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#01 Family

Let's begin our study of collocations by learning some common expressions about the family. Your parents and siblings (brothers and sisters) are your **immediate family** - and your **extended family** includes all your relatives - uncles, cousins, great-aunts, etc.

You can use a **family tree** to diagram the relationships among your **family members**. A person who is related to you by a long series of connections can be called a **distant relative**.

If you're lucky, you have a loving family or a **close-knit** family - these expressions refer to a family that has good relationships, where everyone loves each other and helps each other. If you were raised in a loving family, then you probably had a carefree childhood - that means you had nothing to worry about when you were young.

On the other hand, a family in which the relationships are bad or unhealthy can be called a **dysfunctional family**. If the children experience abuse, poverty, or problems with the law, we can say they had a **troubled childhood**.

Perhaps the parents went through a **bitter divorce** - that means a separation in which there were bad/angry feelings between the husband and wife. It's also possible to have a **messy divorce**, with a prolonged legal battle involving lots of conflicts about the separation of the former couple's assets (money and possessions). The decisions about the separation of assets are made in the **divorce settlement**. A family in which there are divorces or separations is sometimes called a **broken home**.

Sometimes the mother and father **fight over custody** of the children - that refers to who has the primary responsibility of caring for the kids. A judge can **grant joint custody** - that means the ex-husband and ex-wife share the responsibility - or **sole custody** to only one parent. For example, a judge might award sole custody to the mother, and the father

has to **pay child support** - regular payments to help with expenses for the kids.

If it was **a mutual divorce/separation** - that means the ex-husband and ex-wife agreed to separate without fighting - then they will probably **stay on good terms with each other** (meaning to have a polite relationship without conflicts).

If a woman **gets pregnant** without being married or in a relationship, then she will become **a single mother**. Some women in this situation choose to **have an abortion**, and others prefer to give the baby up **for adoption**. The time when the baby is planned to arrive is called the **due date** - you can also say the baby is due in mid-October, for example.

After the woman has the baby (or gives birth to the baby), the baby is given to the **adoptive parents**, who will **raise the child** or **bring up the child** as if it was their own. Sometimes, when the adopted child is older, he or she tries to find their **birth mother** (biological mother).

#02 Relationships

When you move to a new city, it can be hard to **make friends**. You'll probably have a number of **casual acquaintances** - people who you know on a basic level, but with whom you don't have a significant relationship. Over time, some of these may become **good friends** or **close friends** - these collocations refer to friends with whom you have an especially strong relationship.

Do you believe in **love at first sight**? That's when two people meet each other and immediately **fall in love** - perhaps because they have **strong chemistry** - this expression describes strong compatibility or connection between two possible romantic partners. Some people believe that their **significant other** (their boyfriend, girlfriend, husband, wife) is their **soul mate** - this is a poetic expression that means that two people are destined to be together.

It's possible for one person to **have feelings** for another person - this expression is an indirect way to describe romantic feelings - but if the other person doesn't feel the same way, then **the feeling is not mutual**. The other person might say "**he's/she's just not my type**" - meaning that they are interested in people of a different type of personality/appearance. Ah, there's nothing sadder than **unrequited love**! (Love that is not returned)

Some people marry their **childhood sweetheart** or **high school/college sweetheart** - this expression refers to a boyfriend or girlfriend from our childhood, teenage, or college years. Other couples are introduced by **a mutual friend** - one friend that the two people have in common. When the couple is ready to **make a commitment**, the man **proposes to the woman** - he asks her to marry him. If the marriage is good, then we say the couple is **happily married**.

Unfortunately, not all love stories have a happy ending. Sometimes a husband or wife

has an affair - they have sex with a different person. We can also say that they are **cheating on** their husband/wife. The expression “have an affair” is typically used only for married couples, and the expression “cheating on” can be used for married couples or boyfriends/girlfriends.

#03 Appearance

My best friend Joanna is **absolutely gorgeous** (extremely beautiful). She has **long, sleek, jet-black hair** (sleek = smooth and straight, jet-black = perfectly black), **pale blue eyes** (pale = light color), and **a radiant complexion** (skin that appears healthy and full of energy).

People always compliment her on her **hourglass figure** (when a woman has large breasts and hips, but a small waist) and ask her what the secret is to maintaining such a **slender waist** (a thin waist). She has **a round face** with **an upturned nose**, and she actually **bears a striking resemblance** (looks extremely similar) to a famous singer.

Joana could get any guy she wanted - so I was really surprised when she introduced me to her latest boyfriend, who I think is **hideously ugly**. He has **curly, shoulder-length hair** that looks rather unkempt (**unkempt hair** = messy hair, it appears that the person doesn't take care of their hair).

He has **a square face** and **a ruddy complexion** (reddish skin). His deep-set eyes (eyes that are far back in the person's face) are almost hidden under his **bushy eyebrows** (big eyebrows with lots of hair), and he sports **a thick mustache** and a huge, **shaggy beard** (a beard with lots of hair). I guess Joanna doesn't mind his **facial hair** (facial hair = beard and /or mustache).

His body isn't bad - he has **an athletic build** (body with a lot of muscles), with **broad shoulders** (wide shoulders) and **muscular arms**. If he would only **trim his beard** (cut his beard a little shorter) and **comb his hair**, I suppose he could be considered **somewhat attractive** (more or less beautiful/handsome).

#04 Character and Behavior

When I was a teenager, I was **painfully shy** (extremely shy). I loved reading books, and I **had a vivid imagination** (had a creative and colorful imagination). My best friend had a more **outgoing personality** (she liked to be friendly and sociable) and a good **sense of humor** (ability to make other people laugh). Unfortunately, she was also **brutally honest**, and sometimes her comments **hurt my feelings** (made me sad, upset, or angry).

Although I was **fiercely loyal** to her, she **showed her true colors** (revealed her true personality) when she **played a prank** (did a trick) that humiliated me in front of the class. I **bore a grudge** (continued feeling angry) against her for years afterwards. Now that I look back on it, I can see that she had **low self-esteem** (she considered herself inferior) and a bit of a **mean streak** (a “streak” is a tiny bit of someone’s personality).

I’ve **come out of my shell** (become less shy) since those days; I **have a thicker skin** (I’m less sensitive to criticism) and it doesn’t bother me when people **speak their minds** (say exactly what they think, without considering the effects of the words on others).

My biggest flaw is that I **have a tendency** to be arrogant - some say I **have a superiority complex** (consider myself superior to others). I’ll admit that it is hard for me to **swallow my pride** (stop being arrogant) and recognize when I’ve been mistaken about something. My resolution for the New Year is to make a more concerted effort to **put others first** (consider the needs of other people more important than my own).

#05 Feelings

I experienced a **roller coaster of emotions** when my son was born (many different emotions one after another). During my wife's pregnancy, I was **ridiculously excited** about the prospect of becoming a dad. On the big day, I'd imagined that everything would go smoothly and we'd be **blissfully happy** - but there were complications during the delivery and my wife had to have emergency surgery while I waited in the reception area, **worried sick** (very worried).

As time goes by, I got **increasingly anxious** because the doctors weren't telling me anything. After two hours I was **seething with anger** (ready to explode with anger), and I shouted at one of the nurses. Then the security guards came and escorted me out of the hospital.

My wife **was visibly disappointed** (it was obvious that she was disappointed) that I wasn't by her side when she woke up from surgery. She didn't say anything - she's not really one to **show her feelings**; she prefers to **bottle up her emotions** (keep her emotions hidden inside her) - but I knew I had let her down and I **was terribly sorry** that I had **lost my temper** (lost control and shown anger).

The months that followed were tough. My wife became **deeply depressed**, and I too was **an emotional wreck** (a person who is very sad, confused, and upset) as I tried to juggle the demands of work and family life. But now things are starting to turn around - I've **been pleasantly surprised** at the al help we've gotten from our friends and neighbors.

I'm just **immensely grateful** that my wife and son are healthy, and sometimes I'm **overwhelmed** with emotion as I reflect on how lucky we are (when emotion is so strong that it's difficult to think or speak).

#06 House and Apartments

I recently spend a month on vacation - but instead of staying in a hotel, I looked for a **short-term rental** (a place to live that can be rented for a short period of time). I ended up sharing a **two-bedroom apartment** - that's an apartment with two bedrooms, a living room, and a kitchen - with some friends. It was actually cheaper than renting a **studio apartment** (an apartment with only one big room) all by myself.

The apartment was on the top floor of a **five-story building** (that's a building with five floors) and it had a balcony **overlooking the ocean** (that means you can see the ocean from the balcony). From the roof, we also **had a nice view of** the city skyline (this is another expression used when you can see something from a certain place).

The apartment **had recently been remodeled/renovated** - meaning it was fixed up and improved - and was **fully furnished**, so it already had furniture (beds, tables, etc.) and appliances (refrigerator, stove, etc.).

We loved the **spacious living room** (the room was big), but unfortunately **the bedrooms were rather cramped** (small and uncomfortable). It was nice to spend one month there, but by the end of the trip I started to **feel homesick** - that's when you feel sad because you miss your life at home.

I'd really like to **have a place of my own** so that I'm not throwing away money on rent every month, but there's a real shortage of **affordable housing** (houses/apartments that are reasonably priced) in my city. Even if I stay away from the **upscale neighborhoods** (areas where rich people live), I'd still have to **take out a mortgage** (borrow money from the bank, in order to buy a house) and it'll take me more than 30 years to **pay it off**.

But still, I'm gonna start saving up for a **down payment** (an initial payment on big

purchase). Someday, when I do **move into a new place**, I'll be sure to **throw a housewarming party** (a party to celebrate living in a new house/apartment).

#07 Eating

My mother radically changed her **eating habits** a few years ago. In the past, she ate a lot of **junk food** (food that is not nutritious/healthy) and was overweight. Sometimes she would try to go on a diet (eat less food and healthier food), but it would never last. But now she understands how unhealthy **processed foods** are - they're full of **food additives** (chemicals added to food) that contribute to weight gain and heart problems.

Nowadays, she eats **a balanced diet** including a lot of **nourishing meals** (meals that are healthy and nutritious) that she prepares herself. She doesn't buy **organic food** because she thinks the prices are outrageous, but she stocks up on **fresh produce** (fresh fruits and vegetables) so that she can grab an apple or some veggies when she wants **a quick snack** (something small and fast to eat). She has also learned to eat **in moderation** and watch her **portion sizes** (how much food you take).

I often stop by her house when I'm in the mood for **a home-cooked meal**. The other day she made **a hearty stew** (a thick soup with lots of flavors and ingredients) that was full of beans and vegetables. My brother, who has **a healthy appetite** (the capacity to eat a lot), had **a second helping** (a second portion) - but I found the stew so filling that I could barely finish my bowl.

