
BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

6 Minute Vocabulary

Suffixes –ee, -able/ible, -ness



NB: This is not a word-for-word transcript

Finn

Hello and welcome to 6 Minute Vocabulary. I'm Finn...

Alice

And I'm Alice. Today we're looking at a very important part of word building – suffixes.

Finn

Suffixes. We'll look at what they are, what they mean and how to use them.

Alice

There'll be a quiz...

Finn

And we'll leave you with a top tip for learning vocabulary.

Alice

So: to start off, we're going to listen to Andrea and Steve who work in a bank. They have just interviewed two people who want to work there.

Finn

And here's a question to think about while you listen: who did Andrea and Steve like best - the first person or the second person?

Alice

Who did they like best? Let's find out.

INSERT

Andrea

What do you think then Steve?

Steve

Well, the first one was very excitable: he kept laughing and speaking fast.

Andrea

Perhaps it was just nervousness, but there's no room for that in this business.

Steve

No. Now I thought the second interviewee seemed a bit more responsible.

Andrea

Yes, she did – very important when dealing with money. And she was polite.

Steve

Politeness is essential in this job.

Andrea

Absolutely. Well, I think we both know which one is more employable.

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Finn

So, that's Steve and Andrea. And we asked you: who did they like best?

Alice

And the answer is: they definitely liked the second person best. The second one was polite and responsible. The first one was a bit too excitable.

Finn

That's right, and *excitable* is a key word in the show today because it ends in a suffix.

Alice:

Now in the world of vocabulary, a suffix is a group of letters that you can add to the end of a word to change its form, or meaning, or both.

Finn

For example, the word *excitable* has the suffix *-able*, spelt *a-b-l-e*. *-able* makes verbs into adjectives, and we use *-able* words to say that a subject can do something – is able to do something - or they behave in a particular way.

Alice

So if we take the verb *excite*, add the suffix *-able*, we can say that the first interviewee was *excitable*, meaning: he can get very excited.

Finn

And the second one was *responsible*, that's *responsible* with *-ible*, spelt *'i-b-l-e'*. She can be trusted to do the right thing. And that's why she was more *employable*, now that's *-able* with an *a* again. Now for another suffix. Andrea and Steve talked about two *interviewees*. The suffix *-ee*, spelt *e-e*, makes a noun which means 'the person who receives an action'.

Alice

For example, if you add *-ee* to *interview*, you get the person who receives an interview, an *interviewee*.

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Finn

And we're talking about suffixes. Our final suffix for today is *-ness*, spelt *n-e-s-s*. Adding *-ness* to an adjective makes a noun.

Alice

That's right, and interviewee number one suffered from *nervousness* – the noun form of *nervous*.

Finn

But number two understood the importance of *politeness* – the noun form of *polite*. Is politeness important to you Alice?

Alice

Oh yes Finn, politeness is very important to me.

Finn

I think you're very polite. Now let's listen to today's suffixes and words again.

Alice

The first one was: *-able* with an *a*. *a-b-l-e*.

Finn

excitable, employable

Alice

-ible with an *i*. *i-b-l-e*.

Finn

responsible

Alice

-ee: *e-e*

Finn

interviewee

Alice

-ness: *n-e-s-s*

Finn

nervousness, politeness

Alice

And it's time for a quiz. Choose the correct suffix to complete the final words in these 2 sentences. Ready? Number 1. The most important thing to me is my family's... a) happy-ee
b) happy-able, c) happiness.

Finn

This one is the noun form of happy, so it's c) *happiness*.

Alice

Number 2. I'm learning how to do this job. I'm a a) trainee b) trainable, c) train-ness.

Finn

You are receiving training, so you're a trainee.

Alice

Well done if you got those right.

Finn

And that brings us almost to the end of today's programme.

Alice

But before we go, here's today's top tip for learning vocabulary: if you use an online dictionary, type a hyphen or a dash into the search box, and then type in any of today's suffixes. The dictionary will give you a list of words that end with your suffix.

Finn

You know, that's a really good tip: I think I might try that. There's more about this at BBC learning English dot com. Join us again for more 6 Minute Vocabulary.

Both

Good bye!

Vocabulary points to take away

Suffix	Words	Example Sentence
-ee Creates a noun meaning 'person who receives an action'.	<i>interviewee, trainee, employee, refugee, absentee</i>	<i>My company has six thousand employees.</i>
-able Creates an adjective meaning the subject can do something OR that something can be done to it.	<i>excitable, employable, pleasurable, enjoyable, loveable, readable, breakable, moveable</i>	<i>I didn't like his last book – it wasn't very readable.</i>
-ible A different spelling of -able.	<i>responsible, visible, horrible, terrible</i>	<i>Stars are only visible at night.</i>
-ness Creates a noun which describes a quality or state.	<i>happiness, nervousness, politeness, sadness, sickness, kindness, meaninglessness</i>	<i>He missed two days of work because of sickness.</i>

BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

6 Minute Vocabulary

Adjectives and adverbs



NB: This is not a word-for-word transcript

Finn

Hello and welcome to 6 Minute Vocabulary - the show that teaches you how to study vocabulary. I'm Finn...

Alice

And I'm Alice. Hello. Today's show is all about fashion.

Finn

Ahh, fashion. What to wear...

Alice

And what not to wear. And today we're going to listen to some people talking about what to wear to a social occasion...

Finn

And we'll look at a very important area of vocabulary: the difference between adjectives and adverbs.

Alice

We'll have a quiz to test what we've learnt...

Finn

And we'll give you a top tip to help you learn more vocabulary.

Alice

So let's get started - with a conversation. Mike and Sarah are getting ready to go to a party, but they have very different ideas about what Mike should wear.

Finn

While you listen, try to answer this question. What does Mike wear to the party?

Alice

Let's find out.

INSERT

Sarah

You're not seriously going to the party dressed like that! You'll be the most scruffily-dressed man there.

Mike

The invitation said casual, so I'm dressing casually: jeans and a T-shirt. What's wrong with that?

Sarah

It's too scruffy: the invitation said smart-casual. You need to wear something much smarter, Mike.

Mike

What, a suit?

Sarah

No, that's too formal - it's not a job interview. Just wear a nice fashionable shirt.

Mike

But I hate fashion. I can't dress fashionably. I'm the most unfashionable person I know.

Sarah

Well, you'll be the only one in a T-shirt.

Mike

OK, you win. I'll wear my black shirt and the smart shoes. But I'm still wearing my jeans.

Sarah

If you must.

Finn

So, did you hear what Mike wore to the party in the end?

Alice

He wore a black shirt, jeans, and his smart shoes.

Finn

Well done if you got that right. Now, let's take a closer look at some of the fashion-related vocabulary we heard there - starting with some of the adjectives.

Alice

Yes and of course adjectives are words which describe nouns, and there were lots of adjectives describing people and their clothes. Sarah thinks Mike is scruffy.

Finn

Which means not neat or clean.

Alice

But Mike wants to be casual.

Finn

Informal and comfortable.

Alice

She thinks he should be smart.

Finn

Nice and stylish.

Alice

But not too formal.

Finn

Old-fashioned and serious.

Alice

And she wants him to wear something fashionable.

Finn

New and stylish.

Alice

Now, we can change these words into adverbs - words that describe verbs. And Mike and Sarah used lots of adverbs to describe the way people dress. We heard: *scruffily*, *casually*, *smartly*, *formally* and *fashionably*.

Finn

And because they are adverbs, they all end in the letters 'l-y'. Here are some clips from the conversation. Listen out for adverbs which describe the verb dress.

You'll be the most scruffily-dressed man there.

So I'm dressing casually. Jeans and a T-shirt.

I can't dress fashionably.

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Alice

And coming up soon is our vocabulary quiz: but first, let's have a quick recap of today's fashion-related vocabulary.

Finn

First we had some adjectives.

Alice

Scruffy, casual, smart, formal, fashionable.

Finn

And then we looked at some adverbs.

Alice

Scruffily, casually, smartly, formally, fashionably.

Finn

And now: it's quiz time. All you have to do is finish the sentences with words from today's programme. There are two sentences, each with three choices. So, are we ready? Number 1: *Everyone is wearing tight jeans this year - they are really:* a) fashion b) fashionable c) fashionably.

Alice

The answer is: b) fashionable.

Finn

That's right. Now, question 2. *I had a job interview yesterday, so I dressed very:* a) formally b) scruffy c) formal.

Alice

It's: a) formally.

Finn

That's right.

Alice

I hope you got that at home. And that brings us to the end of today's show, so we'll leave you with today's top tip for learning vocabulary, which is, Finn...

Finn

To help you remember how to use adjectives and adverbs, it's a really good idea to write down example sentences.

Alice

That's right. Example sentences will help you use words more accurately than if you just note down the word with a translation.

Finn

And there's more about this on www.bbclearningenglish.com. Join us again for more 6 Minute Vocabulary.

Both

Bye!

BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

6 Minute Vocabulary

Prefixes



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Finn

Hello and welcome to 6 Minute Vocabulary – if you're serious about vocabulary, we'll show you how to learn it. I'm Finn...

Alice

And I'm Alice. In today's show we're going to look at a very interesting area of vocabulary – prefixes.

Finn

We'll look at what they are, what they mean and how to use them.

Alice

There'll be a quiz...

Finn

And we'll leave you with a top tip for learning vocabulary.

Alice

But before all that, we're going to hear from Dave. He's just got back from lunch, but he isn't happy.

Finn

Now, a question to think about while you listen: what was the problem with Dave's food?

Alice

What was the problem with Dave's food? Let's find out.

Example

*I just tried the new seafood restaurant, and I wish I hadn't. It was **intolerable**! To start with, my seat was really **uncomfortable**. I had no room to move. And the menu was very **misleading**. The photos looked nothing like the actual food. When my food came it was **uncooked**. I told the waiter, but he **disagreed**. He said it was fine. He said he'd eat it himself! And I looked in the kitchen – it was really **unhygienic**. There was food all over the floor. It was a **disgrace**!*

Finn

So Dave's pretty unhappy. And what was wrong with his food?

Alice

Well, he said that it was uncooked. It was cold and raw because it hadn't been cooked.

Finn

Not very nice! Well done if you got that right at home. Now, *uncooked* is an example of the vocabulary area we're looking at today - prefixes.

Alice

Yes: prefixes - or as some people say: prefixes. Prefixes, prefixes. A prefix is a small part of a word, usually just a couple of letters, that we put at the front of a base word to change its meaning. For example, the prefix un, spelt u-n, is added to happy, to make unhappy, which means not happy.

Finn

And Dave was unhappy about the restaurant.

Alice

Yes. He said the seats were uncomfortable – meaning not comfortable, and the kitchen was unhygienic, meaning unclean – not clean.

Finn

So that's un, meaning 'not' - and all today's prefixes have the meaning of not. So, Dave said the meal was intolerable. Intolerable. In - spelt i-n - is another prefix that can mean not – and poor Dave couldn't tolerate the meal. Now, let's listen to a bit more of Dave.

Example

...I told the waiter, but he **disagreed**. He said it was fine.

Finn

The waiter disagreed with him about the food. The prefix dis, spelt d-i-s, means not, or 'to do the opposite', like disagree – to not agree.

Alice

Yes, and Dave said it was a disgrace - they should be ashamed of it.

Finn

Let's hear today's prefixes again.

Alice

The first one was: un.

Finn

Unhappy, uncooked, unhygienic, unclean.

