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factor
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attention*

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- | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
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| 34 The economy | <i>curb inflation, safeguard one's interests, plummeting profits</i> |
| 35 Social issues | <i>antisocial behaviour, dysfunctional family, unfit for human habitation</i> |
| 36 Science and technology | <i>harness technology, cutting edge design, wireless hotspots</i> |
| 37 Health and medicine | <i>build up resistance, adverse reaction, shake off a cold</i> |
| 38 Criminal justice | <i>custodial sentences, beyond reasonable doubt, trumped-up charges</i> |
| 39 War and peace | <i>deploy troops, pre-emptive strike, collateral damage</i> |

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- | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 40 Friendship | <i>lifelong friends, platonic relationship, heal the rift</i> |
| 41 Youth and age | <i>child prodigy, go through a midlife crisis, senior moment</i> |
| 42 Celebrities and heroes | <i>go into rehab, kiss and tell, heap praise on</i> |
| 43 Criticising people | <i>bone idle, poison the atmosphere, nasty piece of work</i> |
| 44 References | <i>act as a referee, accumulate experience, financial acumen</i> |
| 45 Appearance and personality | <i>boundless energy, stubborn streak, act one's age</i> |

Basic concepts

- | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| 46 Time and space | <i>cramped conditions, waste of space, go down in history</i> |
| 47 Sound | <i>husky voice, incessant noise, let out a cry</i> |
| 48 Making things easier | <i>viable options, simplicity itself, take the easy way out</i> |
| 49 Difficulty | <i>severe blow, hinder progress, encounter difficulties</i> |
| 50 Quantity and size | <i>finite number, endless supply, unknown quantity</i> |
| 51 Change | <i>sweeping changes, would make a change, sudden shift</i> |

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- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 52 Stopping and starting | <i>bring a halt to, close off a street, dispel rumours</i> |
| 53 Cause and effect | <i>root cause, provoke an outcry, dire consequences</i> |
| 54 Describing groups and amounts | <i>swarm of bees, flurry of activity, stroke of genius</i> |
| 55 Comparing and contrasting | <i>bear little resemblance to, polar opposites, draw a comparison between</i> |
| 56 Making an effort | <i>give it one's best shot, abortive attempt, worth a try</i> |
| 57 Social English | <i>not lose any sleep, to be brutally honest, be on the go</i> |
| 58 Discussing issues | <i>make a commitment, give a straight answer, miss the point</i> |
| 59 Negative situations and feelings | <i>nasty shock, take exception to, suffer at the hands of</i> |
| 60 Positive situations and feelings | <i>sense of achievement, state of euphoria, derive pleasure from</i> |

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Using this book

What is a collocation?

Collocation means a natural combination of words; it refers to the way English words are closely associated with each other. For example, *pay* and *attention* go together, as do *commit* and *crime*; *blond* goes with *hair* and *heavy* with *rain*.

Why learn collocations?

You need to learn collocations because they will help you to speak and write English in a more natural and accurate way. People will probably understand what you mean if you talk about *making a crime* or say *there was very hard rain this morning*, but your language will sound unnatural and might perhaps confuse. Did you mean that there was a lot of rain or perhaps that there was a hailstorm?

Learning collocations will also help you to increase your range of English vocabulary. For example, you'll find it easier to avoid words like *very* or *nice* or *beautiful* or *get* by choosing a word that fits the context better and has a more precise meaning. This is particularly useful if you are taking a written exam in English and want to make a good impression on the examiners. In advanced level exams, marks are often specifically awarded for the appropriate handling of collocation.

At an advanced level an appreciation of collocation can also be helpful in terms of appreciating other writers' use of language. Skilled users of the language may choose to create effects by varying the normal patterns of collocation, with the aim of either startling or amusing their audience. This technique is particularly popular with poets, journalists and advertisers. From an appreciation of the way in which creative writers play with language, you may then even want to move on to use words in more original ways yourself. You are more likely to be able to do this effectively if you have assimilated the standard patterns of language use presented in this book.

How were the collocations in this book selected?

The collocations presented in this book were all selected from those identified as significant by the CANCODE corpus of spoken English, developed at the University of Nottingham in association with Cambridge University Press, and the *Cambridge International Corpus* of written and spoken English. We also made extensive use of the *Cambridge Learner Corpus*, a corpus of student language which showed us what kind of collocation errors learners tend to make.

These corpora show that there are many thousands of collocations in English. So how could we select which ones would be most useful for you to work on in this book?

Firstly, of course, we wanted to choose ones that you might want to use in your own written and spoken English. So, in the unit *Health and medicine* we include, for example, *shake off a cold* and *respond well to treatment* but not *grumbling appendix*, which is a strong collocation, but one which – we hope – most of you will not feel the need for.

Secondly, we decided it would be most useful for you if we focused on those collocations which are not immediately obvious. A *pretty girl*, a *modern car* or *to buy a ticket* are all collocations, but they are combinations which you can easily understand and produce yourself without any problems. So we deal here with less obvious word combinations, for instance, *flatly contradict* (not *strongly contradict*) and *bitter enemies* (not *serious enemies*).

Some of you may have already used our *English Collocations in Use Intermediate*. In general, we have tried to avoid focusing on collocations that we dealt with in that book. The one exception is with collocations that the *Cambridge Learner Corpus* highlighted as causing frequent problems for students, even in advanced level exams. We felt that it would be useful to draw attention to such collocations again, even if we had dealt with them previously.

Idioms can be seen as one type of collocation. We deal with them separately in *English Idioms in Use*, and so do not focus on them here.

How is the book organised?

The book has 60 two-page units. The left-hand page presents the collocations that are focused on in the unit. You will usually find examples of collocations in typical contexts with, where appropriate, any special notes about their meaning and their usage. The right-hand page checks that you have understood the information on the left-hand page by giving you a series of exercises that practise the material just presented.

The units are organised into different sections. First we start with important information relating to learning about collocations in general. Then there is a section focusing on different types of collocation. The rest of the book deals with collocations that relate to particular topics such as *Student life* and *Film and book reviews*, concepts such as *Sound* or *Difficulty* and functions such as *Cause and effect* or *Comparing and contrasting*.

The book has a key to all the exercises and an index which lists all the collocations we deal with, and indicates the units where they can be found.

How should I use this book?

It is strongly recommended that you work through the six introductory units first, so that you become familiar with the nature of collocations and with how best to study them. After that, you may work on the units in any order that suits you.

What else do I need in order to work with this book?

You need a notebook or file in which you can write down the collocations that you study in this book, as well as any others that you come across elsewhere.

You also need to have access to a good dictionary. At this level we strongly recommend the *Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary* as this gives exactly the kind of information that you need to have about collocations. It does this both through the examples provided for each word entry and through special collocations boxes or mini-panels. Your teacher, however, may also be able to recommend other dictionaries that you will find useful. If you have access to the Internet, you will also find this a useful source of information about language use and we occasionally suggest possible activities using the web.

So, a study of collocation is highly recommended (*Unit 8*) if you want to impress people with your natural and accurate use of language and to gain more marks (*Unit 1*) in English exams. Above all, we sincerely hope (*Unit 57*) both that this book will help you acquire the knowledge (*Unit 17*) you need about English collocations and also that you will thoroughly enjoy (*Unit 8*) working through the units in *English Collocations in Use Advanced*.

I

Introducing collocations

A

What are collocations?

A collocation is a combination of two or more words which frequently occur together. If someone says, ‘She’s got *yellow hair*’, they would probably be understood, but it is not what would ordinarily be said in English. We’d say, ‘She’s got *blond hair*’. In other words, *yellow* doesn’t collocate with *hair* in everyday English. *Yellow* collocates with, say, *flowers* or *paint*.

Collocations are not just a matter of how adjectives combine with nouns. They can refer to any kind of typical word combination, for example verb + noun (e.g. *arouse someone’s interest*, *lead a seminar*), adverb + adjective (e.g. *fundamentally different*), adverb + verb (e.g. *flatly contradict*), noun + noun (e.g. *a lick of paint*, *a team of experts*, *words of wisdom*). There is much more about different grammatical types of collocation in Unit 3.

Phrasal verbs (e.g. *come up with*, *run up*, *adhere to*) and compound nouns (e.g. *economy drive*, *stock market*) are sometimes described as types of collocations. However, in this book we consider them as individual lexical items and so include them here only in combination with something else, e.g. *come up with a suggestion*, *run up a bill*, *adhere to your principles*, *go on an economy drive*, *play the stock market*.

It can be difficult for learners of English to know which words collocate, as natural collocations are not always logical or guessable. There is, for example, no obvious reason why we say *making friends* rather than *getting friends* or *heavy rain*, not *strong rain*.

Learners also need to know when specific collocations are appropriate. This is usually referred to by linguists as knowing which register to use. *Alight from a bus* is a formal collocation used in notices and other official contexts. In everyday situations we would, of course, always talk about *getting off a bus*. There is more about register and collocation in Unit 6.

B

Why is it important to learn collocations?

An appreciation of collocation will help you to:

- use the words you know more accurately
In other words, you’ll **make** (NOT *do*) fewer mistakes.
- sound more natural when you speak and write
By saying, for example, *of great importance*, rather than *of big* or *high importance*, you won’t just be understood, you will – quite rightly – sound like a fluent user of English.
- vary your speech and, probably more importantly, your writing
Instead of repeating everyday words like *very*, *good* or *nice*, you will be able to exploit a wider range of language. You would gain more marks in an exam, for instance, for writing *We had a blissfully happy holiday in a picturesque little village surrounded by spectacular mountains* than for *We had a very happy holiday in a nice little village surrounded by beautiful mountains*, even though both sentences are perfectly correct.
- understand when a skilful writer departs from normal patterns of collocation
A journalist, poet, advertiser or other inventive user of language often creates an effect by not choosing the expected collocation. For example, a travel article about the Italian capital might be entitled *No place like Rome*, a reference to the popular expression *There’s no place like home*.

Exercises

1.1 Match the two parts of these collocations.

- | | |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| 1 adhere to | rain |
| 2 arouse | different |
| 3 blond | of wisdom |
| 4 come up with | your principles |
| 5 flatly | an economy drive |
| 6 fundamentally | a seminar |
| 7 go on | someone's interest |
| 8 heavy | contradict |
| 9 lead | hair |
| 10 a lick | the stock market |
| 11 play | of paint |
| 12 words | a suggestion |

1.2 Correct the underlined collocation errors with words from B. Be careful, you will find the words in the *text*, not in the examples.

- 1 Exam candidates often make faults in their use of verbs like *do, make, go* and *get*.
- 2 Try to use a longer range of language when you write.
- 3 Exam candidates who use collocations well gather better marks.
- 4 You have to know what normal collocation patterns are before you can lose them.
- 5 The writer used colloquial language to form an effect.

