

**to act on a tip-off:** if the police act on a tip-off, they use information they have been given to try to prevent a crime or seize a criminal/illegal goods

*Acting on a tip-off, the police raided a house in central London and seized £30,000 worth of stolen goods.*

**to break out of prison/jail:** to escape from prison

*Only one prisoner has ever broken out of this jail.*

**to be convicted of a crime:** to be found guilty in a court of law of a crime you have been accused of committing

*He was convicted of a crime which he hadn't committed.*

**to cordon (an area/building) off:** to place a barrier around an area or building so as to prevent people leaving or entering

*The area around the bank was cordoned off while bomb disposal experts tried to defuse the bomb.*

**to be fined for (committing) a crime:** to have to pay a certain amount of money as punishment for committing a crime

*I was fined £300 for driving without a seatbelt on.*

**to be found (not) guilty of:** to be in a court of law where a judge or jury decide that sb committed/did not commit the crime they have been accused of

*He was found guilty of arson.*

**to get away with sth:** to do sth wrong or illegal and not be punished for it

*If you think you can get away with blackmailing the president, then you've got another think coming.*

**to hold (sb/sth) up:** to rob a person or a place, using a weapon [Note: a hold-up: a robbery]

*The bandits held up the stage coach at gunpoint.*

**an inquiry into (+ noun):** an official investigation

*An inquiry into alleged government involvement in the scandal will be held next week.*

**to let sb off (with a fine/caution, etc):** to be given a lighter punishment (a fine/a caution) than you deserve

*You should count yourself lucky he let you off with a fine. You could have gone to jail.*

**to make off with sth:** to steal and escape with sth

*A group of armed men held up a restaurant in the northern suburbs of Quito and made off with £2,000 from the till.*

**to be on the loose:** to have escaped from prison and not been captured by the authorities

*Of the four inmates that broke out of Maidstone prison last week, only one is still on the loose.*

**to be on the run:** to be trying to escape or hide from the police

*He decided to give himself up to the police after being on the run for two years.*

**to be on trial for (committing) a crime:** to be in a court of law, where a judge and/or jury are deciding whether you are guilty of a crime

*He's on trial for forgery.*

**to plead (not) guilty (to the charges):** to say in a court of law that you are (not) guilty of the crime you have been accused of committing

*He pleaded guilty to all the charges that had been brought against him.*

**to be released from prison:** to be set free from prison

*Having served twelve years of his sentence, he was released from prison in 1995.*

**to rule out (the possibility of) sth:** to say that sth is not possible

*We can't rule out the possibility that this was a politically motivated crime.*

**to be sentenced to (a number of years in prison):** if a judge sentences sb, he or she states in court what their punishment is going to be

*He was convicted of theft and sentenced to two years in prison.*

**to stand up (in court):** to be accepted as true or satisfactory when it is carefully examined in court

*It's a forced confession. They won't use it because they know it won't stand up in court.*

**to testify against sb:** to provide the court with information that shows that sb is guilty of the crime that they have been accused of committing

*If you want to see him sent to prison, you will have to testify against him in court.*

**to tip (sb) off:** to tell the police where and when a crime will be committed or where a criminal or illegal, stolen goods can be found [Note: a tip-off: a piece of information given to the police, usually in secret]

*How did the police know? Did someone tip them off?*

**to track (sb/sth) down:** to look for and find

*They tried to flee the country, but the police tracked them down.*



## Practice

1. Read the news excerpt below and decide if each preposition in bold is correct. If yes, put a tick. If not, write the correct one next to the line in which it appears.

... had no alternative but to plead guilty **over** the ..... charges. The Minister was cautioned and fined £1,000 **for** disturbing the peace. ....  
 And finally, the police, acting **on** a tip-off, arrested ..... Ben Nutt and Tito Anderson yesterday in a ..... downtown Miami hotel. The two men had been **at** ..... the run for three weeks following Nutt's dramatic escape from Miami State Penitentiary. Anderson, **in** trial for the bank robbery at the time Nutt broke ..... out **of** prison, allegedly masterminded his cousin's ..... escape. Nutt was convicted **with** fraud six months ..... ago and was sentenced **with** ten years in prison. .... He caused a sensation at his trial when, having been found guilty **of** the charges brought against ..... him, he vowed that when he was released **of** prison ..... he would personally 'deal with' those people who had testified **against** him. Fortunately, none of the ..... witnesses who appeared **in** court during Nutt's trial ..... was harmed while the two men were **at** the loose. .... An inquiry **about** Nutt's escape is to be held on ... ..