Alice

In.

Finn

Intolerable, inexpensive.

Alice

Dis.

Finn

Disagree, disgrace.

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Finn

And it's time for a quiz. Try to work out the word that finishes the sentence. Ready?

Number 1. *The advert said that the phone was £5 a month, but it didn't say anything about the £50 set-up fee. It was very...* a) unhappy b) inexpensive c) misleading.

Alice

The advert made people believe something that isn't true, so it was very... c) misleading.

Finn

Now number 2. *This letter has come to the wrong house. There's been a...* a) mistake b) disgrace c) disagreement.

Alice

It's not correct so... a) mistake.

Finn

Well done if you got those right.

Alice

And that brings us almost to the end of today's programme.

Finn

Before we go, here's today's top tip for learning vocabulary: if you look up some of today's words in a dictionary, you'll find lots more words starting with the same prefixes. Many of them may be words that you already knew without the prefix. So, when you add a prefix, you get two words for the price of one!

Alice

That's brilliant. Sounds like a good way to quickly double your vocabulary. There's more about this at www.bbclearningenglish.com. Join us again for more 6 Minute Vocabulary.

Both

Bye!

BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

6 Minute Vocabulary

Chunks of language



NB: This is not a word-for-word transcript

Finn

Hello and welcome to 6 Minute Vocabulary. I'm Finn...

Alice

And I'm Alice. In today's show we're going to look chunks of language.

Finn

Yes, and by chunks of language we mean groups of words that naturally go together. And we're going to do that by listening to Kirsten, a student from Germany, talking about her typical morning.

Alice

We'll look closely at the chunks of language Kirsten uses...

Finn

We'll have a quiz to see what we've learnt...

Alice

And we'll bring you a top tip for learning vocabulary.

Finn

But before all that, we're going to hear from Kirsten, who's studying right here in London.

Alice

She's talking about her typical college day. Now, two questions for you to think about while you listen. First, why does Kirsten have to leave?

Finn

And second, why do you think Kirsten's English sounds a little bit unnatural?

Alice

Let's find out.

Insert I

My typical morning? Well, I never go out on an *unfilled stomach*, so before class, I usually have a *complete English breakfast* – I love it. Getting to class can *take a big time* because it is *the rush period*. But when I get to class it is a *lot of enjoyment* because my classmates come from *all over the earth*. Anyway, I must go into class right now, but I'll be *back in a period*.

Alice

So, why does she have to leave?

Finn

She has to go to class. Well done if you got that. But why did Kirsten's English sound a little bit unnatural?

Alice

Well, we understood her, but she did make some unusual word choices.

Finn

Yes. And that's because she made some mistakes when she tried to use English fixed expressions, or chunks of language.

Alice

Chunks are groups of words that naturally go together – they are fixed expressions and they can't usually be changed. So instead of learning them word by word, we can think of them as one complete piece of language. Let's look at some of Kirsten's chunks.

Finn

First she said she doesn't like going out *on an unfilled stomach*. The normal way to say that you are doing something without eating first is to say you're doing something **on an empty stomach**.

Alice

Next she said she likes to eat *a complete English breakfast*. The usual way to describe eggs, bacon, sausage and tomato is **a full English breakfast**.

Finn

Ooh, feeling a bit hungry now. Then she said that going to college *takes a big time*, but the chunk is **to take a long time**.

Alice

And it takes a long time because it is *the rush period* – but the usual expression is **the rush hour**.

Finn

Kirsten told us that class is *a lot of enjoyment*. But we usually say **a lot of fun**.

Alice

It's fun because Kirsten's friends come from *all over the earth* – normally **all over the world**.

Finn

And let's listen to the last sentence again.

Clip 1

Anyway, I must go into class right now, but I'll be *back in a period*.

Finn

So she'll return soon to talk more, but the usual way to say this is **back in a bit**. Or **back in a minute**.

Alice

Great stuff. So, let's listen to Kirsten again, this time with all the correct chunks of language.

Insert 2

My typical morning? Well, I never go out **on an empty stomach**, so before class, I usually have **a full English breakfast** – I love it. Getting to class can **take a long time** because it is **the rush hour**. But when I get to class it's **a lot of fun** because my classmates come from **all over the world**. Anyway, I must go into class right now, but I'll be **back in a bit**.

Finn

Well done Kirsten. It sounded much more natural that time.

Ident

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Alice

So, now it's time for a quiz. You have to finish the sentences with the correct chunk.

Number 1. *I want to learn Chinese, but I think it will...* a) *have a long time*; b) *take a great age*; c) *take a long time*.

Finn

The natural way to say it is: c) *take a long time*.

Alice

Now number 2. *People are learning English...* a) *all over the world*; b) *around the earth*; c) *throughout the planet*.

Finn

People are learning English: a) *all over the world*.

Alice

Well done if you got that.

Finn

That brings us almost to the end of today's show.

Alice

But before we go, here's today's top tip – instead of learning lists of vocabulary word by word, try picking up natural chunks of language that you hear people using. Learning these chunks will make your English sound much more natural.

Finn

Great advice. There's more about this at BBC learning English dot com. Please join us again for six-minute vocabulary.

Both

Goodbye!

Vocabulary

to do something on an empty stomach

to do something without eating first

a full English breakfast

a cooked breakfast, usually with bacon, sausage, eggs, mushrooms, beans, tomatoes, toast and tea

to take a long time

to happen slowly

the rush hour

the period of time in the morning and evening when the traffic is very busy with people going to and from work

a lot of fun

very enjoyable

all over the world

everywhere around the earth

(I'll be) back in a bit

(I'll) return soon

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6 Minute Vocabulary

Binomials



NB: This is not a word-for-word transcript

Finn

Hello and welcome to 6 Minute Vocabulary with me Finn...

Alice

And me Alice. And today's show is all about binomials.

Finn

Or as some call them, binomials. Yes, those short and sweet phrases English speakers love to use in everyday English. We'll look at what binomials are, what they mean and how to use them.

Alice

There'll be a cheap and cheerful quiz...

Finn

And we'll leave you with a quick and dirty tip for learning vocabulary.

Alice

So: to start off, let's listen to Charlie and his mum talking about football practice.

Finn

Here's a question to think about while you listen: what's a good treatment for aches and pains?

Alice

What's good for aches and pains? Let's find out.

INSERT

Mum

Hello, love. How was practice today?

Charlie

Horrible. I hate football.

Mum

Oh dear. Why's that?

Charlie

I'm sick and tired of being in goal. Look at these bruises – I'm black and blue.

Mum

Let's have a look...oh yes love, why don't you jump in the bath? Warm water's very good for aches and pains.

Finn

So, that's Charlie and his mum. And we asked you: what's good for aches and pains?

Alice

And Charlie's mum says the answer is: a warm bath.

Finn

That's right. And the phrase aches and pains is our first binomial.

Alice

Now binomials are short English phrases made of two words that go together – and the two words are often joined with and. Like aches and pains. Which means: general pains in the body, that usually aren't serious.

Finn

Ok: now it's important to remember that binomials are always fixed: you can't change anything about them. You can't say pains and aches. You can't say aches and hurts and you can't say hurts and pains. So, Alice Do you suffer from aches and pains?

Alice

Sometimes Finn, when you're around. Anyway, poor Charlie said he was black and blue. He's talking about the bruises on his body he got from playing football.

Finn

Black and blue? Must have been a tough game...?

Alice

Yes, no wonder Charlie said he's sick and tired of football.

Finn

Sick and tired. It means really fed up and bored with something. And remember, we can't say tired and sick.

Alice

We can't say sick and bored either. What are you sick and tired of at the moment Finn?

Finn

I'm sick and tired of commuting: travelling to work. It took me about an hour this morning.

Alice

That's a really long time.

Finn

And another binomial: bit by bit - this time, the word in the middle is by instead of and.

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Finn

And we're talking about binomials. And if you were listening carefully at the beginning of the show you might have noticed that we used a couple of binomials right at the start. Short and sweet was one of them – it means simple, quick and useful.

Alice

Short and sweet or: quick and dirty. That's another binomial with a similar meaning: quick and dirty means simple, short and basic.

Finn

And another similar one is: cheap and cheerful.

Alice

So, three binomials there you can use to describe something as quick, simple and basic.

Finn

Now let's hear today's expressions again.

Alice

Aches and pains.

Finn

It describes body pains that aren't serious.

Alice

Sick and tired.

Finn

Fed up, bored and angry.

Alice

Bit by bit.

Finn

To describe slow change. And to say something is simple, short and basic we had three binomials:

Alice

Short and sweet; quick and dirty; cheap and cheerful.

Finn

Thank you Alice And now it's quiz time. Number 1. Choose the correct answer: I'm learning French. It's difficult, but I'm getting better a) bit by bit b) bit by little c) bit and bit.

Alice

And the answer is: a) bit by bit.

Finn

Number 2. Sarah fell over and hit her eye yesterday. Today it's a) blue and black b) black and blue c) black and white.

Alice

And the answer is: b) black and blue.

Finn

Ouch. And finally, number 3. At only one minute long, the presentation was a) sweet and short b) cheerful and cheap or c) quick and dirty.

Alice

And the answer is: c) quick and dirty.

Finn

And that brings us almost to the end of the programme.

Alice

But before we go, here's a cheap and cheerful tip for remembering vocabulary: play games. Making and playing a simple card game where you match up the beginning and ends of binomials will really help you to remember them.

Finn

That's right. And there's more about this at BBC Learning English dot com. Join us again for more 6 Minute Vocabulary.

Both

Bye!

Vocabulary points to take away

Binomial	Definition	Example sentence
aches and pains	general body pains that aren't serious	A warm bath is great for aches and pains.
sick and tired	fed up, bored and annoyed	She's sick and tired of this bad weather.
black and blue	sore and bruised	Look at these bruises – I'm black and blue.
quick and dirty	short, simple and basic	It was a one-minute quick and dirty presentation.
cheap and cheerful	simple, basic and often inexpensive	The cafe was cheap and cheerful but the food was great.
short and sweet	quick and simple	Our Monday meetings are always short and sweet.
bit by bit	gradually; a small amount at a time	The weather is going to get better bit by bit.

BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

6 Minute Vocabulary

-ing and -ed adjectives



NB: This is not a word-for-word transcript

Finn

Hello and welcome to 6 Minute Vocabulary. I'm Finn...

Catherine

And I'm Catherine. In today's programme we're going to look at **i-n-g** and **e-d** adjectives.

Finn

So if you're **interested** in vocabulary, but you find some adjectives **confusing**, keep listening...

Catherine

Yes, keep listening, and it's on with the show! I must say Finn, you're looking very **relaxed** today.

Finn

That's because I was on holiday last week. It was very **relaxing**. Speaking of holidays, here are two people who had a bad time on holiday. What went wrong?

INSERT

Man

The train was horrible. Big gangs of teenagers playing music on their phones – I got very **annoyed**.

Woman

The flight was delayed and we had ten really **boring** hours in the airport with nothing to do.

Catherine

Not much fun, eh? So, the man was **annoyed**, or angry, about teenagers playing music. And the woman had a long and **boring** wait in the airport.

Finn

So let's have a closer look. Here's the woman again.

INSERT

Woman

The flight was delayed and we had ten really **boring** hours in the airport with nothing to do.

Finn

Now adjectives ending with **i-n-g**, like **boring**, usually describe things or events that make us have a particular feeling.