My mother recently told me that she'd like to try some **international cuisine**. I was surprised to hear that, because a few years ago she had a bad experience after getting **food poisoning** (when you get sick because of contaminated food) at a Japanese restaurant. So tomorrow I told her to eat **light meals** (small meals) during the day so that she doesn't **spoil her appetite** for dinner ("spoiling your appetite" means eating food earlier, and then not being hungry for a meal later).

#08 Movies and Books

My brother is a huge fan of movies. When he sees a **movie trailer** (a short video offering a preview of the movie), he counts down the days until the movies **comes out**. He always goes to the **movie theater** on **opening night** - that's the first day a movie, show, concert, or performance is open to the public. He also loves to analyze the **film critics' reviews** (the evaluations of the people whose job is to analyze movies) and tries to guess which movies will **be nominated for an award**.

One of his favorite **movie stars** (famous actors/actresses) will be **starring in an upcoming film** about the Vietnam War. It's **based on a true story**, and they're **shooting the film on-site** in Vietnam - that means they will be recording/filming the movie in the same location as the story occurs.

The particular actor had been talking about retiring, but when he was offered the **leading role** (the opportunity to play the most important part in a movie) in a film that's sure to be a **box-office hit** (a movie that is very successful) he couldn't turn it down.

I, on the other hand, prefer books. I'm currently **engrossed in** a book by Stieg Larsson (the book is taking all my attention) - it's the final part of a trilogy, and I can't wait to see how things turn out for the **main character** (the most important person in the book). I already have a huge collection of books, and I also **borrow books from library**.

One book I took out last week deals with modern feminism and motherhood. It's a bit of a **controversial topic**, but it's an **interesting and enjoyable read**. I'm not sure I'll have time to finish it before I have to return the book to the library. Maybe I'll **renew it** for another week - that means to get an extension of the length of time I can keep the book.

Note: We talk about the **beginning and end** of a book, story, or film (not the "start and

finish”). The first and last parts of a story can also be called the **opening and closing scenes** (in a movie) or the **opening and closing chapters** (in a book).

#09 Music

My older brother Alex is very **musically gifted** (he has a natural talent for music). He can play any tune from memory, without looking at **sheet music** (musical notation written on paper). He spends all his free time **strumming a guitar** (playing a guitar), **composing music** (creating music), and writing **song lyrics** (the words to a song).

Alex and his friends formed a band that has attracted **a sizable following** (a lot of fans) in our city. They started out **playing gigs** (giving small, informal performances) in bars and clubs, and they used the money they earned to **record their debut album** (record their first CD).

A remixed track (a song that has been modified electronically) from that CD then became **a massive hit** (a very popular song) on the local radio station thanks to its **catchy tune** (memorable melody) and **upbeat tempo** (fast rhythm).

Their second album will **be released** (it will be made available to the public) at the end of the year; they'll **record it live** at their next show. Alex dreams of **going on tour** - he's just waiting for his **big break** (big opportunity to become famous) to get his foot in the door of the **music industry**.

As for me, I love **singing along** (singing together) to my brother's music, but a career in music isn't for me - I'm **completely tone-deaf** (unable to correctly identify different musical notes) and I always **sing off-key** (sing the incorrect melody)!

Additional collocations:

contemporary music = modern music

classical music

orchestral/instrumental music = music with instruments only (no singing)

rock music

solo album = CD featuring one singer alone, not in a group of singers

compilation album = CD with a collection of songs from many different singers/bands

cult following = a very dedicated/devoted group of fans

#10 Sports

The first important collocation involving sports is when to use the verbs play, do, and go. We typically use play for team sports - you **play soccer, play basketball, play tennis, play baseball** and **play golf**.

The verb do is used for more individual sports - you **do yoga, do gymnastics, do martial arts**, and **do aerobics**. Also, in more general terms, you **do exercise**. Another common individual exercise is **life weights**.

The verb go is used with most activities that end in -ing: you **go swimming, go biking, go surfing, go rock climbing, go bowling**, and **go fishing**.

With the team sports, we can use the game or match: **a soccer game, a basketball game, a tennis match**, etc. You can **win the game, lose the game**, or **tie the game** - that's when the **final score** is 1-1 or 2-2, for example.

A team can play **a home game** - when they play in their own stadium or field - or **an away game** - when they play at the opposing team's stadium or field. When there are many teams that are playing many games to see which one is the best, we call this a **tournament**.

When one team is winning in the middle of the game - for example, 3-1 - we say that team **has the lead**. However, the other team can **make a comeback** - score points from a losing position - and **take the lead**, 4-3.

With the sports that use "do" and "go", we typically use the word competition - **a gymnastics competition, a martial arts competition, a surfing competition, an ice skating competition**, etc. The exception is sports where you go from one place to another - like running, biking, and swimming - in that case, we often call the event a

race.

Athletes can **enter a competition** and try to win **first place**. Some athletes try to **enhance their performance** with illegal substances such as steroids. But if they **fail a drug test**, they'll be disqualified from participating.

If the athlete is performing well, they may **achieve a personal best** - and if they perform better than ANYONE ever has in the past, then they could even **break the world record** or **set a new world record**. If they get injured, however, they might have to **withdraw from the competition** (voluntarily leave the competition).

#11 Health and sickness

There are a number of **lifestyle changes** you can make to improve your **overall health** and increase your **life expectancy** (how long you are expected to live) - you can **quit smoking, reduce stress, eat a balanced diet, get plenty of sleep, and exercise regularly.**

It's also important to **get vaccinations/immunizations** to prevent diseases. No matter how healthy you are, it's still a good idea to have **health insurance** - a program/plan to cover expenses in case of an accident or serious illness.

If you're in a car accident, you might **suffer/sustain serious injuries**. Of course, if you're wearing your seatbelt, you're more likely to have only **minor injuries**. If you've **broken/fractured a bone** - for example, your leg - the doctor will **put your leg in a cast**. If you have a cut, the doctor will **give you stitches**. If you have a burn, the doctor will give you an ointment to **prevent infection**.

If you have a **minor ailment** like a headache, you can **take some aspirin** to **relieve the pain** (reduce the effects of the pain). If you **suffer from a chronic condition** (a condition that continues for a long time) like allergies, asthma, back pain, or depression, there are both **over-the-counter** and **prescription medications** that can help **alleviate the symptoms** (an over-the-counter medication is one that you can buy without a doctor's prescription).

When someone has a minor respiratory infection, we say they **have a cold**. Don't get too close to that person, because you could **catch a cold**, too! You can "catch" other types of contagious diseases as well - such as **sexually-transmitted diseases (STDs)**.

If someone **is diagnosed with** a more serious illness such as cancer or AIDS, they'll need more extensive treatment. When a disease has progressed so far that it will be

impossible to cure, then the patient is said to **be terminally ill** - in other words, the person will definitely die of the disease soon.

#12 Computers

I'm teaching my grandmother how to use a computer. First I showed her how to **start up** and **shut down** the computer. Then I helped her **get online** or **access the internet** so that she can **check her e-mail**. She quickly learned how to **write and send messages**, **reply to an e-mail** and **forward an e-mail** (send a complete e-mail that you received to a new person), but it was a little hard for her to remember to **attach a file** to an outgoing message.

We tried to **log into her bank account** online, but the bank's **website was down** (the website was not functional, or was not online). There was a notice on the **home page** (the main page of the website) that they were doing some **scheduled maintenance** on the system - so we'll try again tomorrow.

This afternoon, I'll teach her how to use a **search engine**. I think she'll really enjoy **surfing/browsing the web** (exploring the internet) and using **social media**. If she needs to do something more advanced, like **burn a CD** (put files from a computer onto a CD), then I can do that for her.

She's a little bit afraid of **pressing the wrong key** and accidentally **deleting an important file**, but I told her that we can always **recover the file** from the recycling bin. I also explained that if **the computer freezes** or **locks up** (stops moving/functioning), she can simply **restart/reboot the computer**.

It's also a good idea for her to **back up her files** (make an extra copy of the information) so that she doesn't lose her data if the **computer crashes** (the computer breaks) and can't be repaired. I **installed a program** that periodically **runs scans for viruses and spyware** to ensure that her computer hasn't been **infected**.

#13 Study

Most children begin their studies at 5 or 6 years old in **pre-school**, followed by **kindergarten**. After that comes **primary/elementary school**, which consists of **first grade** through **fifth grade**. Then there's **middle school - sixth grade** through **eighth grade** - and **high school**, which is ninth grade through twelfth grade.

After high school, you **apply to colleges/universities** to see which ones will accept you. You **send in/submit your application** and then wait for the results. If you **got good grades** in high school, you might **get/be awarded a scholarship** to help pay the tuition (the cost of studying).

In college, you'll **take classes/courses** on various subjects. You should always **take notes** as the teacher is **giving the lecture**. Some teachers may ask the students to **give/make presentations** or **do research** and **write an essay, an assignment, a report, or a paper**. After you **hand in your work**, the teacher will **grade the assignment** (give you an evaluation, for example, 90%) and **give you feedback** (comments on your work).

To evaluate your progress, you'll **take tests/exams**. If you get the minimum number of points required, you've **past the test**; if you don't get the minimum number of points, you've **failed the test**. It's also possible to **pass/fail a course**.

If the course proves to be too difficult, or if you don't like it, you can **withdraw from** or **drop the course**. "Withdraw from" is the more formal expression, and "drop" is the more informal expression.

Most college students **choose a major/concentration**. To talk about a concentration of studies, you can use "major" as a verb or a noun - for example,

I "majored in biology"/ "I was a biology major."

“My daughter is majoring in philosophy.” / “My daughter’s a philosophy major.”

When you **graduate from college**, you’ll **get a diploma**. Afterwards, you can say you **have a degree** in the area of your concentration. You can have **a bachelor’s degree, mater’s degree, or doctorate (Ph.D.)**, for example,

“I have a bachelor’s degree in chemistry.”

“I have a master’s degree in linguistics.”

“I have Ph.D. in theology.”

#14 Academic English

Before you begin writing a paper, it's a good idea to **make an outline** (a list of points in an organized order) of the **main points** you plan to present. The next step is to **gather evidence to support your claims**, since your work won't be credible if you **propose a theory** (or try to **challenge** or **refute a theory** - argue against an existing theory) without some proof.

If your paper is going to **touch on several issues** (talk about several topics) then you'll need to be especially organized. You can **draw a distinction** between topics that are different, or **draw parallels** between examples that are similar. Another way to organize your ideas is to show how they **fall into different categories**.

After making your outline and gathering the supporting evidence you'll use to **make your case** (present your argument), you can write a **first draft** (first version of the paper) in which you **go into detail** on the topic. Then you **revise the paper** (make improvements to it) until finishing with the final draft.

