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GRAMMAR

- Collocations -

➤ What is a collocation?

Collocation is a word or phrase that is often used with another word or phrase, in a way that sounds correct to people who have spoken the language all their lives but might not be expected from the meaning.

It is a combination of words formed when two or more words are often used together in a way that sounds correct.

List of Collocations

Happy to

*We are **happy to** announce the engagement of our daughter.*

Delighted to

*I'd be absolutely **delighted to** come.*

Pleased to

*I was very **pleased to** be able to help.*

Concerned to

*He was **concerned to** hear that two of his trusted workers were leaving.*

Familiar to

*The smell is very **familiar to** everyone who lives near a bakery*

Proud to

*I feel very **proud to** be a part of the team.*

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Kind to

*She has always been very **kind to** me.*

Rude to

*He's got no manners – he's **rude to** everyone.*

Scared to

*People are **scared to** use the buses late at night.*

Free to

*You are **free to** come and go as you please.*

Good to

*It's **good to** see you again.*

Nasty to

*Don't be so **nasty to** your brother – he's four years younger than you!*

Nice to

*It's **nice to** know you.*

Unkind to

*It would be **unkind to** go without him.*

Accustomed to

*She had grown **accustomed to** his long absences.*

Addicted to

*A lot of people nowadays have become **addicted to** the internet.*

Allergic to

*My dad's **allergic to** pop music.*

Anxious to



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*I'm **anxious to** get home to open my presents.*

Opposed to

*She remained bitterly **opposed to** the idea of moving abroad.*

Attached to

I've never seen two people so attached to each other.

Beneficial to

*A stay in the country will be **beneficial to** his health.*

Cruel to

*I can't stand people who are **cruel to** animals.*

Curious to

*I was **curious to** find out what she had said.*

Disappointed to

*He was **disappointed to** see she wasn't at the party.*

Eager to

*Everyone in the class seemed **eager to** learn.*

Eligible to

*When are you **eligible to** vote in your country?*

Exposed to

*The country became highly **exposed to** the vagaries of international markets.*

Faithful to

*He remained **faithful to** the ideals of the party.*

Grateful to



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*I am extremely **grateful to** all the teachers for their help.*

Identical to

*Her dress is almost **identical to** mine.*

Immune to

*Adults are often **immune to** German measles.*

Indifferent to

*The government cannot afford to be **indifferent to** public opinion.*

Inferior to

*Modern music is often considered **inferior to** that of the past.*

Keen to

*John was very **keen to** help.*

Late to

*It's too **late to** start complaining now.*

Limited to

*Places on the bus are **limited to** 50 – so book early!*

Married to

*She's **married to** John.*

Mean to

*Don't be so **mean to** your little brother!*

Polite / impolite to

*He was too **polite to** point out my mistake.*

Qualified to

*I'm not **qualified to** give advice on such matters.*



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Related to

*How are you **related to** him? Is he your cousin?*

Relevant to

*Please speak later; your ideas are not **relevant to** our discussion.*

Sad to

*I was **sad to** hear that they'd split up.*

Sensitive to

*She is very **sensitive to** other people's feelings.*

Similar to

*I bought some new shoes which are very **similar to** a pair I had before.*

Slow to

*She wasn't **slow to** realize what was going on.*

Superior to

*This model is technically **superior to** its competitors.*

Sympathetic to

*The party is considered to be **sympathetic to** welfare reform.*

Thankful to

*I was **thankful to** see they'd all arrived safely.*

Unreasonable to

*It would be **unreasonable to** expect somebody to come at such short notice.*

Wrong to



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We were **wrong to** assume that she'd agree.

A few examples of common pairings are:

Although there are some tricks we can use, there is no specific way of determining which prepositions pair with particular nouns—we just have to know them by heart. The only way to do this is by seeing them used in everyday writing and speech.

Below we will look at examples of the most common prepositions that pair with nouns.

Noun + to

One of the most common prepositions used with nouns is to. The following table contains examples of combinations you might see:

Noun + to	Example Sentence
access to	I couldn't enter the building without access to the door's password.
addiction to	Alison has an addiction to football.
answer to	Her answer to the teacher's question was incorrect.
approach to “	Professor Smith's approach to the experiment was incredibly innovative.
damage to	The damage to the car is worse than I thought it'd be.
dedication to	Ned has intense dedication to his schoolwork.
devotion to	Everyone admired the doctor's devotion to her patients.
reaction to	The child had an adorable reaction to the kitten.
response to	She gave no response to the question I'd asked her.
solution to	No one could come up with a solution to the math problem.
threat to	Climate change is a potential threat to certain species.