Catherine

That's right, and in the example, **boring** describes all those hours and hours in the airport. Ten long, **boring** hours. Sound familiar Finn?

Finn

That sounds very familiar, yes.

Catherine

And there are lots of **i-n-g** adjectives we can use to describe things or events. We can talk about a **confusing** problem, a **surprising** piece of news or an **exciting** film with lots of action. Finn, what's the most **exciting** film you have ever seen?

Finn

So many exciting films. But the first one I can think of is Gravity. In space. Very exciting. OK Catherine, what is your idea of a **relaxing** holiday?

Catherine

I do like to be beside the seaside, Finn. Now let's look at **e-d** adjectives. We're going to hear from a woman who got a very cheap holiday. What **e-d** adjective does she use?

INSERT

We got a great deal. I was **surprised** at how cheap it was.

Catherine

We use **e-d** adjectives to say how we feel about something. In our example, the adjective **surprised** describes how the woman feels about the price.

INSERT

We got a great deal. I was **surprised** at how cheap it was.

Catherine

She didn't expect it to be so cheap!

Finn

That's right. If I say: **I get annoyed by loud music**, the word **annoyed** describes my feelings about the music. The music is **annoying**, and I feel **annoyed**.

Catherine

And if I say: **long lectures make me bored**, the word **bored** describes my feelings about the lecture. The lecture is **boring**, and I feel **bored**. So, Finn, what makes you **bored**?

Finn

I never feel bored.

Catherine

Yes, you do.

Finn

OK, when I'm travelling to work. A long commute is very **boring** and it makes me feel **bored**.

Catherine

Me too. And a word of warning here: don't confuse **bored** and **boring** – because if you say **I'm very boring**, you're actually saying that you make other people feel **bored**!

Finn

And you don't want that.

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Finn

And it's time for a quiz. Listen to these sentences and choose whether they need an **i-n-g** or **e-d** adjective. Catherine will tell you the answers. Ready? Number one: 'I enjoy taking long hot baths. They make me feel really...' a) relaxed or b) relaxing?

Catherine

Now Finn, you're describing your feeling, so it's a) relaxed.

Finn

That's right: they make me relaxed. Number two: 'The discovery of life on Mars would be...' a) **surprised** or b) **surprising**?

Catherine

We're talking about a discovery, which is a thing, so it's b) **surprising**.

Finn

And the last one: 'Those students are very ...' a) **annoying** or b) **annoyed**?

Catherine

And this one is a trick question, because both of them are possible: **Those students are very annoying** is correct if we are describing **the students**. But **Those students are very annoyed** is what we say if we are talking about **the students' feelings**.

Finn

That's right, both are possible. And that brings us almost to the end of the show. But before we go, here's today's top tip for learning vocabulary: **i-n-g** and **e-d** adjectives are easy to confuse, so write down pairs of example sentences in your notebook.

Catherine

Very good. And remember there's more about this at bbclearningenglish.com. Join us again for more 6 Minute Vocabulary.

Both:

Bye!

Vocabulary points to take away

Both –ing and –ed adjectives are used to talk about how we feel and describing our feelings.

The main difference is that –ing adjectives are usually used to talk about the person, place or thing that is making us feel a certain way:

*Yawn! This lecture is really **boring**!*

But –ed adjectives are used to talk about how we feel:

*I've been listening to him for hours – I'm so **bored**.*

You could say *I am boring* – it's grammatically correct – but this means that you make other people feel bored!

Here are some more example sentences with more –ing and –ed adjectives to help you understand the difference in meaning:

exciting and excited

*We have seen some **exciting** developments in technology in the 21st century.
We are **excited** to introduce our new range of smartphones.*

surprising and surprised

*It is **surprising** how little we know about our oceans.
My whole family was there for my party – I was so **surprised**!*

annoying and annoyed

*I hate popup adverts on the internet – they're **annoying**!
I'm sorry, I know you're **annoyed** – I won't make that mistake again!*

relaxing and relaxed

*Some people find listening to classical music very **relaxing**.
Doing yoga can be a way to feel more **relaxed**.*

confusing and confused

*I couldn't understand the plot of that film – it was just too **confusing**.
If too many people are talking at once I just get **confused**.*

BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

6 Minute Vocabulary

Lexical sets



NB: This is not a word-for-word transcript

Catherine

Hello and welcome to 6 Minute Vocabulary. I'm Catherine...

Finn

And I'm Finn, hello.

Catherine

Today's programme is all about **lexical sets**.

Finn

That's right: **lexical sets** help us to learn words by grouping them together by topic or word type. So, more on that later, but first, here's Dave. He's talking about a flood that happened in his home town recently, and here's a question to answer while you listen: what happened to all of Dave's possessions?

INSERT

Dave

Well, we had so much **rain**: it said on the news we got a month's **rainfall** in just one day! The **water level** rose so high that the river **burst its banks** and **water poured** into everyone's houses. It's terrible – my house was **flooded**, all my things were completely **soaked** and the carpets are still **waterlogged**.

Catherine

Oh, dear. Dave.

Finn

Yes. We asked you what happened to Dave's possessions...

Catherine

And he said all his things were completely **soaked** – they were covered in water and now they're all wet and damaged.

Finn

Dave also used a few different words to talk about the flood and its effects. He talked about the **rain** and **rainfall** – that's a way to describe the water that falls as rain over a period of time...

Catherine

And he talked about **water level**, that's the height of the water in rivers and lakes. And Dave said it got very high.

Finn

It did. And that's what caused the **floods**. Now, **floods**, **water level**, **water**, **rainfall** and **rain** – these are all on the topic of **rain** and **floods**.

Catherine

And they're also all the same type of word – they're all nouns. So we can group these words into a **lexical set**.

Finn

That's right: a **lexical set** is a group of words which are all about the same topic, and which all belong to the same part of speech – they're all nouns or verbs or adjectives.

Catherine

So, to make a lexical set for activities on a **beach holiday**, for example, you might think of...

Finn

...**swimming**, **sunbathing**, and **surfing**. What do you like doing on a beach holiday, Catherine?

Catherine

Me - I like sunbathing and eating ice cream. And swimming, sunbathing, eating ice cream, and surfing are all **gerunds**, that's nouns made from -ing verbs.

Finn

Exactly, so: same topic, same word type: that's a lexical set! Lots of people find it useful to learn words in groups like this. They seem to stick in your mind more easily.

Catherine

That's right and by learning words in lexical sets, you'll also have more words to choose from when you're talking about a topic. Let's hear Dave again and see if you can spot another lexical set:

CLIP FROM INSERT

...my house was **flooded**, all my things were completely **soaked** and the carpets are still **waterlogged**.

Catherine

Did you get it? Dave said his house was **flooded** – full of water; all his things were **soaked** – completely wet; and his carpets still have lots of water in them – they are **waterlogged**.

Finn

The words **flooded**, **soaked** and **waterlogged** are all adjectives here, and they're all about flooding, so –

Catherine

– there's our next lexical set!

Finn

There it is!

IDENT

You're listening to BBC Learning English.

Catherine

And we're talking about lexical sets: groups of words related to the same topic that come from the same part of speech, like nouns, verbs, adjectives, gerunds.

Finn

That's right, and it's time for a quiz.

Catherine

Aha! My favourite. Right: I'll say three words and you decide if they make a lexical set or not. Finn will tell you the answers. Ready? Number one. Tea, coffee, water. Lexical set or not?

Finn

Well, they're all drinks – so the same topic – and they're all nouns, so they're a lexical set.

Catherine

They are. Another one: swimming, cleaning, sunbathing.

Finn

And that's not a lexical set. They are all gerunds, but the topic seems to be 'holiday activities' like **swimming** and **sunbathing** – and **cleaning** doesn't really fit with that group. Not on my holidays, anyway...

Catherine

Not on mine, either. So, well done if you got those right at home. And we've just got time for a quick vocabulary tip. Finn?

Finn

OK, right, here we go: find a friend, and play a game of 'lexical set tennis'. It goes like this. You choose a topic, like **sport**, and then choose a word group like **nouns** – and then you take it in turns to say words in the set. Alright Catherine: shall we try this?

Catherine

Yes, come on then...

Finn

The topic is sport and I'll start with football.

Catherine

Rugby.

Finn

Boxing.

Catherine

Basketball.

Finn

Err. Err. Oh no! There's more about this at www.bbclearningenglish.com. Join us again for more 6 Minute Vocabulary. And I've got another one.

Catherine

Come on then.

Finn

Golf...

Vocabulary points to take away

A **lexical set** is a group of words that share the same topic or theme and belong to the same part of speech – they are all nouns, all verbs, all adjectives (for example).

Lexical sets are a useful way to organise vocabulary, making it easier to learn. When reading texts from different sources, it is a good idea to try to find groups of words that are related to the same topic and that belong to the same part of speech.

Practice

Look at this short text and find the words belonging to the same lexical set (possible answers are at the bottom of the page):

The English country garden can be a beautiful place. Flowers of many different types make the garden very colourful. Green bushes and hedges often provide shelter for wildlife, and it is common to find birds like robins flying around. If there are any trees, squirrels may also visit the garden. It's also possible for foxes to find their way into the garden, especially late at night. At this time, when there are no visiting animals or birds, it can be so quiet in a country garden that you can hear the insects crawling around.

Test your memory with lexical sets

Try to find lexical sets in texts you read in English. Look through a text and pick out the words you think belong to different lexical sets and write them down on a separate piece of paper. It is a good idea to check what you have written with another person. You may have spotted different words and different lexical sets. Then hide the original text and try to remember it from your lexical set lists. If you want an even more difficult challenge, try to write your own version of the text from your lists.

Answers

There are a number of different lexical sets in this text:

- **beautiful, colourful, green** are all adjectives used to describe what the garden looks like
- **flowers, bushes, hedges, trees** are all nouns and are names of different plants in the garden
- **robins, squirrels, foxes, animals, birds, insects** are all nouns and are the names of different creatures visiting the garden

BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

6 Minute Vocabulary

Compound adjectives



NB: This is not a word-for-word transcript

Finn

Hello and welcome to 6 Minute Vocabulary. I'm Finn...

Catherine

And I'm Catherine. In today's programme we're looking at compound adjectives, like in a **22-hour journey**.

Finn

We'll look at what compound adjectives are...

Catherine

... we'll see how to use them...

Finn

There'll be a punctuation tip and a quiz...

Catherine

And we'll leave you with a top tip for learning vocabulary.

Finn

But first, let's hear from Rob. Rob's a racing driver and he's being interviewed after a race.

Catherine

And here's a question to think about while you listen: how fast was Rob's lap time?

Finn

Let's find out.

INSERT

Interviewer

Rob, congratulations on your latest win. What did that last victory mean to you?

Rob

Honestly, I expected to win. I mean, you don't come second in a high-quality vehicle like mine.

Interviewer

That's true – it's an impressive motor – but what you did was amazing: your fastest lap time was truly incredible.

Rob

Well, you're right. You don't see a seventy-second lap every day.

Interviewer

Thanks for your time Rob. Well, this year the drivers are hoping to complete the four-kilometre course in an even faster time...

STING

Finn

So, Rob the racing driver did a seventy-second lap.

Catherine

Well done to you if you got that right.

Finn

And that's our first example of a compound adjective. It's made with a number, like **seventy**, and a noun, like **second**. **Seventy-second**. We put seventy-second in front of another noun, like **lap**, making a compound adjective which describes a noun. **A seventy-second lap**.