Let's say you're **carrying out a study** on market trends in developing countries. You can analyze the **key factors** (important factors) that are influencing the economy, showing how local politics **play a role/part** (have an effect) in shaping the country's financial future. Including some specific items that are **perfect examples** and **clear illustrations** of your ideas will help **prove your points**.

At the end of your paper, you should **briefly summarize** the material you presented and **draw conclusions** based on your research. The end of the article is also a good place to **raise questions** (present questions) for further study.

#15 Work

If you just graduated from college and you've never had a job, you can start your career by **doing an internship** (a temporary, low-level job) to gain experience. Depending on the company, the internship could lead to an opportunity to get an **entry-level job** (a job that doesn't require much skill or experience) at the same company.

Although you might be earning **minimum wage** (the minimum salary required by law), if you do excellent work and are a **good team player** (you cooperate well with your co-workers) you could **get a promotion** (get an increase in responsibility) or **get a raise** (get an increase in salary) = hopefully both! Just don't slack off, otherwise you'll **be fired/dismissed** (lose your job).

It's normal for there to be periods of time when you have a **heavy workload** (a lot of work) and need to **work overtime** (work extra hours). But if you have a very **demanding job** (an intense job with lots of responsibilities) and you're stressed out all the time, then it might be time to **quit your job** (leave your job voluntarily) and look for another one.

Now that you have experience, you'll be able to **get a job** with a more **competitive salary** (salary that is higher than average) and **generous benefits** (extra benefits like health insurance, discounts, a company car, etc.). If you can't find a **well-paid** and **rewarding job** in your field, it might be time for a **career change**.

The typical way of **applying for a job** is to read the **job ads** in the newspaper or online, then send your resume to the company with a cover letter. The company will then **interview the candidates** it feels are most qualified, based on the **job description**.

Sometimes **job seekers** (people looking for a job) need to take a **menial job** (job requiring a very low level of skill) in order to **earn a living** (get enough money to

survive) while they're **between jobs**. But if you're persistent, **a great job** offer should come your way sooner or later - maybe even for your **dream job** (a job that would be perfect for you)!

#16 Business

If you don't want to work for someone else, you can **go into business** for yourself. You can **set up a company** (establish a company) in an industry that interests you - of course, it's always good to **do market research** (investigate the market), to determine if there's a need for your product or service.

It's normal for small businesses to **operate at a loss** (the business is losing money) for the first couple of years before they start to **break even** - that's when the money coming in equals the money going out. If there's **tough competition** and your start-up isn't able to **gain market share** (secure a significant number of customers), then your business runs the risk of **going bankrupt** (or going under) - losing all its money and having to shut down. But if the amount of money coming into company from sales is greater than the amount spent on expenses, then you are **making a profit**.

As your business grows, you can **hire/take on staff/employees**. Another possibility is to **make a deal** (make an agreement) with other companies to **do business** together - in this case, representatives from both companies will **sign a contract** (put your name on a contract) that establishes each party's right and responsibilities.

Whenever you're planning to **launch a new product**, it's essential to provide excellent **customer service** (help for the customers). Otherwise, your customer will **take their business elsewhere** - they'll start buying from a **rival company** (a company that is your competitor) instead of from yours.

It's not easy to **run a business** (manage a business), but with a combination of luck, skill and hard work, your business just might **take off** (become popular/successful). One way to describe a period of time of major growth and success is to say that "**business is booming**".

#17 Money

There are a lot of things you can do with money.

First, you need to **earn money** or **make money** - both of these verbs refer to receiving money from your work. Another way to obtain money is to **inherit money** - receive money from a family member or friend after that person dies. If the person was very rich, you could **inherit a fortune** (a fortune is a lot of money).

You can take your money to the bank and **make a deposit** - put money into your bank account. Later, you can **make a withdrawal** - remove money from your bank account. Of course, everyone likes to **spend money** - use money to buy things - but it's important not to **waste/squander** your money. These verbs refer to using money in a way that's not productive.

If **money is tight** (meaning you have very little money), you should **make a budget** - a plan for how much to spend on things every month - and then you need to **stick to the budget** (continue following the plan). Otherwise, you might **be broken** by the end of the month. Someone who is "broken" has no money available.

A person who is **financially savvy** (intelligent, perceptive, and well-informed on the subject of money) will always **save money**. It's a good idea to have an **emergency fund** of at least 3-6 months of **living expenses** (the amount money you use to survive in everyday life). You can also **invest money in the stock market** - you could make a nice profit, but there's also the risk of **losing money** if the economy goes downhill (starts to get worse).

Let's say you want to purchase an expensive item like a car. If you haven't saved up money or **set aside money** for the purchase, you can **borrow money from the bank** - which is also called **taking out a loan**. The disadvantage of this is that you'll need to

pay the money back in installments - plus interest (extra money).

When you travel, you'll need to **change/exchange money** to be able to buy things with the **local currency**. Make sure to change money only at official locations like banks and travel agencies - otherwise, you could be tricked into receiving **counterfeit bills** (false paper money that is not legally valid).

Finally, you can consider **donating money** (giving money without receiving anything in return) to a good cause, such as preserving the environment or researching cures for diseases. Non-profit organizations are always trying to **raise money** (get donations) for their various projects.

#18 Travel

Last week I had the worst **business trip** I've ever taken. Normally a **travel agency** takes care of **booking my flight** (buying a plane ticket) and **making my hotel reservation**, but this time I decided **make the travel arrangements** myself. Big mistake!

First of all, **the plane was overbooked** (there were more passengers than seats available) so I **was bumped to a later flight**. When they gave me my new **boarding pass** (the ticket that allows you to enter the airplane), they didn't ask me if I'd prefer a **window seat** or an **aisle seat** (a seat next to the corridor) - and I was stuck in the middle. To top it off, it was a very **bumpy flight** (a flight with a lot of turbulence).

I then missed my **connecting flight** and had a **ten-hour layover** (I had to wait ten hours for my next flight) in Chicago. Unfortunately, my **checked luggage** (the bags in the airplane's cargo compartment) had already gone through to my final destination, so all I had was my carry-on bag (the bag you take with you on the plane). I **checked into** a hotel near the airport just so I could take a nap.

When I finally arrived in Los Angeles, it turns out that I had made a mistake with my hotel reservation, and instead of booking a room at a **five-star hotel**, I had booked three nights at a **seedy hotel** (a hotel that is not very safe or comfortable) in the **red-light district** (an area of the city where there are many sex shops, strip clubs, etc.)! So, I was stuck sleeping on an uncomfortable mattress in a **dingy room** (a dirty and dark room) while my colleagues enjoyed the **luxury hotel**.

The trip home was uneventful, but when I arrived, I discovered that the airline had **lost my luggage**. All in all, it was a miserable experience.

#19 Weather

Do you want to know if it'll be sunny or rainy next weekend? Then you should check the **weather forecast** - that's the prediction of the weather in the near future.

If the forecast says **the sun will be shining brightly**, with **clear skies** (no clouds in the sky) and **high temperatures**, then it's a good day to go to the beach and **bask in the sunshine** (or **soak up the sunshine**) - these expressions mean to enjoy the sun's heat and light.

However, if the forecast says it'll be **oppressively hot, scorching hot, or swelteringly hot**, then you might want to stay inside and turn up the air conditioning! Another common phrase is **hot and humid** - that means hot with a lot of water in the air (so you will sweat a lot).

The weather forecast might say it will be **partly cloudy** (the sky partially covered by clouds). Another way to say this is that there are **scattered clouds** (just a few clouds). If there are **heavy clouds**, then you won't be able to see the sun at all - and if there are **storm clouds**, then it will probably rain very soon. One way to express this is to say "**It looks like rain**".

We can have **light rain** (little rain) or **heavy rain** (lots of rain, intense rain) - and if the rain gets REALLY intense, we can describe it as **torrential rain**. If the rain continues without stopping, then we call it **continuous rain** or **constant rain** - but if it's the type of rain that starts and stops various times throughout the day, it's called **intermittent rain** or **scattered showers**. When it stops raining, you can say **the rain let up**.

Rain is usually accompanied by wind, which can be **light/slight winds** or **high/strong winds**. If the wind is especially strong and violent, you can say **fierce winds** or **gale-force winds** - this last expression is usually used for winds at the level of a hurricane.

When the wind is increasing in intensity, we say “The wind is picking up,” and when it is decreasing in intensity, we say “**The wind is dying down**”.

Sometimes we describe the wind with an adjective that emphasizes the cold - such as a **biting wind** or an **icy wind**. Finally, a sudden instance of wind can be called a blast of wind or a **gust of wind**.

Snow, like rain, can be light or heavy. Light snow can also be called **snow flurries**. When the snow is being blown around in the wind, we can describe it as **driving snow** or **swirling snow**. It can be wonderful to walk through **fresh, powdery, newly-fallen snow** - but not so nice to drive on it. So we **clear the snow** or **plough the snow** with vehicles to remove it from the roads. You can also do this manually - that’s called **shoveling the snow**. At the end of winter, when temperatures rise, the **snow melts** - it turns into water and disappears.

Sometimes the weather is unusual for a particular time of year. For example, in the winter, you might have a day that is **unseasonably warm**, and in the summer, you might have a day that is **unseasonably cool**. When the temperature reaches an extreme, we call that a **record high** or a **record low**.

Here are some alternative ways of saying the weather was good. You can say the weather was **beautiful, lovely, ideal, superb, or perfect**. To say the weather was bad, you can say the weather was **lousy, miserable, nasty, dreadful, or terrible**.

Other ways to describe the weather:

gloomy/dismal weather = weather that is dark, rather rainy, and depressing

muggy/sultry weather = weather that is very hot and humid or wet

mild/calm weather = weather that is nice and not extreme

harsh/severe/wild weather = weather that is extreme and violent

#20 City

When my parents retired last year, they traded the **towering skyscrapers** (very tall buildings) and **noise pollution** (excessive noise) of Los Angeles for the peace and quiet of a small **coastal city** (a city near the ocean) in southern France. They said they were tired of living in a **high-rise building** right next to an **industrial zone**. Now they live in a **cozy little house** on the **outskirts of the city** (on the outer edge of the city, not in the center).

Life in their new town is quite different from the **hectic pace** (the fast and chaotic rhythm) of L.A., where the **bustling streets** (busy streets filled with people) are **strewn with litter** (filled with garbage) and you can count on spending hours in **traffic jams** (stopped traffic).

Instead, the **narrow cobblestone streets** of the city center are lined with **eighteenth-century buildings** that are now home to **quaint shops** (charming and old-fashioned shops) and **gourmet restaurants** specializing in the **local cuisine** (the typical food of the region).

The best day to visit is Saturday, when there's an **open-air market** (an outdoor market) in the **main square**. You can buy souvenirs from the **street vendors** (people selling things on the street) and have lunch at one of the **trendy cafés** (modern, stylish, and popular café) in the area. There's virtually no **street crime** here, in contrast to the **inner-city areas** (older, central, crowded parts of a city, usually filled with poor people and possibly violence) of L.A.

