

AMBIDEXTROUS AND ANTIDEXTROUS WORDS

REX GOOCH

Letchworth Garden City, Herts, England

rexgooch@ntlworld.com

In the November 2001 Kickshaws, an ambidextrous word is defined as one whose first half contains only letters from the first half of the alphabet, and whose second half contains letters from the second half of the alphabet. An antidextrous word is defined the other way round. In the following, words of even length only are considered, to avoid the problem of the central letter in words with an odd number of letters.

In the case of ambidextrous words, it is difficult to find anything better than AMBIDEXTROUS, except for phrases. For antidextrous words, PUZZLE-HEADED (which I could not find in dictionaries) is easily equaled and just surpassable.

Heterograms (all letters different) are marked with an asterisk. The source of all words is the Oxford English Dictionary, except when noted otherwise (Ch = Chambers; US and Canadian place names from Columbia Gazetteer of North America).

Ambidextrous length 12

*AMBIDEXTROUS

BLACK BOURTON (Oxfordshire)

BLADDER-SNOUT

CALABAR POTTO (Calabar potto)

CHAMBER-STORY (chamber)

FIELD-HONOURS (field 1737q)

HALLIBURTON'S (spin 1862q, could be pl.)

LIE HEAVY UPON (Ch)

MALEFESOURYS (malfeasor 14..q)

BLACK-APRONRY

BLACK COUNTRY (Ch)

BLADDERWORTS (bladder, 1951q)

CHALK-COUNTRY

CHICKEN ROOST (Web 2)

*GLACIERSNOUT (glacier 1933q)

IMMELANN TURN (Bloomsbury, misprint?)

LIGAMENTOSUS (Stedman)

Ambidextrous length 12 when S is added to end

AIGLEAUTOUR (eagle-hawk)

BEEKMANTOWN (Web 2)

BLACK-BRYONY (bryony 1883q)

CHICKEN SOUP (Bloomsbury Thesaurus)

CLAEFERWYRT (clerewort)

GLACIER-SNOW

HELICHRYSON (a plant)

LAC BEAUPORT (village, south Quebec)

MACHIASPORT (village, eastern Maine)

MIFFLINTOWN (town, central Pennsylvania)

ALFHAMPSTON (place OED un- 1960q)

BELCHERTOWN (west central Mass.)

CHALMERSTON Moss (trundle 1839q)

CHICKENWORT

GILCAMSTOUN (a mill) (multure 1547q)

HEDGE-HYSSOP

HIGH-DAY NOON

LACED MUTTON

MIDDLESTOWN (West Yorkshire)

Ambidextrous length 14

ALFALFA SPROUTS
 IMMELMANN TURNS (Immelmann)

CABBAGE-SPROUTS (broccoli)

Antidextrous length 12

OUT-PRODIGIED (out- 1844q)
 PRONUNCIABLE
 PSOROTHALMIA (scurviness 1548q)
 ROOT-SYLLABLE (move, Ch)
 SYNONYMICAL (synonymical 1645q)
 TO TOP THE DECK
 TURNPYKEHEID (turnpike 1623q)
 *UNPROVIDABLE (Web 2)
 UNTO SO MICKLE
 UNWURTHLICHE (unworthly 1220q)

POSTTRACHEAL (Web 2)
 PROTONIC ACID (Bloomsbury Thesaurus)
 QUOYNTELOCHE (point 1290q)
 SUNNYSIDE EGG
 TO TOP THE BILL
 TO WROTHE HELL (wroth)
 UNPONTIFICAL (Web 2)
 UNSUPPLIABLE
 UNTROUBLABLE (Web 2)

Antidextrous length 14

SWOOPSTAKE-LIKE (swoop, Ch)
 UNOUTSPEAKABLE

TO STOP THE CABLE
 VNOUTSPEAKABLE (unoutspeakable 1564q)