Catherine

Let's hear another example, again starting with a number, but this time the noun describes length instead of time.

INSERT

Interviewer

Well, this year the drivers are hoping to complete the **four-kilometre** course in an even faster time.

Finn

So the number **four**, with the noun **kilometre**, go together to make an adjective: **four-kilometre**. And take note: there's no **s** at the end of **kilometre**.

Catherine

That's right: there's no **s** because the word **kilometre** functions as an adjective here – and we can't make adjectives plural. The adjective **four-kilometre** describes the noun **course**. **A four-kilometre course**.

Finn

That's right. Some more examples with length are...

Catherine

A 26-mile race; a six-foot man.

Finn

Now for a punctuation note. When you write a number-noun compound adjective, you need to join the two parts together with a hyphen – a little horizontal line between the two words.

Catherine

That's right. So you write a 'seventy hyphen second' lap. A 'six hyphen foot' man.

IDENT

You're listening to BBC Learning English.

Finn

And we're talking about compound adjectives. Here's Rob again. Listen out for another type of compound adjective.

INSERT

Rob

Honestly, I expected to win. I mean, you don't come second in a high-quality vehicle like mine.

Catherine

Did you get that? It was **high-quality**. A **high-quality vehicle**.

Finn

So, as well as using numbers, we can also make compound adjectives with the words **high** or **low** plus a noun.

Catherine

High plus **quality** equals **high-quality**. Like **high-quality vehicle**.

Finn

Low plus **cost** equals **low-cost**. Like **low-cost airline**. How do you feel about low-cost airlines, Catherine?

Catherine

Well, after my last experience, never again... Some more examples are, Finn?

Finn

High-speed. A **high-speed motorbike**.

Catherine

And **low-fat**. A **low-fat yoghurt**. And if you're writing, don't forget – join the 2 parts together with a hyphen.

Finn

And now it's quiz time. Complete these sentences. Catherine will tell you the answers. Ready? Number one. In a balanced diet, it's important to eat ... a) high-quality carbohydrates or b) high-qualities carbohydrates.

Catherine

It's a) **high-quality carbohydrates**.

Finn

Well done if you got that. Number two. The flight from London to New York is ... a) a nines-hour trip or b) a nine-hour trip.

Catherine

The answer's b) **a nine-hour trip**.

Finn

Number three. Every morning, Catherine goes for... a) a six-mile run or b) a six-miles run.

Catherine

The answer's a) **a six-mile run**. But I don't.

Finn

You don't really, do you? In any case, well done if you got those right at home. And we're almost at the end of the show. But before we go, here's today's top tip for learning vocabulary, which is, Catherine...

Catherine

If you use social media, join an English learning group. When you learn a new word, try to include it in at least 3 of your posts. That will help you remember the word.

Finn

And there's more about this at bbclearningenglish.com. Join us again for more 6 Minute Vocabulary.

Both

Bye!

Vocabulary points to take away

Compound adjectives can be formed in different ways. One of these is a combination of a number and a noun. Compound adjectives like this are usually used to describe the duration of an activity – the amount of time it takes – or a distance or length. For example:

*A **seventy-second** lap*

*A **six-foot** man*

The number comes first and then the noun. For compound adjectives describing amount of time, this will be a word like *second*, *minute*, *hour* or *day*. For distance or length, it will be a word like *foot*, *metre*, *kilometre* or *mile*.

Another way to form compound adjectives is by using the words *high* or *low* followed by a noun.

*A **high-speed** motorbike*

*A **low-fat** yoghurt*

The two words that make up each of these compound adjectives are joined together with a hyphen, a small horizontal line between the words with no spaces.

Here are some more examples of these compound adjectives:

Compound adjectives with numbers	a 22-hour journey a 70-second lap a four-kilometre course a six-foot man a nine-hour trip a six-mile run
Compound adjectives with high and low	a low-cost airline low-fat yoghurt a high-quality vehicle a high-speed motorbike high-quality carbohydrates

BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

6 Minute Vocabulary

Jobs suffixes



NB: This is not a word-for-word transcript

Neil
Hi!

Sophie
Hello!

Neil
..and welcome to 6 Minute Vocabulary. My name is Neil, and I'm one of the presenters today.

Sophie
And I'm Sophie, and I'm the other presenter. Welcome to the show!

Neil
Did you hear that word - **presenter**? Today we're going to be talking about jobs, and the different kinds of English words for different jobs. Like **presenter**, for example.

Sophie
We'll look at some of the different ways that words for jobs can end, like the 'er' at the end of **presenter**. These are called suffixes.

Neil
As usual, we'll be giving you a quiz to see how much you can remember...

Sophie
And we'll also bring you a top tip to help you learn vocabulary.

Neil
But first, let's listen to Anna. She's going to tell us about the different jobs she's had in her life so far.

Sophie
While you listen, think about this question: what is Anna's job now?

INSERT

Anna

When I was a little girl, I always wanted to be a **teacher**. So I spent years training as a **teacher**, and then I got a job in a school... and I hated it! After a few months I quit. I worked for a while as a **librarian**, but I didn't really like that either. Finally I started writing for a small website. Now I work as a **journalist**, writing for newspapers and magazines.

STING

Sophie

So, that was Anna, talking about all the jobs she's done. And we asked: what's Anna's job now?

Neil

Anna is a **journalist** now. She writes for newspapers and magazines.

Sophie

Well done if you got that right. And another question: Did you catch what Anna's first job was?

Neil

She was a **teacher**. Let's listen again...

INSERT | CLIP |

Anna

When I was a little girl, I always wanted to be a **teacher**. So I spent years training as a **teacher**,...

Neil

Now, a lot of English words for jobs end with the sound –er, like **presenter** or **teacher**.

Sophie

Yes, and there are two ways to spell the suffix –er in job names. Sometimes this is spelled e-r, in words like **presenter** or **teacher**. Or sometimes it's spelled o-r: for example, **actor** or **translator**.

Neil

So, a **teacher** teaches students, an **actor** acts in a film, a **translator** translates from one language to another, a **train driver** drives a train. You're an **actor** aren't you Sophie?

Sophie

Yes, I am, Neil. But because I'm female you can also say I'm an **actress**. So, there are lots of jobs that end with that e-r suffix. But now let's look at a different suffix. Can you remember what Anna's next job was, after she quit teaching? Let's listen and check.

INSERT 1 CLIP 2

Anna

After a few months I quit. I worked for a while as a **librarian**, but I didn't really like that either.

Neil

Next, Anna worked as a **librarian** – that's someone who works in a library.

Sophie

Another suffix which we often find at the end of a word for a job is –ian, spelled i-a-n. Sometimes it's pronounced 'shun'. For example, if you've got a problem with your eyes, you might need to go to an **optician**.

Neil

And someone who works in politics is a **politician**. Ever thought of being a politician, Sophie?

Sophie

I can't say I have, Neil. OK, now let's talk about one more suffix. Do you remember what Anna does now? She's a **journalist**.

Neil

There are also quite a lot of words for jobs in English which end in –ist, spelled i-s-t.

Sophie

The person who greets you in an office or a hotel is a **receptionist**...

Neil

And a person who looks after your teeth is a **dentist**.

IDENT

You're listening to BBC Learning English.

Sophie

And we're talking about jobs suffixes.

Neil

Ok. Now it's quiz time! We've got three questions for you. First, if someone translates from one language to another, are they a) a translator b) a translator or c) a translator?

Sophie

And the answer is, b) a translator. Well done if you got that right. Second question: which job ends with the letters –or? Is it a) actor; b) teacher or c) presenter?

Neil

And the answer is **actor**. **Teacher** and **presenter** end with –e-r. Well done if you got both of those questions right. It's almost time for the end of the show. But before we go, there's just time for a top tip for learning vocabulary.

Sophie

When you record a new word, don't just write the word and the translation – try drawing a picture in your notebook too!

Neil

Yes. Drawing a picture can help you remember the word better.

Sophie

There's more about this at bbclearningenglish.com. Join us again soon for more 6 Minute Vocabulary.

Both

Bye!

Vocabulary points to take away

Job names ending in **-er**:

- presenter
- teacher
- train driver

Job names ending in **-or** :

- actor (some people say **actress** for female actors)
- translator

Job names ending in **-ian**

- librarian
- politician
- optician

Job names ending in **-ist**:

- journalist
- receptionist
- dentist

BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

6 Minute Vocabulary

Contractions



NB: This is not a word-for-word transcript

Finn

Hello and welcome to this episode of 6 Minute Vocabulary. I'm Finn...

Feifei

...and I'm Feifei. Hi!

Finn

Today we're going to be talking about contractions, like **I've** meaning I have, or **isn't** meaning is not. We're going to talk about what these contractions mean, and how to pronounce them.

Feifei

That's right, and learning to use contractions like **I've** or **isn't** when you're speaking will make your English sound much more fluent and natural.

Finn

And that's got to be good news. As usual, we'll have lots of examples...

Feifei

There'll be a short quiz...

Finn

And finally we'll give you a tip to help you with your vocabulary studies.

Feifei

So, let's start with an example. Listen to Bill talking about his wife and his brother.

Finn

While you're listening, try to answer this question: has Bill's brother ever visited the US?

INSERT

Bill

My wife and I live in London. **We've** been married for about five years. **I've** always lived in London, but **she's** lived in Germany, and the US, and lots of different places. **I've** never

been to the US, but my **brother's** been there many times, because his wife is from New York.

Finn

So, Feifei asked you: has Bill's brother ever visited the US?

Feifei

And the answer is yes, Bill's brother has been to the US many times, because his wife is American. She's from New York.

Finn

Did you get the answer right? Of course you did!

Feifei

Ok, now here is another question. How long have Bill and his wife been married? Listen again and check...

INSERT 1 CLIP 1

My wife and I live in London. **We've** been married for about five years.

Feifei

You got the answer, didn't you? He said 'we've been married for about five years'.

Finn

Did you notice that he didn't say **we have been**, he said **we've been**? When we're speaking, we often shorten the word **have**, and just say **-ve** instead.

Feifei

So I have becomes **I've**, you have becomes **you've**, we have becomes **we've** and they have becomes **they've**.

Finn

We use contractions like **we've** a lot when we're speaking, but sometimes we write them, too – especially when we're writing something informal or unofficial, like an email or a postcard.

Feifei

Now, when you're writing contractions, remember to use an apostrophe. So, for example, **we've** is spelled **w – e – apostrophe – v – e**.

Finn

The apostrophe shows that a letter, or more than one, is missing.

Feifei

That's right, so when we write **we've** instead of **we have**, we miss the letters h and a from the word 'have'. And the apostrophe shows that these letters have been skipped.

Finn

Right, Here's another question about Bill. How many different places has his wife lived in? Can you remember? Here's a clip.

INSERT 1 CLIP 2

Bill

I've always lived in London, but she's lived in Germany, and the US, and lots of different places.

Feifei

He said that she's lived in lots of different places. And he mentioned two of them: Germany, and the US.

Finn

Did you notice another contraction there? Bill said **she's lived**. It's the short form of she has lived. **She's lived**.

Feifei

This is a very common one. Instead of **has**, lots of English speakers say **-s /z/** instead.

Finn

So instead of **he has** we say **he's**, instead of **she has** it's **she's**.

Feifei

Again, when you use this **-s /z/** contraction instead of has when you're writing, don't forget to use the apostrophe.

Finn

So, **he's** is spelled **h – e – apostrophe – s**, and **she's** is spelled **s – h – e – apostrophe – s**.