Is there anything that my parents miss about Los Angeles? Well, they do miss the **cultural diversity**. But they're past the age where being in a place with a **pulsating nightlife** (having many exciting bars and clubs) is important to them.

#21 Countryside

If you're living in an urban area and looking for a little **change of scenery**, why not take a weekend trip to **the surrounding countryside**? You can walk through the **wildlife preserve** (special area where animals are protected), where a **winding footpath** (a road you can walk on, that has many turns and changes of direction) will lead you through **varied landscapes** including **dense forests**, **vast meadows**, and **gentle, rolling hills**.

More adventurous visitor will enjoy exploring the **rocky landscape** of Yosemite National Park with its **towering cliffs** (very tall cliffs) and magnificent waterfalls. You can take a **hiking trail** that goes up the **steepest face of the tallest mountain** in the park (the side of a mountain is called a "face" - and "steep" means it is very vertical). The trail starts at the **foot of the mountain** (the base of the mountain) and the ascent takes about four hours; you can stop to have lunch on the banks of a **clear, bubbling mountain stream**.

From the summit, there's a **spectacular panoramic view** (meaning you can see in all directions) of the area. To the east, you can see the **jagged, snow-covered peaks** of a distant **mountain range** (a group or chain of mountains); you can gaze at the **lush green countryside** (an area with lot of healthy vegetation) to the south, and when looking west, you can see the **slow-moving, shallow river** (a river that is not very deep or fast) that flows lazily towards the ocean.

The coastline is just a three-hour drive from the mountains, with miles of **sun-drenched, sandy beaches**. You can stay overnight at a family-run hotel in the **picturesque fishing village** (beautiful, good for taking pictures), where every room has an **unobstructed view** (there are no obstacles blocking the view) of the sea. The beaches tend to get crowded in the summer, so one option is to take a **boat trip** across the bay and explore the **secluded beaches** (beaches that are hidden) on the island -it's **well worth the trip** (meaning it's a good use of your time to go there).

#22 Crime

When a person **breaks the law** (does something illegal), we say they have **committed a crime**. Especially horrible crimes - like a **savage rape** or a **brutal murder** - can be described as **barbaric, horrible, or vicious crimes**.

If someone tries to commit a crime but does not succeed, we use the word **attempted** - for example, an **attempted murder, attempted kidnapping, or attempted break-in**. If someone accuses another person of a crime, but it is not yet proven, then we use the word **alleged** - for example, **an alleged assault, alleged harassment, or alleged rape**.

After the victim **reports the crime** to the police, the police will begin to **investigate the crime**. They'll visit the **crime scene** and **gather forensic evidence** (collect details like bullets, fingerprints, or blood samples that can show what happened). If **witnesses come forward**, the police will interview them to hear a **first-hand account** (a story told by a person who saw the event) of what happened. They also consider possible **motives for the crime**.

Police can **arrest suspects** who they believe have committed a crime - but the suspect can **prove their innocence** by **providing a solid alibi** - that means giving a confirmed explanation of where they were at the time of the crime. If it is never discovered who committed the crime, then the case remains an **unsolved crime**. The statistics about the number of crimes in a particular area is called the **crime rate**. And when there is a big increase in the crime rate, we can call this a **crime wave**.

There are also a number of collocations we can use to describe criminals. A **first-time offender** is someone who has broken the law for the first time, whereas someone who has broken the law in the past **has a criminal record**. A criminal who is famous - like a **serial killer** (a person who has killed multiple people over time) or a person who is heavily involved in **organized crime** - can be called a **notorious criminal**.

Collocations for specific crimes/criminals:

a cold-blooded killer/murderer - a person who doesn't have feeling or emotion

a crazed/psychopathic killer - a killer who is insane or mentally unbalanced

domestic violence - when there is violence inside a home, for example, a husband beating his wife

drug trafficking - the purchase, sale, and transport of illegal drugs

identity theft - when a criminal steals an innocent person's identifying information and uses it in an illegal way
sexual harassment - when one person makes undesired sexual advances towards another person

petty crime - a minor crime
armed robbery - when criminals steal something, while using weapons

armed robbery - when criminals steal something, while using weapons

#23 Law/Justice

The government is responsible for **passing laws** (approving new laws to be put into practice), and the courts and legal system are in charge of **upholding** and **enforcing the law** (applying the law to the population).

When a person is **charged with a crime** (formally accused of the crime), he or she must **appear in court** to **stand trial** (be judged guilty or innocent). Both the prosecution and the defense will present their cases before the judge and jury. After consideration, the judge or jury will **reach a verdict** (arrive at a decision).

If there is **irrefutable, overwhelming, or concrete evidence**, this means that it is very obvious that the person committed the crime, and it's possible that the jury will **be unanimous** (meaning they all agree) in their decision. However, if the **evidence is circumstantial** or **inconclusive** (the evidence does not 100% prove the conclusion), then the decision will be more difficult - it's possible to have a **hung jury**, which cannot agree on the verdict.

Less serious crimes will receive a **light sentence** (a small punishment) - for example, the offender may have to **pay a fine** or **do community service**. For more serious crimes, the person will probably **go to prison** - and especially heinous crimes can result in a **harsh sentence** such as **life in prison** (or **life imprisonment**) or, in some places, the **death penalty**.

After the decision is made, the lawyers can choose to **appeal the verdict** (try to change the decision), and the case may turn into a **prolonged legal battle** as the courts decide whether to **uphold** or **overturn the original verdict** - “uphold” meaning to continue with the original decision, and “overturn” meaning to change the decision.

As a **convicted criminal** is **serving time** (spending time in prison), he or she should

remember the possibility of being **released from prison** early for **good behavior**, as long as they are not deemed a **threat to society** (possibly dangerous to other people).

A criminal who is released early is said to be “**on parole**”, meaning that he or she must comply with certain conditions after getting out of jail - such as getting a job and refraining from drug/alcohol use.

#24 War & Peace

When a war begins, we can say that **war has broken out** or **violence has erupted** in the region. When one country officially enters into a state of war, then they have **declared war** on the enemy country.

Sometimes, one country performs a **pre-emptive strike** (an early attack) against another - for example, if it suspects that the other country is **stockpiling weapons** (creating a collection of weapons) that will be used for a future attack. The other country may view this as an **unprovoked attack** (an unfair attack without a reason), and **tensions may rise** until the area is **on the brink of war** - meaning that war is very probable.

Sending in the military is often called **deploying troops**. The soldiers may **be stationed/posted** in a certain area to protect it, or they may **launch an offensive** in which they **storm/invoke enemy territory**. When the soldiers begin firing their guns, we say that they **opened fire**.

Unfortunately, **the horrors of war** affect everyone, as innocent people are always **caught in the crossfire** (in the middle of the violence without participating in it). Both sides are sure to **suffer civilian casualties** (when innocent people are injured or killed) and there will be **collateral damage** to the countries' infrastructure. War also results in many **refugees displaced** by the violence; they may **resettle** in another area or **flee** to another country.

If a particular battle was an important turning point in the war, then it is called a **decisive battle**. Sometimes another country intervenes and helps the two sides **negotiate a truce/ceasefire** (agree to stop fighting). If successful, this can **restore peace** - but it may **be a fragile/uneasy peace**. More work will still be needed to **bring stability** to the area and establish a **lasting peace**. Often, peacekeeping forces remain in the region

to try to avert war (avoid war).

#25 Global

In today's lesson, we'll focus on several major global problems.

One critical issue is **preserving and protecting the environment**. The burning of **fossil fuels** (oil, coal, and natural gas) produces **greenhouse gases** (gases that heat up the atmosphere) that **deplete the ozone layer** and result in **global warming** and **climate change** (changes in the earth's temperature and weather patterns).

Some scientists believe that we have already **done irreparable damage** to the planet, and now we are suffering the consequences of **rising sea levels** and increasingly frequent **natural disasters** such as earthquakes, hurricanes, and tornados. A number of **animal species have gone extinct**, and many more are **endangered**. To reverse this trend, we just invest in **clean energy** (energy sources that do not pollute the environment) with **renewable resources** (elements like water and air, which can be re-used) and utilize manufacturing methods that are not **harmful to environment**.

There are still many regions of the world where children **die of hunger/starvation** (die from not having enough food). Unfortunately, **extreme poverty** is common in the rural areas of **developing countries**, where the population often suffers from **food shortages** (not enough food) and **lack of access to clean water**.

In the cities, **homeless people** sleep on the streets if there is not enough room in local **homeless shelters**. There are also many families **on the margins of society** (outside the dominant society and culture) who are **living below the poverty line** and struggle to make ends meet every month. Although many governments create welfare programs (programs that give money to poor people) to **alleviate poverty**, the widening gap between rich and poor suggests that poverty may never be completely eradicated.

Poverty and underdevelopment contribute to a host of additional problems as well. For

example, many people die of **preventable diseases** because they have no access the **safe and effective vaccines** that exist. A number of large corporations use **child labor** in the manufacturing of their products, as poor families may feel they have no other option for survival. In addition, young women from **disadvantaged backgrounds** (poor families and situations) are prime targets for **human trafficking** and **sexual exploitation**.

#26 Time

Are you always **in a rush**, or do you **take your time**? Do you spend your time efficiently, or do you **waste time** and procrastinate important tasks - then stay up working until **ungodly hours** (very late at night/early in the morning)?

It has **taken me ages** (taken a very long time), but I've finally adopted some **time-management** habits:

Plan things **well in advance** and don't underestimate the **amount of time** things will take - otherwise you'll end up being a slave to your **grueling schedule** (very intense schedule).

Take care of **time-consuming tasks** (things that take a lot of time) on a day when you have no **pressing commitments** (urgent appointments or things to do).

Establish a timeline for major projects, so that you don't **leave things to the last minute** and risk **running out of time**. Then, **stick to the schedule** and try to **get ahead** if possible. There's nothing worse than **falling behind** on a project with a **strict deadline** (a definite date before which it needs to be finished).

Leave home and work a little earlier than normal to avoid **rush hour** (the time when there is a lot of traffic because everyone is going to work or coming home from work).

Sleep for **eight solid hours** (eight hours without interruption) every night; you'll wake up with more energy.

If you're working **from dawn till dusk** (from the early morning to the late evening) and you have little or no **spare/free time**, it could mean that you're overworked, and you should **cut back on your hours** (reduce your working hours) to **free up some time**

(make more time available).

#27 Sound

Let's begin by looking at the difference between "sound" and "noise". Sometimes these words are interchangeable, but not always. A "sound" can be pleasant, neutral, or unpleasant - but "noise" is always either neutral or unpleasant.

