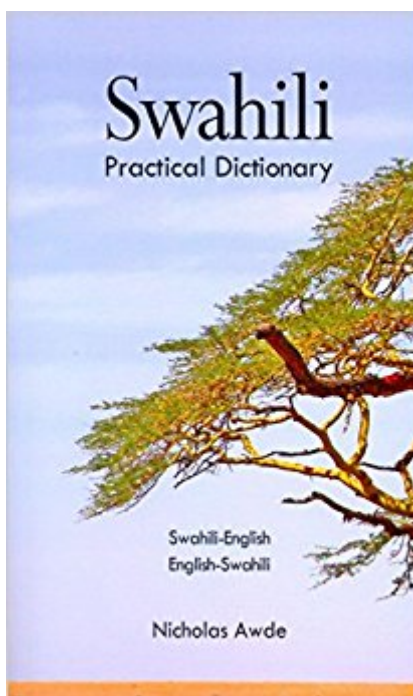




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Swahili-English/English-Swahili Practical Dictionary (Hippocrene Practical Dictionary)



Synopsis

This bestselling Swahili-English/ English-Swahili dictionary is the most comprehensive available, with over 35,000 entries that cover the vocabulary of politics, telecommunications, computers, the Internet, tourism, business and travel. Intended for both speakers of English or Swahili, the guide also includes appendices of English irregular verbs, Swahili noun classes and useful phrases and vocabulary.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Nicholas Awde is a writer and regional consultant based in the Caucasus and Central Asia. Peter Maghashyan is a freelance journalist, analyst, and consultant on regional, political, and economic issues. He is based in Yerevan, Armenia.

I'm not particularly happy with this dictionary. If you just want to look up words, there are free online dictionaries such as the one at kamusi.org. This dictionary doesn't tell you the noun classes of nouns, which is a severe shortcoming; it means that after looking up a word, you won't be able to tell how to use it grammatically in a sentence, unless you can guess its noun class from its form. Usually you can guess, but I can't imagine how I would have known, for example, that "suruali" (trousers) was class 9 rather than, say, class 5. The only way you'd find that out would be by finding that information somewhere else than in this dictionary. Someone who knows a lot of Swahili may be fairly successful at guessing (e.g., "anga," "sky" is probably class 5 because it refers to a place

and a natural phenomenon), but I don't believe that any non-native speaker could guess in all cases, and this will be a particularly tough barrier for beginners. In general, the entries only provide extremely skeletal information. For example, nowhere in the entries for "hungry" or "hunger" does it tell you that the idiom for "to be hungry" is "kuwa na njaa" (to have hunger). The entry for "tungamo" tells you that it translates as "mass," but without giving any other information. "Mass" can mean a lot of things: mass communication, a cancerous mass, the mass of an object. If you then flip to the English-Swahili section and look up "mass," you won't find any clarification, because the only noun listed as a translation back into Swahili is "wingi," which means something different. So if you're sitting at a desk with an internet connection, I don't think you're likely to find this dictionary the most useful resource -- but if you're traveling, it's far too bulky to carry around. I'm a native English speaker, so I don't need the pronunciations given for the English word, but they look a little odd. They all seem to be given for a particular British dialect, so, e.g., "stair" is shown as two syllables, "ste"+schwa. I checked with a British English speaker who seemed to speak a pretty standard, educated London dialect, and she pronounced "stair" as one syllable. I'm sure the pronunciations given here are correct for some dialect in England -- maybe it's the "received pronunciation" dialect of British English that used to be considered the "Queen's English?" East African users of this dictionary should be aware that many of the pronunciations are nothing like what you would hear in Texas or Scotland, and not even necessarily the same as in London.

I like the book and it does help but the author apparently did not know the language as well as he thought. I have several friends who speak Swahili fluently and some of the words were not in this dictionary. One of my friends says he knows this author and that he did not do a very good job in writing this. I guess since so many of the words are not in the book I have to agree with him.

It's decent. No noun classes, as others have said, which is a major flaw. It's very big, which is good, but a lot of the words and phrases they offer are useless, and it contains a lot of baffling s*** like "scorched earth policy" and "nuclear waste" that aren't even translated very well. I'd say more than half of this book is just words that nobody would ever have any use for, but if you're heading off to East Africa to join a militia or fight in a revolution, 5 stars, this is the book you're looking for. If you're really looking for the best Swahili dictionary in existence, and cost is no issue, Baba Malaika's Friendly Modern Swahili-English Dictionary is the best in existence. Unfortunately it was published by an African publisher nearly 20 years ago and is now out of print. It can be difficult to find.

This is a very helpful dictionary and was recommended by my Kiswahili instructor. It's good to have something to use besides an online translator, because it can be far too easy to become dependent on those sorts of things. My biggest criticism--and it is a big criticism, for the price of this dictionary--is that there is no indication of noun classes. This is one area of the language that I am struggling with and it would have been very helpful to include with each word, seeing as it is such a fundamental aspect of Kiswahili.

great

This is the BEST swahili dictionary for beginners or fluent speakers. Am continually impressed.

Cool!

This is best combo dictionary (Swahili-English, English-Swahili) I have come across. Although, you can find better dictionaries that only provide Swahili-English OR English-Swahili, finding 1 combo book is harder. Its 596 pages cover over 35,000 entries in both languages. The English words have the phonetic transcriptions, whereas the Swahili nouns have their plurals shown in brackets. FYI, you won't get much besides words....so if you're looking for grammar help this book is not for you.

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