

# STATE LETTER BANKS: THE LONG AND SHORT OF IT

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Take each of the 50 US state names in turn. For each state name, reduce the name to the list of different letters occurring in the state name, ignoring repeated occurrences of letters (for example, Alabama to ABLM). For each such sequence, what is the longest and the shortest word that can be made from all of the different letters, allowing repeated use of any letter? (In the National Puzzlers' League, collections of such words, not merely the longest and shortest possible, are known as a Letter Bank .)

In some cases, the shortest word possible appears to be the state name itself—obviously for a state such as Iowa or Utah with no repeated letters. Similarly, the longest word possible may be the state name, especially when it is a long name with many repeated letters, such as Mississippi. For a handful of states, both the longest and shortest words are the state name, such as Kentucky or Wyoming. Where possible I have replaced the state name with a transposition.

Most of the words are from Webster's Second or Third editions, although a smattering of words from other sources have been included (and references provided at the end of the article).

lamb	Alabama	ambalam
lask	Alaska	Kalkaska
Azorin	Arizona	Arizonian
ranks	Arkansas	Arkansans
florican	California	craniofacial
cardol	Colorado	local road
counite	Connecticut	uncontinnence
wardle	Delaware	well-rewarded
forlaid	Florida	Firoloida
og aire	Georgia	Gregoria
hawi	Hawaii	Wahiawa
<b>Idaho</b>	Idaho	Hodaiah
lions	Illinois	nonillions
naid	Indiana	Indianian
<b>Iowa</b>	Iowa	<b>Iowa</b>
sank	Kansas	kanakas
<b>Kentucky</b>	Kentucky	<b>Kentucky</b>
allusion	Louisiana	nonillusional
amine	Maine	manienie
land-army	Maryland	Maryland Day
mustache	Massachusetts	Mattachussetts
chingma	Michigan	chimichanga
somniate	Minnesota	testamentations
imps	Mississippi	Mississippis
rimous	Missouri	missouriums
manto	Montana	montanto

bankers	Nebraksa	snake bearers
vaned	Nevada	Vendean
<b>New Hampshire</b>	New Hampshire	New Hampshireman
<b>New Jersey</b>	New Jersey	Jenny-wrens
<b>New Mexico</b>	New Mexico	<b>New Mexico</b>
ywroken	New York	New Yorker
antichlor	North Carolina	chorioallantoic
<b>North Dakota</b>	North Dakota	North Dakotan
hoi	Ohio	hooi
holm-oak	Oklahoma	koloa moha
goner	Oregon	nongreen
Paynesville	Pennsylvania	Pennsylvanians
drain-holes	Rhode Island	snail-horned
unhistorical	South Carolina	unanachronistical
<b>South Dakota</b>	South Dakota	<b>South Dakota</b>
sent	Tennessee	tensenesses
taxes	Texas	estate taxes
haut	Utah	tuath
<b>Vermont</b>	Vermont	removement
raving	Virginia	viraginian
nowanights	Washington	Washingtoniana
<b>West Virginia</b>	West Virginia	Weaving Street
<b>Wisconsin</b>	Wisconsin	Wiconisco
<b>Wyoming</b>	Wyoming	<b>Wyoming</b>

**Oxford English Dictionary**

drain-holes (saucer, 1856q), hawl (haw), holm-oak, land-army (army, see definition), missouriums (mastodon, 1847q), ywroken

**Random House Dictionary**

Azarin, nonillusional, unanachronistical, Wahiawa

**Bartholomew Gazetteer of the British Isles**

Weaving Street (a hamlet in Kent, England)

**English Dialect Dictionary**

hooi (of the wind , to whistle)

**Hodge, Handbook of Indians North of Mexico**

Mattachussetts (early spelling)

**Funk & Wagnalls New Standard Dictionary**

Jenny-wrens (plural of Jenny-wren, the herb Robert—not a wren!)

**Harrap Book of Boys & Girls Names**

Gregoria (feminine form of the given name Gregory)

**Times Index Gazetteer**

Paynesville (towns in Indiana, Minnesota, West Virginia and Wisconsin)

**Webster's Geographical Dictionary**

Kalkaska (town and county in Michigan), Wiconisco (locality in Pennsylvania)