

We use cookies to enhance your experience on our website. By clicking 'continue' or by continuing to use our website, you are agreeing to our use of cookies. You can change your cookie settings at any time.

Continue
Find out more

Oxford English Dictionary | The definitive record of the English language

REVIEWED

By Chris at 8:33 am, Aug 07, 2020

Oxford, *n.* and *adj.*

Pronunciation: Brit. /'ɒksfəd/, U.S. /'aksfəd/

Forms: IME– **Oxford**, 15 **Oxforde**. Also with lower-case initial.

Frequency (in current use):

Origin: From a proper name. **Etymon:** proper name *Oxford*.

Etymology: < *Oxford*, the name of a city and university town in southern England....

A. *n.*

1.

a. The University of Oxford; the members of the University collectively, or the cultured or privileged lifestyle popularly associated with them.

- [c1300 *St. Edmund Rich* (Harl.) 226 in C. D'Evelyn & A. J. Mill *S. Eng. Legendary* (1956) 500 To arsmetrike he drouȝ & arsmetrike radde in cours in Oxenford wel faste.
- c1450 in F. J. Furnivall *Hymns to Virgin & Christ* (1867) 61 Quod resoun, 'in age of xx ȝeer Goo to oxenford, or lerne lawe.']
- 1455 in A. Clark *Lincoln Diocese Documents* (1914) 77 The Chaunceler of Oxford or his commissary.
- 1523 *Act 14 & 15 Hen. VIII* v, in *Statutes of Realm* (1817) III. 214 A Graduat of Oxforde or Cantebrygge which hath accomplished all thyng for his fourme.
- 1526 *C. Mery Talys* f. xiv A scoler of Oxford lately made master of arte come to the cyte of london.
- 1627 ABP. G. ABBOT in J. Rushworth *Hist. Coll.* (1659) 451 He was my Pupil at Oxford, and a very towardly one.
- a1697 J. AUBREY *Wiltshire* (1862) 17 At Oxford, (and I believe at Cambridge) the rod was frequently used by the Tutors and Deans.
- 1749 H. FIELDING *Tom Jones* I. II. ix. 150 Here lies, In Expectation of a joyful Rising, The Body of Captain John Blifil. London had the Honour of his Birth, Oxford of his Education.
- 1799 J. AUSTEN *Let.* 2 June (1995) 43 He is a very Young Man, just entered of Oxford.
- 1847 W. M. THACKERAY *Vanity Fair* (1848) xxxiv He's only been plucked twice..but he's had the advantages of Oxford and a university education.
- 1899 M. BEERBOHM *More* 155 I was a modest, good-humoured boy. It is Oxford that has made me insufferable.
- 1930 *Times Lit. Suppl.* 25 Dec. 1103/1 There is encouraging evidence elsewhere that young Oxford is beginning to recognize that mere cleverness is poetically sterile.
- 1969 J. GROSS *Rise & Fall Man of Lett.* ii. 48 The particular way of life in which he had been raised, a way of life which can be conveniently, if not literally, summed up as 'Oxford'.
- 2003 *Daily Tel.* 12 Mar. 3/1 Less than 20 per cent of Oxford's fellowship is female.

†**b.** With preceding modifying word. Any of various examinations formerly conducted under the auspices of Oxford University. *Obsolete.*

- 1871 *Times* 25 Nov. 15/1 (*advt.*) Careful preparation for high competitive examinations, for senior and junior Oxford and Cambridge, and Civil Service.
- 1916 W. OWEN *Let.* Apr. (1967) 389 I hear you are applying yourself to some solid study for the J[unior] Oxford.

2. In full ***Oxford Down***. A breed of sheep produced by crossing Cotswold and Hampshire Down sheep; a sheep of this breed.

First bred by Samuel Druce at Eynsham, Oxfordshire, about 1830.

- 1849 *Jrnl. Royal Agric. Soc.* **10** 436 The Cotswold is a large breed of sheep, and is the stock from which the class called new Oxford is sprung.
- 1859 *Jrnl. Royal Agric. Soc.* **20** 345 The Oxford Downs date from the year 1833..when a neat, well-made Cotswold ram was used with Hampshire ewes.
- 1893 H. H. BANCROFT *Bk. of Fair* xix. 621 For the best sheep awards were made to exhibitors of Cotswold, Leicester, Lincoln, Cheviot, Dorset, Southdown, Shropshire, Oxford, Hampshire, and merinos... The largest number of entries was of merinos, delaine-merinos, Southdowns, and Oxfords.
- 1970 *Observer* 26 Apr. (Colour Suppl.) 36/1 All six Down breeds..are shortwools, Oxford Down..being heaviest... Bold-looking sheep with top~knot of wool above dark face.
- 1989 S. G. HALL & J. CLUTTON-BROCK *200 Years Brit. Farm Livestock* ix. 115 These were too fat for the twentieth century market and Oxford, later Suffolk, rams were used instead.

