

SECTION 6

Compounds

1 NOUN + NOUN

We often combine two nouns as a collocation. The first noun is usually singular and qualifies the second:

a cookery book (= for learning cookery)

a computer game (= played on a computer)

- We use many of these collocations so often that we consider them to be one word – they have become compound nouns. Some are usually written as one word (*seafood*). Others are written as two words (*brain drain*) and others are hyphenated (*T-shirt*).

There are no fixed rules:

laptop city centre willpower evening class

flowchart animal rights phone-card watch-strap

- We can combine more than two nouns as collocations:

a road tax disc (= a printed notice proving that road tax has been paid) *a motorway service station*

(= for petrol and food on a motorway)

2 ADJECTIVE + NOUN

We can also combine adjectives with nouns as collocations or compounds:

mobile phone parting shot fizzy drink

loudspeaker musical instrument

- 1 Write A + N next to those compound nouns that consist of an adjective + noun. Write N + N next to those that consist of two nouns.

- a pen friend d nervous breakdown
b social services e estate agent
c general public f news bulletin

3 ADJECTIVE + ADJECTIVE

Some words combine to make compound adjectives: *absent-minded big-headed good-looking short-lived*

- These may collocate with particular nouns:

cold-blooded murder clear-cut case run-down area

shop-soiled goods flat-footed all-around athlete

keep-fit fanatic

4 OTHER COMBINATIONS

We can combine other parts of speech, especially several words, to make compound nouns:

grass roots opinion law and order bride-to-be

comrade in arms fork-lift truck

- 2 Underline the correct compound noun to complete the sentence.

Throughout western Europe, there has been a rise in the number of

- a only-parent families c uni-parent families
b one-parent families d mono-parent families

Practice

- 1 In the following sentences, add the second part of the compound noun.

- a Old can be a pleasant time if you're surrounded by grandchildren.
b I can't stand back-seat If I'm driving, I don't need constant advice and instructions.
c Dad's got very high blood and the doctor told him to take it easy.
d In his summing, the judge instructed the jury on several points of law.
e He rose to become commander-in-chief of the country's armed
f She suffered from chronic food after eating contaminated seafood.
g Most western European countries have abolished capital
h As his mother had always been profoundly deaf, he grew up fluent in sign

- 2 Underline the word that best completes each sentence.

- 1 The difference in their computer skills was attributed to the generation
a space b difference c gap d hole
2 Tony seemed remarkably devoid of sense and did the most ridiculous things.
a common b ordinary c average d everyday
3 The cost of has risen dramatically.
a life b lives c alive d living
4 There is a strong movement supporting the abolition of the death
a penalty b punishment c discipline d condemnation
5 The trades unions called for a 5% pay increase for all public workers.
a section b area c zone d sector
6 Why not take your case to the European Court of Human ?
a Entitlement b Allowance c Law d Rights

- 7 He gave up studying after suffering a nervous
 a collapse b breakdown c failure
 d malfunction
- 8 Concorde is the only commercial plane to have broken the sound
 a frontier b barrier c boundary d limit
- 9 The hospital called for volunteer blood after their supplies ran low.
 a givers b contributors c donors d suppliers
- 10 One of the most devastating weapons of modern time is the missile.
 a directed b instructed c programmed
 d guided

3 Combine the words to make a compound.

Examples:

roses / bunch	a bunch of roses
boots / ski	ski boots
day / work	a day's work
stick / walk	a walking stick
two hands / backhand	a two-handed backhand
cloud / sky	a cloudy sky
building / four storeys	bed / sea
price / gas	coat / paint
prices / gas	length / arm
edge / water	hair / breadth
stone / throw	film / popularity
door / car	film / story
shirt / button	room / corner
sentence / ten years	bar / steel
world / end	industry / car
pan / fry	book / 200 pages
apple / core	book / club
heart / matter	degree / university
hesitation / moment	shore / sea

4 Underline the word that best completes each sentence.

- 1 He did very well in the knowledge quiz.
 a widespread b common c general
 d ordinary
- 2 The government requires everybody to make a financial contribution towards their education.
 a higher b high c highest d highly
- 3 Police are meeting members of the ethnic community in order to improve race
 a relationships b relations c relatives
 d relativity

- 4 The state exists in order to provide free education and health care to the less well-off.
 a social b benefit c welfare d nanny
- 5 Unemployment is paid to people who are unable to find any work.
 a security b money c service d benefit
- 6 The factory made huge improvements in its general management and control.
 a quality b level c standard d equality
- 7 Industrial have improved with the introduction of a shorter working week.
 a relationships b relations c relatives
 d relativity
- 8 Coal, oil and other similar resources may eventually be replaced by solar energy.
 a nature b nature's c natural d native
- 9 Arms was the main issue discussed at the leaders' summit.
 a control b controls c controlling d controlled
- 10 The Prime Minister is an old at these conferences, having been to so many.
 a hand b man c time d goat

5 Fill each of the numbered blanks with one suitable word.

I was reading an article in our sister newspaper the other day in which an eminent columnist was suggesting that as a nation we had been slow to respond to the sea- (1) which our generation is experiencing in all aspects of day-to- (2) life. As I devoured my take- (3) pizza I started making a simple list of words which, if they did exist thirty years ago certainly had different connotations and in most cases did not exist at all: ozone (4), greenhouse (5), (6) ROM, mobile (7), (8) dish, (what was wrong with just three TV channels?) community (9) (to avoid all those prison riots?), remote (10), (11) print-out, jungle (12) – whatever has happened to music?

Not so long ago a previous population had to acquaint themselves with terms like brain (13) as all the egg-heads headed across the Atlantic and (14) power, as all the others started sticking daffodils in their hair. And before that a generation had to learn about the vacuum (15), the assembly (16), the burglar (17), the washing (18), the hair (19) and the fridge- (20). New words are coming into the language now at a frightening speed and, to respectfully disagree with my colleague, I believe we are, generally speaking, coping pretty well.