



## Dictionary Review

Compiled by  
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### ***Hippocrene Swedish Practical Dictionary: Swedish-English/English-Swedish***

**Reviewed by:**

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**Author:**

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Hippocrene Books, Inc.

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28,000 entries

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[www.hippocrenebooks.com](http://www.hippocrenebooks.com)

**For visitors** to Sweden who want more than a super-basic dictionary, the *Hippocrene Swedish Practical Dictionary: Swedish-English/English-Swedish* is a good option. Given the dictionary's compact size, it still manages to cover many of the words one might need when spending time in Sweden.

I suspect that Hippocrene is not the first publisher people go to when looking for a Swedish dictionary, so I think the *Hippocrene Swedish Practical Dictionary: Swedish-English/English-Swedish* will be purchased by those who are already familiar with other Hippocrene dictionaries, which are generally well-rated on Amazon. (For instance, Hippocrene published a comprehensive dictionary for Swedish-to-English in 2009, which earned five out of five stars on Amazon.) Swedish dictionaries published by Berlitz and Prisma are more popular and receive more reviews on Amazon. Unfortunately, the *Hippocrene Swedish Practical Dictionary: Swedish-English/English-Swedish* has not yet received any rating on Amazon, so I hope customers will not skip over it due to a lack of marketing. Once people hold it in their hands, I believe they will not be disappointed.

### **Components**

**Introduction:** I have taught Swedish as a second language to teenagers and adults on and off during my 10 years in the U.S., and found this dictionary's introduction to Sweden and the Swedish language one of the best I have ever read. The introduction portrays a country with a unique but very European culture based on a specific environment and political, economic, and social history. Sweden ranks high on human rights and democracy, is immigration- and asylum-friendly, and has a well developed social welfare system supported by high income and sales tax. The introduction also

addresses the Swedes' love of compound nouns, word stress, and the typical Swedish "sing-song" melody. It also explains that pronunciation varies in different regions of the country, advising readers simply to "listen to native speakers and imitate their tones cautiously, realizing that regional and personal differences exist."

**Symbols and Abbreviations:** Abbreviations and symbols are included to indicate useful information about a word or expression, such as "contraction," "expression," "oneself," and "vulgar." Words are also followed by short grammar notes in brackets.

**Pronunciation:** This dictionary does not provide a phonetic spelling for each word listed; there is only a general introduction to pronunciation in the first three pages. As a student of languages who has never learned the phonetic alphabet, I still get a lot from this dictionary and truly appreciate the three pages of pronunciation instruction. Instead of a phonetic spelling, each stressed vowel in a Swedish word is marked for easier pronunciation. The three-page pronunciation guide provides good examples of pronunciation, with references to English, French, or German words. The guide is divided into vowels, consonants, and special cases such as "sh," which is a unique consonant combination for Swedish. As a teacher of Swedish as a second language, I would definitely use this pronunciation guide in my teaching.

**Entries:** The main part of this dictionary consists of about 16,000 Swedish-to-English entries and about 16,000 English-to-Swedish entries.

### **Contents**

It is clear that this is a new dictionary with a bias toward American ➡

## Dictionary Reviews Continued

English, with the inclusion of terms germane to the new Sweden (i.e., tourism, sports, immigration, education, the European Union, and information technology). The dictionary is targeted to native speakers of American English, so it follows American spelling and vocabulary practice.

I found all of the words I would expect to find as a tourist, businessperson, or student, including “youth hostel,” “student housing,” “Internet café,” “guided tour,” “sightseeing,” “allergy,” “rental car,” “embassy,” “health insurance,” “seminar,” and “business center.” The dictionary also includes terms from many countries such as Iraq, Afghanistan, Japan, and China.

Some of the entries I was happy to find included “blog,” “webzine,” “e-zine,” “e-business,” “e-book,” “funicular,” and the names of many Swedish and American political and nonprofit organizations. I did not find “webinar,” which is an increasingly popular term among students and businesspeople.

The dictionary provides synonyms for most words, but does not include dialects and social register. It does indicate usage and technical field, thanks to the many abbreviations for usage and grammar.

## Overall Evaluation

The only negative I found was that the main entry word is not indicated in blue type—a plus in reviews of many other dictionaries—but it is in bold. The typeface is small but fully legible. I found no spelling errors among the words I read. There are no illustrations or appendices, but this is a compact dictionary. One thing I did find confusing, however, is that the dictionary claims to have 28,000 entries, but in the introduction it says that there are approximately 16,000 entries in each direction, which would make 32,000 entries.

The advertising synopsis claims that Sweden is one of the world’s most politically and economically successful democracies. As a Swede, I can agree with this statement, but this might appear to be quite a strong claim to an American. It also claims that Sweden is one of the top 20 tourist destinations in the world, which is news to me and probably to many Americans as well. The synopsis further states, and I agree fully, that this dictionary is perfect for businesspeople, travelers, and students.

I would definitely choose the *Hippocrene Swedish Practical Diction-*

*ary: Swedish-English/English-Swedish* over more popular, thinner dictionaries. It is pocket-sized and contains every word you might need as a businessperson or student, and more than you would need as an occasional tourist. The high quality of the entry selection can be credited to the author, Harald Hille, who has 25 years of experience as a translator for the United Nations.

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