1.3 Look at these sentences from a hotel brochure. Improve the style by replacing the words in italics with the word in brackets that forms the best collocation. (Use each word only once.)

- 1 Our new family hotel is set in a *nice* location and all the rooms have *nice* furnishings and *nice* views over the surrounding countryside. (stylish / secluded / breathtaking)
- 2 Visitors will enjoy the *good* atmosphere in either of our *good* dining rooms, both serving *good* food to both residents and non-residents. (delicious / relaxing / spacious)
- 3 We organise tours to *beautiful* surrounding villages where you'll have the opportunity to take some *beautiful* photographs and sample the *beautiful* local cuisine. (mouth-watering / picturesque / stunning)

1.4 Write F (formal), I (informal) or N (neutral) in the brackets at the end of each sentence. In each pair of sentences, there is one neutral sentence and one formal or informal sentence. Underline the collocations that are noticeably formal or informal.

- 1 a Passengers must not alight from the bus while it is in motion. ()
b Passengers must not get off the bus while it is moving. ()
- 2 a Let's grab a bite before we get down to work. ()
b Let's have something to eat before we start work. ()
- 3 a SFTS has the right to bring the agreement to an end with three months' notice. ()
b SFTS reserves the right to terminate the agreement with three months' notice. ()
- 4 a She thinks her boyfriend is planning to pop the question tonight. ()
b She thinks her boyfriend is planning to ask her to marry him tonight. ()

1.5 Correct the four collocation errors in this paragraph.

The yellow-haired boy said he had joined the English class to get some new friends. He also said that he wanted to learn about collocations because it would be of big importance in helping him to do fewer mistakes when writing in English.

2

Strong, fixed and weak collocations

A Strong collocations

A strong collocation is one in which the words are very closely associated with each other. For example, the adjective **mitigating** almost always collocates with **circumstances** or **factors**; it rarely collocates with any other word. *Although she was found guilty, the jury felt there were mitigating circumstances.* [factors or circumstances that lessen the blame]

Here are some other examples of strong collocations.

collocation	comment
Inclement weather was expected.	(very formal) = unpleasant weather <i>Inclement</i> collocates almost exclusively with <i>weather</i> .
She has auburn hair .	<i>Auburn</i> only collocates with words connected with hair (e.g. <i>curls, tresses, locks</i>).
I felt deliriously happy .	= extremely happy Strongly associated with <i>happy</i> . Not used with <i>glad, content, sad, etc.</i>
The chairperson adjourned the meeting .	= have a pause or rest during a meeting/trial <i>Adjourn</i> is very strongly associated with <i>meeting</i> and <i>trial</i> .

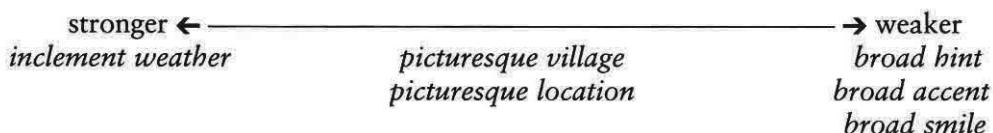
B Fixed collocations

Fixed collocations are collocations so strong that they cannot be changed in any way. For example, you can say *I was walking to and fro* (meaning I was walking in one direction and then in the opposite direction, a repeated number of times). No other words can replace *to* or *fro* or *and* in this collocation. It is completely fixed. The meaning of some fixed collocations cannot be guessed from the individual words. These collocations are called idioms and are focused on in the book *English Idioms in Use*.

C Weak collocations

Weak collocations are made up of words that collocate with a wide range of other words. For example, you can say you are in **broad agreement** with someone [generally in agreement with them]. However, *broad* can also be used with a number of other words – a **broad avenue**, a **broad smile**, **broad shoulders**, a **broad accent** [a strong accent], a **broad hint** [a strong hint] and so on. These are weak collocations, in the sense that *broad* collocates with a **broad range** of different nouns.

Strong collocations and weak collocations form a continuum, with stronger ones at one end and weaker ones at the other. Most collocations lie somewhere between the two. For example, the (formal) adjective *picturesque* collocates with *village*, *location* and *town*, and so appears near the middle of the continuum.



D Types of collocations in this book

The collocations in this book are all frequently used in modern English. We used a corpus (a database of language) to check this. We have also selected the collocations which will be useful to you as an advanced learner. We pay most attention to those that are not predictable. A *broad avenue*, for example, would be predicted by any student who knows *broad* and *avenue*. However, the use of *broad* to mean *strong* as in a *broad accent* is more difficult to predict.

Exercises

- 2.1 Complete the collocations using the words in the box. You will need to use some words more than once.

adjourn auburn broad deliriously inclement mitigating picturesque

- 1 a accent
- 2 in agreement
- 3 circumstances
- 4 factors
- 5 hair
- 6 happy
- 7 a smile
- 8 a location
- 9 a meeting
- 10 a town
- 11 a trial
- 12 weather

- 2.2 Rewrite each sentence using a collocation from 2.1.

- 1 Melissa has quite a strong Scottish accent.
- 2 Bad weather led to the cancellation of the President's garden party.
- 3 We were all very happy when we heard we'd won the award.
- 4 Their new home was in a very pretty location.
- 5 Because there were circumstances that made the theft less serious, the judge let him off with a warning.
- 6 I think we should stop the meeting now and continue it tomorrow.
- 7 She had a big smile on her face when she arrived.
- 8 She has lovely reddish-brown hair.
- 9 I think we're generally in agreement as to what should be done.

- 2.3 Think of as many collocations as you can for each word. Then look in a dictionary for other suitable words. Write W (weak) or S (strong) next to each group depending on how many words you found.

- 1 extremely
- 2 an effort
- 3 cancel
- 4 deliver
- 5 a living

- 2.4 How useful do you think the collocations you have worked on in 2.2 and 2.3 are for you personally? Choose which collocations are most important to you personally and make sentences with them.

FOLLOW UP

Choose an English-language text that you have worked on recently. Underline five collocations in it. Are these collocations weak, strong or fixed?

3

Grammatical categories of collocation

A Verb + noun

verb	noun	example	meaning of verb
draw up	a list a contract	Our lawyer drew up a contract for us to sign.	prepare something, usually official, in writing
pass up	a chance an opportunity	I didn't want to pass up the chance of seeing Hong Kong, so I agreed to go on the trip.	fail to take advantage of
withstand	pressure the impact	The police officer's vest can withstand the impact of a bullet.	bear

B Noun + verb

noun	verb	example
opportunity	arise	An opportunity arose for me to work in China, so I went and spent a year there.
standards	slip	People feel educational standards slipped when the government cut finances.

C Noun + noun

- Noun + noun collocations used to describe groups or sets:
There's been a **spate of attacks/thefts** in our area recently. [unusually large number happening in close succession]
The minister had to put up with a **barrage of questions/insults** from the angry audience. [unusually large number, happening at the same time]
- Noun + noun collocations used with uncountable nouns:
By a **stroke of luck** I found my keys in the rubbish bin! [sudden, unexpected piece of luck]
She gave me a **snippet of information** which is top secret. [small piece of information]

D Adjective + noun

This is not an **idle threat**; I will call the police if this happens again! [simply a threat]
He waited in the **vain hope** that the Minister would meet him. [unlikely to be fulfilled hope]
There is **mounting concern/criticism/fury** over the decision. [growing concern etc.]
The **simple/plain truth** is that no one was aware of the problem.

E Adverb + adjective

The article provides an **intensely personal** account of the writer's relationship with his sons.
Joe's sister was a **stunningly attractive** woman.

F Verb + adverb or prepositional phrase

The teenager tried to persuade his mother that he was innocent but he failed **miserably**.
I don't like to travel with my brother because he drives **recklessly**. [wildly, without care]
As soon as the singer came on stage she **burst into song**.
If your dog starts to foam at the mouth, you should take it to the vet immediately.

G More complex collocations

Mary was looking forward to retiring and **taking it easy** for a while.
It's time you **put the past behind you** and started focusing on the future.

Exercises

3.1

Match a word from each box to form collocations. Not all the collocations appear on the opposite page, so use a dictionary to help you if necessary.



A	disease	evidence	opportunity	smoke	B	arises	chatter	howls	pressure
	standards	teeth	wind	withstand		rises	slip	spreads	suggests
1	5
2	6
3	7
4	8

3.2

Complete each sentence using a collocation from 3.1 in the appropriate form.

- 1 The scientific human beings first emerged in Africa.
- 2 The was all night and it was raining, so I couldn't sleep.
- 3 The machine has to be made of materials that can a lot of
- 4 Oh, no! There's a fire. Look at the from those buildings.
- 5 It was so cold I couldn't stop my from
- 6 Our survey shows that parents believe have at the school.
- 7 You must accompany Bob on one of his business trips to Asia, if the ever
- 8 An alarming new is among cattle in the south of the country.

3.3

Rewrite the underlined part of each sentence using a collocation from the opposite page.

- 1 I don't want to say no to the chance of meeting such a famous person.
- 2 We'll have to write a contract before you start work, as it's a new position.
- 3 You're working too hard. You should try to relax for a short period of time.
- 4 This new bullet-proof car can take the impact of a rocket-propelled grenade.
- 5 Do you have any interesting little bits of information about our new boss to tell us?
- 6 The Minister faced a large number of questions from reporters.
- 7 I had some luck last week. The police found my stolen wallet and nothing was missing.
- 8 There's been a number of violent attacks in the area recently.
- 9 After her divorce Mandy was determined to forget the past and build a new life.

3.4

Answer these questions.

- 1 Who do you think is the most stunningly attractive person you have ever seen?
- 2 What should you do if you are in a car with someone who is driving recklessly?
- 3 Do you prefer walking in the country if there is a gentle breeze or a strong wind?
- 4 Would you write your most intensely personal thoughts and feelings in your diary?

3.5

Choose the correct collocation.

- 1 He said he would throw us out, but it was just a(n) *vain / idle / lazy* threat.
- 2 They rushed the victim to hospital, in the *idle / simple / vain* hope of saving her life.
- 3 The government is encountering *mounting / climbing / rising* criticism of its policies.
- 4 There is *raising / mounting / vain* concern across the world about climate change.
- 5 The horse was *fuming / foaming / fainting* at the mouth, so we called the vet.
- 6 Suddenly, without warning, Marjorie *busted / hustled / burst* into song.
- 7 The *right / straight / plain* truth is that I hate my job.
- 8 I tried to persuade her but I'm afraid I failed *desperately / miserably / wholeheartedly*.