3. Short for *Oxford shoe* *n.* at *Compounds 2*.

- 1855 *Househ. Words* 12 May 350/2 The clumsy Blucher, the clumsier Ankle Jack, or Highlow, the skimping half-faced sacerdotal Oxford.
- c1890 in *Amer. Mail Order Fashions* (1961) 28/2 Women's tan Dongola Kid, square or pointed toe, fox heel Oxfords. French stay.
- 1932 *New Yorker* 11 June 45 Waterproof leather oxfords or ghillies.; suede oxfords at Brooks and Rogers Peet... Golf oxfords at Spalding [etc.].
- 1962 L. DEIGHTON *Ipcress File* i. 13 He rocked on his hand-lasted Oxfords.
- 2003 *Chicago Tribune* (Nexis) 4 May (Mag. section) 10 His suede oxfords, peace-sign choker and furrowed brow stamp him as an 18-year-old.

4.

a. Short for *Oxford cloth* *n.* at *Compounds 2*.

- 1890 *Illustr. London News* 24 May in L. de Vries *Victorian Advts.* (1968) 51/3 New Range of Coloured Oxfords, Cambrics, and Calcuttas for Shirts and Pyjamas.
- 1914 *Glasgow Herald* 7 Sept. 10/2 Glasgow firms manufacture..zephyrs, Oxfords, shirtings, and dress goods.

- 1985 *Daily News Rec. (U.S.)* (Nexis) 21 Mar. 11 For dress shirts this Oxford is in a wine stripe on white by Canyon Fabrics in a 60/40 polyester/cotton blend.
- 1998 *GQ* Feb. 148/3 The best button-downs are made in cotton Oxford for winter and sea-island cotton for summer.

b. Short for *Oxford shirt* *n.* at *Compounds 2*.

- 1927 *Washington Post* 24 Jan. 2 (*advt.*) White Oxford (neckband style or collar attached).
- 1978 *Spectator* (New Canaan High School, Connecticut) 66 Then I..pulled out four shirts: a turtleneck, a Lacoste 'alligator' shirt, a flannel shirt, and a wrinkled, white button-down Oxford.
- 2000 A. BOURDAIN *Kitchen Confid.* (2001) 100 The waiters are in comfortable clothes—100 percent cotton oxfords or same-colored T-shirts, blue jeans or khakis, [etc.].

5. *slang* (now chiefly *Australian*). Short for *Oxford scholar* *n.* at *Compounds 2*. Now *rare*.

- [1898 A. M. BINSTED *Pink 'Un & Pelican* iii. 65 In peacocked the little man with the long chain, the 'wine-steward' who chucked away Ernest's 'half-oxford'.]
- 1902 J. S. FARMER & W. E. HENLEY *Slang* V. 119/1 Oxford, a crown piece.
- 1960 'A. BURGESS' *Doctor is Sick* 103 'We'll say a quid deposit, returnable on return of the hat, and a straight charge of an Oxford for the loan. Right?' 'Right.' The young man handed over his Oxford scholar.
- 1965 *Australasian Post* (Melbourne) 4 Mar. 46 From 'dollar' we have the rhyming slang 'Oxford scholar', which eventually became shortened to an 'Oxford'.

†**6.** Short for *Oxford grey* *n.* and *adj.* at *Compounds 2*. *Obsolete. rare*.

- 1926 *Daily Colonist* (Victoria, Brit. Columbia) 21 July 16/4 (*advt.*) A 4-ply worsted wool in shades of pink... Oxford.

7. Any of various English dictionaries published by Oxford University Press; (sometimes) *spec.* the *Oxford English Dictionary*.

- 1927 *Amer. Speech* 2 444/2 A general dictionary such as Webster's, the Standard, or the Concise Oxford.
- 1941 S. J. PERELMAN *Let.* 8 Oct. in *Don't tread on Me* (1987) 39 Neither Roget nor the Pocket Oxford have words to describe how happy we'd be to join your little seminar this weekend.
- 1950 W. STEVENS *Let.* 21 Nov. (1967) 699 I look it up either at the office, where we have a Webster, or have someone look it up for me in the State library, where there is an Oxford.
- 1989 *Nature* 29 June 672/3 Joe Smith..stood his ground and hit back with the shorter Oxford and a technical definition.

†**8.** In *plural* = *Oxford bags* *n.* at *Compounds 2*. *Obsolete. rare*.

1929 G. MITCHELL *Myst. Butcher's Shop* xi. 120 He fell down, and tore chunks out of his Oxfords on the brambles.

9. *British*. Short for *Oxford marmalade* *n.* at *Compounds 2*.

1964 J. SYMONS *End of Solomon Grundy* I. ii. 29 The routine of breakfast..Cooper's Oxford, the electric percolator.

1972 'I. DRUMMOND' *Frog in Moonflower* 10 The Master..spread a piece of toast with Cooper's Oxford.

B. *adj.*

(Supposedly) characteristic of members of Oxford University, esp. as regards speech, manner, etc. (cf. *Compounds 1b*).

In quot. 1886: supporting Oxford University against Cambridge in the Boat Race.

