

TUCSON WORD SQUARES

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Here is a little game I played, involving the construction of fake 8x8 word squares. From a set of 37,000 eight-letter words, extract the commonest four-letter beginnings and four-letter endings. The commonest beginnings were over 251, fore 123, back 65, hand 60, outs 59, down 52, wood 52 and foot 51. The 89 commonest beginnings (down to cent, rock, rose, book, home, dist resi and others with 24 occurrences) yielded seven 4x4 squares; in fact, the first square was produced from the 30 commonest beginnings, and the second square from the 44 commonest.

PROP	DISP	DISC	FISH	POST	PORT	* = S,T
REVE	INTE	INTE	INTE	OVER	OVER	
OVER	STAR	STAN	STRA	SEMI	RE*I	
PERI	PERI	CENT	HEAD	TRIP	TRIP	

With endings, things were different. It took 102 to produce a set of four 4x4 squares; enlarging the list to 114 resulted in eight.

IONS	LINE	*ATE	* = L,N or R
OSIS	ICAL	ATOR	
NITE	NATE	ZONE	
SSES	ELED	ERE +	+ = D,R

Then came the hard part: make double 4x4 squares in which horizontals are beginnings and verticals are endings. This took 367 beginnings plus 341 endings to get one square. 440 beginnings plus 381 endings yielded the seven squares below.

BEAR	BEST	BEST	RESO	RAIL	RAIN	REIN
UNTI	UNSI	UNTI	IRON	INCI	INCI	INCI
SLEE	SLEE	SLEE	SEMI	SCAN	SCAN	SCAN
HYDR	HYDR	HYDR	TREA	TELE	TELE	TELE

And here, shades of Jeff Grant's Scrabble game in the November 1991 **Word Ways**, is a fake (but plausible) 8x8 square.

PROPRIST
REVEANCE
OVERICAL
PERILINE
RAILIONS
INCIOSIS
SCANNITE
TELESSES