Using your dictionary and other resources

A Using dictionaries

Good modern learners' dictionaries include example sentences which make a point of illustrating each word's most frequent collocations. Enormous databases of language, known as corpora, are used to analyse speech and text to identify which words collocate most frequently. Look up the word *abject* in the *Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary* and you will find the entry above. Notice how frequent collocations are used in the example sentences.

abject /'æb.dʒekt/ **adjective** FORMAL EXTREME 1 **abject misery/poverty/terror, etc.** when someone is extremely unhappy, poor, frightened, etc: *They live in abject poverty.* ○ *This policy has turned out to be an abject failure.* NOT PROUD 2 showing no PRIDE or respect for yourself: *an abject apology* ○ *He is almost abject in his respect for his boss.* • **abjectly** /'æb.dʒekt.li/ **adverb**

Remember that dictionaries today are not only available on paper; you can also access them on CD-ROM and online. These can be particularly helpful when you are exploring collocations, as they make it quick and easy to search for items in different ways and to jump from one entry to another. Online dictionaries give you easy access to an enormous amount of information relating to meaning, collocation and register, for which there is not enough space in a book. In whatever form, a dictionary is an invaluable tool for developing your knowledge of collocation.

B Using other resources

The Internet enables you to explore collocations in other ways too. A search engine can be very helpful. Although it is almost impossible to come up with a word combination that a search engine will be unable to find examples of, the number of results can give you a good idea of whether a combination is a true collocation or not. For example, compare the results below for "abject failure" and "abject success". (You need to use inverted commas so that the search covers only instances where the words occur consecutively.)

Results 1–10 of about 104 for "abject success". (0.14 seconds)

Results 1–10 of about 283,000 for "abject failure". (0.04 seconds)

To be sure that a word combination is a normal collocation you would expect a search engine to find thousands of instances of it.

It is often useful to consult a corpus to find out how words are commonly used. Here is an example of how a corpus presents information:

s he came from a domestic situation of **abject** poverty, it was a radical chang
despite their efforts, the project was an **abject** failure, and all involved were
many years the population had suffered **abject** terror as a result of the policie
vast majority of this tiny country live in **abject** poverty, despite the immense
ir living conditions can be described as **abject** misery, such was the state of

The site www.webcorp.org.uk lets you use the web as a corpus. It will search the web for words of your choice and display samples of text containing those words. You can make various choices about how you wish the web to be searched and how you would like the information to be presented to you.

The problem with using the web as a corpus is, of course, that the Internet includes a certain amount of language that is not accurate or standard. You may prefer to do a search of the British National Corpus at www.natcorp.ox.ac.uk which is a real corpus, so should produce a more accurate result. Both these sites should prove useful resources if you want to do your own in-depth investigation of specific collocations.

Exercises



- 4.1 Use your dictionary (book, CD-ROM or online version) to find three collocations for each of these words.

- 1 cast (as verb with basic meaning of throw)
- 2 application
- 3 utter (as adjective)
- 4 absolutely
- 5 release (as verb)



- 4.2 Rewrite the underlined part of each sentence using the word in brackets. Use a dictionary to help you.

- 1 His opponent made critical and damaging remarks about his honesty. (ASPERSIONS)
- 2 The point you're making is quite unrelated to our topic. (RELEVANCE)
- 3 The speaker praised Janice's contribution to the project. (TRIBUTE)
- 4 As soon as she got home Kay started working. (SET)
- 5 His rudeness made us all fall silent. (RENDERED)
- 6 It is uncertain how many workers will be affected by the changes. (INDETERMINATE)
- 7 The marketing campaign was better than we had expected. (EXCEEDED)
- 8 I'm slightly unsure about these sales figures. (NIGGLING)



- 4.3 Type these phrases into a search engine. Don't forget to use inverted commas. How many results do you get for each? What does this suggest about whether these phrases are collocations or not?

cast a concert cast a groan cast a play cast a smile



- 4.4 Go to www.natcorp.ox.ac.uk. Type in the words below. Note the number of times the words appear in the same collocations as in the sentences in 4.2. Do they often collocate with any other words?

aspersions indeterminate nigglng tribute



- a) Answer these questions.

- 1 What field do you work in, or plan to work in?
- 2 What do you enjoy doing at the weekend?
- 3 What is, or was, your favourite subject at school or college?
- 4 How did you spend your last holiday?
- 5 What did you have to eat yesterday?
- 6 What was the last book you read?

- b) Now use a dictionary to find three collocations that relate to each of your answers to 1–6.

Find the collocations by looking up key words relating to your answer. For example, if your answer to question 1 was *medicine*, you could look up key words such as *medication*, *ill* and *surgical* to find such collocations as *to prescribe medication*, *terminally ill*, *a surgical procedure*.

- c) Now write example sentences using the collocations you have found.

TIP

Be careful when using corpora to check or find new collocations. Corpora include many types of text, some of which are technical. Check the sources of the texts where the collocations appear to see if the collocations are used in a variety of situations.

5

Finding and working on collocations in texts

A Finding collocations

You can expand your collocation vocabulary by training yourself to notice collocations whenever you read. Note the collocations in these three examples of texts from different sources – a newspaper feature, a film review and a website for London tourists.

As a newly qualified teacher at a comprehensive school in Wiltshire, every day Joe faces the challenge of gaining the respect of a class of 15-year-olds. Joe, 26, admits it is a tough challenge but thinks he is winning the battle. Joe, who teaches English and media studies and coaches a school football team, will qualify fully in July, pending the results¹ of his lesson assessments. With this milestone passed², and the increased financial stability it will bring, Joe will turn his thoughts to buying his first home.

¹ (formal) as long as he achieves successful results

² major life event behind him

★★★ The Interpreter

She has a gift for languages, which brings her to the UN. She wants to make a difference. She is idealistic in that single-minded, dedicated manner associated with freedom fighters. Silvia (Nicole Kidman) remains an enigma. When Tobin Keller (Sean Penn) begins to investigate her, he is

faced with a blank sheet. She is beautiful, blonde, lissom and lithe. She lives alone, has no lover, rides a Vespa throughout New York and works all day, providing simultaneous translation for delegates. She has an odd accent, which, like everything else about her, is difficult to pin down³.

³ hard to fix or place



Entertaining children in London

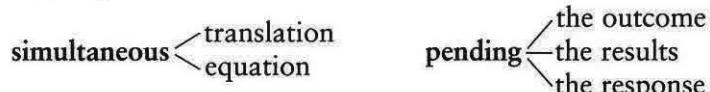
Covent Garden's buskers and jugglers provide no-cost entertainment in a car-free setting, and you've always got the chance of being plucked from the crowd to help out with a trick. Don't underestimate the value of London's public transport as a source of fun, either. The #11 double-decker from Victoria, for instance, will trundle you past the Houses of Parliament, Trafalgar Square and the Strand on its way to St Paul's Cathedral for a modest sum. The driverless Docklands Light Railway is another guaranteed source of amusement – grab a seat⁴ at the front of the train and pretend to be the driver, then take a boat back to the centre of town from Greenwich.

⁴ (informal) take a seat

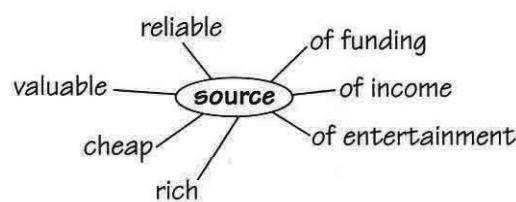
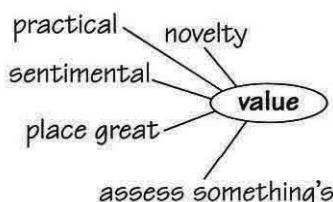
Remember you will also hear collocations in conversations, lectures, songs and films. Try to get into the habit of recording any interesting collocations that you notice.

B Recording collocations

When working on collocations in a text, use your dictionary to find more relating to one or both parts of the original collocation. You can record strong collocations effectively in collocation forks:



and weak ones in collocation bubbles (because there are so many more of them):



Exercises

5.1 Complete each sentence using a collocation from A.

- 1 Tania has always had a so I'm not surprised she wants to study Chinese at university.
- 2 At high tide the sea covers the causeway and the only way to get to the island is to
- 3 It's very crowded in this café. You and I'll get our drinks.
- 4 Once my exams are over I'll planning a holiday.
- 5 Far more people these days manage to against cancer.
- 6 Most politicians say they enter politics because they want to
- 7 Try not to having good friends. Ultimately, friendship is far more important than work.
- 8 He's got the job – a successful in his driving test tomorrow.
- 9 Although they lack experience, doctors are often very enthusiastic and passionate about their work.

5.2 Complete the collocations. The first letters are given to help you. Use a dictionary if necessary.



to j ___ a _ t ___
to p ___ u _ t ___
to g ___ t ___
to s ___ a
to b _ i _ w ___ a

to f ___ a
to p ___ a
a d ___
to r ___ to the
a s ___

chance

challenge

5.3 Check these expressions (a) in a good dictionary and (b) using a search engine. Which two are collocations and which two are not?



- 1 learn by head 2 learn by heart 3 lose a chance 4 miss a chance

5.4 Answer these questions.

- 1 Name three milestones in your life that you have already passed.
- 2 Are you already fully qualified? If so, as what? If not, when will you be?
- 3 What are some typical sources of income?
- 4 What is the toughest challenge you have ever faced?
- 5 What qualities would be needed by someone providing simultaneous translation?
- 6 What are some examples of things that have sentimental value for you?

5.5

Here is one student's plan for work on collocations. Complete the gaps, using a dictionary if necessary. Then tick the ideas you can use yourself.

- (1) an effort to notice collocations in any English text I read.
- (2) hold of a good dictionary to check other collocations for words that I want to learn.
- Write down at least three collocations for each new word I want to (3) to memory.
- Look back over old homework to see where I have (4) mistakes with collocations and (5) my best to (6) those mistakes in future.
- (7) a point of using good collocations when I have to write or speak in English.
- Read and listen to as much English as (8) because that will expose me to natural collocations.
- Every week revise the collocations I have (9) a note of in my vocabulary file.

6

Register

A What is register?

Our use of language changes according to the situation that we are in. If your close friend hosts a party, you could say, ‘Thanks for the party. It was a blast.’ (very informal) However, if your boss was the host, you would probably say, ‘Thanks for the party. I really enjoyed it.’ (neutral) In this example, *neutral* and *very informal* are both examples of register.

The register of most language is neutral (it can be used in any situation). However, register can also be formal, informal, characteristic of a certain professional field (e.g. legal, journalistic or media) or specific to official notices and forms.