1886 H. BAUMANN *Londinismen* 129/2 Are you Oxford or Cambridge?

1928 D. H. LAWRENCE *Woman who rode Away & Other Stories* 152 But, in a voice more expostulatingly Oxford than ever, he said [etc.].

1947 *Econ. Jnl.* **57** 12 He was top in the English Essay..., second in a rather 'Oxford' paper on philosophy.

1983 *Eng. Hist. Rev.* **98** 460 Amery had a very Oxford conversation with H. A. L. Fisher, classifying the brain power of their Coalition colleagues.

COMPOUNDS

C1. General *attributive*.

a. In the sense 'of, relating to, or originating from Oxford University', as *Oxford college*, *Oxford graduate*, *Oxford man*, etc.

1590 'PASQUIL' *First Pt. Pasquils Apol.* sig. B3 You that are Oxford men, enquire whether Walpoole were not a Puritane.

1611 J. SPEED *Hist. Great Brit.* IX. xix. 731/2 Reuerence of the man..moued so the affection of the Oxford Academians.

a1661 T. FULLER *Worthies* (1662) Surrey 82 He used to examine the Pockets of such Oxford Scholars as repaired unto him, and alwayes recruited them with necessaries.

1709 M. PRIOR *Poems* (ed. 2) 206 An Oxford Man, extreemly read in Greek.

1740 D. BELLAMY *Perjur'd Devotee* IV, in *Misc. in Prose & Verse* II. 56 Zounds he makes Love like an Oxford Scholar.

1796 F. BURNEY *Camilla* II. III. i. 7 As to the colonels, and the ensigns, and that young Oxford student, they won't at all do; officers are commonly worth nothing; and scholars..are the dullest men in the world.

1822 M. EDGEWORTH *Frank: Sequel* III. 143 It was said..that all Cambridge scholars call the cipher *aught* and all Oxford scholars call it *nought*.

1854 *Putnam's Monthly Mag.* Aug. 231/2 The Oxford graduate [sc. Ruskin] is himself sensible of the likeness which he bears to the knight of La Mancha.

- 1885 *Dict. National Biogr.* at *Adolphus, John Leycester* He had been appointed steward or legal adviser of his old Oxford college.
- 1909 *Daily Chron.* 13 Nov. 4/4 Confidence-tricksters would rather meet a fly-flat than the most learned of Oxford dons.
- 1957 G. AVERY *Warden's Niece* viii. 153 A young man..clumsily trying to propel his punt from the stern instead of the conventional Oxford position in front.
- 1993 *Esquire* Nov. 38/2 He was an Oxford graduate who ended up playing keyboards in her band.

b. In the sense '(supposedly) characteristic of members of Oxford University' (cf. sense *A. 1a*). See also *Oxford accent n.*, *Oxford English n. at Compounds 2*.

- 1877 H. JAMES *Let.* 28 Feb. in R. B. Perry *Thought & Char. W. James* (1935) I. 375 I lunched the other day with Andrew Lang to meet J. Addington Symonds,—a mild, cultured man, with the Oxford perfume.
- 1897 G. B. SHAW in *Sat. Rev.* 17 Apr. 411/1 Stage smart speech, which, like the got-up Oxford mince and drawl of a foolish curate, is the mark of a snob.
- 1924 E. M. FORSTER *Passage to India* xxiv. 221 'We object to the presence of so many European ladies and gentlemen upon the platform,' he said in an Oxford voice.
- 1934 *Spectator* 5 Jan. 18/2 Surely it is permissible to suggest..the Oxford Bleat by writing down the directions given me the other day as 'past a whaite house, between the water-tah and the pah station'.
- 1960 W. B. GALLIE *New Univ.* vi. 115 They were delighted by the fact that he so often appeared to be joking—for so they described Lindsay's elaborate Oxford irony.
- 1989 *Amer. Forests* (Nexis) May 20 'Well,' he said in an understated Oxford manner, 'if I can't make things happen here, it won't be for lack of trying.'

C2.

Oxford accent *n.* Received Pronunciation, formerly considered to be particularly characteristic of members of the University of Oxford, and (esp. in the early 20th cent.) supposed to be marked by affected utterance.

- 1902 *Sc. Notes & Queries* 4 55/1 Even our cultivated men do not escape, as witness the nasty remark made by Mr. Percy White in a recent book about 'what gentlemen from Aberdeen call the Oxford Accent'.
- 1904 J. K. JEROME *Tommy & Co.* v. 174 Somerville's Oxford accent is wasted here.
- 1934 *S.P.E. Tract* (Soc. for Pure Eng.) No. XXXIX. 616 It might be said perhaps that the 'Oxford Accent' conveys an impression of a precise and rather foppish elegance, and of deliberate artificiality.
- 1959 J. BRAINE *Vodi* vi. 93 Dick assumed an Oxford accent. 'It's *naht* old-fashioned, dear brethren, to think of Hell in the language of fire and brimstone.'
- 1992 *Boundary 2* 19 123 Wadleigh, with his disheveled appearance and acquired Oxford accent.
- 2014 K. L. SEEGERs tr. D. Meyer *Cobra* iii. 14 Morris contacted me by phone... With a...I suppose what they call an Oxford accent.

