

## AEINST+1 WORDS

DARRYL FRANCIS  
Sutton, Surrey, England

*HEALTH WARNING: This article could damage your Scrabble vocabulary*

According to Official Scrabble Lists (OSL), the most fecund set of six letters, to which a seventh letter can be added then anagrammed to form a valid seven-letter word, is AEINRT. This is closely followed by the AEINST set. The US equivalent of OSL is Mike Baron and Jere Guin's The Wordbook, based on The Official Scrabble Players Dictionary (OSPD). According to The Wordbook, the top three six-letter groups are AEINST, AEIRST and AEINRT. Taking an "average" of the two sources, AEINST is the most fertile set of six letters.

To most US Scrabble players, the universe of words extends only to The Official Scrabble Players Dictionary (OSPD). If they need to confirm a longer word not included in OSPD, then they will check out the Merriam-Webster Tenth Collegiate Dictionary. And to many UK Scrabble players, the universe of words extends only to Official Scrabble Words (OSW), or maybe to The Chambers Dictionary for longer words. Many countries around the world, though, admit the existence of words in both Official Scrabble Words and The Official Scrabble Players Dictionary. (These are the so-called SOWPODS countries--a rearrangement of the letters in OSPD and OSW.)

I want to demonstrate that the world of words is much, much broader than the combination of OSW and OSPD. There are many dictionaries beyond these, and they include words which could be valid for Scrabble if you were playing an "open reference sources" game. I decided to mine a number of dictionaries just to see what additional AEINST+1 words could be found.

Let's take a quick tour of a few dictionaries. Official Scrabble Words contains a total of 74 different AEINST+1 words:

A TAENIAS  
B BASINET, BESAIN, BESTAIN  
C CANIEST, CINEAST  
D DETAINS, INSTEAD, SAINTED, SATINED, STAINED  
E ETESIAN  
F FAINEST, NAIFEST  
G EASTING, EATINGS, GAINEST, GENISTA, INGATES, INGESTA, SEATING,  
TANGIES, TEASING  
I ISATINE



J JANTIES, TAJINES  
 K INTAKES, KENTIAS, TANKIES  
 L EASTLIN, ELASTIN, ENTAILS, SALIENT, SLAINTE, STANIEL, TENAILS  
 M INMATES, MAINEST, MANTIES, TAMINES  
 N INANEST  
 O ATONIES  
 P PANTIES, PATINES, SAPIENT, SPINATE  
 R ANESTRI, NASTIER, RATINES, RESIANT, RETAINS, RETINAS, RETSINA,  
 STAINER, STARNIE, STEARIN  
 S ENTASIS, NASTIES, SESTINA, TANSIES, TISANES  
 T INSTATE, SATINET  
 U AUNTIES, SINUATE  
 V NAIVEST, NATIVES, VAINEST  
 W AWNIEST, TAWNIES, WANIEST, WANTIES  
 Z ZANIEST

If we now turn to The Official Scrabble Players Dictionary (OSPD), a further 10 AEINST+1 words can be found. Brief definitions are shown:

A ENTASIA	spasmodic contraction of a muscle
D DESTAIN	to remove stain from
H SHEITAN	an evil spirit
H STHENIA	excessive energy
L NAILSET	a steel rod for driving a nail into something
L SALTINE	a salted cracker
M ETAMINS	loosely woven fabrics
M TAMEINS	garments worn by Burmese women
X SEXTAIN	a stanza of six lines
Z ZEATINS	chemical compounds found in maize

Let's now turn to Webster's Third New International Dictionary (W3). Although this has been in print since 1961, it is still the most authoritative and unabridged of American dictionaries. I've trawled through the pages of W3 and located another 21 AEINST+1 words. (For those who may be familiar with W3, I have excluded words which W3 marks as "usually capitalised" or "capitalised".) Again, I have included brief definitions in order to make the words more interesting or meaningful.

