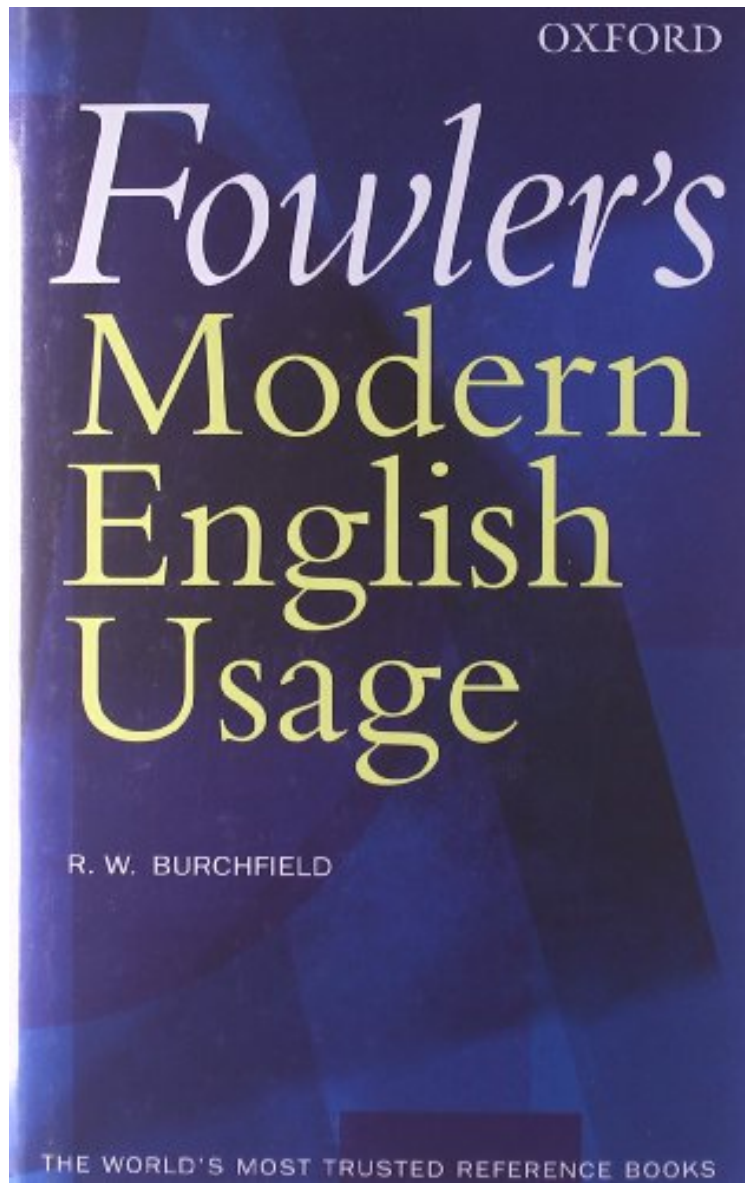


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Fowler's Modern English Usage

R. W. Burchfield

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R. W. Burchfield : Fowler's Modern English Usage before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Fowler's Modern English Usage:

13 of 13 people found the following review helpful. A Terrific New Updated FowlerBy Wu YongweiI am a non-native English speaker. So naturally I like prescriptive English usage guides, and have an inherent doubt over the newer descriptive onesI do not feel I am guided enough. For this reason, I did not think this book worth buying, after

reading some reviews of this book. However, my opinions turned around 180 after browsing a few pages in a bookstore. Take for example the use of hopefully. Previous guides I read say that using it in the meaning I hope is not recommended in formal contexts, but the reason they give is not persuasive. Burchfield powerfully argues for the VALIDITY of sentence adverb, cites historical evidence of the usage, and concludes it with: since at least the 17c., certain adverbs in -ly have acquired the ability to qualify a predication or assertion as a whole.... In the last third of the 20c., this little-used and scarcely observed mechanism of the language has broken loose.... Conservative speakers, taken unawares by the sudden expansion of an unrecognized type of construction, have exploded with resentment that is unlikely to fade away before at least the end of the 20c. Well, I am persuaded enough now to use hopefully with a clear conscience. I believe he has the authority to tell the trend and direction of the English language. The book takes into account different variants of the English language, including British, American, Australian, Canadian, etc., and its style is light-hearted and humorous. For example, when reading about whether to use English plural forms or Latin plural forms for Latin words in English, I cannot help laughing when I read: when formal knowledge of Latin rules is fading fast, it is not surprising that there should be a general movement towards the English plurals ... but ... a degree of self-satisfaction is certainly in order if a knowledgeable person chooses to retain the Latin plural form. I wish I would not shy away to correct others Criteria 1 :-). The book is both historical and modern. It is not pedagogical, and is fun to read. I highly recommend it to anyone who is serious about writing and speaking good English. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By D Placher Great reference 1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Excellent Resource By Tom Welch This is an exceptionally good resource for my work editing. Highly recommended.