Oxford bags *n.* chiefly *British* (with *plural* agreement) wide baggy-legged trousers of a style originally popular among Oxford University

students in the 1920s. 

- 1925 *Daily Mail* 6 Mar. 7/4 (*heading*) The Oxford 'Bags'. Although Oxford University has no chair of tailoring an ardent band of reformers there intends to set the world a lead on the subject of—trousers.
- 1948 H. ACTON *Mem. Aesthete* vi. 119 I wore jackets with broad lapels and broad pleated trousers. The latter got broader and broader. Eventually they were imitated elsewhere and were generally referred to as 'Oxford bags'.
- 1992 N. HORNBY *Fever Pitch* 82 I chose a pair of Oxford bags, a black polo-neck jumper, a black raincoat and a pair of black stack-heeled shoes.
- 2012 F. L. NIVEN *Fabulous Fashions 1920s* iii. 22 In 1924 students at Oxford University started wearing loose pants with wide legs... This gave them a very baggy appearance, hence the name 'Oxford bags'.

Oxford-bagged *adj.* now *historical* wearing Oxford bags.

- 1925 *Sat. Herald* (Dublin) 17 Oct. 6/6 We of 1925 seem to have vested the question of personal appearance with all the gravity of a State problem or a weighty philosophical theme... 'Is the silhouette doomed?' 'Do men like bobbed women?' 'Do women like Oxford bagged men?'
- 1961 *Times* 18 May 16/6 Eton-cropped maidens sporting decorously with Oxford-bagged partners.
- 1993 *Daily Mail* (Nexis) 9 Mar. 37 A boatered, blazered and Oxford-bagged Nanki-Poo..woos a gym-slipped Yum-Yum.
- 2013 E. SCOTT *I could have been Contender* ii. 13 Dad was a handsome, Oxford-bagged man who obviously had a lot of sex-appeal.

Oxford chrome *n.* = *Oxford ochre n.*

- 1875 R. HUNT & F. W. RUDLER *Ure's Dict. Arts* (ed. 7) III. 465 *Oxford chrome*, an oxide of iron used in oil and water-colour painting.
- 1885 S. FALLOWS *Progressive Dict. Eng. Lang.* *Oxford-chrome*, an oxide of iron used in oil and water-color painting.
- 1955 *ISCC-NBS Method designating Colors* (U.S. National Bureau of Standards Circular 553) 157 (*table*) Ochre, Oxford Chrome, Oxford Ochre, Oxford Yellow.
- 1968 J. D. CLARK *Beastly Folklore* 102 *Oxford chrome*: yellow ochre.

Oxford clay *n.* *Geology* a stiff grey-blue fossiliferous Jurassic clay found in central England.


- 1812 *Philos. Mag.* **40** 53 The third or great oelite, comprising the green sand, Bedford sand, 1st oelite or Portland stone, clunch, or Oxford clay.
- 1818 W. PHILLIPS *Sel. Facts Geol. Eng. & Wales* 66 In these..are included the three strata..namely, the Forest marble, the Cornbrash limestone, and the clunch clay (Oxford Clay).
- 1898 *Jrnl. Anthropol. Inst.* **27** 225 If the diviner's recommendations were acted on, the council would be boring into a stratum of Oxford clay.
- 1989 J. CAMPBELL-KEASE *Compan. Local Hist. Res.* (BNC) 358 A broad band of Corallian Limestone and

Sand crosses the central part..and this is bounded on each side by Oxford Clay.

- 2012 J. STEANE & J. AYRES *Trad. Buildings Oxf. Region* v. 51/1 They [*sc.* moats] are found in large numbers on the Oxford Clay, in the upper Thames valley and in the north-east of the county.

Oxford cloth *n.* a soft heavy cloth, usually woven in a basket weave from cotton or a cotton mixture, and used chiefly in making shirts.

- 1905 *Clothier & Furnisher* (N.Y.) Aug. 48/1 It [*sc.* the garment] is made from a medium weight cheviot or Oxford cloth.
 1969 *Sears, Roebuck Catal.* Spring–Summer 24 Rajah shirt with soil release. Oxford cloth of polyester and cotton.
 1987 J. BARTH *Tidewater Tales* (1988) 30 She's easy in the preppie drag she wears to work: tweed skirts, cable-knit crewnecks over oxford-cloth buttondowns.
 2007 K. J. NIELSON *Interior Textiles* iv. 74/2 Oxford cloth and duck are unbalanced basketweaves that carry two fine warp threads as one interlaced with one slightly heavier weft thread.

Oxford comma *n.* [after the preferred use of such a comma to avoid ambiguity in the house style of Oxford University Press] a comma immediately preceding the conjunction in a list of items. 

