

1 . Draw up a list

Verb + Noun

1 . to draw up a contract / list

- Our lawyer drew up a contract for us to sign .
- Can you please draw up a list of materials our company will have to order for ?

2 . to pass up a chance / opportunity

- I can't pass up the chance of getting their last model before they are out of market .
- I didn't want to pass up the opportunity to visit Hong Kong , so I agreed to go on a trip .

3 . to withstand pressure / impact

- The police officer's vest can withstand the impact of a bullet .
- These metal pipes can withstand high pressure without getting any substantial damage .
- The train's window glass can withstand the impact of a flying stone or any other solid object .

Noun + Verb

1 . An opportunity arises

- An opportunity arose for me to work in China , so I went and spent a year there .
- I'd waited for an opportunity to arise for months , and the ship has finally

come in .

2 . Standards slip

- People feel educational standards slipped when the government cut finances .
- The quality standards of production will slip if there is less quality control and the work places are poorly organized .

Noun + Noun

Describing groups or sets

1 . A spate of thefts / attacks

Unusually large number happening in close succession

- The police analysts recorded a spate of attacks on ethnic minority groups last month .
- There've been a spate of thefts in our area recently .

2 . A barrage of insults / questions

Unusually large number happening at the same time

- The minister had to put up with a barrage of questions from the angry audience .
- The bar owner received a barrage of insults from a drunk crowd when he'd told them the bar was closing in 5 minutes .

Used with uncountable nouns

1 . A stroke of luck

Sudden , unexpected piece of luck

- By a stroke of luck , I found my keys in the rubbish bin !
- By a stroke of luck , that mister didn't report you , Sam. You've got to be more careful next time.

2 . A snippet of information / music / code

A small piece of information

- He sent me a few snippets of his latest work and I found it amazing!
- A British soldier was caught when he was sending snippets of information , that was top secret , to a Russian spy .

Adjective + Noun

1 . An idle threat

Just a threat which won't be followed by actions

- It's not an idle threat ; I will call the police if it happens again !

2 . The vain hope

Unlikely to be fulfilled

- He waited in the vain hope that the minister would meet him .

3 . Mounting concern / criticism / fury

Growing ...

- There is mounting concern over the decision made .

- There was mounting fury over trans men being allowed to have lockers in women locker rooms .
- His ideas now meet mounting criticism .

4 . Simple / plain truth

- The simple truth is that no one was aware of the problem .
- It was the plain truth that people never like to be told .

Adverb + Adjective

1 . Intensely personal

- The article provides an intensely personal account of the writer's relationship with his sons.

2 . Stunningly attractive

- Joe's sister was a stunningly attractive woman .

Verb + Adverb

1 . to fail miserably

- The teenager tried to convince his mother that he was innocent , but he failed miserably .

2 . to drive recklessly

- I don't like to travel with my brother because he drives recklessly .

3 . to burst into song

- As soon as the singer came on stage she burst into song .

4 . to foam at the mouth

- If your dog starts to foam at the mouth , you should take it to the vet immediately !

Complex collocations

1 . to take it easy for a while

to avoid hard work and recuperate

- The doctor told my brother he should take it easy for a while .
- Mary is looking forward to retiring and taking it easy for a while .

2 . To put the past behind you

Let the past be the past

- It's time for you to put the past behind you and start focusing on future .
- What happened 20 years ago doesn't have to affect you now . Put the past behind you and move on .