Our choice of register depends on what we are talking about (business, the news, the neighbours), who we are talking to (friends, strangers, figures of authority) and how we are talking to them (in a letter, in an email, in public, in private). Study the table below and notice how different words and phrases are used to describe the same situation.

example	register	comment
The police are investigating / looking into the arms deal.	neutral	Either version would not seem out of place in any spoken or written contexts.
The cops are trying to dig out info about the arms deal.	informal	Phrasal verbs are often an informal alternative – although some are neutral.
The police are conducting an investigation into the arms deal.	formal	Longer words of Latin or Greek origin often indicate more formal language.
Police to probe arms deal	neutral, journalistic	Probe is typical of newspaper headline style.
The arms deal may be subject to police investigation .	formal, legal and official	Subject to <i>investigation</i> is typical of a bureaucratic or legal style.

Be careful not to think of formal language as written and informal language as spoken. There is a lot of overlap. For example, markedly formal language is most typical of official or academic writing and official legal or bureaucratic speech. Informal language is typical of conversation, personal letters and emails, and some journalism.

B Formal versus neutral collocations

formal (from official documents)	neutral (spoken)
Students must submit their assignments by 1 May.	‘You have to hand in your assignments by 1 May.’
Students may request an extension after consulting their tutor.	‘You can ask for an extension after you’ve talked to / had a word with your tutor.’

C Informal versus neutral collocations

That film was **totally awesome!** (mainly used by teenagers, predominantly US) [neutral equivalent: absolutely amazing/fantastic]

That party was **well good!** (*Well* used to mean ‘very’/‘really’, mainly by younger speakers.)

I **haven’t** a clue / the **foggiest idea** what you mean. [neutral equivalent: I have no idea]

We can **grab** a snack before the meeting if you’re hungry. [neutral equivalent: have a snack]



Make a note in your notebook if a collocation is very formal or informal in register.

Exercises

- 6.1** Write F (formal), I (informal) or N (neutral) in the brackets at the end of each sentence. Underline the collocations which indicate the register. Then rewrite the formal and informal sentences to make them neutral.

Example: Do not alight from the bus until it stops. (F) *Do not get off the bus until it stops.*

- 1 I feel dead tired all the time. ()
- 2 We were all bored stupid by the poetry reading. ()
- 3 Currency exchange offices are located in the arrivals lounge. ()
- 4 She conducted a study of single-parent family units. ()
- 5 She did her degree in London and found work there in 2001. ()
- 6 I just got the latest software so my computer is bang up-to-date. ()
- 7 Affix a passport-size photograph to the application form. ()
- 8 Jake asked his tutor for an extension to complete his dissertation. ()

- 6.2** Match the beginning of each sentence with its ending. Then label each sentence with the appropriate register from the list below. Underline the collocations which indicate the register.

Registers: informal conversation (IC) journalism/news (J) entertainment (E)
technical (T) legal (L) notices (N)

- | | |
|---------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| 1 This is breaking | a ring after dinner. |
| 2 These are the songs that are climbing | according to model and road conditions. |
| 3 There are tons of good reasons | blockbuster from Star Studios. |
| 4 Visitors must keep to the designated | news here on Global TV Extra. |
| 5 In any such case, customers shall forfeit | electronic circuit. |
| 6 Fuel consumption may vary | of the fitness machines to 20 minutes. |
| 7 I'll give you | to win support for the plan. |
| 8 The Minister will tour Asia in a bid | the charts this week. |
| 9 Joss Engold stars in the latest | for not studying law. |
| 10 A microchip is a miniaturised | testify for a second time. |
| 11 Please restrict your use | areas at all times. |
| 12 A witness may be asked to | the right to compensation. |

- 6.3** Complete this conversation between a doctor and a patient, using the verbs in the box in the appropriate form. The language is quite informal, without technical medical terms.

come clear do feel get run take write

Doctor: What can I (1)..... for you, Mr Wilson?

Patient: Well, Doctor, I've been (2) a temperature for the last couple of days and I've (3) out in a rash on my neck. Do you see? These red spots here.

Doctor: Hmm. Let's (4) a look.

Patient: It's very irritating and I have trouble (5) off to sleep at night. Then I (6) down all day and can't concentrate on my work.

Doctor: Right. I don't think it's anything serious. I'll (7) you out a prescription for some lotion which should help to (8) up the rash.

- 6.4** Look at how the doctor describes the case in his records using more technical language. Choose the correct word from the choice provided. Use a dictionary to help if necessary.



A patient (1) *presented / represented* this morning with an (2) *elevating / elevated* temperature. He was also (3) *exposing / exhibiting* a neck rash. He further (4) *complained / grumbled* of an (5) *inability / impossibility* to concentrate.

7

Metaphor

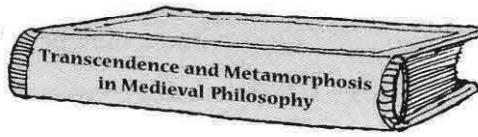
When we speak metaphorically, we use words in a non-literal sense. For example, when we say a writer **casts light on a situation**, we mean that the writer helps us understand it more clearly, in the same way that putting a light on in a dark room helps us see more clearly.

A Metaphors based on the body

collocation	example	meaning
face (up to) the facts	You're never going to run in the Olympics. It's time you faced (up to) the facts .	accepted reality
shoulder the blame	Although others were also responsible for the problem, Sue decided to shoulder the blame .	take responsibility for something bad
foot the bill	Choose what you like from the menu – the company is footing the bill .	paying
head a team	Jo heads a team working on crime prevention.	leads a project group
keep someone on their toes	Having three sons under the age of five keeps Jana on her toes .	makes her stay active and concentrated
have an eye for	Gina has an eye for detail, so ask her to check the report.	is good at noticing
go hand in hand with	Unemployment goes hand in hand with social unrest.	happens at the same time or as a result of

B Metaphors based on weight

Heavy can be used to mean serious or difficult, as in **heavy responsibility**. A **heavy burden** can be either something heavy to carry or a difficult responsibility to deal with, while a **heavy book** can be either one that weighs a lot or one with difficult content. A **weighty tome**, however, would only be used to mean a book with difficult content. Similarly in **weighty matters** or **weighty problems**, **weighty** means difficult and serious.



Light, the opposite of **heavy**, can also be used metaphorically to mean carefree or lacking in seriousness. So **light reading** is reading material that is not serious. If you do something with a **light heart**, you feel carefree and happy.

If someone has a **slim chance** of doing something, there is a chance, but it is small. **Fat chance** (very informal) means almost no chance.

C Metaphors based on movement

James did a lot of partying in his final year and **ran into difficulties** with his course. His father was **hopping mad**¹ when he only just managed to get his degree. However, when he left university he **walked straight into a job**² in an excellent company. Some people **jumped to the conclusion** that this was because he'd started going out with the Managing Director's daughter. His mother worried that, if their relationship **hit the rocks**³, he would **run into trouble** at work too.



¹ (informal) extremely angry

³ ended (metaphor based on a boat being destroyed on rocks)

² got a job very easily

Exercises

7.1 Rewrite the underlined part of each sentence using a metaphor from A.

- 1 The presidential visit meant no one had time to relax.
- 2 Rosetta took full responsibility for the failure of the project.
- 3 I don't think Greg will ever win Rosie's heart; it's time he accepted that.
- 4 The company had done so well that year that it agreed to pay for a staff night out.
- 5 I'm glad I'm not in charge of this team.
- 6 Carola is very good at finding a bargain.

7.2 Answer these questions about the metaphors on the opposite page.

- 1 What usually goes hand in hand with inflation, an increase or a decrease in savings?
- 2 If a relationship hits the rocks, is it the end or the beginning of that relationship?
- 3 If you say that someone is hopping mad, do you mean that they are good at athletics or that they are very angry?
- 4 If you run into difficulties or trouble, does that mean that they happen quickly?
- 5 Would you be more likely to call a magazine publishing gossip about celebrities light reading or a weighty tome?
- 6 If you talk about facing the facts, are the facts more likely to be pleasant or unpleasant?

7.3 Explain the difference in meaning between the sentences in each pair.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1a Jill walked into a well-paid job in the City.
2a Pat is heading the project team.
3a Dad jumped to the wrong conclusion.
4a Rod left the room with a light heart.
5a Fat chance I've got of winning! | 1b Jill got a well-paid job in the City.
2b Pat is backing the project team.
3b Dad came to the wrong conclusion.
4b Rod left the room with a heavy heart.
5b I've got a slim chance of winning. |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

7.4 Choose the correct collocation.

- 1 Kieran's constant whistling is *riding / getting / driving* me crazy.
- 2 Sylvia is a first-class designer as she has a good *eye / nose / hand* for detail.
- 3 You mustn't shoulder the heavy *weight / burden / task* of redecorating the house all by yourself.
- 4 There is just a *thin / slim / skinny* chance that Marek might pop in today.
- 5 The committee has some *fat / weighty / heavy* matters to discuss on today's agenda.
- 6 When the results came out, Marco was thrilled to see his name *footing / facing / heading* the list of successful candidates.

7.5 Explain what the play on words is based on in each of these headlines.

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 ATHLETE RUNS INTO TROUBLE | 2 DIET PILLS HAVE FAT CHANCE OF SUCCESS | 3 NEW DIRECTOR KEEPS ROYAL BALLET ON ITS TOES |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| 4 SHOEWORLD CO. TO FOOT THE BILL | 5 NEW LAW MAKES RABBIT OWNERS HOPPING MAD |
|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|



You may find it useful to draw little pictures in your vocabulary notebook – or imagine them in your mind – to help you remember some collocations.

8

Intensifying and softening adverbs

Adverbs are often used before adjectives and verbs either to strengthen their meaning (intensifying adverbs) or to weaken it (softening adverbs).

Her comments were **deeply** offensive. (intensifier – very/extremely)

Her comments were **slightly** offensive. (softener – a little bit)

A Intensifying adverbs

Notice how intensifying adverbs are used to mean ‘extremely’ or ‘completely’ in the sentences below. The expressions marked with * are very informal.

Jane really enjoys doing housework. You should see her flat – it’s always **spotlessly** clean.
It was **downright** rude of Antonio to tell Paula that she looked older than her own mother. I hope he feels **thoroughly** ashamed.

It’s **blatantly** obvious that Olga is only interested in Richard because he’s **stinking** rich*.

I wonder what she’ll do when she finds out he’s **wildly** exaggerated how rich he really is!

I don’t know what I was worrying about! The exam turned out to be **dead** easy*!

This celebrity website is good fun but most of the information is **wildly** inaccurate.

B Softening adverbs

Note the softening adverbs used in these sentences from newspapers.