- 1978 P. SUTCLIFFE *Oxf. Univ. Press* IV. i. 114 It was [F. H.] Collins who invented the 'Oxford comma', for which he obtained support from Herbert Spencer.
 1990 *Orlando* (Florida) *Sentinel* (Nexis) 9 Nov. A2 Do you know what an 'Oxford comma' is? One that precedes a conjunction. As the one between the 'b' and the 'and' in: 'a, b, and c'. Hardly anybody uses the Oxford comma anymore. It's rarely needed.
 2020 P. PULLMAN in *Oxf. Times* 30 Jan. 4/4 The 'Brexit' 50p coin is missing an Oxford comma, and should be boycotted by all literate people.

Oxford corner *n.* *Printing* (now *historical* and *rare*) a corner formed by ruled border lines on a title page, etc., which cross and extend slightly beyond each other.

- 1888 C. T. JACOBI *Printer's Vocab.* 93 Oxford corners, borders with mortised corners.
 1960 G. A. GLAISTER *Gloss. Bk.* 289/1 Oxford corners, right-angles formed outside a printed frame (e.g. on a title-page) where the lines meet and project.

Oxford English *n.* English spoken with an Oxford accent or in a manner popularly supposed to be characteristic of members of Oxford University.

- a1894 O. W. HOLMES *Compl. Poet. Wks.* (1912) 313 Our old-world scholar may have ways to teach Of Oxford English, Britain's purest speech.
 1926 D. H. LAWRENCE *Plumed Serpent* ii. 31 An odd, detached, yet cocky little man, a true little Indian, speaking Oxford English in a rapid, low, musical voice.

- 1952 M. STEEN *Phoenix Rising* iv. 72 Americans come over and proceed to acquire what they think is Oxford English.
- 2003 *Take One* (Nexis) May We hear the Honourable Akele Banda, Malawi's minister of health, in his impeccable Oxford English, describe to us [etc.].

Oxford frame *n.* a rectangular frame having sides which cross each other and project slightly at the corners (cf. *Oxford corner n.*).

- 1870 *Littell's Living Age* 21 May 505/1 A novelty is announced in black-edged or mourning note-paper. The new design consists of what is known as an Oxford frame, as a substitute for the ordinary black border.
- 1873 E. SPON *Workshop Receipts* 1st Ser. 8/2 Nothing is prettier than an Oxford frame of light oak.
- 1997 *N.Y. Rev. Bks.* 17 July 61/3 The frame is of a type that was common in Victorian England. Petrie calls it an Oxford frame.

Oxford grey *n.* and *adj.* (*a*) *n.* = *Oxford mixture n.*; the colour of such fabric; any of various other shades of grey, esp. as the colour of a similarly variegated fabric; (*b*) *adj.* having this colour.

- 1822 *Sat. Evening Post* (Philadelphia) 20 Apr. 2/5 A costume of Oxford Grey has been established for the Students of Harvard University.
- 1836 W. F. TOLMIE *Jrnl.* 28 Oct. (1963) 322 1 pr Extra S. fine dark Oxford grey trousers.
- 1903–4 *T. Eaton Catal.* Fall–Winter 17 Women's Trainless Suit, made of Oxford grey Donegal tweed.
- 1973 R. HAYES *Hungarian Game* xxxix. 235 Urkowitz' face was turning a shade of fine Oxford gray.
- 1996 *Transition* 72 38/1 The Sinatra of the snap-brim hat, the oxford-gray suit, and the wing-tip shoes that seemed to be shined even on the soles.


Oxford hollow *n.* *Bookbinding* a flattened paper tube inserted between the spine of a book and its cover to strengthen the spine and allow the book to be opened flat more easily.

- 1956 H. WILLIAMSON *Methods Bk. Design* xix. 308 Another method is to fix on the spine of the section a tube of paper, or Oxford hollow, and to fix the cover to this.
- 1985 *Business First–Columbus* (Ohio) (Nexis) 23 Sept. II. 8 One side of the tube is glued to the back of the book, the other side is glued to the binding. That's called an 'Oxford hollow'.

Oxford John *n.* now *historical* (a dish of) thin slices of mutton or lamb seasoned and stewed. 🗨️

- 1784 *Glasse's Art of Cookery* (new ed.) ii. 51 Oxford John. Keep a leg of mutton till it is stale, cut it into thin collops, [etc.].
- 1892 *Encycl. Pract. Cookery* II. 68/2 Oxford John.
- 1984 *N.Y. Times* (Nexis) 10 June X. 12/1 The night of 'English country fayre' began with Herefordshire salmon., continued with Oxford John (roast leg of lamb, lemon herb sauce and rosemary jelly).

- 2005 P. STOCKLEY *Factory of Cunning* I. 50 Victoire dragged her attention from a plate of Oxford John..., a ragout of lamb with parsley, in which hearty croutons jostled.

Oxford marmalade *n.* a kind of coarse-cut marmalade originally manufactured in Oxford (in quot. 1962 *figurative*). 

- 1905 *Times* 2 Mar. 14/7 The original home where the distinctive feature of Mr. Cooper's business, the 'Oxford' marmalade, was started some 40 years ago.
- 1962 *Sunday Express* 25 Feb. 6/3 Wyatt's thick-cut Oxford marmalade voice.
- 1999 *Ottawa Citizen* (Nexis) 16 Aug. A6 Dreaming of nipping down to the pub for a quick drink, enjoying his Oxford marmalade on toast, or making homemade Bath Oliver biscuits.
- 2009 M. TUNGATE *Luxury World* xiii. 145 It was a jar of Frank Cooper's Original Oxford Marmalade on a breakfast table that inspired this chapter.

