

Posture and Movement

to crouch: to sit with legs bent under you so that you are close to the ground and leaning forward slightly
Soldiers in camouflage crouched silently in the bushes.

to curl up: to move into a position where your body makes a rounded shape

The cat was curled up on the sofa, nose to tail, fast asleep.

to duck: to quickly lower your head in order to avoid being hit by sth, or so as not to be seen

If he hadn't ducked, the ball would have hit him square in the face.

to fidget: to be constantly moving your hands or your feet

Children often fidget and fuss around restlessly when they are bored.

to flinch: to make a sudden small movement because sth has hurt you or has made you jump

I'm going to put a little drop of this in your eye so try not to flinch.

to frown: to lower your eyebrows because you are angry or you do not understand

He frowned in frustration as he tried to add the sums one more time.

to kneel: to bend your legs so that your knees are touching the ground

He knelt before the Queen to be knighted.

to nod: to move your head up and down (in most countries, you nod when you say yes)

"Are you all happy with today's programme?" she asked. Everyone nodded in agreement.

to nudge: to gently push sb with your elbow to attract their attention

She nudged him. "Look," she said. "I think that's Elton John over there."

to shiver: if you are shivering, your body is shaking because you are cold

He had forgotten to take his coat and was shivering.

to shudder: If you shudder, your whole body shakes for a short time because you have seen, heard or tasted sth unpleasant

The surgeon then proceeded to describe the operation in graphic detail. Mr Forth shuddered.

to tremble: if you are trembling, your body or part of your body is shaking because you are frightened or very nervous

I was so scared that I couldn't stop trembling.

Compound Body Adjectives

bloodcurdling (scream): very frightening

We heard a bloodcurdling scream and then we saw the vampire.

eye-catching: so attractive or unusual that you can't help noticing it

A good advertising poster must be simple but eye-catching.

first-hand: if you have first-hand experience of sth, you have experienced it personally

Now, Gary, you have first-hand experience of teaching in Paraguay.

hair-raising: very frightening; used to describe experiences and journeys

How we didn't crash I do not know. It was one of the most hair-raising bus rides I've ever been on.

head-on: used to describe a collision between two moving vehicles where the front part of one vehicle hits the front part of another vehicle

The car he was driving was involved in a head-on collision with a lorry.

light-hearted: funny and not very serious

light-hearted films/ television programmes/books

It's a comedy, but I wouldn't describe it as being a light-hearted film.

mouth-watering: food that looks and/or smells very good

... a shop full of mouth-watering cakes.

nail-biting: very exciting and dramatic, because you do not know what is going to happen

The final would be decided on penalty kicks. It was going to be a nail-biting five minutes.

narrow-minded: not accepting and positively disliking anything new, different or radical **Opp:** broad-minded

My parents are very broad-minded and accept new ideas easily.

well-thumbed: a book or magazine that has been read so much that the edges and corners of the pages are dirty and in poor condition

Some of the second-hand books were well-thumbed.

Verb-Noun Combinations

not to bat an eyelid: not to show any visible signs of surprise

When I told him that his bill came to £25,000, he didn't bat an eyelid. His face remained expressionless.

to clear your throat: to cough in order to speak more clearly

He stood up, cleared his throat and started to speak.

to clench your fist: to curl your fingers up very tightly, usually because you are very angry (also: **to clench your teeth**)

He clenched his fists and went to punch me.

to cross your legs: while sitting, to put one leg on top of the other

I had hardly enough room in my airline seat to cross my legs, let alone stretch them.

to flex your muscles: to strike a pose and show your muscles

The strong man at the fairground was proudly flexing his muscles.

to fold your arms: to bring your arms together and link them

She folded her arms over her chest and glared at him defiantly.

to grit your teeth: to press your teeth tightly together, often because you are angry or distressed (also: **to clench your teeth**)

Joe gritted his teeth as the bullet was extracted from his arm.

to pluck your eyebrows: to pull out some of the hairs of your eyebrows, using tweezers

For this season's look, pluck your eyebrows and pencil them into a half-moon shape.

sb's heart is pounding: sb's heart is beating very hard

As he took the envelope containing his results, his hands were shaking and his heart was pounding.

to rumble (of stomach): to make a noise because it is empty and you are hungry

I hadn't had breakfast and in the middle of the interview my stomach started rumbling.

to shake your head: to move your head from side to side; in most countries, you shake your head when you say no

He shook his head as a sign of refusal.

to shrug your shoulders: to move

your shoulders up and down

The boy shrugged his shoulders and said: "Who cares?"

to sprain (your ankle/wrist): to twist and hurt (your ankle/wrist)

She fell down the stairs and sprained her ankle.

to stub your toe: to hit your toe against sth

She stubbed her toe against the leg of the chair.

Practice

1. Match the verbs in the box with their definitions (sentences 1 to 12).

nudge - duck - kneel - crouch - tremble - fidget - curl up - shudder - frown - nod - shiver - flinch

- You do it when you make a small sudden movement because something has hurt you (an injection, for example) or something has made you jump.
- Some people do it when they pray.
- You do it to avoid something that has been thrown at your head.
- You do it with your elbow to get someone's attention.
- You do it on the floor or on a big sofa, often whilst reading a book or watching television.
- You do it when you lower your body to the ground by bending your knees. When a football team is having its photograph taken, the players in the front row do it.
- When you shake because you are cold, you do it.
- When you shake momentarily because you have seen, heard or eaten something unpleasant, you do it.
- When you shake because you are frightened, you do it.
- You do it with your eyebrows when you are angry or you don't understand.
- You do it with your head when you are agreeing with someone or when you are saying yes.
- Kids do it when they can't keep still.

2. Each of the compound body adjectives below is followed by two nouns. Only one of the nouns goes with the adjective. Circle the correct one. Then use the correct combinations in sentences.

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 a well-thumbed | book / road |
| 2 a nail-biting | finish / animal |
| 3 a mouth-watering | nap / dessert |
| 4 an eye-catching | disease / dress |
| 5 a light-hearted | comedy / fruit |
| 6 narrow-minded | streets / parents |
| 7 a blood-curdling | recipe / scream |
| 8 a hair-raising | shampoo / bus journey |
| 9 a head-on | collision / decision |
| 10 first-hand | cars / knowledge |

3. a. Complete the collocations with an appropriate part of the body from the box below.

shoulders - heart - teeth - fist - eyebrows - legs - muscles - eyelid - toe - throat - head - stomach - ankle - arms

- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 He cleared his | 8 He clenched his |
| 2 He didn't bat an | 9 His was pounding. |
| 3 He shrugged his | 10 He shook his |
| 4 He crossed his | 11 She sprained her |
| 5 She folded her | 12 She plucked her |
| 6 He stubbed his | 13 My was rumbling. |
| 7 He flexed his | 14 She gritted her |

- b. Describe the pictures using appropriate collocations from exercise 3a.