I woke up to the **lovely** sound of my wife playing the piano. (pleasant)

I could hear the **soft** sound of their voices in the other room. (neutral)

The fighting cats made **horrible screeching sounds**. (unpleasant)

I can't hear you; there's a lot of **background noise**. Could you call me back? (neutral)

My car is making an **annoying buzzing noise** whenever I turn on the A/C. (unpleasant)

If a noise or sound is very strong, we can describe it as a **loud sound/noise** - and if it is REALLY intense, then we can describe it as a **deafening sound/noise**. On the other hand, if we can barely hear it, then it is a **faint** or **soft sound/noise**. There's also a **muffled sound** - when it seems that something is blocking the sound.

Noise that doesn't stop is called **constant/incessant noise**. You'll hear the **roar of traffic** day and night. If you work in a factory, then you might hear the **hum of machinery** all day long. And if you live next door to college students, you'll probably hear **music blaring** as they party every night.

Nature is full of noise, too - such as **birds chirping** and **dogs barking**. If you sit near the ocean, you can listen to the **waves crashing**. When you're in a remote, deserted area, you might hear the **wind whistling** through the trees. And if there's a storm, you'll hear the **rumble of thunder** - or be scared by a sudden thunderclap.

Now let's talk about the absence of sound. There's a difference between the words "quiet" and "silent". "Quiet" means that there is very little noise, whereas "silent" means there is no noise at all.

You can emphasize the totality of the silence by saying that it was **absolutely, completely, or perfectly silent**. When it begins to be silent, you can say that **silence descended or fell**, and then when a noise interrupts the silence, it **breaks or shatters the silence**.

It's also common to use collocations to give an emotional tone to the quiet/silence:

The kids were **oddly/strangely/uncharacteristically quiet** (the fact that it is quiet is unusual, not normal).

His joke about sex was followed by an **awkward/uncomfortable silence** (the silence is due to embarrassment).

After yelling at her brother, she lapsed into a **stony/sullen silence** (the silence is due to anger).

There was a **shocked/stunned silence** after the president announced his resignation (the silence is due to extreme surprise).

The city becomes **ominously/eerily quiet** after midnight (the quiet is frightening and possibly dangerous.).

#28 Size

The lesson will help clarify when to use the confusing words **big, small, large, little, tall, short, high,** and **low**. Often, the only difference between them is in their collocations.

“Big” is much more common than “large”. The word “large” is a little more formal, but in many sentences, it makes no difference: She lives in a **big** house. = She lives in a **large** house.

So let’s focus on the collocations in which large is almost always used - knowing that you can use “big” for other objects. We tend to use large with drink sizes - **a large coffee, a large soda** - as well as with clothing sizes - small, medium, and large.

Large is usually used with words referring to statistics and measurements, such as **quantity, number, amount, increase,** and **proportion**. We say:

A large number of students enrolled in the course. And not “A big number of students enrolled in the course”.

We also use the expressions “large scale” and “small scale” to refer to the size of an operation; for example, “The factory began **large-scale** production of automotive parts.”

There are a number of collocations in which we must use “big” and we cannot use “large”. These include situations and events, for example: **a big accomplishment, a big decision, a big disappointment, a big failure, a big improvement, a big mistake,** and **a big surprise**. You can also use the informal expressions **big brother** and **big sister** to refer to a sibling who is older than you.

The words “tall” and “short” are used for physical objects, and refer to the total height

from the bottom to the top. So we talk about a **tall building, tall trees, and a tall man/woman**. The words “high” and “low” refer to distance above the ground - so we say that an airplane is flying 10,000 feet high, or that an apple is on a low branch of a tree.

High and low are also used with non-physical things, especially those which have different “levels”:

high/low prices, high/low levels, high/low quality, high/low rate, high/low degree

Finally, let’s tackle “small” and “little”. The word “little” can imply that you feel some affection or sympathy for the object, whereas the word “small” is neutral. Thus, “little” often appears together with adjectives like **nice, cut, pretty, poor, and tiny**.

She lives **in a small house**. She lives **in a cute little house**. They have three **small children**. They have there **pretty little girls**. We adopted a **small dog**. We adopted a **poor little dog** that had been abandoned in the park.

Another difference is that the word “small” usually refers to physical size, whereas the word “little” can refer to quantity - it means “not very much” and is the opposite of “a lot”.

For example, we can say:

I made **a little money** from a temporary job. (not “small money”)

I **slept very little** last night. (not “slept very small”)

There’s **little salt** in this food. (not “small salt”)

#29 Light

We use the expression “**the sun is shining**” to talk about the sun emitting light. If the light is so strong that it’s difficult to see, we can describe it as **blinding sunlight** - and if the light is not very strong, then it is **weak sunlight**.

When the **sun sets** (disappears below the horizon), everything **grows dark**. If there’s a **full moon**, then there will still be some light. But if there’s a **crescent moon** or a **new moon**, then it will be **pitch dark/black** (completely black) and you’ll be able to see the **stars twinkling in the night sky**.

To describe the strength of a light, you can use the words “bright” and “dim”. A **fluorescent light bulb** emits **bright light**, and the **faint glow** of a **flickering candle** is **dim light**. When light shines on an object, it makes the object **cast a shadow**. An area that protected from the sunlight is often called “the shade”. If you don’t want to get sunburned, it’s a good idea to **sit in the shade**.

We use the word “lighting” to refer to a system of artificial lights, especially inside a house or building. A place can have **bright/strong lighting** or the opposite - **soft/subdued lighting** (a low level of illumination for artistic/romantic purposes). And along the highways and roads, we have **street lights**.

If it’s nighttime and the **power goes out** (or there is a **power outage** - a lack of electrical power), then the city will be **plunged into darkness**. You can describe the darkness as **complete/total darkness** to emphasize that it is 100% dark. People will have to use flashlights or **light candles** to be able to see - until the next morning the **sun rises/comes up**.

#30 color

Today you're going to expand your vocabulary by learning various collocations about colors.

You can describe a color as **light** or **dark** - for example, someone can have **light brown** or **dark brown** hair. If a color is very intense, you can describe it as **bright** - for example, a **bright red** apple. If the color is not very intense, you can describe it as **pale** - for example, a **pale green** dress.

When describing colors in general, you can talk about **bold/vivid colors** - which are very intense - or **pastel colors**, which are light or pale.

We can use other words to describe specific **shades of a color** (variations of a specific color). These words are usually a typical object with that particular color. For example, "sky blue" is a light shade of blue, like the color of the sky. Here are some of the most common collocations:

ruby red/cherry red/fiery orange

burnt orange/lemon yellow

golden yellow/emerald green

olive green/sky blue/royal blue

navy blue/midnight blue

when you have something that is primarily one color, but with a little bit of another color included, we can use the word "tinge". There are two ways to structure the

sentence:

The flowers are yellow with **a tinge of pink** in the middle.

My cat's fur is light gray with a slight **brownish tinge**.

You can also use this form - a color words plus - ish - to describe mixes of colors. For example, "**reddish brown**" is a shade of brown with a strong portion of red, whereas "**yellowish brown**" is a shade of brown with a strong portion of yellow.

Some colors look good together - in this case, we can say that **the colors match**. Other colors look terrible together - in this case, we can say that **the colors clash**. When the color of a person's clothes looks good with that person's **skin tone** (color of their skin), you can say "**that color suits you**" or "**that color looks good on you**".

Finally, one tip about changing the color of something. We use the verb "paint" in most cases - you **paint a house** and **paint your nails**. But we use the verb "dye" for hair and cloth/fabric - so you **dye your hair blonde** and **dye a shirt blue**.

#31 Texture

The word “texture” refers to the way something feels, and there are many different collocations used to describe it. Let’s look at them in pairs of opposites.

Dry hair / Oily or greasy hair - You need to wash oily hair more often than you need to wash dry hair.

Dry skin / Oily skin - Oily skin is prone to acne, whereas dry skin often needs moisturizer.

A smooth / Rough surface - Surfaces such as the ground, a road, and your skin can be smooth (with consistent surface) or rough (with a varied surface).

Calm / Choppy or rough water - The water of the ocean is calm when the weather is mild, and it is choppy/rough when there are high winds.

Hard / Soft object - A mattress or pillow, for example, can be hard or soft.

Tender / Tough meat - Meat that is “tender” is easy to cut and chew, and meat that is “tough” is difficult to cut and chew.

A sharp / Dull blade or point - A knife or a pencil can be “sharp” - meaning it can cut - or “dull”, meaning it has lost its ability to cut.

The words “soften” and “harden” describe the process of becoming soft and becoming hard. For example, **potatoes soften** when you cook them in boiling water. And **snow hardens** if the temperature decreases and the snow begins turning into ice.

We can also use “soften” and “harden” in a more metaphorical way - we can say a

person's **voice softens** when they begin speaking in a more friendly tone, and their **voice hardens** when they begin speaking in a less friendly tone. A person's attitude or views can also "soften" (become more friendly/tolerant) or "harden" (become less friendly/less tolerant).

Texture words are often used when describing food:

creamy - describes a smooth and rich texture, like cream. Sauces, soups, puddings, and chocolate can be creamy.

crunchy/crispy - describe something that makes a noise when you chew it. Crackers, chips, bacon, granola, and other "hard" foods can be crunchy or crispy.

chewy - describes food that requires some effort to chew. Caramel and other types of candy can be chewy. This word can have a negative connotation if the food is not supposed to be chewy - for example, when you overcook meat, it becomes tough and chewy.

greasy - describes food with a lot of oil. Hamburgers, French fries, and chicken wings can be greasy.

#32 Smell

Today we'll continue learning collocations related to the five senses, with expressions for describing different smells. Let's begin by looking at some commonly confused words.

Aroma, scent, and fragrance all describe a good smell. You can talk about the **wonderful aroma** of a cake that has just been taken out of the oven, the **fresh scent** of flowers, and the **sweet fragrance** of a woman's perfume.

The word smell is neutral; you can have the **lovely smell** of fresh-baked bread, or the **horrible smell** of rotting food. The word "smell" can be a noun or a verb - so you can also say "**It smells delicious**" or "**It smells nasty**".

The words **stench, stink, and odor** all describe bad smells - there's the **foul odor** of a dead animal, and the **revolting stench** of sewage. The unpleasant smell of a person who doesn't take showers or use deodorant is called **body odor**.

To describe the strength of smells, you can they are **light/faint smells** or **strong smells**. When a smell is extremely strong, you can say it is an **overpowering smell**. A smell that you recognize can be called a **familiar smell**, and a smell that is unique and easy to identify can be called a **distinctive smell** or an **unmistakable smell**.

Smells can "waft" - that means float through the air. For example, the **mouth-watering scent** of chocolate chip cookies wafted across the room. Another verb used with smell is "fill" - the **acrid smell** of smoke filled the hallway. Finally, if a smell stays in a place for a long time, we can use the verb "linger" - the **spicy aroma** of her cooking lingered in the kitchen for hours.