† **Oxford mixture** *n.* *Obsolete* a kind of woollen cloth of a very dark grey colour flecked with white; (also) a coat made of this cloth.

- 1837 C. DICKENS *Pickwick Papers* xl. 441 His legs..graced a pair of Oxford-mixture trousers, made to show the full symmetry of the limbs.
- 1847 *Sporting Rev.* Sept. 161 Let our honest man attire him in an Oxford mixture, with tolerably full skirts.
- 1868 'H. LEE' *Basil Godfrey's Caprice* iii. 18 He wore a long Oxford mixture coat.
- 1909 *Chambers's Jnl.* Jan. 43/2 The regulations enjoin..trousers of Oxford mixture.

Oxford ochre *n.* now *historical* a form of yellow ochre formerly obtained from deposits at Shotover, near Oxford.

- 1827 N. WHITTOCK *Decorative Painters' & Glaziers' Guide* I. i. 12 Yellow Ochre is a mineral earth found in many places, but in England chiefly at Shotover Hill, near Oxford; and is therefore known by the name of Oxford Ochre.
- 1854 T. H. FIELDING *Painting in Oil & Water Colour* (ed. 5) 179 Yellow Ochre is..sometimes called Oxford Ochre, being abundant in that neighbourhood.
- 1875 R. HUNT & F. W. RUDLER *Ure's Dict. Arts* (ed. 7) III. 430 A section of the ochre-pits at Shotover Hill, near Oxford, where the Oxford ochre is obtained.
- 1912 *Proc. Royal Soc. B.* **85** 82 A rather rich yellow ochre, made with Mars yellow, Oxford ochre, and a little burnt sienna.
- 1985 J. AYRES *Artist's Craft* iv. 127 (*caption*) Until the late nineteenth century Oxford ochre was a well-known pigment. It was ground in two mills..adjacent to the ochre quarry.
- 2013 J. STEANE & J. AYRES *Trad. Buildings Oxf. Region* x. 344 This mill was used to grind grain but also 'Oxford ochre', a pigment that was won from the adjacent quarry.

Oxford oolite *n.* *Geology* (now *disused*) the middle division of the oolitic series in the Jurassic system of southern Britain; an oolitic

limestone of this division.

- 1818 W. BUCKLAND in W. Phillips *Sel. Facts Geol. Eng. & Wales (table)* Upper or Oxford Oolite. Perishable Freestone composed of Oolitic concretions and Shelly fragments united by a calcareous Cement.
- 1822 W. BUCKLAND in *Philos. Trans.* (Royal Soc.) **112** 174 The rock perforated by the cave is referable to that portion of the oolite formation which, in the south of England, is known by the name of the Oxford oolite and coral rag: its organic remains are identical with those of the Heddington quarries near Oxford.
- 1882 A. GEIKIE *Text-bk. Geol.* III. ii. §2 793 The Middle or Oxford Oolites are composed of two distinct groups: (1) the Oxfordian, and (2) the Corallian.
- 1928 *Philos. Trans.* (Royal Soc.) B. **216** 82 In 1926..I referred to these rocks as the 'Oxford Oolites,' a name which it has since seemed desirable to abandon.
- 1933 W. J. ARKELL *Jurassic Syst. Great Brit.* i. 7 The scene had now shifted from Bath to Oxford, for we have Upper or Oxford Oolite, Oxford, Forest or Fen Clay, and Stonesfield Slate.

Oxford pillowcase *n.* a pillowcase in which the pillowcase bag is framed with a flat border to give the pillow more shape.

- 1957 *Clitheroe Advertiser & Times* 24 May 8/1 (*advt.*) Coloured sheet sets with Oxford pillowcases... Blue, peach, pink and green.
- 1995 G. NICOL *Cross-stitch* 34 Oxford pillowcases have a classic style, providing a perfect foil for monograms.
- 2007 R. SIMHON *Housewife's Handbk.* ii. 64 It is a good idea to put Oxford pillowcases on the bottom pillows and housewife cases on the top ones, so that the frilled edge peeps out.

† **Oxford plant** *n.* *Obsolete rare* = *Oxford weed n.*

- 1856 N. HAWTHORNE *Jrnl.* 31 Aug. in *Eng. Notebks.* (1997) II. V. 115 We looked also at the outside of the wall [of New College]; and Mr. Parker..showed us a weed growing upon the wall,..hanging plentifully downward from a shallow root. It is called the Oxford plant, being found only here, and not easily, if at all, introduced anywhere else.

Oxford punch *n.* now *historical* and *rare* a kind of punch containing calf's foot jelly.