Fowler's Modern English Usage is the world-famous guide to English usage, loved and used by writers of all kinds. In keeping with its long tradition, Fowler's gives comprehensive and practical advice on grammar, syntax, style, and choice of words. It gives a clear and authoritative picture of the English we use, and elucidates many scores of usage questions such as the split infinitive and the intricacies of political correctness. It gives in-depth coverage of both British and American English with reference to the English of Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and South Africa. The volume includes wide-ranging examples of usage from a broad selection of newspapers, journals, and books from across the globe, and features illustrative quotations from authors such as Agatha Christie, Chinua Achebe, Iris Murdoch, Harold Pinter, and Noel Coward. Based on the evidence and research of the Oxford Dictionaries Program, this is the most comprehensive and authoritative guide to usage available. The third edition of 1996 provided a complete revision and an expansion of the original text, bringing the book fully up to date on all matters of grammar, usage, syntax, and style. This is a reissue of the revised third edition of 1998, which includes a new Supplement and revised entries. Replaces isbn 0198602634.

.com For generations, lovers of the English language have turned to trusty copies of Fowler's to settle nagging grammatical questions, or, for true hard-core language junkies, for the sheer fun of reading H. W. Fowler's classic outrage contained in entries on "Hackneyed Phrases" or "Pedantic-Humour Words." The New Fowler's Modern English Usage, the first revision in more than 30 years, has not arrived without controversy. Some language (and Fowler) purists complain that the book is too liberal at times, noting that usage is common as opposed to correct. Those points are debatable, and, indeed, they're what makes the book's nearly 900 pages so interesting to peruse. The currency of the new Fowler's extends to, in the entry on "Vogue Words," such novelties as "couch potato," "flavour of the month," "on a roll," and the notorious "parameter." From Library Journal An icon to those who write and think about words, Fowler's has not been updated since 1965. (It was originally published in 1926.) Burchfield, the chief editor of The Oxford English Dictionary and its four-volume supplement, is perhaps the best equipped to tackle this monument. His revision pulls a much-loved and slightly eccentric work out of the charm of the past and into the whirlwind of today's language. In a simple, alphabetical arrangement, the third edition covers grammar, syntax, style, word choice, and advice on usage. Some of the contents have been changed completely: there are explanations of the differences between British and American usage, new pronunciation guidelines, and new entries reflecting the politicizing of speech (sexist language, political correctness). The most famous and endearing aspect of Fowler's, the treatment of the split infinitive, has been rewritten to provide more explanation than wit. Some of the contents have only been updated and clarified, retaining the same examples. For instance, the second edition seeks to define "dead letter" apart from "its Pauline and post-office uses"; the new edition changes this to "apart from its theological and post-office uses"; both use "quill pens, top hats, [and] steam locomotives" as examples of objects that have fallen out of fashion. The result is a work that is different from the original and more useful, but academic libraries will want to keep the first and second editions as well. Other libraries will definitely want to update their copies; this work will be a standard in the field for years to come. Neal Wyatt, Chesterfield Cty. P.L., Va. Copyright 1997 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist First published in 1926, Fowler's Modern Usage was revised in 1965 by Ernest Gowers. Now Robert Burchfield, the editor of the Oxford English Dictionary for almost 30 years, has undertaken a thorough rewriting of what he has termed "a fossil." Fowler still gives advice on choosing the right word, word

formation, pronunciation, and punctuation. However, now there are lots of examples from the 1980s and 1990s. Burchfield has gotten rid of Fowler's amusing but often useless headwords ("Between Two Stools"). He provides new usage for words such as gender (Fowler said it was only a grammatical term). Fowler is now much more reflective of current usage than Partridge's *Usage and Abusage* [RBB My 1 95], which only got a cosmetic revision. Burchfield's explanations of the usage of problem words such as *that/which* and *like/as* are clear. Fowler used simple respelling for pronunciation; Burchfield uses the International Phonetic Alphabet. The book still has no index, and even the classified index from earlier editions has been dropped, but long entries now have tables of contents. Many writers will be loathe to give up their old Fowler, but libraries with an earlier edition will want to add this new one, which will be used by writers long into the twenty-first century.