2. For questions 1 to 10 below, complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence, using 3 to 8 words. You must include the word given in bold, which cannot be changed in any way.

- 1 The thief robbed him at gunpoint outside his very own home.  
**held** He .....  
 ..... outside his very own home.
- 2 Ten inmates escaped from Wandsworth Prison last night.  
**out** Ten inmates .....  
 ..... Wandsworth Prison last night.
- 3 The judge was lenient, fining him instead of sending him to prison.  
**let** The judge .....  
 ..... a fine.
- 4 He thought he would be able to steal the money and not be caught and punished for it.  
**get** He thought he could .....  
 ..... the money.
- 5 The thieves took everything in her safe.  
**made** The thieves .....  
 ..... the contents of her safe.

- 6 Someone undoubtedly told the police that he was going to rob the bank.

**tipped** The police must .....  
 ..... about the robbery.

- 7 The court will dismiss this evidence as being unsatisfactory and unacceptable.

**stand** This evidence ..... in court.

- 8 The police stand little chance of finding the missing jewels.

**track** It is doubtful .....  
 ..... the missing jewels.

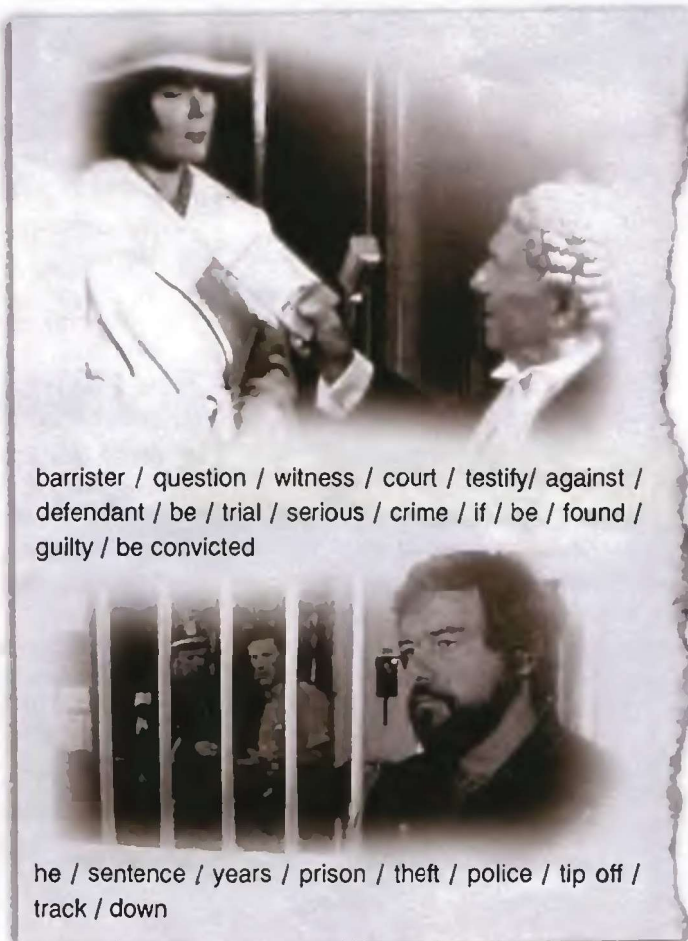
- 9 The police surrounded the entire area and prevented people from entering it while they dusted for fingerprints.

**cordoned** The area .....  
 ..... dust for fingerprints.

- 10 "It would be foolish not to consider the possibility of foul play," said the policeman.

**rule** The policeman refused .....  
 ..... of foul play.

3. What do you think has happened/is happening in each photograph? Talk about them, using the prompts, as well as your own ideas.