Here are some additional collocations for describing smells:

earthy/fishy/fruity/metallic smell - smells like soil/dirt, fish, fruit, or metal

rancid/putrid smell - a disgusting smell of things that are rotten

damp/dank smell - a smell of wet things and mold

a pervasive smell - a smell that tends to fill the space and remain there

a pungent smell - a smell that is “sharp” and strong; it almost hurts your nose when you smell it

#33 Taste

Let's begin this lesson by looking at the commonly confused words **taste** and **flavor**.

The word **taste** is often used as a verb, so you can say that a food **tastes good** or **tastes bad**. If you want to be a little extreme in your description, you can say that a food **tastes divine/heavenly** (for an extremely good taste) or **tastes gross/disgusting** (for an extremely bad taste).

Another expression is "**it tastes funny**" - that means it tastes unusual, with a negative connotation. For example, "This milk tastes funny - it might be past its expiration date." It's very common to say that something **tastes like** something else: "I had frog's legs once - they **tasted like** chicken."

The word **flavor** is typically used as a noun. We can say something has a **nutty, fruity, cheesy, minty, or salty flavor** to compare the flavor to another food (nuts, fruit, cheese, etc.). You can also use the word **taste** as a noun - for example: "This wine has a **fruity taste/fruity flavor**."

Flavors or tastes can also be described by category, or by the sensation they cause in your mouth - **a bitter flavor, a sour taste, a sweet taste**. When you enjoy the taste of something, and want to keep it in your mouth for a long time, we say you **savor the taste**.

If a food has a LOT of flavor, then it can be described as **strong or rich** - the **strong flavor** of garlic, the **rich flavor** of chocolate. When the level of flavor is low, it is a **mild flavor** or a **subtle flavor**. Both of these words have a positive connotation - "This cheese has a nice, **mild flavor**" or, "The **subtle flavor** of ginger adds a nice touch to this marinade."

The expression **bland taste** or bland flavor is a way to describe food with little flavor, with a negative connotation. For example - “These crackers have such a **bland flavor** that it feels like I’m snacking on cardboard.”

There are some foods that people usually don’t enjoy the first time they try them... but with time, people learn to like the flavor. A food like this can be described as **an acquired taste**.

#34 Statistics

First, let's clarify the difference between "number" and "amount" - we use "number" with countable nouns, and "amount" with uncountable nouns.

A **large number** of people / A **massive amount** of damage / A **significant number** of countries / A **considerable amount** of money / A **tiny number** of computers / A **miniscule amount** of alcohol

Numbers and statistics can **increase** or **decrease** (more formal), **rise** or **fall** (also formal) or **go up** and **go down** (more informally). When a number goes up or down very fast, we can describe this as **sharp or dramatic** - for example, the sudden improvement in the economy has resulted in a **dramatic drop** in unemployment and a **sharp rise** in consumer spending. When a number goes up or down slowly, then we can talk about a **gradual increase** in population or a **slow decline** in the number of violent crimes. And if a number doesn't change, then it **remains steady** or **remains constant**.

We use the word "widespread" to describe something that is happening frequently in many places. For example, there being **widespread dissatisfaction** with the government, or a new book winning **widespread acclaim** in the literary world. A hurricane can cause **widespread damage**, and a presidential candidate can have **widespread support** among voters of a certain demographic.

In conversational English, we often use the structure keep + -ING to describe something that happens frequently. For example, "I'm trying to work, but my colleagues **keep interrupting** me." "Why do you **keep asking** me about the problem? I've told you a thousand times. I don't know how to solve it."

#35 Movement and Speed

English has a number of words that mean “fast” - but each one has different collocations.

Use fast to describe a vehicle, person or action: **a fast car, a fast train, a fast runner, work fast, drive fast, learn fast**

Use quick to describe an event or action: **a quick lunch, a quick glance, a quick shower, a quick decision**

Use rapid to describe a change: **a rapid increase/decline, a rapid change, rapid growth, rapid progress**

The word speedy is often used with recovery and resolution: **a speedy recovery** from surgery, **a speed resolution** to the problem

The word swift is often used with action, response, and reaction: The **swift action** of the police enabled the criminal to be caught immediately; we received a **swift response** to our request for information.

The word prompt means “fast and punctual” - it is often used with information and payment or customer service. For example, you can give a **prompt reply** to an e-mail, and receive **prompt delivery** of a product you ordered.

The word hasty means “fast and in a rush”- He made a **hasty exit** from the party when he saw his ex-girlfriend walk in. This word often has connotation of doing something without sufficient consideration. You might come to a **hasty conclusion** before considering all the evidence and make a **hasty decision** that you’ll regret later.

When you’re driving, you need to pay attention to the **speed limit** - the maximum

velocity permitted. If you're driving at **breakneck speed** (extremely fast), then you might need to slow down. If you get caught in a **speed trap** (where the police measure the velocity of passing cars), you might have to pay a **speeding ticket** (penalty for driving too fast).

Of course, you might need to put on a **burst of speed** (sudden increase in speed) to pass a car that's **moving at a snail's pace** (very slowly). If major construction is being done on the road, then traffic might **slow to a crawl** (slow down to a very low speed) and eventually **come to a standstill** (stop completely). To talk about changes in speed, we can say something is **gaining speed** or **speeding up** (to describe moving faster) or **losing speed** or **slowing down** (to describe moving slower).

Finally, to talk about eating or walking in a slow and relaxed way, you can use the word "leisurely" - After a **leisurely breakfast**, we took a **leisurely stroll** through the park.

#36 Changes

To talk about making small changes, you can say **make adjustments**, **make alterations**, or **make modifications**. More informally, you can say **make tweaks** - “We made a few tweaks to the website.”

To talk about bigger changes, you can use the verbs “**transform**” and “**revolutionize**”:

The internet has **revolutionized the way** people communicate. The city **transformed** the vacant lot **into** a playground. (You usually “transform” into something else)

When you put on different clothes, you **change your clothes**. When you remove a baby’s dirty diaper and put on a clean one, you **change the baby’s diaper**. When you reverse a decision or opinion, then you **change your mind**. And when you introduce a different topic of conversation, then you **change the subject**. When you change your religion, then we often use the verb convert - I **converted to Christianity**; my brother wants to **convert to Islam**.

Other verbs used for changes are “turn”, “become”, “get”. Let’s look at their different collocations.

Use turn with colors:

Bananas **turn black** if you put them in the refrigerator.

You can also use **turn into** as a less formal expression for “transform into”:

Our living room couch turns into a bed.

Use become with emotions and states of being, including comparative adjectives:

My sister **became angry** when she found out I'd broken her computer.

It's **becoming apparent/clear** that the treatment isn't working.

The band's music **became popular** among teenagers.

It's **becoming more difficult** to separate one's personal and professional life.

You can also use become with professions: My brother **became an actor**.

The word get can be used as a less formal alternative to "become" with emotions and comparative adjectives (but NOT with professions or states of being).

I'm **getting excited** about my upcoming trip to Spain.

It's **getting more expensive** to rent a place in this neighborhood.

Will it ever **get easier** for me to understand movies in English?

We also use the word go in a few specific collocations involving changes:

go bald = lose your hair

go blind = lose your ability to see

go deaf = lose your ability to hear

go crazy/insane = lose your mental control

#37 Speaking

Want to become a better conversationalist? Here are a few tips for **making small talk** (talking casually about simple topics):

To **strike up a conversation** (start a conversation), you can **make comments** about weather or the local surroundings.

Stay away from **delicate subjects** (sensitive topics) like religion and politics - you don't want to get into **a lengthy discussion** (a long discussion) or **have an argument** (have a verbal fight).

If there's **a lull in the conversation** (a pause in the conversation), ask the other person a question about themselves.

If you **tell a story**, don't **go on and on** (talk too much) - remember that you're having **a brief chat** (a quick conversation); you're not **making a speech**.

Be careful about **cracking jokes** - you might end having to **apologize profusely** (apologize many times) if the person is offended.

Having good communication skills can really improve your relationships. People appreciate it when you **get straight to the point** (talk directly about the essential message) rather than **dropping hints** (trying to communicate very indirectly).

Of course, nobody trusts a person who **tells lies** (says things that aren't true) or **stretches the truth** (exaggerates and distorts the facts). If you always **tell the truth**, then people know they can count on you when you **give your word** (make a promise or statement of the truth).

It's also important to watch your **tone of voice** (the emotion with which you speak) and avoid making **sarcastic remarks** or **disparaging comments** (very negative and destructive comments). If you must **make a complaint**, try to give **constructive criticism** (criticism that helps the situation improve). And if you need to **ask a favor** of someone, always do it politely - don't forget to say "Please"!

#38 Starting/Finishing

Let's get started with a common question: Is there a difference between the verbs “start” and “begin”? There's no difference in meaning - “I started studying English 3 years ago” is the same as “I began studying English 3 years ago” - but “begin” is a little more formal than “start”.

The phrase “Let's get started” is an informal way to announce the beginning of an activity. You can also say that something “**got off to a good start**” if it began well. Other collocations for a good start include **an encouraging start** or **promising start** - these expressions show that there is hope for good results in the future. For example, “The soccer team got off to a promising start, winning the first four games of the season”.

If it is not so certain that there will be good results in the future, then you can say **a shaky start** or **unsteady start** - “The business had a shaky start in the second quarter of 2013, with sales numbers fluctuating daily”.

If the beginning of something did not meet expectations, you can call it **a disappointing start** - and if it was REALLY terrible, you can describe it as **a disastrous start**. “Kevin failed every single one of his first exams - his semester was off to a disastrous start”.

Sometimes things go so badly that you need to get out of the situation and have a completely **fresh start** or **new beginning**. When a successful person or company started without being famous or rich, then we say they had **a humble/modest beginning**.

Now let's talk about “finish” and “end” - there is a difference between these two verbs. “Finish” usually implies completing something, whereas “end” is used for a more passive situation/state:

I finished my homework.

The semester ends in December.

We need to finish the project.

We ended our partnership with that company.

When you make the final changes to something before it is completed, we say you **put the finishing touches on it**.

Two expressions used to talk about ending something are **come to an end** or **draw to a close**. You can also say “**the beginning of the end**” to describe something that will probably end soon - “The explosion at the factory was the beginning of the end for our company”. In other words, the explosion began a process of the company failing and eventually shutting down.

When something ends quickly, then it comes to **an abrupt/sudden end**. On the other hand, when an activity appears that it will continue forever, then we say there’s **no end in sight**.

#39 Success and Failure

Successful Samantha has a long list of **impressive accomplishments**. It seems like everything she does ends up being a **phenomenal success**. In her first job, she created a **highly effective** way to motivate the company's employees, resulting in a **dramatic improvement** in workplace morale.