- 1827 R. COOK *Oxf. Night Caps* 11 The Oxford Punch, when made with half the quantity of spirituous liquors, and placed in an ice tub for a short time, is a pleasant summer beverage.
- 1845 E. ACTON *Mod. Cookery* xxvi. 637 Oxford Punch... Lemons..oranges..calf's foot jelly..white wine..French brandy..Jamaica rum [etc.].
- 1877 E. S. DALLAS *Kettner's Bk. of Table* 322 Oxford punch.—The great characteristic of this punch is its having a quantity of calf's foot jelly dissolved in it.
- 1913 *Country Life* 29 Nov. 908/1 In answer to the request for recipes I send the following. The first is called 'Oxford Punch'.
- 2013 K. O'CONNOR *Pineapple* v. 112 In Britain choice old pineapple rum from the West Indies continued to

be sold by provisioners to the nobility and gentry, and used in drinks like Oxford Punch.

Oxford ragwort *n.* a southern European ragwort, *Senecio squalidus*, which escaped from Oxford Botanic Garden and is now naturalized on waste ground, railway tracks, etc., in many parts of Britain.

1884 W. MILLER *Dict. Eng. Names Plants* 249/2 *Senecio..squalidus*, Oxford Rag-wort.

1886 G. C. DRUCE *Flora Oxfordshire* 158 Oxford Ragwort... Very plentiful in and around Oxford, where it was first noticed by Sir Joseph Banks. .Dillenius sent seeds to Linnæus but whether he gathered them from the Oxford Garden or the wall of the town no memorandum exists.

1926 *Nat. Hist. Oxf. District* 72 A few brave adventitious plants may be seen on the walls, including the ubiquitous Oxford Ragwort.

1990 *InterCity Mag.* Sept. 28/3 We're now approaching King's Cross, urban jungle all round. Watch for a bright yellow groundsel-like plant called the Oxford Ragwort.

Oxford sausage *n.* any of various kinds of sausage, *esp.* one flavoured with sage and lemon; (in quot. 1764, used as the title of an anthology of miscellaneous verse).

c1700 W. BISHOP in *Ballard MSS XXXI*. 122 Your best Oxford Sossages.

1764 (*title*) The Oxford sausage.

1778 G. HUDESFORD *Warely* II. 22 My spacious Red Lane will afford a smooth passage, To a sav'ry Bologna, or spic'd Oxford Sausage.

1850 G. P. R. JAMES *Henry Smeaton* xxi. 84/2 We shall be quite safe here; and I have got half a loaf and a long Oxford sausage with me.

1926 *Daily Colonist* (Victoria, Brit. Columbia) 5 Jan. 6/2 (*advt.*) Fresh Made Oxford Sausage, 3 lbs. for 32 c.

2001 *Philippine Daily Inquirer* (Nexis) 23 Oct. 9 Our food reviewer raved over a first-class omelet, Oxford sausages and cafe au lait.

Oxford scholar *n.* [rhyming slang] *slang* (now *Australian* and *New Zealand*) a dollar (in early use, a crown, five shillings; cf. **DOLLAR** *n.* 4b).

1937 E. PARTRIDGE *Dict. Slang* 596/1 *Oxford Scholar*, five shillings (piece or sum): New Zealanders' rhyming s. on *dollar*: C. 20. Also from ca. 1870, in the S.W. of England.

1960 'A. BURGESS' *Doctor is Sick* 103 'We'll say a quid deposit, returnable on return of the hat, and a straight charge of an Oxford for the loan. Right?' 'Right.' The young man handed over his Oxford scholar.

1991 *Sunday Mail Mag.* (Brisbane) 13 Jan. 43/5 James..said 'I've got the Oxford scholars (dollars) if you've got the place.'

Oxford School *n.* the school of thought represented by the Oxford

Movement; the body of people belonging to this school.

- 1835 in H. P. Liddon et al. *Life E. B. Pusey* (1894) I. xv. 350 Mr. Maurice..made up his mind that it represented the parting-point between him and the Oxford School.
- 1949 *Eng. Hist. Rev.* **64** 333 Bunsen could expect..that the Jerusalem plan for an Anglo-Prussian bishopric would have its most formidable opponents in divines of the Oxford school.

Oxford shirt *n.* a shirt made of Oxford cloth.

- 1881 *Times* 30 Sept. 12/2 Dressed in light gray jacket, dark checked trousers and vest, side-spring boots, blue check Oxford shirt, white stockings, and white straw hat.
- 1959 *Listener* 4 June 982/1 The cloth cap and the collarless Oxford shirt.
- 2000 *GQ* Nov. 230 In his signature oxford shirts and dark sport coats, he still could be that shy everyboy down the block—the one who reads poetry and walks with his head hung low.

Oxford shirting *n.* = *Oxford cloth n.*

- 1891 *Blackwood's Edinb. Mag.* Mar. 319/1 She commended a cotton dress my sister had on..—a blue Oxford shirting, trimmed with a darker shade.
- 1917 *Jrnl. Royal Anthropol. Inst.* **47** 355 The fabric is of non-spun fibre, with a good selvedge and an Oxford shirting pattern obtained by means of white warp and red and blue weft.
- 1981 *Times* 8 Oct. 13/5 Spots and stripes were the fashion prints of the season—clean and pure for Laura Biagotti's Oxford shirting dresses.

