLY  
 4-6 EXAMINATE-EXANIMATE  
 4-7 ASSERTORS-ASSORTERS  
 4-8  
 4-9  
 5-6 CENTERING-CENTREING  
 5-7 ANTIMONIC-ANTINOMIC  
 5-8  
 5-9  
 6-7 COMPLAINT-COMPLIANT  
 6-8 MAGNESITE-MAGNETISE  
 6-9  
 7-8  
 7-9 MISLEADER-MISLEARED  
 8-9 GREGARIAN-GREGARINA  
  
 1-2 EGOCENTRIC-GEOCENTRIC  
 1-3 CAMERATION-MACERATION  
 1-4 DEALERSHIP-LEADERSHIP  
 1-5 GENERATION-RENEGATION  
 1-6 CORREPTION-PORRECTION  
 1-7  
 1-8  
 1-9  
 1-10 DECOMPOSER-RECOMPOSED  
 2-3 AEROGRAPHY-AREOGRAPHY  
 2-4 MAHOMMEDAN-MOHAMMEDAN  
 2-5  
 2-6 PATCHERIES-PETCHARIES  
 2-7  
 2-8  
 2-9  
 2-10  
 3-4 OPISOMETER-OPSIOMETER  
 3-5 DENOTATION-DETONATION  
 3-6 RESERVEDLY-REVERSEDLY  
 3-7 RECOURSING-RESOURCING  
 3-8  
 3-9  
 3-10 UNDESERVED-UNRESERVED  
 4-5 ALIENATION-ALINEATION

4-6		6-7	
4-7	UNFALLIBLE-UNFILLABLE	6-8	UNDERNOTED-UNDERTONED
4-8		6-9	
4-9		6-10	
4-10		7-8	DISCREETLY-DISCRETELY
5-6	LOUVER-DOOR-LOUVRE-DOOR	7-9	CHRYSOLITE-CHRYSOTILE
5-7	ANTIMONIES-ANTINOMIES	7-10	
5-8	UNRESERVED-UNREVERSED	8-9	PARADISIAC-PARADISAIC
5-9		8-10	CHIMNEY-POT-CHIMNEY-TOP
5-10		9-10	CATEGORIES-CATEGORISE

On examination, a number of the examples may look trivial — for example, LOUVER-DOOR and LOUVRE-DOOR. If you can improve on any of these, please send them to the editor.

To demonstrate that longer metalleges exist, here are two pairs:

ALTITUDINARIANS-LATITUDINARIANS  
 CONSERVATIONISTS-CONVERSATIONISTS

Any longer ones?

*OBoy!*

*Morice*

