

73 Compound Adjectives - Adverb Combinations I

an action-packed movie: a film full of action (explosions, stunts, etc)

If you like action-packed movies, then you have got to see Total Explosion 3.

all-out war: total war

Desperate negotiations were taking place in an effort to avoid all-out war.

badly-run: badly and inefficiently managed and organised

It's a mystery how such a badly-run company could have made so much money.

a close-knit community: a community in which everyone knows each other

In such a close-knit community everyone knew what you had said five minutes after you had said it.

far-fetched: unlikely to be true or practical

far-fetched idea/story/excuse

That a crocodile ate your homework is a far-fetched excuse.

far-reaching: having a big impact on a large number of people, with effects that will last for a long time

far-reaching actions/events/consequences

last-minute: happening at the very latest moment

last-minute attempt/cancellation

We did some last minute shopping before the dinner party.

long-winded: a long-winded speech/explanation/account/answer/report continues for too long and is boring as a result

The bride's father gave the most long-winded speech I have ever heard in my entire life.

nerve-(w)racking: making you feel very tense and worried

Appearing on television can be a nerve-wracking experience.

the odds-on favourite: the person, team, political party, athlete, etc that everyone thinks will win a race, competition, election, etc

He is the odds-on favourite to win the tournament.

so-called: who is supposed to be

This so-called expert didn't know the first thing about computers.

well-earned: well-deserved

a well-earned holiday/rest/break

After working flat out on the project, he took a well-earned rest.

Adverb Combinations I

to categorically deny sth/doing sth: to completely and strongly deny sth

He categorically denied being involved.

to clean forget to do sth: to completely forget to do sth (usually used in the phrase I'm sorry, I clean forgot, which is used in response to the question Did you remember to...)

I clean forgot to post the letter.

to distinctly remember sth/doing sth: to clearly recollect sth/doing sth

I distinctly remember telling you...

to drive flat out: to drive as fast as possible

We'll have to drive flat out if we want to get there by midday.

to fully expect sth to happen/that sth will happen: (formal) to confidently believe that sth will happen

The government fully expects the new train system to be operational by the end of next year.

to be highly critical of sb/sth: to criticise sb/sth very strongly

The report was highly critical of the new bill.

to be well worth doing: to be a very good thing to do because you will get some benefit from it

His new book is well worth reading.

to know full/perfectly well: to know exactly what you are doing/to understand perfectly what the consequences of your actions are/will be

You knew full well that you were breaking the rules.

to laugh out loud: to suddenly laugh loudly

He suddenly laughed out loud and everybody looked at him.

to refuse point blank to do sth: to firmly refuse to do sth

He refused point blank to hand over the document.

to be relatively inexpensive: to be quite cheap, considering the quality of the thing you are buying/paying for

It is relatively inexpensive to rent a small flat in the city centre.

to rely heavily on sth/sb: to depend greatly on

This university relies heavily on donations from ex-students to finance research projects.

to start sth afresh: to start sth again, from the beginning and in a new way

He decided to start the novel afresh, with different characters and a less complicated plot.

to be strictly confidential: to be top secret (for reports, records, information, etc)

What I've told you is strictly confidential and off-the-record.

to strongly object to sth/to doing sth: to be strongly against sth (a plan, a decision, etc) because you think it is unfair or wrong

I strongly object to the government's plans to ...

to travel light: to travel without much luggage

I travel light, whereas my wife takes at least 90 kilos of luggage with her.

to be vitally important: to be very important (often used in the phrase: it is vitally important that...)

It is vitally important that the press do not get wind of this.

to win hands down: to beat your competitors very easily

Thinking he was better than Liz at table football, he challenged her to a game. She won hands down!

Practice

1. Match each compound adjective (1-12) with an appropriate noun (a-l).

- | | | |
|-----------------------|-------|----------------|
| 1 far-reaching | ..... | a favourite |
| 2 the odds-on | ..... | b cancellation |
| 3 a far-fetched | ..... | c holiday |
| 4 long-winded | ..... | d movies |
| 5 a badly-run | ..... | e consequences |
| 6 all-out | ..... | f speeches |
| 7 a well-earned | ..... | g company |
| 8 a last-minute | ..... | h experts |
| 9 action-packed | ..... | i excuse |
| 10 so-called | ..... | j war |
| 11 a nerve-(w)racking | ..... | k community |
| 12 a close-knit | ..... | l experience |

2. Complete the sentences below with suitable combinations from exercise 1.



- 1 Speaking in public can be a
- 2 "It's fully booked," she said. "The only way you'll get a seat is if there is a"
- 3 Nobody there knows what they're doing. It is such a
- 4 Sylvester Stallone is famous for his
- 5 A scandal like this is bound to have
- 6 It was a surprise that he lost because he was the to win.
- 7 None of their knew the first thing about developments in fibre optics.
- 8 After a long year of hard work, he took a
- 9 Do I have to go? I can't think of anything worse than having to sit through yet another of his painfully on declining family values.
- 10 The increasing frequency of border clashes and the accompanying government rhetoric made it clear that the country was on the verge of

- 11 Moving to London came as something of a shock to me. I grew up in a small,, where everybody knew everybody. In London I knew nobody.
- 12 Road works, a street demonstration and a circus parade made him three hours late for work! Only Henry could come up with such a ridiculously

3. Complete the sentences using an appropriate adjective or verb from the vocabulary presented in this list.



- 1 Never take too much luggage when you go on holiday. It's always best to light.
- 2 I strongly to being treated in such an off-hand way.
- 3 "We fully her to make a complete recovery," said the doctor, putting all our minds at rest.
- 4 He point blank to have anything to do with it.
- 5 I don't understand. Why did you say it? You full well she'd be offended.
- 6 If you found a letter with 'strictly emblazoned across it, would you open it?
- 7 The president categorically having had anything to do with the vote-rigging scandal.
- 8 I distinctly telling you not to post the letter until I got back. So why did you post it?
- 9 The press have been highly of the minister's failure to come up with a viable solution to the problem of spiralling unemployment.
- 10 I saw the latest Polanski film last night. It's excellent and is certainly well seeing.
- 11 "Did you remember to ask him about the car?" "Oh! Sorry, John, I clean"
- 12 We were late and we were going to miss the ferry, so we took the toll road and flat out all the way from St Omer to Calais.
- 13 They may look as though they cost a fortune but in fact they were relatively
- 14 Most of the world's poorer nations heavily on the richer countries for economic support.
- 15 After two days of writing, he decided to scrap everything and afresh.
- 16 Should the two teams meet in the final, there is no doubt in my mind that South Africa will hands down.
- 17 It is vitally that this letter should get to the General. It's a matter of life and death.
- 18 Her excuse was so ridiculous that I couldn't help out loud.