Now she's developing a system for real-time translation among 100 different languages. If she can pull it off, it'll be an **unprecedented success** (success in something for the first time in history) and the **crowning achievement** (best or most significant achievement) of her career.

So far, the program has enjoyed **modest success** (some limited success) but there is **still room for improvement** (potential for improvement). However, Samantha says that the team is **making good progress**, and that in the next month or two she hopes to **make a breakthrough** (make a sudden advance in success, especially when you over an obstacle).

Although Samantha is very ambitious, she's also a very likeable person. She **brings out the best** in other people, and quickly **wins the respect** of colleagues.

Samantha's brother, Disastrous Dan, is the opposite - everything he attempts seems to **fail miserably**. He wanted to be a doctor, but his teachers told him he wasn't smart enough, **dashing his hopes** (making him abandon hope) of a career in medicine. He had the opportunity to do a prestigious internship in another country, but he **lost his nerve** (lost his courage) and turned down the offer.

He then applied for various jobs, but **completely failed** to show up to the interviews on time. He was eventually hired, but later lost his job during an economic downturn due to his **mediocre performance** (average work, not very special) and total lack of

remarkable achievements.

Dan then tried to start his own software company to compete with Samantha's; that was a **spectacular failure**. He invested his life savings in the business, despite all his friends telling him that it would be a **recipe for disaster** (very likely to result in disaster). His sales predictions were **way off the mark** (completely inaccurate), and the company **went under** (lost all its money and shut down) just eight months after it was founded.

Poor Dan - it seems like he's **doomed to failure** (destined to be unsuccessful). But **if all else fails** (if everything is unsuccessful), he can always move into Samantha's mansion as a **last resort** (a final possibility)!

#40 Cause and Effect

The word “cause” is primarily used with negative results: a storm can **cause damage**, a mechanical defect can **cause a problem**, unclear instructions can cause confusion, a political scandal can **cause an uproar** (a strong negative reaction/manifestation from the public), a high-risk sport can cause injury, and an infection in a hospital can **cause death**.

You can describe something as **cause for concern** or **cause for alarm** - meaning a reason for concern or alarm. For example, “The growing number of teenagers dropping out of school is cause for concern”. One of the only positive collocations with “cause” is **cause for celebration**: “The opening of the new school was cause for celebration in the community.”

When analyzing a problem, you can identify the **main/primary cause** of the issue - but keep in mind that there may be hidden/underlying causes as well. The deepest or most **fundamental cause** is sometimes called the **root cause**.

Interestingly, we do not use the verb “cause” together with “effect”. Instead, we say that something **has an effect** - for example, “Television **has a strong effect** on public opinion”. Another way to say “**a strong effect**” is the expression **a significant impact** or **a profound impact**.

There are many different ways to describe effects:

short-term vs. long-term effects - the time of the effect

visible effects vs. subtle effects - whether or not the effects are obvious

powerful effect s. minimal/negligible effect - how strong the effects are

beneficial effect vs. adverse effect - to describe positive and negative effects

main effect vs. side effect - to describe the primary effect or an additional effect

Something can also **have/produce results** - the **preliminary results** are the early ones, and after more time passes, you'll get the **final results**. Results that obviously exist and can be proved are called **concrete/tangible results**, and a result that is impossible to avoid is an **inevitable result**. Results can also be **direct or indirect**, and the result that you want is called **the desired result**.

One word that is similar to "result" is "outcome" - it describes a resulting situation. You can try to guess the **likely/probable outcome** - the logical outcome is the result you would expect, and an **unexpected outcome** is one you didn't predict.

#41 Memories

I'm trying to think of my earliest memory. I **vaguely remember** (remember a little bit, not in much detail) when my brother was born - I was three years old at the time - but I **distinctly remember** my first day of kindergarten, when I was around five.

When I look at photos, even more **memories come flooding back** (memories come to mind) - I remember my school, my classmates, and my teacher, who would **constantly remind** us to clean up the classroom, because we were always making a mess. I'd **completely forgotten** the teacher's name, though, and my mother had to **refresh my memory** (remind me of a fact I'd forgotten).

I still have a lot of my toys from when I was a kid. They **bring back fond memories** (pleasant memories) of long afternoons spent playing with my brother. I also remember a family vacation to Switzerland when I was about eight - that was an **unforgettable experience**.

My most **traumatic memory** is of my uncle dying in a car crash when I was ten. He was only 32 years old - younger than my dad - and the **memory** of the funeral still **haunts** me (the sad/profound memory stays with me). I still wear a bracelet that was a Christmas present from him; it **serves as a sobering reminder** (it provides a serious reminder) not to take a single day of life for granted.

Unfortunately, I have a **terrible memory** for people's names, unless the name is unusual or **particularly memorable**. Just the other day, I was talking to an acquaintance from church and **my mind went blank** (I couldn't think of anything) when I tried to think of her name. I **racked my brain** (tried hard to remember something), but nothing **came to mind**. My husband **gently reminds me** that I really need to pay more attention, because it **makes a bad impression** when I call people by the wrong name.

#42 Agree or Disagree

When you agree with someone completely, you can say “**I totally agree**” or “**I strongly agree**”. Another way to describe 100% agreement is to say a person **agrees wholeheartedly**. On the other hand, you can say “**I agree up to a point**” if you agree with part of a person’s opinion, but disagree with another part. Another expression is “**I agree in principle**” if you agree with the idea, but not with the practical application.

Avoid the common error of saying “I’m agree”. The correct phrase is “I agree” (more informally) or “I’m in agreement” (more formally).

We can say that two people **share an opinion** or **share a view** if they have the same perspective. But if there are differences, then we call this **a difference of opinion**. If the difference of opinion is very big, then the two sides are said to **be “worlds apart”** on the issue. Hopefully, two people who think differently will be able to **reach a compromise** (agree on a fair solution) without having **a heated argument** (angry/intense argument) about the issue.

One polite way to express your disagreement is: “**I’m afraid I disagree.**” You can also say “**I see your point**” to communicate the fact that you understand and the other person’s idea or opinion. We call a small disagreement **a minor/slight disagreement**, and a big disagreement is **a major/serious disagreement**. It’s easy to reason with a person who **disagrees respectfully**, but it’s more difficult to **settle a disagreement** (resolve a disagreement) if the other person **disagrees vehemently** (with intense emotion and expression).

If a conflict continues for a long time, it can be called **a long-running dispute** - and if it involves lots of angry and negative emotions, then it’s **a bitter dispute**. If the two sides cannot agree to disagree (tolerate the other person’s opinion, despite disagreeing), then they may need the help of a third party to resolve the conflict.

#43 Beliefs and Doubts

When you **strongly/firmly believe** something, we can call it **a deeply-held belief** or **an unshakable belief** - the latter phrase implies that it would be difficult to convince you to change your mind. It's possible to have **a subconscious belief** - a belief that you are not actively aware of. Your emotions can also **color your judgement** (influence your opinions/decisions).

A lot of people **believe in superstitions** - irrational beliefs that have no basis in fact, like the number 13 being unlucky. Other have a **blind faith** (believe in something without thinking) in fate or destiny. When new evidence appears, it can either **strengthen/reinforce your belief** (make it stronger) or **undermine/weaken your belief** (make it weaker).

When forming your beliefs, be careful about **making assumptions**, which can **lead to erroneous conclusions**. False **beliefs held** by many people are called **common misconceptions**. Scientists and other researchers often publish material to help **dispel misconceptions** (eliminate them) - for example, "**Contrary to popular belief**, it's not harmful to go swimming immediately after eating".

If you are completely sure about something, then you can describe it as "**beyond/without a shadow of a doubt**". But sometimes **doubts arise** - or another person **voices their doubts** - thus making you reconsider. Maybe the doubts don't even come from a fact, but you just have **a sneaking suspicion** - a persistent feeling - that **casts doubts on** things you previously assumed to be true.

When you have a small doubt that persists and continues to bother you - this is called **a gnawing/lingering/nagging/niggling doubt**. This might be an indication that it's time to **rethink/reexamine your beliefs** - after **further consideration**, you just might **arrive at a different conclusion**.

#44 Deciding and Choosing

How do you **make a decision**? Do you make lists of **pros and cons** (advantages and disadvantages) and carefully **consider all the options** ... or do you **trust your intuition** (listen to your deep, instinctive feeling) and then **make a choice** based on your feelings?

If it's an especially **tough decision**, you might want to **ask for advice** from a good friend. After **discussing the issue in-depth** (talking about it in a lot of detail) and listening to your friend's suggestions, you can choose to either **take their advice** (implement their advice) or **ignore their advice**.

When you make a decision very quickly, we call it a **snap decision**. That's somewhat similar to a **spur-of-the-moment decision** - a decision made spontaneously, without very much thinking or planning. If you do this, then you might need to **defend your decision** against people who believe it was an **arbitrary decision** (one determined by chance or impulse, not by logic or principle).

Some people **remain undecided** because they're afraid to make a **costly mistake** (a mistake with serious negative consequences). In this case, **weighing the possible outcomes** (analyzing the possible further results) can be helpful. Other people are always questioning themselves and **having second thoughts** (reconsidering, doubting your previous decision) about the choices they've already made.

Although it might seem attractive to **keep your options open** as long as possible, you run the risk of waiting so long that you end up **having no choice** (being limited to only one course of action). It's far better to develop **sound judgement** (the intelligent ability to decide things) so that you can make **wise decisions** (good and smart decisions) and be confident about them.

#45 Claim and Deny

Read and listen to this news report about a corruption scandal in a large company:

Randy Fisher, president of the software company NewTech, is **facing accusations** of fraud by its chief financial officer, Brian King, who has **openly accused** Fisher of hiding millions of dollars of profit in offshore bank accounts in order to avoid paying taxes.

Fisher **denied the allegations** (says the accusations are not true) and **clearly states** that King has no evidence to **substantiate his claims** (prove his claims are true or reasonable). However, in a **leaked document** (a secret document that was accidentally released to the public) from the company's internal archives, Fisher **heavily implies** (says indirectly but strongly) that the company is in fact much more profitable than it appears on paper. Some journalists are now **spreading the rumor** (transmitting the comment) that these "invisible" funds were used to finance Fisher's recent real estate investment in Central America.

According to King, Fisher wanted him to participate in the illegal financial scheme, and became angry when King **refused his offer**. It is **widely acknowledged** (known by many people) that if Fisher were to resign, King would be the logical successor to the position of CEO. This has **fueled speculation** (created beliefs) that there may be an **ulterior motive** (a hidden reason) for his accusations.

NewTech's public relations department has **issued a statement** affirming its total compliance with tax regulations. If indeed King's **claims are unfounded** (his claims have no basis in fact), then he will probably face legal action for **unjustly and maliciously accusing** Fisher, thus resulting in damage to his reputation.