A ANISATE	a salt of anisic acid
B BANTIES	bantams
B BINATES	celebrates two masses on the same day
C ACTINES	star-shaped spicules (as of sponges)
C CASINET	lightweight twilled trousering
D TIENDAS	shops or stores
G SIGNATE	having markings like letters
M ESTAMIN	worsted twilled fabric
M INMEATS	inner parts of an animal that are used for food
M TAIMENS	giant trout of northern Asia



N ENSAINT	to make a saint of
N STANINE	an aptitude score for aviation students
O ASIENITO	a contract for furnishing slaves
R ANTSIER	more impatient
R NERITAS	molluscs
R RESTAIN	to stain again
R TANIERS	any of several plants having edible roots
S SATINES	smooth durable fabrics
T STEATIN	an ointment
V NATIVES	certain minerals
X TAXINES	bitter poisonous alkaloids

The predecessor of W3 was Webster's New International Dictionary (Second Edition). This was published between 1934 and 1961, and is still regarded as perhaps the greatest unabridged American dictionary. This contains many words which for various reasons didn't make it into W3. Again, I've excluded proper names. Brief definitions are included here. This time, another eleven AEINST+1 words have been found:

B BETAINS	crystalline sweet-tasting alkaloids
B INBEATS	drives in by beating
G GAINSET	to oppose
G TINAGES	large porous water-jugs
L LANITES	various Philippines trees
M STAMINE	a coarse woollen cloth
O AEONIST	one who holds the eternal duration of the world
P PEISANT	weighty
P PIANETS	magpies
R ASTERIN	a pigment of the China aster
R ERANIST	a member of a club

Onwards and upwards! The magnificent Oxford English Dictionary (Second Edition, 1992)(OED) is a record of the English language up until just a few years ago. It is a rich source of obsolete spellings. Examination of the OED reveals another 31 AEINST+1 words. As well as giving definitions, I have marked obsolete words, just in case anyone wishes to discard them. (But why? The Chambers Dictionary and OSW contain many thousands of obsolete words.)

B BETANIS	betonies, plants (obs)
G ATEIGNS	attains (obs)
G GAITENS	gaits
G GNAISTE	to gnash (obs)
G GNASTIE	nasty (obs)
G STIGEAN	supremely binding
G TEAINGS	tea-meetings
H SHANTIE	a cabin
H THAINES	thanes (obs)



L ALIENTS	aliens (obs)
L ATELINS	yetlings, cast-iron pots (obs)
M MANIEST	superlative of 'many'
N INNATES	makes innate
N SINNATE	sinnet, a kind of cordage (obs)
N TANNIES	tawnies (obs)
O INOSATE	a salt of inosic acid
P PASTINE	ground prepared for planting
R ESTRAIN	to bind tightly
R RANITES	greyish-black minerals
R SARIENT	sergeant (obs)
R SERIANT	sergeant (obs)
R SERTAIN	certain (obs)
R STRAINE	strain (obs)
R TIRANES	tyrants (obs)
R TRAINES	trains (obs)
S STAINES	stains (obs)
T NATTIES	natty persons
U ASTIUNE	a kind of precious stone
U TAUNIES	tawnies (obs)
U UANITES	vanities (obs)
V VANITES	vanities (obs)

And just to finish with, I checked the pages of Funk & Wagnalls New Standard Dictionary. Just one further AEINST+1 specimen came to light:

D SEDATIN            a white crystalline compound

All told, that makes 148 AEINST+1 words, exactly twice the number allowed by OSW! I could go on to examine increasingly obscure dictionaries, especially dialect dictionaries, but I had to draw the line somewhere.

As I said at the start of this article, it could damage your Scrabble vocabulary! I am not proposing that the Scrabble world starts to use references beyond OSW and OSPD, but I would like Scrabble players to recognise that the universe of words does not stop at just these two works. There are many other sources of words, and many other words, outside of these two familiar works. Don't let the limited solar system of OSW/OSPD blind you to the existence of a myriad galaxies of words beyond!