The spokesperson said the new insurance scheme was only **slightly** different from the old one. [weak collocation; *slightly* can be used with a wide range of adjectives]

The Chief Executive said he was **mildly** surprised by the public interest in the firm’s plans. [*mildly* also collocates with *amusing/ed, irritating/ed, offensive*]

Alfredo Scaluzzi’s new film is **loosely** based on a nineteenth century novel. [*loosely* also collocates with *centred, structured, related, connected*]

Ms Giroa said she regarded reports that she was about to seek a divorce as **faintly** ridiculous. [*faintly* formal; *faintly* also collocates with *amused, surprised, patronising, absurd*]

C Alternatives to *very*

There are a variety of words that you can use as alternatives to *very* which collocate with most adjectives, for example: *really, extremely, terribly, incredibly* and *awfully*. Other adverbs collocate with certain adjectives and verbs but not with others.

alternatives to <i>very</i>	✓	NOT
highly	unlikely, educated, recommended	appreciate, influence, interesting
strongly	influence	appreciate
greatly	appreciate, influence	
utterly	absurd, ridiculous	sorry, busy, glad, lonely
completely/totally/entirely	different, dependent, separate	
thoroughly	enjoy	



Absolutely only collocates with adjectives which have strong meanings, e.g. **absolutely** (NOT *very*) **delighted**, **very** (NOT *absolutely*) **happy**.

Exercises

8.1 Match a word from each box to form collocations.

blatantly downright spotlessly
stinking thoroughly wildly

ashamed clean inaccurate
obvious rich rude

8.2 Complete each sentence using a collocation from 8.1.

- 1 He's just bought a 200,000 dollar yacht – he must be !
- 2 I'm amazed you didn't realise she was lying! It was to me!
- 3 It was of him not to say hello to the secretary.
- 4 I've been hoovering and dusting all day, so now my flat is
- 5 Most of the facts were wrong in that news report. It was
- 6 You should be of yourself. Your behaviour was appalling!

8.3 Rewrite the underlined part of each sentence using a collocation from the opposite page.

- 1 The American writer Mark Twain is famous for commenting that reports of his death had been over-exaggerated.
- 2 This restaurant is recommended by many different people.
- 3 The exam was extremely easy; everyone got high marks. (make this informal)
- 4 The musical *West Side Story* is kind of based on the plot of Shakespeare's play *Romeo and Juliet*. (make this less informal)
- 5 The idea of the boss singing *Happy Birthday* to me struck me as a little bit ridiculous.
- 6 The success of the Wimbledon tennis tournament is 100% dependent on the weather. (give two answers)
- 7 I really enjoyed the days I spent at your lovely house in the country.
- 8 I was just a little surprised by her decision to quit her job so soon.
- 9 I was really delighted when they told me I'd got the job.
- 10 The new model of this camera is a little bit different from the old one.

8.4 Add intensifying adverbs from the opposite page to these sentences to make the words in bold stronger.

- 1 I **appreciate** the fact that you have given me so much of your time.
- 2 Sometimes Tony says **ridiculous** things.
- 3 The crossword in today's newspaper is **difficult**. I can't even start it!
- 4 It's **sweet** of you to offer to help.
- 5 I found his remarks **offensive**; he should apologise.
- 6 She leads a **lonely** life in a tiny house on a remote island.
- 7 We should try to keep the two groups **separate** from each other.
- 8 She is an **educated** person.
- 9 I've been **busy** all week.
- 10 That meal was **expensive**! I'm not eating there again.

8.5 Are the adverb collocations correct or not? If they are incorrect, correct them using collocations from C opposite.

- 1 I thoroughly enjoyed the film.
- 2 Your help would be strongly appreciated.
- 3 The song is highly influenced by Brazilian folk rhythms.
- 4 I find the situation utterly absurd.



Look out for more collocations with these words as you listen and read, and record them in collocation bubbles indicating what they do, and do not collocate with.

9

Make and verbs that mean *make*

A

Common errors with *make*

The *Cambridge Learner Corpus* shows that some of the most frequent collocation errors made by candidates in advanced English exams relate to the use of *make*. Here are some typical errors and their corrections.

I would like to do/give some suggestions – **make some suggestions**
 I think that I could have/give a contribution to the project – **make a contribution**
 I expect you to give a formal apology – **make a formal apology**
 There is still some way to go and lots of improvements to do – **improvements to make**
 Thank you very much for doing these arrangements – **making these arrangements**

Sometimes candidates use *make* where another verb is required. For example:
 We're going to make a party on Saturday – **have a party**
 Lana made some interesting research into her family roots – **did ... research**

B

Other expressions with *make*

It's a good idea to make a habit of switching off the lights when you leave a room.
 If you always say exactly what you think, you'll make a lot of enemies.
 The team made several attempts to climb the mountain before they finally succeeded.
 I hope that they'll make a success of their new restaurant business.
 I have to go to a party for a colleague after work but I will try and make an early escape.
 Our research team has made an important discovery about how whales communicate.
 When doing your accounts, try to ensure you make all the calculations correctly.
 If we move the sofa closer to the window, it'll make room for the piano.
 I first made his acquaintance when he moved in next door. [formal: got to know him]
 The house we looked at is just what we want and we've decided to make an offer on it.
 As no one else has any ideas, I'd like to make a proposal. [make a formal suggestion]
 We must make a stand against the casino they propose to build here. [protest about]

C

Other verbs that mean *make*

collocation	example	comment
create a good/bad impression	Wear your grey suit to the interview if you want to create a good impression .	slightly more formal than make an impression
create a (+ adj.) atmosphere	The lanterns in the garden create a romantic atmosphere .	more formal than make for a romantic atmosphere
stage a protest	The students staged a protest against rising tuition fees.	= make a formal protest
lodge a complaint	Several people have lodged a complaint about the bank manager's rudeness.	= make a formal complaint
rustle up a meal	It took Sam ten minutes to rustle up a meal .	(informal) = make a meal very quickly
run up curtains	This weekend I'm going to run up some curtains for my new room.	= make quickly using a sewing machine
turn in a profit	This month our company should turn in a profit for the first time.	slightly more informal than make a profit
coin a phrase	I wonder who coined the term 'blogging'.	= invent / make up a new phrase

Exercises

9.1 Are these sentences correct or incorrect? If they are incorrect, correct them.

- 1 Have you any suggestions to make about how to celebrate the school's anniversary?
- 2 We are planning to have a party next Saturday.
- 3 The company director gave a formal apology for his earlier comments.
- 4 The manager had to make a number of changes to office procedures in order to do all the improvements he had planned for the company.
- 5 My sister did all the arrangements for the party.

9.2 Complete each sentence using a word from the box.

acquaintance attempt calculations discovery enemies
habit offer room stand success

- 1 Try to make a of noticing good collocations in any text you read.
- 2 A railway official asked us to move our luggage to make for the boy's bike.
- 3 The new CEO has made a lot of by being so autocratic.
- 4 If Pauline makes a of this project, she'll probably get promoted.
- 5 The old gentleman said he was delighted to make my
- 6 Do you think you'll make an on the flat you viewed yesterday?
- 7 Every young scientist dreams of making a that will change the world.
- 8 Rachel made no to contact me when she was over here last year.
- 9 We tried to make a against the new housing development but to no avail: the contractors started work this morning.
- 10 The that you made contained a few inaccuracies.

9.3 Replace *make* in each sentence with an alternative word. Then say whether you have made the sentence more or less formal.

- 1 The Green Party plans to make a major protest against the government's new farming policy.
- 2 Tessa helped me to make some lovely cushion covers for my new flat.
- 3 I regret to inform you that several clients have made complaints about your conduct.
- 4 You won't make a good first impression if you arrive late for your interview.
- 5 It won't take me long to make a meal for the children.
- 6 Do you expect your business to make a profit this year?

9.4 Rewrite each sentence using the word in brackets.

- 1 At the meeting the chairman proposed something rather interesting. (PROPOSAL)
- 2 I hope we can leave soon as I'm terribly tired. (ESCAPE)
- 3 I'm reading a fascinating book about the invention of new words and phrases to express new social and technical needs. (COINED)
- 4 We changed the layout of the hall to make it more relaxed for the yoga class. (ATMOSPHERE)
- 5 I tried to phone the company several times at the weekend. (ATTEMPTS)
- 6 Kim contributed very positively to the discussion. (CONTRIBUTION)
- 7 The service was poor but I wouldn't go so far as to formally complain. (LODGE)
- 8 I first got talking to Roger on a train. (ACQUAINTANCE)

FOLLOW UP

Make a point of looking back through any pieces of your writing that a teacher has corrected. Have you ever **made any mistakes** involving collocations with *make*? If so, **make an effort** to use those expressions correctly in your next assignment.

Communicating

A

Collocations with *say, speak, talk and tell*

I wouldn't say no to a nice cup of tea. [informal: I'd really like]

Needless to say / It goes without saying that the workers voted in favour of the wage increase.
Jana didn't say a word when I told her I was leaving.

Generally speaking, people are aware of the environmental consequences of their actions.

Strictly speaking, a tomato is a fruit and not a vegetable because it contains seeds.

She always speaks very highly of you. [says good things about you]

Charlie, stop mumbling and speak properly. I can't understand a word you're saying.
(generally used by parents or teachers to children, not between adults)

Now we've got to know each other, I think it's time we talked business.

At first, Andrew appears to be talking nonsense but
after a while you realise he's actually talking a lot of sense.
I'll tell you a secret but please don't tell anyone else.
The old woman looked at Glen's palm and began to
tell his fortune. [predict his future life]

**B**

Collocations meaning communicate

example	comment
I asked why she didn't trust him but she wouldn't give me a reason.	NOT say a reason
The charity states its aim as being to help underprivileged children.	(formal) also state your purpose/goal
The staff on reception required each visitor to state their business before issuing them with an entry permit.	(formal) = say what their intentions are
In her lecture Lucia gave an account of her trip to the Andes.	used about both speech and writing
The speech got the message about the policy changes across.	(informal) = conveyed the idea
I declare Hiroshi Yamamoto the winner of the gold medal.	(formal) statement made at the time of the win
He was pronounced dead at 1.10.	(formal) used when making an official statement of death
The old man tried to impart his knowledge to his sons.	(formal) = transfer knowledge; also impart wisdom
That journalist gets amazing stories but he won't divulge his sources.	(formal) = make something secret known; also divulge a secret
The Internet is a powerful means of disseminating information.	(formal) = spreading information to a lot of people
We notified the police of the burglary.	(formal) = officially informed
Although found guilty, Robson continued to protest his innocence.	(formal) = insist he was not guilty
He professed ignorance of the dent to the car but I think he was lying.	(formal) = claimed – perhaps insincerely – that he did not know
Did you break the news to her that her mother is in prison?	used for news that is very upsetting

Exercises

10.1 Complete each sentence with the appropriate form of *say*, *speak*, *talk* or *tell*.

- 1 Strictly , you shouldn't be here.
- 2 Ilya me a secret and made me promise not to pass it on to anyone else.
- 3 It goes without that we'll invite you to our wedding.
- 4 I spend most days with my three-year-old son, so forgive me if I start nonsense.
- 5 The teachers always very highly of my son's abilities.
- 6 I had my fortune at the fair yesterday.
- 7 It's so hot. I wouldn't no to an ice cream, would you?
- 8 Shall we have lunch first and then sit down to business?
- 9 I think that, generally , it's better to use public transport than drive yourself.