# 15 Crime II (Vocabulary and Collocations)

**an alibi:** a person or story which proves that sb was not in a place when a crime was committed [Note: **watertight alibi:** alibi that is impossible to disprove]

*We checked out his alibi and it is watertight. He was at a party when the robbery took place.*

**an appeal:** a request to a court asking for a previous decision to be changed

*The defendant's appeal was rejected.*

**blackmail:** threatening to reveal a secret about sb unless they do sth the other person wants

*The two men are thought to be behind the recent spate of blackmailing of local restaurant owners.*

**a brush with the law:** dealings with the police for a very minor crime

*Most people have had at least one brush with the law in their lives.*

**a cache of:** a hidden number of, used for explosives, weapons, etc

*The police uncovered a cache of protection money during the raid.*

**a criminal record:** a list of crimes which sb has been found guilty of, which is kept by the police

*The jury should bear in mind that my client has no criminal record.*

**to drop the charges against sb:** (police) to decide that sb did not commit the crime that they are charged with

*All the charges brought against Genski were dropped when it was revealed that ...*

**to fit a description:** to look exactly like sb (a criminal) that has been described

*If you see a man who fits this description, please contact your local police station immediately.*

**to be found (not) guilty of:** a judge decides that sb did (not) commit the crime that they have been charged with

*He was found guilty of shoplifting and fined £500.*

**to hand down a sentence:** (a judge) to announce in a court of law what sentence a criminal will receive

*It was one of the longest prison sentences ever handed down in an American court of law.*

**to handle sb's defence:** (a lawyer) to defend sb in a court of law

*Who is handling his defence?*

**a hardened criminal:** an experienced criminal who is unlikely to ever abide by the law

*He was a hardened criminal.*

**a law-abiding citizen:** a person who does not break the law

*This new law is an insult to all law-abiding citizens.*

**not a shred of evidence:** not a single piece of evidence

*There may not be a shred of evidence to connect him with the crime, but he's still the main suspect.*

**to pass sentence:** (a judge) to tell a court what punishment a convicted person will receive

*Passing sentence, Judge Rand described Smith as a menace to society.*

**to place sb under arrest:** (formal, police language) to arrest sb

*He was placed under arrest last Monday.*

**a plain-clothes policeman:** a policeman who does not wear a uniform

*How was I to know that he was a plain-clothes policeman?*

**to plead guilty:** to say (in a court of law) that you are guilty of a crime that you have been charged with

*He pleaded guilty to the crime and was sentenced to six months in prison.*

**to be in/taken into police custody:** arrested and kept in prison while waiting to go to court

*He was taken into police custody pending trial.*

**to press charges against sb:** to make an official accusation against sb, which has to be decided in a court of law

*Will the police be pressing charges, after all?*

**a previous conviction for ...:** to have previously been found guilty of a crime in a court of law

*He asked for previous convictions to be taken into account.*

**protection money:** money paid to sb who threatens to hurt or blackmail the other person

*The nightclub owner refused to pay protection money to Mr Big.*

**to be quashed:** to be rejected; for an appeal/a decision

*Lord Chief Justice Bates quashed the lower court's decision and Jenkins walked free.*

**to raid:** if the police raid a place, they arrive without warning and search it because they believe that a criminal or sth illegal is hidden there [Note: a raid (n)]

*The police raided the house and arrested two people.*

**to reach a verdict:** to decide in a court of law whether sb is guilty or not guilty of a crime

*It took the jury five days to reach a verdict.*

**to be released on bail:** sb who is waiting to go on trial does not have to wait in prison because a large sum of money has been paid as a guarantee that they will not run away

*He should never have been released on bail. It was obvious that he would flee the country.*

**a spate of...:** a spate of robberies/break-ins/attacks/etc is a series of these things that follow each other, often in the same area, over a short period of time