#46 Liking and Disliking

Read and listen to these three people talking about likes and dislikes.

“I’m a **lifelong fan** of U2 - they’re my **all-time favorite** band. In addition to the **sheer enjoyment** (pure pleasure) of listening to their music, I’m also a **great admirer** of Bono and his philanthropic work. He’s concerned not only with the **fleeting pleasure** (momentary enjoyment) of fame and fortune, but also with making a difference in the world. I **hold him in the highest regard** (have great respect for him) for this reason.”

“When my daughter was a baby, I noticed that she **developed a particular liking for** classic music, and when she was six I signed her up for violin classes. It was a **real pleasure** to see her **obvious enjoyment** of the lessons. She **grew quite attached** (strongly like/love over time) to her teacher, who says that she has the potential to turn her **great love** of music into a professional career. Now my daughter is 13 and lately she’s expressed a **clear preference** for the most difficult pieces of music - she says she wants a challenge.”

“I **took an instant dislike** to Sam from the moment we were introduced. Within five minutes, he was talking about his **deep dislike** foreigners - without knowing that my own parents were immigrants from Argentina. He said he **had nothing but contempt** (only hate) for people who abandoned their own countries to come to ours, and then began making horribly racist jokes and comments. I have no idea where Sam’s **blind/irrational hatred** (hatred without a logical reason) of foreigners comes from, but he seems to have **developed a strong aversion** (developed an intense dislike) to interacting with anyone who’s the slightest bit different from him. I try to be polite, but deep down I **hate him with a passion** (hate him a LOT).”

#47 Praising and Criticizing

When I told my family I wanted to be a professional musician, I faced **a barrage of criticism** (intense attack of negative comments) from my parents, who **strongly disapproved** of the idea. I'd had a feeling that they would only **give their blessing** (give their approval/support) to a more "traditional" career track.

I **countered their criticism** (argued against their criticism) by pointing out that I'd rather follow my passion and enjoy my job than get rich working a job I hated. Although they gave their **grudging approval** (angry and reluctant approval) to my enrollment in music school, I could tell by my father's **frown of disapproval** (disapproving facial expression) that he wished I'd study law or medicine instead.

The only person who encouraged me was my aunt, who **thinks the world of me** (has great respect and admiration for me) and has always offered **enthusiastic support** for my hopes and dreams. She **heartily approved** (completely and sincerely approved) of my plans and **dismissed** my parents' **criticisms** as ridiculous.

My parents finally came around when I gave my first concert in Carnegie Hall, to **a standing ovation** (when the audience stands up and claps for an extended period of time). The critics had given my show **rave reviews** (extremely positive evaluations), describing it **as an outstanding performance** (an excellent, superior performance).

After seeing me on stage, my parents **congratulated me warmly** (congratulated me with love) and apologized for the **scathing criticisms** (very strong and hurtful criticisms) they had made in the past. Later, I heard them **speaking highly of** (saying good things about) my music to some of their friends. I had finally **won their approval**.

#48 Metaphor

A number of words in English are used metaphorically - with a meaning that is not exactly the same as their literal meaning. Usually they apply a quality of one word to another word. For example, when we say that something is **lightning fast**, we are using the quality of lightning (which is almost instantaneous) to describe something that is extremely fast.

Another example is **the root of the problem** - the literal meaning of the word “root” is the part of a plant or tree that is under the soil. The roots are what support and sustain the entire tree. Therefore, “the root of the problem” is the deepest, most basic or fundamental reason for the problem.

Many metaphors are related to elements in the natural world, such as light and dark, water, fire, and plants - in this lesson, you’ll learn 5 collocations in each category.

LIGHT AND DARK

If someone’s **face or eyes light up**, it means that they suddenly get very happy or excited. You can also say someone’s **eyes are shining with delight**.

The expression **lighten the mood** means to make a depressing atmosphere/situation more relaxed and happy.

On the other hand, if someone’s **face/eyes/expression darkens**, it means that they suddenly appear sad or angry.

Dark days or dark times refer to periods of time that are bad or unpleasant, full of problems.

WATER

You can say that **ideas are flowing** or **conversation is flowing** to describe when it is proceeding easily and naturally.

Water metaphors are often used to describe the movement of groups of people - you can say that **people poured/streamed** into the stadium (to describe continuous movement of large groups of people) or that **people trickled** into the church (when only a few people come, occasionally).

The expressions **waves of disappointment** or **waves of sadness** refer to strong feeling.

FIRE

A **heated discussion** or **heated debate** is one that is very intense, often with negative emotions like anger. If someone has **a fiery temper**, it means that when they get angry, and could possibly explode. There's also the expression **tempers flared** to describe a situation when people began to get angry.

The words **kindle and spark** describe the act of starting fires. "kindle" is usually used for starting positive things - something can **kindle interest/enthusiasm/hope** - and "spark" is usually used for starting negative things - something can **spark outrage/controversy**.

PLANTS

It's difficult for a plant to grow in soil that has a lot of rocks. So if something **gets off to a rocky start**, it means that it encountered many problems in the beginning.

Thorns are the small, sharp growths that appears on some plants (such as roses). The expression **a thorny issue** describes a matter that is difficult, complicated, and possibly dangerous.

The word “blossom” is used to describe when a flower appears and opens, revealing all its beauty. So if **a romance/friendship is blossoming**, then it is developing in a beautiful way.

If your efforts begin to produce the desired results, we can say **your efforts are bearing fruit**.

A seed represents something very small that can grow into something big. So if some event **plants seeds of hope/seeds of jealousy**, it means it produces a small feeling that can grow into a stronger emotion over time.

#49 Confusing Words

We've already looked at a few pairs of confusing words, like end and finish, big and large, or fast and quick. Here are some additional verbs that are frequently confused by English learners, with their different collocations explained.

Close/Shut

Close and shut are the same for doors, windows, mouths, and eyes: **Close the door / Shut the door** so that the mosquitoes don't get in. It's cold in here; could you please **close the window / shut the window**? She **shut her eyes / close her eyes** as she began to meditate. Dan's mouth **was closed / shut**.

Note: The word "shut" can be used with a word that implies the action was noisy: She **slammed** the door shut. The wind made the gate **bang** shut.

The phrase "Shut your mouth!" is a rude way to tell somebody to stop talking. Close (not shut) is used for shops, banks, etc. as well as for airports and roads that are not open or available at a particular time: What time does the bank **close**? The roads are **closed** due to construction. The shop is **closing** in 30 minutes. We use expressions with "close" to refer to the end of an event or process: Let's **bring** this meeting **to a close**. It appears that the economic crisis is **drawing to a close / coming to a close**. Messi scored a goal in the **closing moment** of the game.

Gain/Win/Earn

The word win means to be #1 in a competition, or to receive an award.

My soccer team **won** the game 3-1. I want to **win** the lottery! John **won** a prize in the science competition.

You can **win a game, win a race, win a competition, or win the lottery**. You can also **win a medal** (like in the Olympics), a prize, or an award. In conflicts, you can **win an argument, win a battle or win the war**.

The word earn means to get something in exchange for your work or effort. Sarah is a famous lawyer; she **earns** a lot of money. I'm not rich, but I **earn** a decent salary. My bank account earns 2% interest per month. The salesman **earns** a 10% commission on every sale he makes.

The word gain means to receive/obtain or to increase (it may or may not be the result of work or effort). I've **gained weight** ever since I stopped exercising. Jack's car **gained speed** as he drove down the mountain. This training has helped me **gain insight** into modern educational methods. In my last job, I **gained a lot of experience**. He has **gained a reputation** for complete honesty in his business dealings.

Save/Keep

Save is used for conserving something - you can **save energy, save time, or save space**. It can also be used for rescuing, as in the expression "**save someone's life**". The expression "**save money**" has two meanings - to conserve money by paying less, for example: "Coupons help me save money at the supermarket." It also means to keep money for a long time, for example: "I'm saving money for my vacation in December." In this second case, we often say "**saving up money**".

The word keep means to maintain something in your possession - for example, if someone gives you a jacket, and you try to return it, but the other person tells you to keep it. There are various other expressions using keep in the sense of maintaining or continuing: **keep trying** = continuing trying, **keep an eye on / keep track of** = continue to observe/monitor a situation, **keep in mind** = continue being aware of something,

keep in touch = to maintain contact with a person, **keep something clean/safe**, **keep someone happy/quiet** = to maintain the object or person in that state, **keep a promise** = to do the action that you promised to do, **keep a secret** = to maintain a secret hidden, not tell it to anybody.

Spend/Pay

You spend money and time: I **spent \$100** on tickets to the baseball game.

We **spent three hours** waiting in line to buy the tickets! You can also spend a period of time like the morning, afternoon, night, weekend, week, etc. I **spent the weekend** making repairs to the house. The students **spent the afternoon** volunteering at the animal shelter. You pay the request, bill, or demand for the money: **pay rent**, **pay a fine**, **pay your bills**, and **pay your taxes**. It's also possible to use pay with quantities of money, but we use a different preposition: I **spent** \$100 on the tickets. I **paid** \$100 for the tickets.

#50 Everyday verbs

To finish up our study of collocations, we're going to focus on some expressions with everyday verbs. A lot of learners make mistakes with these verbs because the collocations are often different in their native languages. Listen and repeat:

Have

have a baby / have children, have a good time / have a blast / have fun, have breakfast/lunch/dinner/a snack, have an opportunity, have an advantage

Take

take a shower/bath, take a class/test/exam, take a bus/train/taxi, take a break / take a rest = pause from an activity in progress, take advantage of, take care of, take action

Pay

In the previous lesson, you learned collocations with pay involving money. Here are some collocations that have nothing to do with money: pay attention = give attention / observe pay tribute = give honor or recognition, pay someone a complement = give someone a compliment, pay someone a visit = an informal way to say "visit someone", pay (your) respects = express your admiration for someone (often used for someone who has died)

Break

break a habit = stop doing a habit, break a promise = fail to do what you promised to do, break the ice = (informal) initiate conversation and social interaction, especially in a group that is a little quiet or reserved, break the rules/law = disobey the rules/law, break the news to someone = tell someone important news (usually bad news)

Catch

catch a cold / the flu = when you get sick due to a bacteria/virus transmitted from another person, catch fire = when something begins to burn, catch sight of / catch a glimpse of = get the opportunity to look at something, catch someone's eye = make eye contact with someone, catch the bus/train/subway = an informal way to say that you went on the bus, train, or subway

Come

come into force/effect = begin to have an effect, come to an end, come to terms with = learn to accept someone or something, come under attack/scrutiny, come close = to approximate someone or something in a specific quality

Get

As you learned in Lesson 36 about changes, get can be used in the sense of “become”:

get married/divorced

get drunk/pregnant

get angry/scared/excited/tired