10.2 Rewrite the underlined part of each sentence to make it more formal.

- 1 The victim was asked why he had not told the police sooner about the mugging.
- 2 The older generation has always attempted to pass its wisdom on to young people.
- 3 Stockman has always insisted that he is innocent.
- 4 Robert claimed that he knew nothing of the damage to the car.
- 5 The reporter had no option but to explain where he had got his information from.
- 6 The doctors said he was dead when they arrived at the scene of the accident.
- 7 The judges said that Magda Karlson had won the competition.
- 8 The charity does a great deal to inform people about its activities.

10.3 Are these sentences correct or incorrect? If they are incorrect, correct them.

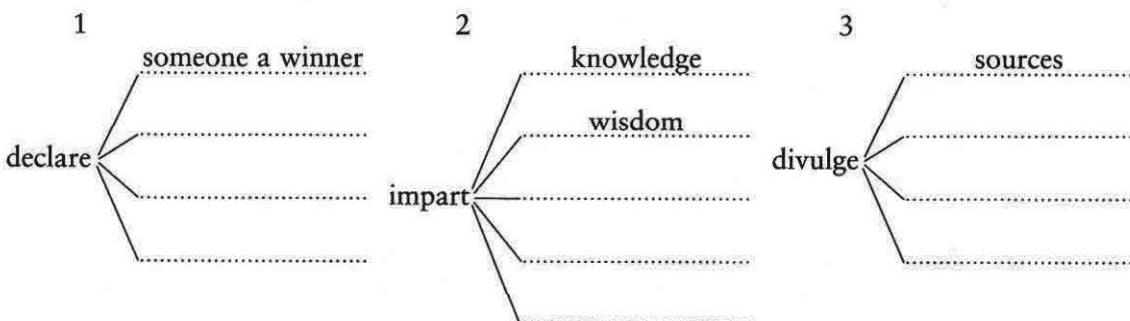
- 1 Do you think I managed to give the message across in my speech?
- 2 Needless to say, he didn't tell a word to his parents about what had happened.
- 3 You can't chew gum and say properly at the same time.
- 4 He refused to say his reasons for turning down our invitation.
- 5 She was devastated when we dropped the news to her.
- 6 In your report we would like you to give a detailed account of what happened.
- 7 I really like this documentary maker, he tells a lot of sense.
- 8 At the beginning of your dissertation you must say your goals clearly.

10.4 Use a dictionary to find nouns to complete these phrases based on collocations in B.



- 1 of innocence in the face of evidence to the contrary
- 2 a company's of aims
- 3 of information among the population
- 4 of a crime to the police
- 5 of the winner of a competition

10.5 Use a dictionary to complete these collocation forks.



III

Collocations with phrasal verbs

A News items

The Justice Minister said he would **abide by the decision**¹ of the High Court to free the prisoner.

The police, **acting on a tip-off**³, arrested the thieves as they left the building.

Hollywood star Glenda Nixon has **filed for divorce**⁴. She and her husband Kevin Lomax have lived apart for the last six months.

The new Regional Governor will **take up office**² on 1 March, following his party's recent election victory. The Education Commission has been asked by the government to **come up with an alternative** to the present schools examination system.

The police intend to **come down heavily on**⁵ anyone causing trouble at tomorrow's football final.

¹ (formal) accept the decision ³ a secret warning

² (formal) start work in an official position ⁴ made an official request for a divorce

⁵ punish very strongly

B Everyday conversation

Note how B uses a collocation with a phrasal verb to repeat A's ideas.

A: It was great just sitting in the town square and enjoying the feel of the place, wasn't it?
B: Yes, it was nice to just sit there **soaking up the atmosphere**.

A: I think we should both arrange our work schedules so we don't have to work in May.
B: Yes, I'll try to **free up some time** so we can go away together.

A: I'm finding it hard to find time to practise the French I learnt at school.

B: Yes, I have a similar problem **keeping up my Spanish**.

A: Well, all that gardening has made me hungry.

B: Yes, it certainly helps to **work up an appetite**.

A: It'd suit my arrangements if we could meet up at lunch-time.

B: Yes, that would fit in perfectly with my plans too.

A: The hotel wasn't as good as I thought it would be.

B: No, it didn't live up to my expectations either.



C Other phrasal verbs with strong collocations

burst into laughter/tears [suddenly start to laugh/cry]

When she saw the damage the floods had done to her house, she **burst into tears**.

dip into savings/funds [spend part of some money which was being saved]

The club had to **dip into their emergency funds** to pay for the repairs to the roof.

jot down an address / a phone number / a room number [write down quickly]

Can I **jot down your email address**?

see off an intruder/opponent [get rid of, defeat]

He's a tough guy. He **saw off** several intruders who were trying to break into his house.

adhere to principles / beliefs / ideals / a philosophy [formal: continue to maintain a belief]

It's difficult to **adhere to one's beliefs** when one is being constantly attacked.

TIP

It is often difficult to remember the meanings of phrasal verbs. When a phrasal verb has a set of collocations as in the examples in C, write them down together. This is a good way of remembering the meaning.

Exercises

11.1 Complete the collocations using prepositions from the box.

by down for in with to up up to up with

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1 file divorce | 5 live expectations |
| 2 come an alternative | 6 abide a decision |
| 3 take office | 7 jot someone's address |
| 4 adhere a philosophy | 8 fit plans |

11.2 Complete each sentence using a collocation from 11.1 in the appropriate form.

- 1 I'd been looking forward to the course but unfortunately it my expectations.
- 2 Has anyone a good alternative to the petrol- or diesel-fuelled car yet?
- 3 I should your address in case I forget it.
- 4 The new president of our club is due to office next week.
- 5 We have to the decision of the committee; we have no choice.
- 6 Most members of the group a common philosophy.
- 7 I don't have any special arrangements, so can easily your plans.
- 8 Hilda Bragg has divorce in a New York court.

11.3 Answer these questions using collocations from the opposite page.

- 1 What can you do with savings or funds in an emergency?
- 2 What can you do with principles or ideals?
- 3 What can you try to do with a language if you don't want to lose it?
- 4 What can guard dogs help you to do if you have intruders?

11.4 Correct the collocation errors in these sentences.

- 1 Everyone broke into laughter when she told the story.
- 2 We had a run along the beach to work in an appetite before lunch.
- 3 The police have said they intend to go down heavily on anyone carrying an offensive weapon at the match.
- 4 Do you think you could free out some time to have a quick meeting this afternoon?
- 5 The police acted on a rip-off and managed to avert a possible disaster.
- 6 I hope the party will live on to your expectations.
- 7 We sat on our hotel balcony, soaking through the atmosphere of the carnival.
- 8 Tanya quickly saw out her opponent in the semi-final and now goes on to the final.

11.5 Answer these questions. Write full sentences using the word in brackets in a collocation from the opposite page.

- 1 What do you plan to do in future to make sure you don't lose your English? (KEEP)
- 2 What film or gig or sports event have you been to that wasn't as good as you expected? (LIVE)
- 3 What sort of thing might tempt you to use some of your savings? (DIP)
- 4 Your best friend is getting married 100 miles away tomorrow and all the trains have been cancelled. What would you try to do? (COME)
- 5 At short notice some friends have invited you to stay for the weekend. They've already made some plans for the weekend. What would you do your best to do? (FIT)
- 6 How easy do you find it always to act according to your principles? (ADHERE)

12

Working life

A Fiona



In my mid-twenties I joined the staff of a language school. The pay wasn't brilliant but I could make a living¹ and there were many aspects of the job that I enjoyed. The other members of staff were nice and I enjoyed teaching the students. A few years later, after returning from maternity leave, I decided to go part-time. Luckily I was able to do a job-share² with another woman who had a small child. Then the school began to go through a difficult period and had to lay off staff³. I decided to go freelance⁴. I had managed to build up a network of contacts and this gave me a good start. I soon had a substantial volume of work – private students and marking exams – and was able to earn a good living.

¹ earn enough to live (can also be used just to refer to one's job and how one earns one's money: *She makes a living as a hairdresser*)

² situation where two people share equal parts of the same job

³ dismiss staff because there is no work for them to do

⁴ work for several different organisations rather than working full-time for one organisation



People usually **do work**, NOT **make work**. If we talk about people **making work**, it means that they create work for other people to do, e.g. *A baby makes a lot of work for its parents – but it's worth it.*

B Ben



After graduating, I practised medicine¹ for a number of years in London. I managed to carve a niche for myself² as a specialist in dermatology. Then I realised I needed some fresh challenges and so I did a job swap for a year with my opposite number³ in a clinic in Vancouver. When I returned, I went back to my old job and also took up the post⁴ of editor of a leading medical journal. I held that position for a number of years. I'm now hoping to go abroad again and so am letting everyone know that I am open to offers.

¹ worked as a doctor

³ someone doing the same job in a different location

² make a special position for myself

⁴ started work

C Julia



After graduating in economics, I did the usual thing of putting together my CV¹ and applying for jobs. I got a very tempting offer from an investment bank and accepted it. It was a high pressure environment but I felt motivated and I did very well. I was put on a fast-track scheme² and was moving up the ladder³ fast. However, one day I had a change of heart⁴. I realised I'd stopped enjoying the excitement. I felt I needed to get my priorities right⁵. I decided that other aspects of my life should take priority over⁶ my work. I handed in my resignation and moved to the country.

¹ CV = *curriculum vitae*, a written description of your education, qualifications, skills and career

³ being promoted

² system for rapid training and promotion of talented staff

⁴ my attitude or mood changed

⁵ give importance to the right aspects of life

⁶ be more important to me than



We say someone is **under a lot of / considerable pressure**, NOT under **high pressure**.

Exercises

12.1 Match the beginning of each sentence with its ending.

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 My husband and I do | of contacts. |
| 2 Circulate the report to all members | the staff in our company. |
| 3 Kazuki has been happier since he went | of work this month. |
| 4 I hope it won't be necessary to lay | of staff. |
| 5 It's not easy to make | part-time. |
| 6 Meeting people is the best aspect | a job-share. |
| 7 Marian was the last person to join | off many of our staff. |
| 8 Anna will be going on maternity | of the job. |
| 9 Try to build up a good network | a living as an actor. |
| 10 We've had a ridiculous volume | leave next month. |

12.2 Complete the conversation using words from the opposite page.

- Meg: Did you know my son's in Australia at the moment? He's doing a job swap with his opposite (1) , the person who (2) a similar position to his in the company's Sydney office.
- José: Wow, that's good! But I thought he wanted to go to the States this year?
- Meg: Well, yes. He did have a very tempting (3) from a company in New York and he was about to accept, but then he had a (4) of heart.
- José: So, have you met the exchange person from Sydney?
- Meg: Yes, he's been to dinner a couple of times. He'd like to settle here in fact and has asked us to tell everyone he's (5) to offers from any companies that might be interested. Maybe your firm might be interested?
- José: Perhaps. We could do with someone with good Australian contacts. But we could really do with someone who could (6) a post before the end of the year.
- Meg: That could work out perhaps. He certainly seems very nice. And he'd be motivated to do well for you because he's so keen to stay here.
- José: And do you think your son will stay in Australia?
- Meg: I hope not. I've told him to get his priorities (7) Being near his mum should (8) priority over Australian beaches and sunshine!