IDENT

You're listening to BBC Learning English.com

Feifei

And now it's time for a quiz. Number one. When we're speaking, we don't normally say 'I have lived here for three years' – what do we say?

Finn

We say, 'I've lived here for three years'.

Feifei

Easy question, right?

Finn

I think so.

Feifei

Here's another one: Which pronunciation is correct? Is it a) **He's** /s/ a teacher or is it b) **He's** /z/ a teacher?

Finn

It's b) He's /z/ a teacher. And one last question. In the sentence **We've been listening to 6 Minute Vocabulary**, how do you spell **we've**?

Feifei

It's **w - e - apostrophe - v - e**.

Finn

That's it. Before we go, here's a top tip to help you learn vocabulary.

Feifei

Vocabulary learning isn't a silent activity! You'll learn words more effectively if you say them out loud. It doesn't matter if nobody's listening – say the words out loud anyway!

Finn

Absolutely. Very good. There's more about this at bbclearningenglish.com. Join us again soon for more 6 Minute Vocabulary. Bye!

Feifei

Bye!

Vocabulary points to take away

Contractions with 'to be':

am becomes **-'m**:

I am here → **I'm** here

are becomes **-'re**:

you are right → **you're** right

we are talking → **we're** talking

they are colleagues → **they're** colleagues

is becomes **-'s**

He is my brother → **he's** my brother

She is my sister → **she's** my sister

It is raining → **it's** raining

Contractions with 'to have':

have becomes **-'ve**:

I have done → **I've** done

you have been → **you've** been

we have eaten → **we've** eaten

they have drunk → **they've** drunk

has becomes **-'s**:

he has met → **he's** met

she has studied → **she's** studied

it has gone → **it's** gone

my friend has arrived → **my friend's** arrived

Contractions with 'will':

will becomes **-'ll**:

I will wait for you → **I'll** wait for you

it will snow tomorrow → **it'll** snow tomorrow

they will meet us → **they'll** meet us

Contractions with 'not':

not becomes **-n't**:

we **do not** → we **don't**

he **should not** → he **shouldn't**

they **are not** → they **aren't**

BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

6 Minute Vocabulary

Adjective order



NB: This is not a word-for-word transcript

Finn

Hello and welcome to 6 Minute Vocabulary with me Finn...

Catherine

And me Catherine. And today's show is all about adjective order.

Finn

Adjectives – yes, those useful words we use to describe things. We'll look at what adjective order is – and how to use it.

Catherine

There'll be a nice, easy quiz...

Finn

And we'll leave you with a small, but meaningful tip for learning vocabulary.

Catherine

So: let's start off with Nikki and Joe who are talking in a furniture shop.

Finn

Here's a question to think about while you listen: what did Nikki's grandparents have?

Catherine

What did Nikki's grandparents have? Let's find out.

INSERT

Nikki

Joe! Come and sit on this sofa!

Joe

It's really uncomfortable.

Nikki

I know... but I've always wanted a big, old, leather sofa. My grandparents had one when I was little.

Joe

That's not a good reason to buy a horrible sofa! The one with the stripy blue cotton cushions looks a lot nicer.

Nikki

Maybe... Ooh what's this... Look, a beautiful green and blue Turkish kilim!

Joe

Kilim? Oh, a little carpet. Sofas first, Nikki.

Finn

So, that's Joe and Nikki. And we asked you: what did Nikki's grandparents have?

Catherine

And the answer is: they had *a big, old, leather sofa*.

Finn

That's right. And the phrase *a big, old, leather sofa* is our first example of **adjective order**.

Catherine

Now, when we use two or more adjectives together to describe a noun, the order we put them in is important. For example, we don't usually say *an old, leather, big sofa*.

Finn

So for our sofa example, first it's size - so *big*, then age - *old*, and then material - *leather*. *A big, old, leather sofa*.

Catherine

So that's size, age, and material type. And each new adjective in the list needs to go in the right place.

Finn

For example, colour goes between age and material type. So we can say: *a big, old, red, leather sofa*.

Catherine

Now some people find it difficult to remember the adjective order...

Finn

But there's a good tip which is: the adjective with the meaning most closely related to the noun goes nearest to it.

Catherine

And in our example, the material type – *leather* – is most closely connected to the noun. *Big, old* and *red* are more general. So: *big, old, red, leather sofa*. Another one please, Finn?

Finn

Blue stripy cotton cushions.

Catherine

That's colour – *blue*, quality - *stripy*, and material type - *cotton*. *Blue stripy cotton cushions.*

Finn

And Nikki got very excited about a *beautiful green and blue Turkish kilim*.

Catherine

Did she? I can understand that.

Finn

Yes. So it's a beautiful green and blue Turkish kilim. There we had opinion: beautiful, and then colours: green and blue, we had two colours joined by 'and', and then country: Turkish.

IDENT

You're listening to BBC Learning English.

Finn

And we're talking about adjective order. And you might have noticed that we used some adjectives at the beginning of the programme.

Catherine

We had *nice, easy quiz* – with two opinion adjectives. *Easy* has a closer connection to the noun *quiz* than *nice*. So we put *easy* next to the noun. *A nice, easy quiz*.

Finn

A nice, easy quiz. And another one: *a small but meaningful tip*.

Catherine

We can put 'but' between adjectives when they seem a bit unusual next to each other. Like *small, but meaningful*.

Finn

Strange, but true, eh, Catherine?

Catherine

Indeed. Nothing strange about vocabulary. So let's hear today's examples again. First, size, age, colour, and material.

Finn

Big, old, red, leather sofa.

Catherine

And *leather* has the strongest connection to the noun. Next, colour, quality, and material.

Finn

Blue stripy cotton cushions.

Catherine

And opinion, colour, and country.

Finn

Beautiful green and blue Turkish kilim.

Catherine

Right. And now it's quiz time. Put these adjectives in the right order. Number 1. *I love my ... old, smelly, big dog.*

Finn

Right: *I love my big, old, smelly dog.*

Catherine

Good. Number 2. *This is a ... Moroccan, simple, but delicious recipe.*

Finn

This is a simple, but delicious, Moroccan recipe.

Catherine

Very good. And that brings us almost to the end of the programme.

Finn

But before we go, here's that tip we promised you, and it's a game this time. Now, this is a game to play with a friend to practise describing things. Think of a noun but don't tell your friend what it is. Then give adjective clues to help them guess the noun.

Catherine

Good game. Do you want to play?

Finn

Let's give it a go.

Catherine

Brilliant. There's more about this at www.bbclearningenglish.com. Join us again for more 6 Minute Vocabulary.

Both

Goodbye!

Vocabulary points to take away

1 opinion	2 size	3 age	4 colour	5 quality	6 origin	7 material type	Noun
	<i>big</i>	<i>old</i>	<i>red</i>			<i>leather</i>	<i>sofa</i>
			<i>blue</i>	<i>stripy</i>		<i>cotton</i>	<i>cushions</i>
<i>beautiful</i>			<i>green and blue</i>		<i>Turkish</i>		<i>kilim</i>
	<i>big</i>	<i>old</i>		<i>smelly</i>			<i>dog</i>
<i>lovely</i>			<i>pink and white</i>			<i>silk</i>	<i>curtains</i>
				<i>simple but delicious</i>	<i>Moroccan</i>		<i>recipe</i>
<i>nice easy</i>							<i>quiz</i>
	<i>small but meaningful</i>						<i>tip</i>
<i>strange but true</i>							<i>fact</i>
<i>helpful</i>					<i>English</i>		<i>tip</i>

BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

6 Minute Vocabulary

Similar words



NB: This is not a word-for-word transcript

Rob

Hello and welcome to 6 Minute Vocabulary with me Rob...

Sophie

And me Sophie. And today's show is all about similar words.

Rob

Yes, similar words – words that are close in meaning, but which we use in different ways. We'll look at what they are, what they mean and how to use them.

Sophie

We're hoping for high scores in our quiz...

Rob

And we'll leave you with a big tip for learning vocabulary.

Sophie

So, first let's listen to two architects travelling up the Burj Khalifa building in Dubai.

Rob

Here's a question to think about while you listen: what's special about this building?

Sophie

What's special about this building? Let's find out.

Insert 1

Marisa

We've reached the top. How high are we?

Jon

We're on the 124th floor.

Marisa

Wow – so this is the tallest building in the world. It's pretty impressive.

Jon

You can really see how big the city is. And also what a large number of construction projects are happening here.

Marisa

So why did we come here today?

Jon

Well, I've got some big ideas about our next building project that I want to discuss!

Rob

So, Jon and Marisa are architects. And we asked you: what's special about the Burj Khalifa?

Sophie

And the answer is: it's the tallest building in the world.

Rob

And 'tall' is one of today's **similar words**.

Sophie

That's right, and 'high' is another. These words have a similar meaning – they describe something that is more than average height.

Rob

So what's the difference, Sophie?

Sophie

We usually use 'high' for things that are wider than their vertical height, for example, high mountains or a high wall. And we use 'tall' for things that are narrower than their vertical height, like people or trees.

Rob

Or buildings – as we heard just now. Buildings with many floors often have greater height than width, like the Burj Khalifa.

Sophie

That's right. But we can also talk about 'high buildings': *Sherlock Holmes fell from the top of a high building.*

Rob

Context is always important for choosing the right word. We use 'high' in this sentence because it's the position of the top of the building that's important – not the building as a whole.

Sophie

Great explanation, Sherlock. Another example?

Rob

OK. 'Big' and 'large'. These words both mean something that is more than average size. In general, we use 'big' more often than 'large' – and we use it to talk about real things, like 'big cities', and abstract things, like 'big ideas'.

Sophie

What's your big idea for today, Rob?

Rob

Well, my big idea of the day is world peace. You hear about so much death and destruction in the news I really think that world peace is what we should be aiming for.

Sophie

Well, that is a big idea – big because unfortunately it's quite an abstract idea, which is why we say big idea and not large idea. So, when do we use large?

Rob

OK, well, we use 'large' when we want to sound more formal, for example, *Dubai has the largest population in the United Arab Emirates.*

Sophie

We also use 'large' in some fixed expressions. Jon talks about Dubai having 'a large number of construction projects' in progress.

IDENT

6 Minute Vocabulary from bbclearningenglish.com.

Rob

And we're talking about similar words. Now let's hear today's words again.

Sophie

Big and *large*. Meaning more than average size.

Rob

'Big' for real and abstract things: *big city, big house, big decision, big ideas*. 'Large' for real things with a more formal tone: *a large population, a large number of projects, a large amount of money*.

Sophie

High and *tall*. Meaning more than average height.

Rob

'High' for things that are wider than their vertical height: *high mountains, high wall, high windows, high bookshelf*. 'Tall' for things that are narrower than their vertical height: *tall buildings, tall people, tall trees, tall grass, tall Sophie!*

Sophie

Thanks Rob! And remember that context is very important!

Rob

Thank you Sophie. And now it's quiz time. Is the English in these sentences right or wrong?
Number 1: *My brother is 180cm high.*

Sophie

And the answer is: Wrong. *He's 180cm tall.*

Rob

Number 2. *I looked down from the high window to the garden below.*

Sophie

And the answer is: Right. And finally, number 3. *Moving house is a large decision to make.*

Rob

And the answer is: Wrong. It's *a big decision!*

Sophie

And that brings us almost to the end of the programme.

Rob

But before we go, here's our big tip for remembering vocabulary: use internet search engines to check how often words are used together. It'll help you choose the right words!

