

Lesson 35 – Movement & 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 **speedy 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 slow 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.

Lesson 35 – Quiz

Match the two halves of these sentences:

1. After he got five speeding	a) action saved the little boy from drowning.
2. Both sides are hoping for a speedy	b) crawl because I'm downloading a big file.
3. He ended up regretting his hasty	c) decision to quit his job.
4. I took a quick	d) down when driving in the rain.
5. If this bill is not paid	e) expansion of that company.
6. I'm impressed by the rapid	f) internet connection at the university.
7. It's nice to have a leisurely	g) limit on the highway is 65 miles per hour.
8. My computer has slowed to a	h) lunch on Sunday afternoon.
9. The lifeguard's swift	i) nap after I got home from work.
10. The marching soldiers came to a	j) promptly, a late fee will be applied.
11. The speed	k) resolution to the lawsuit.
12. This project is moving at a	l) snail's pace due to government bureaucracy.
13. We have a fast	m) speed, the runner passed his opponent and won the race.
14. With a burst of	n) standstill at the admiral's signal.
15. You should slow	o) tickets, his driver's license was suspended.