12.3 Rewrite each sentence using the word in brackets.

- 1 The recession meant that the company had to make some workers redundant. (LAY)
- 2 Your family should really be more important to you than your work. (PRIORITY)
- 3 Nita soon gained several promotions at work. (LADDER)
- 4 Bill hates his new boss so much that I think he'll soon leave. (RESIGNATION)
- 5 Vic earns good money as a freelance journalist. (LIVING)
- 6 I need to write down all my qualifications and experience before I apply for jobs. (cv)
- 7 My father always wanted to work as a doctor in a rural community. (PRACTISE)

12.4 Correct the seven collocation errors in this paragraph.

George makes a life as a sports reporter on a local newspaper but he is under high pressure at work at the moment. He's had far too much work to make recently. He's been put on a fast-train scheme for promotion and they're really pushing him. It's so hard that he's thinking of handing over his resignation and going freelancing. It wouldn't be easy but I'm sure he'd soon work a niche for himself as a sports journalist.

13

New employment

A

Discussing job applicants

Guy: So which of these applicants do you think we should interview? They all seem to fit the job description quite well to me. It's quite a daunting task to narrow the list down to just one person.

Julia: I agree. So, let's start by taking up references for these ten people.

Guy: OK. So why did you pick these ten out of the fifty who applied?

Julia: Well, these ten all seem to be people who realise the importance of working as a team. They've all shown that they are capable of mastering new skills. And they're all clearly comfortable with taking on responsibility.

Guy: Did you automatically eliminate the two who'd previously taken industrial action¹?

Julia: One of them – I'd also heard rumours about his involvement in a professional misconduct case. He was certainly relieved of his duties² at ARG under mysterious circumstances. But the other was standing up for a woman who'd been wrongfully dismissed³, even though he knew he might lose his own job. So he sounded good to me.

Guy: Fair enough. He must have strength of character to risk losing his own livelihood.

Julia: That's right. So could we pencil in a meeting for considering the references? And then I'd better leave you and go and clear my desk⁴ before I go home.

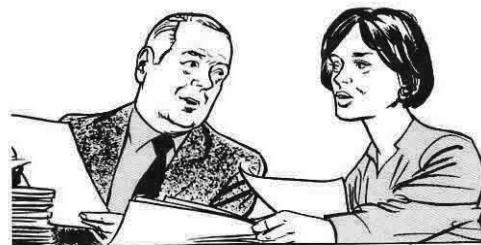
Guy: Yes, sure. How about Friday at 10?

¹ gone on strike

² (formal) dismissed

³ (formal, legal) unfairly dismissed

⁴ deal with all the papers on one's desk (also used when someone is clearing their desk because they are leaving their job)



If workers refuse to work, they go on strike or stage a strike, NOT make a strike.

B

Conversation about a new job

Jenny: I hear your brother's landed a fantastic new job¹.

Ali: Actually it's not as good as he hoped. He's got a terribly heavy workload and that means working some very unsocial hours. He also complains about having to do lots of menial tasks around the office, running errands for his boss.

Jenny: But he's paid well?

Ali: Not really. He just about gets a living wage². And all the overtime is unpaid.

Jenny: He'll just have to throw a sickie³ from time to time.

Ali: Yes, I suggested he did that too, but he says he's afraid of getting the sack⁴ if he does. He feels there might be some prospects for him there eventually, even if he is just being used as sweatshop labour⁵ at the moment.

Jenny: Well, with any luck he'll eventually find that he can realise his potential⁶ there.

Ali: I hope so. But they have a very high turnover of staff and it won't be easy for him to stay the course⁷.

Jenny: No, but he's very determined, isn't he? So let's hope it all works out.



¹ (informal) got a new (and usually a good) job

² enough money to live on

³ (informal) take a day off work pretending to be sick

⁴ (informal) being dismissed

⁵ workers who are paid very little and work in very bad conditions

⁶ achieve all that he is capable of

⁷ remain there until he is successful

Exercises

13.1 Find a collocation in A that matches each definition.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| 1 to make a provisional date for a meeting | 6 unfairly sacked |
| 2 an alarmingly difficult task | 7 to be deprived of your source of income |
| 3 to become skilled at doing new things | 8 behaviour unacceptable for someone in |
| 4 to request statements from referees | a particular job |
| 5 to have the skills required for a job | |

13.2 Complete this paragraph using words from the box in the appropriate form.

be fit land run sweat take

Mel was surprised but happy to (1) a job on her local newspaper as soon as she left university. She was surprised because she didn't feel that she (2) the job description, but she was happy because she had always dreamt of working as a journalist. So she didn't really mind when she found that she was spending much of her time (3) errands for the editor. Her brother said she was just being used as (4) labour but she felt confident that there (5) good prospects for her there. She was sure she would soon have the chance to (6) on more responsibility.

13.3 Complete each conversation using a collocation from the opposite page to make B agree with what A says.

- 1 A: I think that Mick will leave his new job before the year is out.
B: Yes, I agree. I don't think he'll either.
- 2 A: Had you heard that they may fire some members of staff?
B: Yes, I did hear a rumour that some people might
- 3 A: Inflation is so high that I don't seem to earn enough to live on any more.
B: No. I don't feel I earn myself.
- 4 A: Has the HR Manager been removed from his job?
B: Yes, he was yesterday.
- 5 A: I hope the workers don't decide to go on strike.
B: Yes, it would be very unfortunate if they decide to
- 6 A: It's going to be hard to decide which of the job applicants to shortlist.
B: Yes, I don't know how we are going to

13.4 Answer these questions about your own work or ask someone else these questions and write down the answers.

- 1 What kind of menial tasks does your job involve?
- 2 Do you think this job will allow you to realise your potential?
- 3 Do you ever have to work unsocial hours? If so, why? If not, why not?
- 4 Does there tend to be a high turnover of staff at your workplace?
- 5 If you do overtime, is it paid or unpaid?
- 6 Have you ever thrown a sickie? If so, why? If not, why not?
- 7 Have you ever taken or would you ever consider taking industrial action?
- 8 In your job is it necessary to work as a team?
- 9 Do you have a heavy workload?

FOLLOW UP

It will probably be particularly useful for you to learn work collocations that relate to your own professional life. Look on the Internet for information in English about the job that you do or are interested in doing in the future. Make a note of any interesting collocations that you come across.

14

Thoughts and ideas

A

Talking about thoughts

I honestly think we can win the match tonight. [NOT I **strongly** think]
I'm not sure if I want to invest in your business or not, but I'll give it some thought.
Bear in mind that there are often delays to flights during bad weather. [remember]
It's common knowledge that Jane is looking for a new job. [everyone knows]
My teenage son hasn't yet grasped the importance of revising for exams. [understood how important something is]
I take the view that we are all responsible for our own actions. [believe]
It's a foregone conclusion that Jaime will win the race. [absolutely certain]
I'm not quite sure what I'm going to do but I've got a rough idea. [general idea]
I don't subscribe to the theory that nature and nurture are of equal significance but it is now a widespread belief. [hold that opinion]; [generally held view]
Opinions are divided as to whether mothers of young children should go out to work or not, but it is my firm conviction that different things suit different families. [people hold different views]; [I am totally convinced]



We say I am **becoming aware** of the problem, NOT I am **getting aware**.

B

Judging

collocation	example	meaning
judge someone harshly	Don't judge him too harshly . He really couldn't have done things differently.	be very critical of someone
poor judgement	Deciding to set up a business now shows poor judgement of the economic situation.	
pass judgement on	Di's quick to pass judgement on other people but she's far from perfect herself.	criticise
against your better judgement	I finally agreed to go out with him, against my better judgement .	despite the knowledge that something is a bad idea
a lack of judgement	His approach to his children showed a lack of judgement .	an inability to judge a situation wisely
an error of judgement	Promoting Alec was a serious error of judgement .	bad decision

C

Metaphors of thinking

We can talk about thinking laterally [approaching a problem in an imaginative and original way rather than using a traditional approach]. We can say someone has a fertile imagination [one that produces lots of original and interesting ideas]. We can wrestle with a problem [struggle to find a solution] and we can have a nagging doubt [an unpleasant feeling of doubt that will not go away]. We can also talk about something fuelling speculation [encouraging people to consider that something may be true], and sometimes people jump to conclusions [guess the facts about a situation without having enough information].

Exercises

14.1 Look at A. Correct the collocation errors in these sentences.

- 1 Opinions are separated on the issue of single-sex schools and there are sound arguments on both sides of the case.
- 2 I believe that the government will win another term in office but my girlfriend takes a different opinion.
- 3 I strongly think that you'd be making a serious mistake if you took that job.
- 4 I don't believe it's a foregone fact that the larger company will win the contract.
- 5 People are gradually getting aware of the problem of climate change.
- 6 You should bear in thought that your visitors will be tired after their long flight.
- 7 I've got a raw idea of what I want to say in my essay but I haven't planned it properly yet.
- 8 Increasing numbers of people today subscribe for the theory that small is beautiful.

14.2 Complete the paragraph using words from the box.

error firm grasped laterally pass poor



Recent research shows that people who spend time meditating each day improve their mental abilities. It seems that meditation particularly enhances our ability to think in creative, unusual ways, in other words, to think 'outside the box' or think (1) It may, then, have been an unfortunate (2) of judgement on the part of the management at BNM and Co. to put a stop to the yoga classes that staff had organised for their lunch-breaks.

'It would seem that our managers have not yet (3) the importance of these classes,' explained yoga instructor Zandra, 'but it is not my place to (4) judgement on them. Their judgement may be (5) at the moment but it is my (6) conviction that as people come to understand yoga better, they will see how it could benefit the company as well as individual members of staff.'

14.3 Rewrite each sentence using the word in brackets.

- 1 It's unwise to draw conclusions too quickly about people's motives. (JUMP)
- 2 Everyone knows that Ellie has been taking money from the till. (COMMON)
- 3 I agreed to help him though I knew it was wrong. (AGAINST)
- 4 I'm afraid your decisions show you are unable to judge situations well. (LACK)
- 5 We have to decide when to have the party. Can you think about it? (THOUGHT)
- 6 I think you are being too critical of him. Remember he's only 18. (HARSHLY)
- 7 Surprisingly, a large number of people believe left-handed people are more intelligent. (WIDESPREAD)

14.4 Use a dictionary to find frequent collocations with these words. Your collocations can use the words literally or metaphorically.