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Noun + for

Another common preposition used with nouns is for. Examples can be seen in the table below:

Noun + for	Example Sentence
admiration for	Penny has so much admiration for her mother.
cure for	Health officials recently announced that a cure for the fatal disease had been found.
desire for	My desire for success is more important than my desire for romance.
hope for	Youths often have high hopes for humanity.
need for	The need for social interaction is a basic human trait.
passion for	Simply having a passion for writing doesn't necessarily mean you will become a best-selling author.
reason for	There is always a reason for change.
respect for	Certain cultures promote respect for elders.
room for	There's room for one more person at this table.
sympathy for	You should always have sympathy for strangers.
talent for	Greg has a talent for stand-up comedy.

Noun + of

The preposition of can be used with many nouns. Here are some common combinations:

Noun + of	Example Sentence
advantage of	Most people seem to underestimate the advantage of majoring in philosophy.
disadvantage of	The disadvantage of becoming an entrepreneur is the amount of debt you can accumulate.
fear of	My niece has a fear of the dark.
habit of	I used to have a habit of biting my fingernails.



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intention of	Do you have any intention of going out today?
knowledge of	Timothy's knowledge of beekeeping is impressive.
lack of	The police cannot arrest him due to a lack of evidence.
memory of	I have no memory of my first year in school.
process of	The process of elimination is a popular technique when taking multiple choice tests.
smell of	I love the smell of freshly baked cookies.
sound of	Can you hear the sound of birds chirping?
taste of	The taste of cooked octopus is an acquired one.

Noun + in

Several nouns take the preposition in, examples of which can be seen in the following table:

Noun + in	Example Sentence
belief in	It is not uncommon to have a belief in a higher power.
change in	Scientists detected little change in the atmosphere.
decrease in	A decrease in taxes would dramatically affect the economy.
delay in	There appears to have been a delay in processing your payment.
experience in	She has little experience in backpacking.
increase in	I'm hoping for an increase in environmentally friendly products.
interest in	Even as a child, the girl had an interest in archaeology.
pleasure in	He took pleasure in playing the piano.
reduction in	Meredith was forced to take a reduction in her pay.
rise in	After he won the jackpot, his hometown witnessed a sharp rise in sales of lottery tickets.

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Noun + on

The preposition on is less commonly paired with nouns, but there are instances where it is used.

Here are some examples of on being used with nouns:

Noun + on	Example Sentence
advice on	I read magazines for advice on relationships.
attack on	Some view the new law as an attack on our rights.
ban on	The early 20th century saw a short-lived ban on alcohol.
emphasis on	She is studying East Asian cultures with an emphasis on Japanese society.
focus on	His focus on success has hindered his social life.
report on	The report on fast food made people more aware of the number of calories they consume.

Noun + at

The preposition at is only paired with a few nouns.

For example:

- Though new to skiing, he made an **attempt at** the highest slope.
- I have no **chance at** winning this game.

Often, we use the preposition in conjunction with which, as in:

- This is the **age at which** you are eligible for military service.
- There's always a **point at which** trying to reason with him becomes futile.

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Noun + from

From is only occasionally used with nouns. The preposition usually refers to two things at opposition with each other, or specifies an origin or starting point when used in conjunction with to:

- The town sought **protection from** bandits.
- His **transition from** pauper to prince was something out of a fairy tale.

Noun + with

Generally, nouns combined with the preposition with point to relationships and connections between two or more things. For example:

- What's the **matter with** you?
- I noticed a small **problem with** the story you submitted.
- Her close **relationship with** her sister is enviable.
- If you're having **trouble with** the assignments, consult your teacher.

Noun + about

When paired with a noun, about means concerning or in regard to.

For example:

- His **anxiety about** public speaking is so bad that he sweats when he's onstage.
- Do you have any **information about** the changes in the schedule?
- She wants to hear the **story about** her favourite superhero again.

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Noun + between

A noun that takes the preposition between forms a comparison between two things. Here are some common combinations:

- For her thesis, Stacy submitted a **comparison between** classical music and contemporary rock.
- The **connection between** good and evil is fascinating.
- Is there a **difference between** green onions and scallions?

Some most commonly used collocations

at any rate	according to	as far as	with open arms
at last	across from	as opposed to	with regard to
behind the scenes	adjacent to	as soon as	within reason
beside the point	ahead of	as well as	out from
beyond me	along with	at the behest of	out of
by accident	apart from	by means of	outside of
by the way	as for	by virtue of	prior to
down the street	as of	for the sake of	opposite of
down to the wire	as per	for lack of	opposite to
for a living	as regards	for want of	other than
for sure	aside from	in accordance with	pursuant to
in any case	back to	in addition to	rather than
in common	because of	in case of	regardless of
in fact	close to	in front of	right of
next in line	counter to	in lieu of	thanks to
of course	down on	in place of	up to
on demand	due to	in point of	based on
on sale	except for	in spite of	subsequent to
on time	far from	on account of	such as
out of the blue	inside of	on behalf of	owing to
out of the ordinary	instead of	on top of	up in the air

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under control	left of	with regard to	next to
under the circumstances	near to	with respect to	with a view to