Sophie

There's more about this at bbclearningenglish.com. Join us again for more 6 Minute Vocabulary.

Both

Bye!

Vocabulary points to take away

Similar words	Definition	Example sentence
tall	more than average height	<i>Burj Khalifa is the tallest building in the world.</i>
high		<i>My brother is six foot tall.</i>
big	more than average size	<i>Sherlock Holmes fell from the top of a high building.</i>
large		<i>I put the books on a high shelf.</i>
		<i>You can see how big the city is.</i>
		<i>Moving house is a big decision.</i>
		<i>Dubai has the largest population in the United Arab Emirates.</i>
		<i>I made a large amount of money this year.</i>

BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

6 Minute Vocabulary

Compound nouns



NB: This is not a word-for-word transcript

Alice

Hello and welcome to 6 Minute Vocabulary with me Alice...

Finn

And me, Finn. Today we're looking at compound nouns.

Alice

What are you eating, Finn??

Finn

Popcorn. I've also got some ice cream – do you want some Alice?

Alice

Well, maybe after the show.

Finn

[clears throat] Sorry. In today's show, we're looking at compound nouns.

Alice

We'll look at what they are, what they mean and how to use them.

Finn

There'll be a quiz...

Alice

And we'll leave you with a tasty top tip for learning vocabulary.

Finn

So, first up: we're going to listen to Bill and his daughter-in-law talking about Bill's computer.

Alice

And here's a question to think about while you listen: what's wrong with Bill's laptop?

Finn

What's wrong with Bill's laptop? Let's find out.

INSERT

Bill

I'm having problems with this new software.

Susan

Where's Mike? He's good with computers.

Bill

He's buying postcards at the post office, I think.

Susan

Let's have a look then. I think I can fix this.

Bill

Susan, you're my favourite daughter-in-law! But should I buy a new laptop?

Susan

I think you'll have to Bill. This keyboard doesn't work at all.

STING

Alice

So, that's Bill and his daughter-in-law. And we asked you: what's wrong with Bill's laptop?

Finn

And the answer is: the keyboard doesn't work.

Alice

Now, **keyboard** is a key word in today's show because it's an example of a compound noun.

Finn

That's right. In English vocabulary, we often put two or more nouns together to form a new noun, with a meaning that combines the meanings of the two original nouns. We call these words compound nouns.

Alice

For example, **keyboard**. The second part – board – names the thing we are talking about.

Finn

The first part tells us what type of thing it is – it's a board with keys.

Alice

Now, we usually write **keyboard** as one word. Same with **laptop**, **software** and **postcard**. But we write others as two words.

Finn

For example, **post office** – it's an office where we post things and we write it as two words.

Alice

Unfortunately there aren't really any rules about when to write compound nouns as one word and when to write them as two words – so be sure to use a good dictionary!

IDENT

You're listening to bbclearningenglish.com.

Alice

And we're talking about compound nouns. And if you were listening carefully earlier on you might have noticed a few compound nouns right at the start. **Popcorn** was one of them. We also heard **ice cream** - another compound noun!

Finn

And you may also have noticed how these words are pronounced. With compound nouns, the stress usually goes on the first part, like this – **popcorn, ice cream, keyboard**. What's our final example, Alice?

Alice

Daughter-in-law. This compound noun is made of a noun and a prepositional phrase.

Finn

Now, when we write three-word compounds, we usually use hyphens – little dashes - between the words. This shows the three words go together.

Alice

And the plural is **daughters-in-law**, not **daughter-in-laws**. We are talking about two daughters – so we add the plural 's' to this word.

Finn

Do you have any daughters-in-law, Alice?

Alice

No I don't Finn. I'm far too young to have any daughters-in-law. But I do have a sister-in-law, and she's a lovely woman. Let's hear about compound nouns again.

Finn

They're fixed expressions formed from two or three words linked together in different ways. There are compounds we write as one word, like **keyboard**, **software**, and **popcorn**.

Alice

But we write some of them as two separate words, like **post office** and **ice cream**.

Finn

Now it's time for a quiz. I'm going to say a compound noun and I'm also going to say whether we write it as one word, two words or with hyphens. You decide if this is true or false. Ready? Number 1. **Popcorn**. Two words.

Alice

False. It's one word.

Finn

Number 2. **Ice cream**. One word.

Alice

False! It's two words.

Finn

And number 3. **Daughters-in-law**. With hyphens.

Alice

True!

Finn

That's right, it has hyphens. Well done if you got those right.

Alice

And that brings us almost to the end of the programme.

Finn

But just before we finish, here's today's top tip for learning vocabulary: practise the pronunciation of compound nouns. The stress is on the first word. Try saying 'hot dog' with an equal stress on both words: this means a dog that is hot. Then say it again with the stress on the first word: hot dog is a type of sausage snack.

Alice

Great, thank you Finn. That's wonderful. There's more about this at bbclearningenglish.com. Join us again for more 6 Minute Vocabulary.

Both

Goodbye!

Vocabulary points to take away

Compound nouns are nouns that are made up of a combination of two (or sometimes more) nouns or a combination of a noun and a prepositional phrase. Some examples of these are:

- popcorn
- keyboard
- hot dog
- ice cream
- daughter-in-law
- father-in-law

There are three ways that compound nouns can be written: with the two nouns making up the compound noun placed together **without a space** between them, with the two nouns **separated by a space**, and with the words **connected by hyphens** (a hyphen is this punctuation mark -)

There are no rules for the first two ways of writing compound nouns (with or without a space between the two nouns), so it is a good idea to check in a good dictionary. You can also check whether you can write plural forms of these compound nouns (e.g. **keyboards**)

Form

Without a space:

- pop + corn = popcorn
- key + board = keyboard
- post + card = postcard

With a space:

- hot + dog = hot dog
- ice + cream = ice cream
- alarm + clock = alarm clock

The third way of writing compounds here is a combination of a **noun** (daughter) and a **prepositional phrase** (-in-law). When we write these the form is:

- daughter + -in-law = daughter-in-law
- father + -in-law = father-in-law

Pronunciation

We pronounce most compound nouns, especially those made up of two nouns, with the **stress on the first syllable**. This is important as it can change the meaning.

hot dog (the same stress on each word) = a dog that is hot

hot dog (more stress on the first word) = a snack made from a bread bun and a sausage

BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

6 Minute Vocabulary

Homophones



NB: This is not a word-for-word transcript

Neil

Hello and welcome to 6 Minute Vocabulary. I'm Neil.

Sophie

And I'm Sophie. Hi, Neil, I've got a question for you.

Neil

OK...

Sophie

What's black and white and read all over?

Neil

What's black and white, and red all over? I don't know that. Go on, tell me...

Sophie

A newspaper.

Neil

Oh – I see... so it wasn't the colour red, but read [/red/] as in the past form of read [/ri:d/]. White paper, black writing and the 'read all over' bit means people read it. Very good, Sophie. You should go into comedy.

Sophie

I'm not too sure about that, Neil. Sorry for the bad joke everyone, but words that sound the same but have different meanings is actually our topic for today's show.

Neil

That's right – homophones, words that sound the same but have different spellings and different meanings... Let's listen to Mark and Jane.

Sophie

Mark's just had an accident in the kitchen.

Neil

And here's a question for you to think about while you listen: what has Mark got on his jeans?

INSERT

Jane

What's wrong, Mark? You look really angry.

Mark

What's wrong, Jane?! Can't you see? I've got flour all over my jeans.

Jane

You've got a flower on your jeans? I didn't know you liked pretty things...

Mark

Not a flower, Jane. Flour! Look.

Jane

Ahh, Mark! You're making me a birthday cake. Ahh...

Neil

So, that's Mark and Jane.

Sophie

And we asked you what Mark had got on his jeans.

Neil

And of course, the answer was **flour**. The kind of flour you use to make bread and cakes. And **flour** is spelt **f-l-o-u-r**.

Sophie

Jane thought it was a different kind of **flower**, f-l-o-w-e-r, the brightly coloured and sweet-smelling plant you might have in your garden.

Neil

That's right, **flour**, f-l-o-u-r, and **flower**, f-l-o-w-e-r, are homophones – words that sound the same, but have different spellings and different meanings. Now, homophones can be difficult to learn, and the reason is because they sound exactly the same.

Sophie

That's right. And here are some more examples...

Neil

Mail, m-a-i-l, meaning letters and parcels you send in the post, and **male**, m-a-l-e, the opposite of female.

Sophie

And here's another one: **right**, r-i-g-h-t, the opposite of left, and **write**, w-r-i-t-e, like write a letter.

Neil

Here's one: **peace**, p-e-a-c-e, when it's quiet and calm, and **piece**, p-i-e-c-e, a part of something – a piece of cake!

Sophie

And one more: **tail**, t-a-i-l, the long, narrow part that sticks out of the back of an animal's body and **tale**, t-a-l-e, a kind of story. What's your favourite fairy tale, Neil?

Neil

Well, I really like The Emperor's New Clothes. I think it's really relevant still today. Even for grown-ups.

Sophie

It's a great story.

IDENT

You're listening to bbclearningenglish.com.

Neil

And we're talking about homophones.

Sophie

That's words which are spelt differently and have different meanings, but sound the same.

Neil

And now it's time for a quiz. I'm going to read a sentence with one of the homophones from today's show. Try to spell the word correctly as you listen and Sophie will tell you the answers afterwards.

Sophie

Good luck!

Neil

Are you ready? Number one. **Ben gave his girlfriend a flower for Valentine's Day.** Now how do you spell **flower** there?

Sophie

Unless she wanted to bake bread, he gave her a **flower, f-l-o-w-e-r.**

Neil

Correct. Well done if you got that one right. Number two. **The dog is wagging its tail.**
How do you spell **tail?**

Sophie

This is part of an animal's body, so it's **t-a-i-l.**

Neil

And well done if you got that one at home. Finally: **The postman put the letters on the table on the right.** How do you spell **right?**

Sophie

The table's on the **right**, not on the left, so it's **r-i-g-h-t.**

Neil

Well done to everyone at home who got those right.

Sophie

And that almost brings us to the end of the programme. But before we go, here's today's top tip for learning vocabulary. Homophones are difficult to spell correctly when you hear them because they sound the same. So, if you think a word might be a homophone, read or listen to the words around it very carefully. That will help you get a better idea what word it is and how to spell it.

Neil

There's more about homophones at bbclearningenglish.com. Join us again for more 6 Minute Vocabulary.

Both

Bye!

Vocabulary points to take away

red - the colour. 'I bought a red dress to wear at the party.'

read - the past of read. 'I read that book last year.'

flour - the main ingredient in bread. 'I need half a kilo of flour for this recipe'.

flower - the brightly coloured and sweet-smelling part of a plant. 'My favourite flowers are roses.'

mail - letters and parcels you send in the post. 'I haven't opened my mail yet.'

male - the opposite of female. 'This hospital has separate male and female wards.'

right - the opposite of left. 'Most people are right-handed.'

write - write a letter. 'I write to my sister in America every week.'

peace - quiet and calm. 'The war continued for several months while the peace agreement was finalised.'

piece - a part of something. 'Would you like a piece of cake?'

tail - the long, narrow part that sticks out of the back of an animal's body. 'Cats use their tails to help them balance.'

tale - a kind of story. 'My favourite fairy tale is Sleeping Beauty.'

BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

6 Minute Vocabulary

Weather words



NB: This is not a word-for-word transcript

Rob

Hello and welcome to 6 Minute Vocabulary. I'm Rob...

Catherine

And I'm Catherine. And our topic today is weather. Now Rob, apparently, British people love to talk about the weather. Do you think that's true?

Rob

Absolutely, you know me, I'm talking about it all the time. And in today's programme, we'll look at some key weather vocabulary and show you how to use it in different types of sentences.

Catherine

There'll be a quiz...

Rob

And we'll give you a top tip to help you learn vocabulary more effectively.

Catherine

So, on with the show! We'll start by listening to Harvey, talking about the weather where he lives. And we have a question for you at home.

Rob

The question is: what is the weather like for Harvey in spring?

INSERT

Harvey

I live in the north. I love it here, but the weather isn't too good. There's a lot of **rain** in the autumn and winter. In fact, **it's raining** right now. Sometimes it **snows** in the winter. In the spring the weather's usually quite **windy**. But it's lovely and **sunny** in summer.

STING

Rob

So, that's Harvey. And we asked you about the weather in spring. What's it like?

Catherine

Harvey said that the weather gets quite **windy** in spring.

Rob

Well done if you got that right. And we'll talk more about windy weather later. First, let's talk about the rain! Listen to this clip:

INSERT

There's a lot of **rain** in the autumn and winter.

Catherine

In this sentence, **rain** is a noun, so in a sentence, we can say **there is a lot of rain**, or we can add a main verb, for example: **I like rain**. Rob - how do you feel about rain?

Rob

I hate rain because I like to do a lot of cycling and when it rains I get wet. But the word **rain** can also be a verb. For example: **it rains a lot** here in London; in fact, look out the window: **it's raining now!**

Catherine

It's always raining in London! And can add a letter 'y' to the end of rain to make the adjective **rainy**. Rob, do you use an umbrella on **rainy** days?

Rob

No I don't, I wear a coat – more practical.

Catherine

More 'blokey'!

Rob

More 'blokey', yes. So that's the noun – rain; the verb – rain; and the adjective – rainy. The word **snow** works in the same way. Listen to this another clip.

INSERT

Sometimes it **snows** in the winter.

Catherine

Sometimes it snows in winter. The word **snow** there is a verb.

Rob

As a noun, we can say: **sometimes there is snow.**

Catherine

Or we can add the letter 'y' to make an adjective. **Sometimes it's snowy.**

Rob

Good. Now for another clip. Here's Harvey talking about the weather in Spring.

INSERT

In the spring the weather's usually quite **windy**.

Catherine

In the spring the weather's usually quite **windy**. In this sentence, **windy** is an adjective.

Rob

We can also use the word **wind** as a noun. **Is there much wind today** Catherine?

Catherine

There's quite a lot actually, I got quite blown around. So that's **wind** as a noun and **windy** as an adjective, but we can't use **wind** as a verb. You have to use a different verb like **blow**. The wind is blowing very hard today...

Rob

Right. And the word **sun** is the same. It's a noun:

Catherine

The sun is hot...

Rob

It can make an adjective:

Catherine

It's lovely and sunny...

Rob

But it isn't a verb. You need a different word for that.

Catherine

The sun is shining, even though it isn't!

IDENT

6 Minute Vocabulary from BBC Learning English.

Rob

And we're looking at weather words. Ok, it's quiz time! Are these sentences correct or wrong? Number one. **It's sunning today.**

Catherine

That's wrong. You can't say **it's sunning**, because sun isn't a verb. Instead, say **it's sunny** or **the sun is shining**.

Rob

Number two. **There was a lot of snow last week.**

Catherine

And that's correct.

Rob

Here comes the last one. **I don't like windy.**

Catherine

And that's also wrong. **Windy** is an adjective, so we need to add a noun here. Say: **I don't like windy weather**. Or, use **wind** as a noun and say: **I don't like wind**.

Rob

And that's the end of the quiz. Well done if you got those right. And we've just got time for a top tip for learning vocabulary.

Catherine

We have Rob, and this is it: when you learn a new word for the first time, you'll learn it more effectively if you use it a few times in the first 24 hours. So, if you learn a new word in the morning Rob, look it up again in the evening before you go to sleep.

Rob

I'll do that. Thank you! There's more about this at bbclearningenglish.com. Join us again soon for more 6 Minute Vocabulary.

Both

Bye!

Vocabulary points to take away:

noun	verb	adjective
rain There is a lot of rain .	rain It rains a lot.	rainy It's very rainy .
snow There is a bit of snow .	snow It snows in winter.	snowy It's a bit snowy .
wind I don't like wind .	blow The wind blew the trees over.	windy It's always windy .
sun The sun is hot today.	shine I wear sunglasses when the sun shines .	sunny It's sunny today.

BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

6 Minute Vocabulary

New words



NB: This is not a word-for-word transcript

Rob

Hello! Welcome to 6 Minute Vocabulary. I'm Rob.

Catherine

And I'm Catherine. And today we're talking about new words.

Rob

Yes, new words in English. We'll look at where they come from, why we need them and who uses them.

Catherine

We'll have a quiz; and we'll also bring you a top tip for learning vocabulary.

Rob

But first, here's Iris, talking about a photograph she took.

Catherine

And here's a question: is Iris happy with her photo?

INSERT

Iris

So here's a **selfie** from a **flashmob** I went to – there's everyone dancing and stuff, and that's my idiot boyfriend at the back: he decided to **photobomb** me! It's quite funny though... I put it on my social networks – but the **trolls** said we looked stupid! I don't care though, I like it.

STING

Rob

So that's Iris. And she said she liked the photo.

Catherine

Good. Now there were a few words there which are quite new in English. Let's have a look at some of them. Listen again to Iris. Two questions this time. One: what type of photo did she take and two: where was she?

INSERT | CLIP |

So this is a **selfie** from a **flashmob** I went to...

Catherine

Iris took a **selfie**, and she was at a **flashmob**. Let's take those words one at a time.

Rob

Yes, first of all, a very popular word now, **selfie**. That's a photograph you take of yourself, by holding your camera or phone out in front of you at arm's length.

Catherine

Yeah, **selfie**. Take many **selfies** Rob?

Rob

Absolutely not, no.

Catherine

None at all?

Rob

Don't want to look at myself, thank you.

Catherine

But where does the word **selfie** come from? Well the word **self-portrait** has been around for a long time. It means 'a picture you draw or paint of yourself'. So **selfie** probably comes from that.

Rob

And that's one way words come into English. Get an old word, change it to fit a new situation and you've got a new word like **selfie**. And that's one reason why we need new words – to talk about new situations, like all these self-portraits that everyone's taking.

Catherine

Yeah, good. Now another way to make a new word for a new situation is to get two old words and put them together. Iris was at a **flashmob**. Now, a **flashmob** is a crowd of people who gather together quickly and suddenly – it's often organised through social media. Now the word **flash** can mean 'something that happens very quickly', and a **mob** is a crowd of people. So when you put them together, you've got the perfect new word for the situation. Ever been on a **flashmob** Rob?

Rob

I'm afraid not, no one's invited me actually.

Catherine

Really? I'll invite you on the next one I go on.

Rob

Thank you. Anyway, you've probably noticed that these words are mostly made by people on social media. It's not the only place that new words come from, but a lot of new words are coming from social media at the moment.

Catherine

Next example. Iris's boyfriend jumped into her **selfie** at the last minute. He's actually in the photo even though she wasn't expecting him to be! And here's the word for it:

INSERT 1 CLIP 2

...and that's my idiot boyfriend at the back: he decided to **photobomb** me!

Rob

So: **photobomb**. That's a new word made from two old words: **photo**, obviously, and **bomb**, the thing that suddenly explodes. And we've got similar new words like **weatherbomb**...

Catherine

That's a sudden period of extreme weather, and then there's **thoughtbomb** where people get together and, basically – think!

Rob

Yes, that's a new word for what we used to call 'brainstorm'...?

Catherine

It is, yes. Very similar.

Good, right, OK. Well now, Iris used another new word to describe people who post horrible comments on social media. Listen carefully to this:

INSERT 1 CLIP 3

I put it on my social networks – but the **trolls** said we looked stupid!

Rob

A person who posts negative comments on social media is called a **troll**. And **troll** is actually an old word for an imaginary creature – a kind of monster. You find lots of trolls in old Scandinavian stories – and the word's been around in English for a long time.

Catherine

So an old word, with a new meaning – but there's a link there to the original meaning isn't there Rob?

Rob

Yes that's right, because both kinds of troll are quite ugly in their own way – either in their looks or behaviour.

IDENT

6 Minute Vocabulary from BBC Learning English.

Rob

And we're talking about new words. So Catherine, have you ever been trolled?

Catherine

Thankfully I haven't Rob, I choose my friends very carefully on social media.

Rob

Good, good.

Catherine

Right, it's quiz time! Question one: what's the word for a group of people who gather together suddenly, and it's normally organised on social media?

Rob

Any ideas? The word is **flashmob**. Question two: what word means: 'jump into someone else's photograph'?

Catherine

That's **photobomb**. Finally, what's the word for people who write nasty, negative comments online?

Rob

They are **trolls**. OK, well done if you got those right at home.

Catherine

Well done indeed. And now here's a vocabulary tip. To keep your English right up-to-date, join some social media groups where people use English. Social media is a great place to pick up words and expressions that are in use, even though they're not in the dictionary.

Rob

Yes, and new words are being invented all the time aren't they?

Catherine

They are, yes.

Rob

OK, well there's more about this at bbclearningenglish.com. You can also find us on Twitter, Facebook and many other social networks but, don't **troll** us please.

Catherine

No.

Rob

OK. Join us again soon for more 6 Minute Vocabulary.

Both

Bye!

Vocabulary points to take away:

flashmob (noun)

a crowd of people who gather together quickly and suddenly, often organised through social media

selfie (noun)

a photo that you take of yourself, normally on a mobile phone

photobomb (verb/noun)

to suddenly put yourself into someone else's photograph

weatherbomb (noun)

a short period of extreme weather

thoughtbomb (noun)

a group session where people think together; brainstorm

troll (noun/verb)

person who behaves badly online – for example, someone who posts negative, insulting comments on social media

BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

6 Minute Vocabulary

Male and female job words



NB: This is not a word-for-word transcript

Catherine

Hi! Welcome to 6 Minute Vocabulary. My name is Catherine, and I'm here with Rob.

Rob

Hello everyone. Today we're going to be talking about different words for jobs, and especially how those words change depending on whether a man or a woman is doing the job.

Catherine

Yes, and listen carefully because we're going to give you a quick quiz.

Rob

And then you'll get a tip to help with your vocabulary learning.

Catherine

Right, so let's get started! First we're going to listen to listen to Joe, talking about how he met his girlfriend, Judith.

Rob

While you listen, here's a question for you to think about: what is Judith's job now? Listen carefully!

INSERT

Joe

Well, I used to be an **actor**, and I met Judith at work. We were doing a play about a **policeman**, who falls in love with a **waitress**. I played the **policeman**, and Judith played the **waitress** – and sure enough, we fell in love! Later, I quit acting, and now I'm a **businessman**. But Judith has a successful acting career – right now, she's on a film shoot: she's playing a **firefighter**!

Catherine

So, the question was: what is Judith's job now?

Rob

And the answer is, Judith is an **actress**. Right now, she's making a film.

