

# COUNTING WITH YOUR FINGERS

ERIC IVERSON

Saint Paul, Minnesota

Assuming that the thumb is your first finger, the index finger your second, and so on to the pinkie your fifth, here are the words in which each character typed on a qwerty typewriter keyboard by your *n*th finger appears precisely *n* times in the word:

beebe, booboo, deeded, entente, furfur, grugru, juju, murmur, tutu

For example, in *booboo* the O is typed by the fourth finger and appears four times, and the B is typed by the second finger and appears twice. Words have been taken from a 144,878-word computer list; most can be found in Webster's Third New International Dictionary. The thumb is never used in typing letters, so all qualifying words must contain at least two of every letter.

However, if you count the index finger as the first finger, and the pinkie as the fourth, you get a lot more hits. There are about 500 such words, of which 106 of seven or more letters are listed below. The only one-word countries that have this property are *Yemen*, *Morocco*, and *Fiji*.

Ahmadabad, bedirtied, berhyme, bidding, birthing, bruiting, brutifying, budgeted, burdened, burgesses, circuit, circuitry, crucifying, crunchy, cubicity, debuted, deified, denuder, detrude, dihybrid, disseised, ecumenicity, edified, embrute, emeriti, endured, estruses, etherifying, feminie, ferment, fervent, firming, footboy, footsoreness, foredoomed, freshness, fruiting, genitive, giddinesses, gleefully, godhood, gombroon, gossoons, greenth, greyhen, Guenther, guessers, guesses, gumtree, hegumen, hegumeny, hissings, homogony, huntresses, illegible, imbruing, imbruting, imbuing, inebriety, inedited, infight, insists, invitee, katakana, levelly, Libreville, maharaja, Mahayana, Methuen, mirinesses, missuits, mitring, mynheer, nigrify, recency, redivide, refunded, reignite, reinvoke, rejudged, rhesuses, ridding, rifting, selflessly, sensitise, submerses, subsegments, subseres, subserves, subsisting, sureness, syntheses, tegumen, thereby, thrillingly, thriving, thundered, trended, tresses, trivium, underfed, veinier, venture, vitrify

If one uses a Dvorak keyboard instead, the original list is reduced to *beebe*, *booboo*, *dikdik*, *dumdum* and *Mimi*. The second list contains 90 words of five or more letters:

beefy, befitted, beige, bemixed, Bette, betted, bigeye, bitty, boyhood, bugeye, bugeyed, bumph, bumpy, butty, chebec, checked, chick, chipmuck, chuck, chucky, chymic, cubic, Debye, demurrer, ditty, dogtooth, dumky, dumpy, dunning, embed, emitted, emyde, ephebi, epithet, eutectic, exhume, exhumed, exude, ferrer, fatted, feued, fixup, fritterer, fumette, funning, gimp, gutty, hedge, hempie, Hettie, hexed, hiccup, hotfoot, humid, humpy, impede, imphee, intendment, kedge, keyed, kitty, merrier, misguesses, mixup, mucic, murderer, ninny, outfoot, Panamanian, pellmell, Pennine, petite, petted, pigmy, pudgy, punning, puttee, putty, skepsises, speisses, successes, teeth, tempted, tight, tufty, tutee, unkenned, unpenned, uptight, yeuked