- 1 a fertile
- 2 to fuel
- 3 to wrestle with
- 4 a nagging

14.5 Use a dictionary or an online corpus (see Unit 4) to decide whether these are common collocations or not.



- 1 bear in memory
- 2 personal conviction
- 3 harshly treated
- 4 a rough belief

Business reports

A Business news

Charles Park and Sons have **announced record profits** for last year despite a slight **decline in demand** for one of their key products, caused by increasingly **fierce competition**¹ in the sector. They say they are already well on the way to **meeting their targets** for the first quarter. Their new models will **go into production**² in the spring and this is expected to **boost**³ their **sales** and **profits** even more.

The government today announced its intentions to **stimulate growth** in the south-west by **allocating** a large **part of its development budget** to industrial projects in the area. Roger Middle, who chaired **the committee** working on this scheme, said that local people welcomed the decision, which should **generate** more **business** for local firms. They appreciate that their area has many **unique selling points** for businesses and their employees, and feel that development will **pay dividends**⁴ for everyone living and working in the area.

Clothing firm G and L has announced plans to build a new factory in the Midlands. Their spokesperson, Mark Mulloy, said yesterday that the proposal **made sound business sense**. ‘It will be easier for us to **maintain quality** and **promote the interests** of our shareholders at the same time as **satisfying the demands** of our **target market**,’ he said.

SIB Distribution held an **emergency meeting** last night to discuss the crisis caused by yesterday’s rise in fuel prices. Their MD said, ‘This **hike in prices**⁵ will seriously **affect the bottom line**⁶. It’s a considerable challenge for us as we already operate on **narrow profit margins**. However, we have **set ourselves clear objectives** and are confident we will still be able to **balance the books**⁷. We have no intention of **calling in the receivers**⁸ yet!’

¹ NOT **high competition**

⁵ (journalistic) **rise in prices**

² start being made

⁶ affect the net income

³ increase

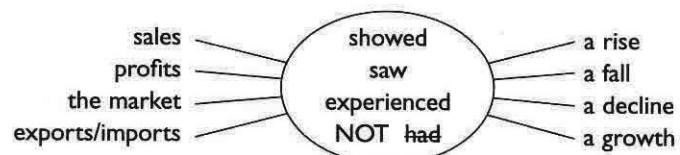
⁷ make sure the amount spent is not more than the amount earned

⁴ bring advantages

⁸ going bankrupt

B Describing trends

An important part of many business reports is the description of trends. The *Cambridge Learner Corpus* shows that there are a number of collocation errors which are frequently made when candidates write about business in advanced English exams.



We say a **slight decrease/increase**, NOT a **little decrease/increase** and a **substantial decrease/increase**, NOT a **strong decrease/increase**.

When comparing two things in terms of quantity, we say, for example, **Exports were five times greater than imports**, NOT **Exports were five times larger than imports**.

Exercises

15.1 Are these sentences true or false?

- 1 A business executive will feel worried if the company experiences a decline in demand for its products.
- 2 A business CEO is pleased if the company does not meet its quarterly sales targets.
- 3 A hike in the price of raw materials is likely to present a difficult challenge for a business that uses those materials.
- 4 Marketing and sales staff will promote their products' unique selling points.
- 5 Business managers are likely to be happy about calling in the receivers.
- 6 A company is likely to feel more secure if it has narrow profit margins.

15.2 Complete each sentence using a word from the opposite page.

- 1 It was a sad day for the company when it finally had to call in the
- 2 I'm sure you'll agree that our new mobile phone has a number of unique selling
- 3 We use a professional accountant to help us balance our
- 4 The bank agreed that our plans make sound business
- 5 We must ensure that the research project does not negatively affect the bottom
- 6 We look forward to next spring, when our exciting new line will go into
- 7 All your hard work will eventually pay
- 8 We are confident that our new business strategy will help boost both sales and

15.3 Correct the collocation errors in these sentences.

- 1 The company is pleased to report a strong increase in profits over the last quarter.
- 2 The new health and safety committee is to be tabled by a retired doctor.
- 3 There is increasingly high competition between airline companies.
- 4 The company's exports to Japan had considerable growth over the last decade.
- 5 The sales figures for March show a little decrease on those for February.
- 6 Our sales in the domestic market are certain to have a rise next year.
- 7 Last year sales were three times larger in Europe than in Australia.
- 8 We feel that this proposal does considerable business sense.
- 9 Although we need to reduce our costs, it's important we attain the quality that our reputation is built on.
- 10 Business leaders hope new government policies will stimulus growth.

15.4 Answer these questions about the collocations in this unit.

- 1 When might the Managing Director of a company call an emergency meeting?
- 2 What kind of age group is a sports car company likely to have as its target market?
- 3 Why would shareholders be pleased if their company announced record profits?
- 4 In what situations other than business do people set themselves objectives?
- 5 Name three things that a business would have to allocate part of its budget to.
- 6 How might a company try to stimulate growth in demand for its products?

FOLLOW UP

On the website www.companieshouse.gov.uk you can find reports on several million companies. Look up a company that interests you and make a note of any interesting collocations that you find.

16

Customer services

A

Shopping in the high street or online?

Most companies **carry out surveys**¹ to find out what customers or potential customers feel about their products and services. I answered one recently about **online shopping**. I personally much prefer to go **shopping** on the high street rather than to shop on the Internet. You get a much better impression of whether something is **good value for money** or **truly fit for purpose**² when you can touch it. And I feel if you have a problem with a purchase, it's easier to go back and **make a complaint** if you've bought something from a shop. But shopping online has its advantages, and many companies **offer you a discount** when you **place an order** online. And, of course, lots of online companies have plenty of **regular customers** and plenty of **satisfied customers**. I suppose the bottom line is that it's good for us as consumers to have as much **healthy competition** as possible.

¹ or **do surveys**, NOT **make surveys** ² good at doing what it is supposed to do

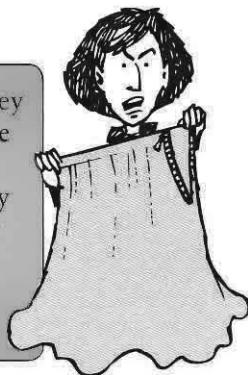


We say **do the shopping** or **go shopping**, NOT **do-shopping**. **Do the shopping** means the regular daily, weekly or monthly shopping that people do for food and household items. It is a household chore (compare: **do the ironing/washing**). While **go shopping** also means this, it has the additional meaning of shopping as a leisure activity (compare: **go fishing/swimming**).

B

Complaining about service

I ordered this skirt on the Internet and I'm furious. On their website they promise **prompt service**. In fact they said they offered a next-day service but it took ten days to come. When I rang up to complain they put me **on hold** and then never got back to me! Then, when the skirt eventually arrived, the zip was broken. It's really **poor quality** – though the advert says all their clothes are **top quality**. I'm going to **kick up such a fuss**¹. Of course, I'll demand a **full refund**², but I'd really like an apology as well. And I'll certainly **take my custom elsewhere**³ in future.



¹ (informal) make a very forcible complaint

² ask for all my money back (NB NOT **strongly demand** because the verb **demand** cannot be made stronger in English – it is already strong enough)

³ not buy from the same place again

C

Company promise

If you have **grounds for complaint**¹, please contact our Head Office at the address below. We pride ourselves on providing an **excellent service** and all our products **conform to safety regulations**². We **honour all commitments**³ to customers. We **take very seriously** any **complaints** about poor service. So if you feel that one of our products does not **come up to standard**⁴, then we will immediately offer you a replacement. We promise to **handle all complaints promptly**.

¹ a reason for complaining

³ do what we said we would do

² obey all the rules or laws relating to safety

⁴ reach appropriate standards

TIP

Learn more collocations relating to the topic of customer services by looking at the customer services page of a company website, for example, that of John Lewis, a British department store: www.johnlewis.com/Help/HelpHome.aspx. Make a note of any interesting collocations.

Exercises

16.1 Look at A. Correct the collocation errors in these sentences.

- 1 Have you ever made a complain to the management about the food in a restaurant?
- 2 I hate making shopping on Saturdays as the town is so crowded then.
- 3 If you want your shopping delivered, you can put your order with us online or by phone.
- 4 We made a large-scale customer survey before developing our new product range.
- 5 On-the-web shopping is proving increasingly popular.
- 6 I was surprised by the weak quality of the acting in that film we saw last night.

16.2 Choose the correct collocation.

- 1 This shop gives very good *worth / cost / value* for money.
- 2 Every business wants *satisfactory / satisfied / satisfying* customers.
- 3 He is an economist who believes in the advantages of *healthy / rich / fertile* competition.
- 4 Service doesn't have to be next-day but it should be reasonably *punctual / prompt / present*.
- 5 I hate it when you phone a company and get put on *hole / hang / hold* for ages.
- 6 Dan kicked up a terrible *fuss / foot / fever* about the service we received.
- 7 The hotel manager *dealt / handled / honoured* our complaint very efficiently.
- 8 We can't sell our old sofa because it doesn't *perform / inform / conform* to modern safety regulations.
- 9 I would prefer not to take my custom *somewhere / anywhere / elsewhere*.
- 10 The service at the hair salon did not *run / come / do* up to standard.

16.3 Complete the letters using words from the opposite page.

Dear Sir/Madam,
I am writing to complain about the service I received in your Cambridge branch.
I bought a suit there recently but it is poorly cut and does not fit well, even though it is the size I normally take. I am a (1) customer of yours and have never had any problems before. I returned the suit to the shop the next day, but the manager refused to give me a full (2)
I request that you look into this matter and (3) this complaint seriously. Otherwise I may be forced to take my (4) elsewhere.
Yours faithfully,
John Cole

Dear Mr Cole,
Thank you for your letter regarding your purchase of a suit from us. We apologise for the inconvenience caused to you.
Our company is committed to (5) an excellent service and selling (6) quality garments. We therefore enclose the requested refund and trust that you will continue to shop with us and will never again have (7) for complaint about our goods.
Yours sincerely,
Jason Campbell
Customer Services Manager

16.4 Complete the crossword.

Across

- 1 When choosing new offices you must ensure that they will be fit for — .
- 3 To get your money back you'll have to prove you have — for complaint.
- 4 I have no option but to demand a — refund.
- 5 I am afraid that your service simply fails to come up to — .
- 6 As a respected firm we always — all our commitments.
- 7 It is our policy to offer students a — on books and stationery.

Down

- 2 Your helmets do not conform to safety — .

