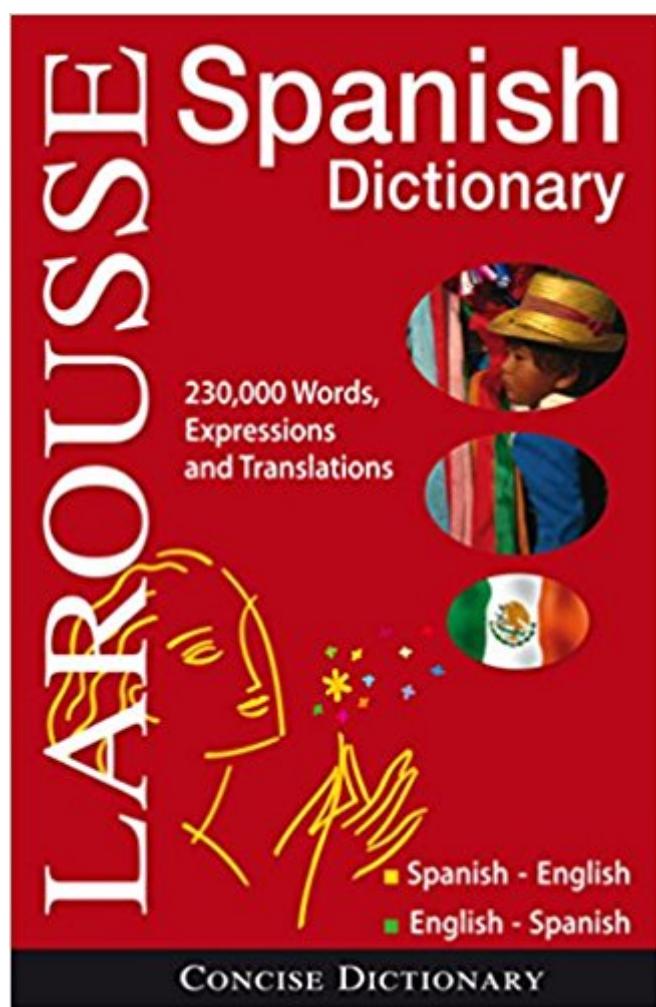


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Larousse Concise Dictionary: Spanish-English / English-Spanish



Synopsis

The Larousse Concise Spanish-English / English-Spanish Dictionary is the ideal companion for those who wish to learn and become more fluent in contemporary Spanish. With 230,000 words, expressions and translations, it has the majority of the words users are looking for. This book is more comprehensive than the pocket or mini dictionary but is still compact in size. This new edition offers extensive, up-to-date coverage of general and professional Spanish and includes Latin-American terms. The supplement on life and culture in Latin America has been fully revised and updated.

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Customer Reviews

My Master's thesis was a review and rating of Spanish-English dictionaries. I find this dictionary, like all the other Larousse dictionaries, to be a good choice. Here are a few of the factors which distinguish a good bilingual dictionary from a bad one. To begin with, ignore certain publishers' marketing ploys such as entry and translation counts. They say nothing about the value of the words chosen. The first valid factor to consider is lexicographic technique. A bad dictionary simply lists translations. Take, for example, the entry in the Cassell's Spanish Dictionary under the English headword loop: "lazo, gaza, nudo; ojal, presilla, alamar; anillo; recodo, comba, curva, vuelta," etc. For the English reader writing in Spanish, this is hopelessly inadequate, as the dictionary provides no clue as to which translation to use in which situation. Compare the treatment of the same word in the far superior American Heritage Spanish Dictionary. "(length of line) lazo; (coil) vuelta; (bend) curva; (circular path) vuelta, circuito; (fastener) presilla" etc. Here, the user is given glosses in the

native language to assist in identifying the right word for the context. Example sentences are also a tremendous help. Larousse is excellent in this respect, presenting good information to guide users through the semantic and syntactic complexities. Second, a good dictionary should maintain an up-to-date lexicon, including such cultural and technological additions to the language as "babysitter," "hostile takeover," "software," "flash drive." Larousse is very good in this respect; its frequent revisions are more than mere window dressing and do a creditable job of covering the most recent additions to the language.

Based on a comment from a knowledgeable reviewer I considered the Oxford, Collins, and Larousse dictionaries. Many features of Oxford looked good but to my eyes, the font choices were not ideal, which hinders comprehension and retention for me, and I decided against Oxford for that reason. Others may have different opinions on fonts, so see what your eyes like. So I ordered Collins and Larousse, intending to choose just one. I've kept both. This review is really a comparison of the two. Collins gives the international phonetic pronunciations for both the Spanish and the English entries. Larousse gives them primarily for the English entries. Though they do add visual clutter in Collins I think they are useful and am not sure why Larousse doesn't give them for the Spanish words more often. If you are learning from a teacher you may not need them, but if you are studying on your own you may want them. The Collins has a complete summary of Spanish grammar, including irregular verbs. The Larousse just has a verb section. I find the Larousse much more readable than the Collins. The Collins has bright blue for the words you are looking up. It stands out, but the font is small for the headwords, the accents are easy to miss, and I actually find the all-black Larousse to be more readable. The headwords just jump out of the page at you, and though the typeface for the definitions is smaller in Larousse, there is more space between lines, which I find easier to navigate (you may have a different preference). It will be easier for me to catch the spelling and accents at a glance from the Larousse. (Yes, I am not a spring chicken.) Larousse gives more definitions or usage examples at one or two places where I compared.

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