

60th Scripps National Spelling Bee

The **60th Scripps National Spelling Bee** was held in Washington, D.C. at the Capital Hilton on May 27–28, 1987, sponsored by the E.W. Scripps Company.

The winner was 13-year-old Stephanie Petit^[2] of Bethel Park, Pennsylvania, prevailing on the word "staphylococci".^{[1][3][4]} Second place went to 14-year-old Rachel Nussbaum of Ithaca, New York, who fell on "dyscalculia".^{[1][5][6]}

There were 185 spellers this year, 92 boys and 93 girls.^[7] Pennsylvania sent the most, with 15. Twenty-nine were appearing at their second bee, and five were there for a third visit.^[8] After the first day of competition, the field was reduced to 123 after four rounds of spelling. One hundred eight spellers fell in two rounds on the morning of day two, leaving 15 spellers at the lunch break; nine girls and six boys.^[1] A total of 877 words were used.^[8] Alex Cameron served as pronouncer.^[5]

The first place prize was \$1,500 (and other non-cash prizes),^[1] the first increase in the prior \$1,000 top award since 1956.^[9] Petit also appeared on *The Tonight Show* with Johnny Carson on June 10.^{[10][11]} Second place received \$1,000, third got \$750, fourth \$500, fifth \$400, sixth \$300, 7th through 10th received \$200, and the remaining spellers each received \$50.^[8]

An additional change this year was that the opening practice round was eliminated, due to the growing number of spellers.^[7]

References

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60th Scripps National Spelling Bee



The Capital Hilton, site of the 60th National Spelling Bee

Date	May 27–28, 1987
Location	The Capital Hilton in Washington, D.C.
Winner	Stephanie Petit
Age	13
Residence	Bethel Park, Pennsylvania
Sponsor	<i>Pittsburgh Press</i>
Sponsor location	Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
Winning word	staphylococci
No. of contestants	185 ^[1]
Pronouncer	Alex Cameron
Preceded by	59th Scripps National Spelling Bee
Followed by	61st Scripps National Spelling Bee

6. Levin, Steve (6 July 2003). Past winners spell out pain and glory of 'The Bee' (<http://www.post-gazette.com/news/nation/2003/07/06/Past-winners-spell-out-pain-and-glory-of-The-Bee/stories/200307060016>), *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*
7. (28 May 1987). 2-Day Forecast: Capital In For A Spell of Spelling (<https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=1350&dat=19870527&id=kkBPAAAAIBAJ&sjid=5gIEAAAAIBAJ&pg=7013,593994&hl=en>), *Toledo Blade*
8. (28 May 1987). Girl wins U.S. spelling bee (<https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=1314&dat=19870528&id=ESdXAAAAIBAJ&sjid=hO8DAAAAIBAJ&pg=7030,6961077&hl=en>), *Spokesman-Review* (Associated Press)
9. (11 May 1956). 63 Young Champions Entered In National Spelling Contest (<https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=1454&dat=19560511&id=3mNgAAAAIBAJ&sjid=9HENAAAAIBAJ&pg=668,2092160&hl=en>), *Wilmington Star-News* (noting rise in first place award in 1956 from \$500 to \$1000)
10. (9 June 1987). Speller gains fame (<https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=1144&dat=19870609&id=DRkiAAAAIBAJ&sjid=P2MEAAAIBAJ&pg=3760,4788943&hl=en>), *Pittsburgh Press*
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