

# Dictionary skills: Part 1

## Level 1

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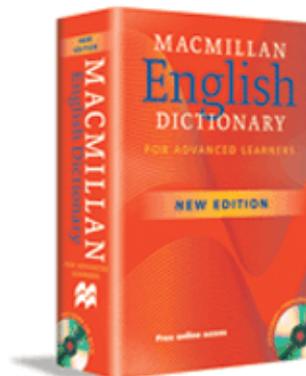
**Level:** Pre-intermediate to intermediate

**Age:** Teenagers / adults

**Time needed:** 45–60 minutes (approx)

**Subject:** Dictionary skills / vocabulary development

**Summary:** These worksheets are designed for use with the *Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners* to give learners practice in using the dictionary to check meaning and for vocabulary development.



### Exercise 1: Parts of speech

1. If you do Exercise 1 as a class exercise, ask learners to work with a partner and try to complete the grid *before* checking in the dictionary. If they are unfamiliar with dictionary use, you may need to show them where the word class information can be found – immediately after the phonemic transcription of the word (e.g. *noun, adj, adv*). In the case of verbs, check they understand [I] and [T] shown after the word class information – I for *intransitive* and T for *transitive*. Make sure they realise that homographs such as *flat* have different dictionary entries for each word class.

### Exercise 2: Irregular past tenses

2. Make sure learners know where this information can be found (immediately after the phonemic transcription).

### Exercise 3: Compounds

3. The answers to these will not be found in the dictionary under the entries for the nouns themselves but in the associated compound words found immediately after each entry. For example, the entry for *business* gives definitions for different uses of the word as well as idioms containing the word *business*. Compounds beginning with *business* can be found after the entry, e.g. *business card, business class, business plan* and so on.

### Exercise 4: Main meanings

4. Draw your learners' attention to the use of pink boxes in MED2 for words with five meanings or more. These give very brief definitions for each meaning in the order of priority in which they are presented in the dictionary. For example, meaning one of the nine meanings of *full* is *containing all that fits*, while the much less common meaning eight is *clothing: loose on body*.

### Exercise 5: Word building

5. When learners have finished this exercise, you could highlight some of the main patterns used in noun formation exemplified here, e.g. *-ation, -ment*, and ask them for more examples of each.

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### 1 Parts of speech

What parts of speech are these words? Check in the dictionary and write *verb*, *noun*, *adjective* or *adverb* in the gaps after each word. Note that some of them have more than one function.

1. cheap \_\_\_\_\_
2. earn \_\_\_\_\_
3. full \_\_\_\_\_
4. flat \_\_\_\_\_
5. flight \_\_\_\_\_
6. guess \_\_\_\_\_
7. hard \_\_\_\_\_
8. kind \_\_\_\_\_

### 2 Irregular past tenses

Complete the table by writing in the irregular past tenses of these verbs. Then check your answers in the dictionary.

	Irregular past form
1. bend	
2. bleed	
3. burst	
4. cling	
5. creep	
6. deal	
7. dig	
8. flee	

### 3 Compounds

Find the nouns that go with these other nouns to match the definitions.

Example: bus \_\_\_\_\_ – a building where buses start and finish their journeys (bus station)

1. **business** \_\_\_\_\_ – a special area for offices and small factories
2. **cash** \_\_\_\_\_ – the place in a shop where you pay for your goods
3. **coffee** \_\_\_\_\_ – a short period of time when you stop working to drink something
4. **day** \_\_\_\_\_ – a ticket that allows you to travel by train or bus at a reduced price because you go and come back on the same day
5. **ice** \_\_\_\_\_ – a small piece of ice you put in a drink to make it cold
6. **luggage** \_\_\_\_\_ – a shelf above the seats on a train or bus used for storing bags during a journey
7. **taxi** \_\_\_\_\_ – a place where taxis wait for customers
8. **weather** \_\_\_\_\_ – a report on likely weather conditions for a period of time in the future

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### 4 Main meanings

These words all have more than one meaning in English. Fill the gaps using the words in the list. Then look in the dictionary\* and check your answers.

\* You will find short definitions of the main meanings of words with five or more meanings in the pink-shaded box beneath the word, e.g. full (nine meanings).

temperature	cooked	cooking	part
full	periods	higher	serving

- base      lowest \_\_\_\_\_ of something (sth)
- dish      for cooking/ \_\_\_\_\_ food
- fill      make something (sth) \_\_\_\_\_
- hot      very high in \_\_\_\_\_
- lift      move to \_\_\_\_\_ position
- pan      container for \_\_\_\_\_
- raw      not \_\_\_\_\_
- season      one of four \_\_\_\_\_ of the year

### 5 Word building: Nouns

Complete the table by writing in the noun form of each of these verbs. Then use the dictionary to check your answers.

verb	noun
<i>e.g. correct</i>	<i>correction</i>
1. permit	
2. explain	
3. arrive	
4. depart	
5. enjoy	
6. sign	
7. sleep	
8. agree	

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### KEY

#### 1 Parts of speech

1. adjective
2. verb
3. adjective
4. adjective; noun; adverb
5. noun
6. noun; verb
7. adjective; adverb
8. adjective; noun

#### 2 Irregular past tenses

1. bent
2. bled
3. burst
4. clung
5. crept
6. dealt
7. dug
8. fled

#### 3 Compounds

1. park
2. desk
3. break
4. return
5. cube
6. rack
7. rank
8. forecast

#### 4 Main meanings

1. part
2. serving
3. full
4. temperature
5. higher
6. cooking
7. cooked
8. periods

#### 5 Word building: Nouns

1. permission
2. explanation
3. arrival
4. departure
5. enjoyment
6. signature
7. sleep
8. agreement