*A spate of muggings has the police and the public worried.*

**to stand trial:** to go to a court of law and be judged

*Jennifer Mills will stand trial for embezzlement.*

**to trace the whereabouts of sb:** (police language)/(formal) to look for sb

*The police are trying to trace the whereabouts of the driver.*



## Practice

1. Complete the text with words from the box below.

shred – custody – trace – brushes – fit – abiding –  
whereabouts – cache – plain – record – watertight –  
raid – hardened – spate – previous



The Metropolitan police are trying to 1) ..... the 2) ..... of a Mr Nobby Redston, following a 3) ..... on his East London flat yesterday afternoon. The police are reported to have uncovered £10,000 worth of stolen goods and a 4) ..... of weapons. Mr Redston is believed to be behind the recent 5) ..... of robberies that have terrorised Londoners over the last six months. The police were alerted to the possibility of Redston being The Man in the Mask when he was photographed by a 6) .....-clothes policeman outside a bank in the Isle of Dogs. The policeman who photographed Mr Redston said, "We received a call saying that there was a suspicious character hanging around outside one of the city's largest banks. Rather than jump straight in, I took a photo of him. I matched the picture with a man called Redston. Redston has a long criminal 7) ....., being a 8) ..... criminal with 9) ..... convictions for armed robbery, extortion and the illegal use of arms." Redston's flatmate, who is now in police 10) ....., said that the police were looking for the wrong man and claimed that there was not a 11) ..... of evidence to connect Redston to the robberies. Redston's lawyer issued the following statement an hour ago: "My client has a 12) ..... alibi and does not 13) ..... the description of the man the police had previously been looking for. Whilst Mr Redston has admittedly had one or two 14) ..... with the law in the past, he is basically an upstanding and law- 15) ..... citizen who abhors violence of any kind. He is appalled by these allegations. Unfortunately, my client is currently unavailable for questioning as this afternoon he went on a business trip to Austria, but he wishes to make it known that when he returns he will be in immediate contact with the police."

2. Passage B is a summary of passage A. Using passage A as a guideline, complete passage B with words from the box below.

reach – quashed – stand – passed – handed – pressed – released –  
placed – found – drop – taken – plead – handling



A It was my neck or his. I was arrested in connection with one of the robberies and after spending the night in a police cell, I cut a deal. I had to go to Austria, wear a microphone and get Redston to talk. The police said they'd let me go, you see. I had my reservations but the police reckoned once he was on trial he'd have to admit that he'd done it, and that even if he didn't, what with my testimony and old man, Hobday, being his lawyer, he didn't stand a chance. I'd be safe, they said. So I went along with it. I got the police what they wanted and I even got him to come back home. I was there when the police arrested him, and I was there when the judge gave him ten years. It had only taken the jury one hour to decide that he was guilty. I wasn't that worried when Hobday announced there would be an appeal. Even the police said the courts would reject it. They didn't. He was allowed to go free before a retrial. That's why I'm not helping the police any more.

B On the day he was 1) ..... into custody on charges of theft, Mr Russell Franks agreed to help the Metropolitan Police Force capture his one-time associate, Mr Norbert Redston. He did this on the understanding that in exchange the police would 2) ..... all outstanding charges against him and that he would not 3) ..... trial. The police assured Mr Franks that Mr Redston was certain to 4) ..... guilty at his trial and that even if he didn't, the fact that Mr Redston had Anthony Hobday 5) ..... his defence would almost certainly guarantee a favourable outcome. Mr Franks wore a microphone and recorded Mr Redston admitting his involvement in six robberies. Mr Franks was present when the police 6) ..... Mr Redston under arrest and testified against Mr Redston during the subsequent trial. Thanks to Mr Franks' testimony, Mr Redston was 7) ..... guilty of all the charges 8) ..... against him. Mr Franks was in court when the Lord Chief Justice Ross 9) ..... sentence. Given the length of the sentence 10) ..... down and the fact that it took the jury only one hour to 11) ..... a verdict, Mr Franks was not concerned when Mr Hobday lodged an appeal. He had also been assured that Mr Redston's appeal would be 12) ..... . It was not, and Mr Redston was 13) ..... on bail pending a retrial. As a result of this, Mr Franks no longer wishes to co-operate with the police.