

LETTER BANKS OF THE CAPITALS

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Recently, Darryl Francis found words from the letter banks of the chemical elements and the states of the US. I decided to letter-bank (to coin a verb) the names of the nations of the world, but I found that, on average, their capitals had shorter names than their countries. I used a Scrabble-based (North American vocabulary only) program similar to LeXpert to letter-bank the national capitals.

A letter bank is the set of different letters contained in a word or phrase, such as **ainot** for **nation**. The shortest and longest Scrabble words using the **ainot** letter bank are **anoint** and **annotation** (or **initiation** or **intonation**), respectively.

There are 192 nations in the world, excluding dependencies such as Greenland and disputed areas such as Western Sahara. Vatican City is inside the city of Rome, so it has no capital city, but South Africa has two, Cape Town and Pretoria. The program found words for 107 of the 192 capitals, although some, such as the ones for Muscat and Berlin, need improving. Note that **Amman** and **Manama** share the same letter bank. **Banjul** (the Gambia) and **Ljubljana** (Slovenia) also share the same letter bank, and bring the total to 109.

Afghanistan	Kabul	bauk
Albania	Tiranë	retina; entertainer
Algeria	Algiers	glaires; grisailles
Andorra	Andorra la Vella	overland; overlearned
Angola	Luanda	ulnad; landau
Australia	Canberra	aberrance
Austria	Vienna	naïve
Azerbaijan	Baki	kabiki
the Bahamas	Nassau	anus; sunnas
Bahrain	Manama	nam; mannan; Amman
Bridgetown	Dhaka	dhak
Belarus	Minsk	minks; miniskis
Belgium	Brussels	rubles; burblers
Bolivia	La Paz	plaza
Botswana	Gaborone	begroan; baronage
Brazil	Brasília	brails
Cambodia	Phnom Penh	barillas
Cape Verde	Praia	pair; priapi
Central African Republic	Bangui	bubinga; unbanning
Chile	Santiago	agonist; assignations
Comoros	Moroni	minor; morrion
Congo, Republic of the	Brazzaville	verbalize; verbalizer
Costa Rica	San José	joannes
Cyprus	Nicosia	casino; scansions
Czech Republic	Prague	pugaree; puggaree

Dominica	Roseau	arouse; rousseaus
Ecuador	Quito	quoit
Egypt	Cairo	coria; carioca
Equatorial Guinea	Malabo	abloom
Eritrea	Asmara	mars; samsaras
Estonia	Tallinn	lattin; lanital
Ethiopia	Addis Ababa	basidia
Fiji	Suva	vaus
France	Paris	pairs; ripraps
Gabon	Libreville	verbile; believer
Georgia	Tbilisi	biblists; biblists
Germany	Berlin	berlin; nibbler
Ghana	Accra	arc; caracara
Greece	Athens	hasten; ensheathes
Grenada	Saint George's	orangiest; antisegregation
Haiti	Port-au-Prince	precaution; unappreciation
Iran	Tehran	thenar; threatener
Ireland	Dublin	unbuild
Italy	Rome	omer; roomer
Jamaica	Kingston	stoking; knottings
Jordan	Amman	man; manana; Manama
Kazakhstan	Astana	ants; statant
Kenya	Nairobi	rabboni
Kiribati	Tarawa	wart
Korea, South	Seoul	ousel; soulless
Laos	Vientiane	native; inattentive
Latvia	Riga	ragi; agria
Lebanon	Beirut	tribute; butterier
Lesotho	Maseru	amuser; marasmuses
Liberia	Monrovia	omnivora
Libya	Tripoli	tripoli
Macedonia	Skopje	kopjes
Madagascar	Antananarivo	variation
Maldives	Male	alme; lamellae
Malta	Valletta	valet; valvelet
Micronesia	Palikir	palikar
Moldova	Chisinau	unchains; anchusins
Monaco	Monaco	macon
Morocco	Rabat	brat; rabat
Mozambique	Maputo	pomatum
Myanmar	Yangon	agony; anagogy
Nauru	Yaren	yearn; yearner
the Netherlands	Amsterdam	smarted; remastered
New Zealand	Wellington	toweling; towelling
Nicaragua	Managua	magnum
Nigeria	Abuja	juba
Norway	Oslo	sol; lolls
Oman	Muscat	muscat; muscats
Palau	Koror	kor; rook

Paraguay	Asunción	acinous
Peru	Lima	mail; mammilla
Philippines	Manila	liman; mammalian
Poland	Warsaw	raws; warsaws
Portugal	Lisbon	billons; billions
Qatar	Doha	hodad
Saint Kitts and Nevis	Basseterre	baster; barbettes
Saint Lucia	Castries	stearic; criticasters
Samoa	Apia	pia; pappi
São Tomé and Príncipe	São Tomé	osteoma; maestosos
Saudi Arabia	Riyadh	hydria
Senegal	Dakar	dark
Seychelles	Victoria	victoria; activator
Sierra Leone	Freetown	forwent; forewent
Singapore	Singapore	operagoings
South Africa	Pretoria	priorate; appropriate
Spain	Madrid	aramid
Sri Lanka	Colombo	clomb
Swaziland	Mbabane	ameban; amebean
Switzerland	Bern	bren
Taiwan	Taipei	pieta; appetite
Tajikistan	Dushanbe	husbanded
Tanzania	Dar-es-Salaam	medlars; marmalades
Togo	Lomé	mole
Trinidad and Tobago	Port-of-Spain	stainproof; nitroparaffins
Tunisia	Tunis	suint; sinusitis
Turkey	Ankara	rank
Uzbekistan	Tashkent	khanates
Venezuela	Caracas	scar; caracaras
Yemen	Sanaa	ansa; asanas
Yugoslavia	Belgrade	garbled; gallbladder
Zambia	Lusaka	kulaks
Zimbabwe	Harare	rhea; rehear

Some letter banks produce common words which for various reasons are not allowed in Scrabble. **Ouagadougou** (Burkina Faso) reveals the capitalized **Gouda**, and **Moscow** the hyphenated **moo-cows**. Undoubtedly searching other sources would turn up more, less common, words. The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary has **kive** for **Kiev** (Ukraine), **unannoyed** for **Yaoundé** (Cameroon) and **whindle** for **New Delhi** (India). Webster's Second has **snakish** for **Kinshasa** (Democratic Republic of the Congo). Can anyone find a source for **two-A** for **Ottawa** (Canada)? Hopefully 150 or 160 will eventually be found from various sources.