Oxford shoe *n.* a low-heeled shoe laced over the instep.

- [1721 N. AMHURST *Terræ-filius* No. 46 (1754) 247 I have met them with bob-wigs and new shoes, Oxford-cut.]
- 1847 *New Monthly Mag.* **80** II. 457 High-lows (now called Oxford shoes).
- 1870 M. BRIDGMAN *Robert Lynne* I. xiii. 213 Patent-leather Oxford shoes.
- 1925 J. DOS PASSOS *Manhattan Transfer* III. iii. 309 He wore..olive green woolen socks with black clockmarks and dark red Oxford shoes, their laces neatly tied with doubleknots that never came undone.
- 1984 W. BOYD *Stars & Bars* I. i. 9 Everything about him proclaims his Englishness. His haircut.., and his shiny, well-creased, toe-capped Oxford shoes.

Oxford Tract *n.* any of the series of pamphlets published at Oxford in 1833–41, and more usually called the ‘Tracts for the Times’ (see **OXFORD MOVEMENT** *n.*); usually in *plural*.

- 1836 F. D. MAURICE *Let.* 5 Sept. in F. Maurice *F. D. Maurice* (1884) I. xiii. 205 I cannot say from my own experience whether you are right in your opinion that the Oxford Tract doctrines are spreading.
- 1870 S. A. ALLIBONE *Crit. Dict. Eng. Lit.* 1709/1 Dr. Pusey had given great offence to some, and equal

satisfaction to others, by his connection with the Oxford Tracts movement.

1900 *Dict. National Biogr.* at *Wilson, Daniel* He was a zealous opponent of the principles maintained in the Oxford tracts, against the tendencies of which he both spoke and preached with vehemence.

1992 R. CHAPMAN in L. J. Workman *Medievalism in Eng.* 173 Unlike some of his associates in the Cambridge Camden Society, he [*sc.* J. M. Neale] approved of the Oxford Tracts.

Oxford trousers *n.* (with *plural* agreement) = *Oxford bags n.*

1925 *Punch* 4 Mar. 244 (*caption*) Perils of the Dance. The terror of the Oxford trousers.

1937 J. LAVER *Taste & Fashion* xvii. 241 The advent of Oxford trousers in the middle twenties.

1982 *Times* 5 Oct. 9/1 (*caption*) Margaret Howell's dark brown chalk striped suit..£198, (double breasted jacket and Oxford trousers with turn-ups).

Oxford Union *n.* a general club and debating society established in 1826 (based on an earlier society founded in 1823) for members of Oxford University (more fully **Oxford Union Society**); (also) the buildings of this society. 🗨

1826–31 (*title*) Oxford Union Society [proceedings].

1857 (*title*) A peep at the pictures and a catalogue of the principal objects of attraction in the room of the Oxford union society.

1893 *Dict. National Biogr.* XII. 560/1 He rowed in the Merton boat, and was president of the Oxford Union.

1996 *Q* Jan. 192/4 He..played jazz piano in the cellars of the Oxford Union.

Oxford unit *n.* *Pharmacology* (now *historical*) a unit of penicillin dosage originally adopted at the Sir William Dunn School of Pathology in the University of Oxford (see quot. 1942); cf. *penicillin unit n.* at **PENICILLIN n. Compounds 2b**.

1942 H. W. FLOREY & M. JENNINGS in *Brit. J. Exp. Pathol.* **13** 122 For those using the dilution method it may be stated that the 'Oxford unit' is that amount of penicillin which when dissolved in 50 ml. of meat extract broth just inhibits completely the growth of the test strain of *Staphylococcus aureus*.

1948 H. N. G. WRIGHT & M. L. MONTAG *Textbk. Pharmacol. & Therapeutics* (ed. 4) xxxiii. 548 For the treatment of mild to moderately severe infections daily dosages of 80,000 to 120,000 Oxford units are sufficient.

1952 W. T. SALTER *Textbk. Pharmacol.* xlix. 1084/1 The new international unit and the old Oxford unit are very close.

2004 *Daily Tel.* 7 Jan. 25/2 He devised a new assay method that allowed the activity of a sample of penicillin to be measured precisely, in what became known as 'Oxford units'.

Oxford weed *n.* ivy-leaved toadflax, *Cymbalaria muralis*, a southern

European plant which is widely naturalized in Britain, notably on old walls in Oxford.

- 1834 W. BAXTER *Brit. Phænogamous Bot.* I. 23 This very pretty plant is a native of Italy, and is said to have been originally introduced into England by means of its seeds having been brought..to Oxford, where it has long established itself on the walls of the Colleges, gardens, &c. in such abundance as to have obtained the name of 'Oxford-weed'.
- 1976 C. OMAN *Oxf. Childhood* vii. 133 Mrs Pember was a qualified botanist and I was soon flattered by being sent up to the top of a crumbling wall..to get her specimens of Oxford Weed.
-

Oxford University Press

Copyright © 2020 Oxford University Press . All rights reserved.