Catherine

The first job that Joe mentioned was **actor**. Now, this is one of those jobs where the word changes, depending on whether a man or a woman is doing the job. So, we say that a man is an **actor**, but a woman is an **actress**.

Rob

That's right. When Joe met Judith, she was playing a **waitress**. Again, we can say a man is a **waiter**, and a woman is a **waitress**.

Catherine

Yeah, so we've got **actor, actress; waiter, waitress**. You can hear the pattern, can't you?

Rob

I can, yes. Judith was playing a **waitress** in the play, but can you remember what Joe was playing? Listen again:

INSERT 1 CLIP 1

We were doing a play about a **policeman**, who falls in love with a **waitress**.

Catherine

Right, so Joe was playing a policeman, and we say that a man is a **policeman**, and a woman is a **policewoman**.

Rob

Now, Joe is a businessman because he's a man. But for a woman, we can say **businesswoman**.

Catherine

Yeah, so **policeman, policewoman; businessman, businesswoman**. Easy, isn't it?

Rob

Well maybe it's not quite so easy, because we know that Judith is making a film right now, but do you remember what sort of character she is playing? Listen again and check:

INSERT 1 CLIP 2

But Judith has a successful acting career – right now, she's on a film shoot: she's playing a **firefighter**!

Catherine

OK, so Judith is playing a **firefighter**.

Rob

But wait, hold on a minute Catherine, there's something strange about that word, **firefighter**.

Catherine

Yes, Indeed. A **waiter** is a man, and a **policewoman** is a woman. What about a **firefighter**? Man or woman? What is it?

Rob

Well, in fact, the word **firefighter** is the same for a man or a woman. More and more, in modern English, people prefer to use words for jobs which are the same for both sexes.

Catherine

They do. For example, some people prefer not to use the word **actress**. They just like to use the word **actor** for a man or a woman.

Rob

And instead of **policeman** or **policewoman**, we can say **police officer**. That's good for a man or a woman, too.

Catherine

And that's why we say **firefighter**. We don't say fireman, firewoman, we just use **firefighter** these days for everyone.

IDENT

6 Minute Vocabulary from BBC Learning English.

Catherine

And we're talking about job words that change depending on whether a man or a woman is doing the job...

Rob

...and job words that are the same for both men and women.

Catherine

Those are my preferred options, what about you Rob?

Rob

I think it's easier and less complicated, yes, to use those sort of generic words.

Catherine

Yeah, like **presenter**.

Rob

Like **presenter**. Not 'presenteress' or anything like that.

Catherine

Indeed. And some job titles that used to be different for men and women are now being replaced by a single job title for both sexes. For example on planes, in the past, we used to have **stewards** and **stewardesses** looking after the passengers. Now we just have, Rob...

Rob

Flight attendants. And instead of a **chairman** or a **chairwoman** in charge of a formal meeting, these days we often hear the word **chairperson**.

Catherine

Or just **chair**.

Rob

OK.

Catherine

Right, so now it's time to see how much you can remember. And we've got three quiz questions for you. Number one: if the word for a man is **businessman**, what's the word for a woman?

Rob

And the answer is **businesswoman**. Second, if the word for a woman is **waitress**, what's the word for a man?

Catherine

Waiter! Right, and just one more question: if a man can be a **policeman**, and a woman can be a **policewoman**, what's the word that's equally good for a man or a woman?

Rob

It's **police officer**! Did you get all those right? Well done if you did!

Catherine

And before we go, here's a top tip to help you learn your vocabulary more effectively.

Rob

When you're out and about, walking down the street, or sitting on the bus, notice the people you see, and say the words for them to yourself in English - like **waitress** or **police officer**.

Catherine

Or **presenter**.

Rob

Indeed.

Catherine

There's more about this at bbclearningenglish.com. Join us again soon for more 6 Minute Vocabulary. Bye!

Rob

Bye!

Vocabulary points to take away

For a man:	For a woman:	For a man or a woman:
actor	actress	actor
waiter	waitress	(sometimes) waiter
policeman	policewoman	police officer
businessman	businesswoman	(sometimes) businessperson
chairman	chairwoman	chairperson / chair
fireman	(sometimes) firewoman	firefighter
presenter	presenter	presenter
steward	stewardess	flight attendant

BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

6 Minute Vocabulary

Strong adjectives



NB: This is not a word-for-word transcript

Rob

Hello and welcome to 6 Minute Vocabulary. I'm Rob, and this is Catherine.

Catherine

Hi! Today we've got a **fantastic** programme for you. It's all about **strong adjectives**.

Rob

Yes, it is. We'll give you a **wonderful** explanation of what they are and how to use them...

Catherine

We'll also give you some very useful advice on how to use intensifiers with adjectives...

Rob

And there'll be a **fabulous** quiz...

Catherine

And finally we'll give you an absolutely **amazing** tip to help you learn vocabulary.

Rob

Wow. OK, let's get going then, there's no time to waste. Here's Tom. Now, he took his girlfriend to the cinema and then for dinner afterwards. Very romantic! Let's hear how the evening went. While you're listening, try to answer this question: was it a successful evening out?

INSERT

Tom

We went to see that new film - I thought it was **quite funny**, but Jenny thought it was **hilarious**. We went for a meal: The food was **not so bad** but the service was **absolutely terrible**! We waited nearly an hour to get our food. When it finally arrived, I was **absolutely starving**!

Rob

So – the meal didn't go too well: Tom and Jenny had to wait a long time for their food – nearly an hour! What do you think about that Catherine?

Catherine

I wouldn't last that long. Twenty minutes, and I'd be gone.

Rob

Well, luckily, they liked the film. Listen to this clip:

INSERT | CLIP |

I thought it was **quite funny**, but Jenny thought it was **hilarious**.

Catherine

Tom said he thought the film was **quite funny**. **Quite funny**. Now, when we use an ordinary adjective, like **funny**, we can add a word like **quite**, or **very**, or **just a little bit**, to give more information about the adjective.

Rob

So, we can say the film was **quite funny**, or **very funny**, or **just a little bit funny**. These words are called intensifiers – and they are **quite useful**.

Catherine

They're **very useful** actually. Yes. So Tom thought the film was funny; but Jenny thought it was **hilarious**. And the word **hilarious** means – very, very funny.

Rob

Hilarious is a special kind of adjective – it already includes the idea of **very**.

Catherine

Right, and we call this type of adjective a strong adjective, and there are lots of them. For example, to mean **very good**, we can say:

Rob

Wonderful! Fabulous! Amazing!

Catherine

Thank you Rob. Three **fantastic** words there. But most of the time, we don't use intensifiers like **quite**, or **very**, or **just a little bit** with these strong adjectives, and that's because the idea of **very** is already in the word. So for example, **hilarious** means **very funny**, so **a little bit hilarious** would mean **a little bit very funny**, and that doesn't make sense, does it Rob?

Rob

Absolutely not, no. OK, well back to the clip. Tom used a couple of other strong adjectives, too. Listen again. What's the strong adjective?

INSERT 1 CLIP 2

The food was **not so bad** but the service was **absolutely terrible**!

Catherine

Well, Tom used the ordinary adjective **bad**, and he used it with an intensifier when he said **not so bad**.

Rob

But the strong adjective was **terrible**. **Terrible** means **very bad**.

Catherine

And this time, Tom used an intensifier that we usually only use with strong adjectives – he said it was **absolutely terrible**. So, when we want to make a strong adjective even stronger, we need to use one of these special intensifiers, like **absolutely**. So, we say **very bad**, but we say **absolutely terrible**.

Rob

And we don't usually say **absolutely bad**. Here's Tom using another strong adjective. Listen carefully, and see if you can catch it!

INSERT 1 CLIP 3

We waited for nearly an hour to get our food. When it finally arrived, I was **absolutely starving**!

Catherine

Tom used the phrase **absolutely starving**. **Starving** is a strong adjective, which means **very hungry**, and he used the intensifier **absolutely** to make it even stronger. **Absolutely starving**.

IDENT

6 Minute Vocabulary from BBC Learning English.

Rob

And today our **absolutely wonderful** topic is strong adjectives and intensifiers.

Catherine

And now it's time for a very quick quiz. Question one. What is the strong adjective for **funny**?

Rob

And the answer is **hilarious**. Question two. What is the strong adjective and intensifier for **very bad**?

Catherine

And the answer is **absolutely terrible**. Just one more question! Can you name three strong adjectives that mean **good**?

Rob

And in the programme we had **fantastic, wonderful, fabulous** and **amazing**, which describes me I think. And if you got all those right, you're **absolutely wonderful**.

Catherine

And we've just got time for that **fantastic** vocabulary tip we promised you. When you're learning adjectives, make a picture in your mind of someone or something that reminds you of that adjective. It will help you remember the word. For example, I think that Rob is **absolutely fantastic**.

Rob

You're just saying that Catherine, thank you very much.

Catherine

There's more about this at bbclearningenglish.com. Join us again soon for more 6 Minute Vocabulary. Bye!

Rob

Bye!

Vocabulary points to take away

Normal adjectives	Strong adjectives
funny	hilarious
bad	terrible
good	wonderful, amazing, fantastic, fabulous

Intensifiers for normal adjectives	Intensifiers for strong adjectives
very	absolutely
quite	
not so	
just a little bit	

BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

6 Minute Vocabulary

Multi-word verbs



NB: This is not a word-for-word transcript

Catherine

Hello and welcome to 6 Minute Vocabulary with me, Catherine...

Rob

And me, Rob. Hello. In this show we're going to **find out about** multi-word verbs.

Catherine

That's right: we're **looking into** verb phrases that are **made up of** more than one word. And if you'd like an example, Rob and I have used three of them already.

Rob

It's incredible: we have! Catherine you said **looking into** and **made up of**.

Catherine

Yep, and Rob you said **find out about**. And some people call this type of multi-word verb a phrasal verb.

Rob

They do. And in this programme, we'll look at lots of multi-word verbs...

Catherine

... we'll explain what they mean ...

Rob

There'll be a quiz ...

Catherine

And we'll leave you with a top tip for learning vocabulary.

Rob

So, let's get started by listening to Andre – a student from France who is studying in London.

Catherine

Yep, and he's talking about his weekend. And here are two questions for you while you listen. First, did Andre meet up with his friends?

Rob

And second, Andre's English is pretty good, but it sounds a bit unnatural. Why is that? Here's Andre.

INSERT

Andre

I wanted to **rendezvous** with friends at the shopping centre, but I couldn't find them. In the end, I **abandoned** the day. They said they couldn't find me, but I think they just **invented** a story!

Catherine

Thank you, Andre. And we asked you if Andre managed to meet his friends.

Rob

And sadly he didn't. He said he abandoned the day. Well done if you got that at home. But why did Andre's English sound unnatural?

Catherine

Well, we could understand him OK, but some of the words he used were a little bit too formal for everyday natural spoken English.

Rob

Yes, that's right. When we're speaking, some words, especially verbs that originally come from Latin – make us sound much too formal. Andre used quite a few of these – for example he said **abandon** the day.

Catherine

Yeah - abandon the day. Well, to sound more natural, Andre could use a multi-word verb instead, and say he **gave up on** the day. Now, **give up on something** has a very similar meaning to **abandon** in Andre's sentence – they both mean **stop doing something, because you're not succeeding**. And Andre stopped hoping he would find his friends.

Rob

So, **give up on** is a phrasal verb. In English, these are made up of verbs and prepositions.

Catherine

Yep so, we've got the verb **give** and the prepositions **up** and **on**. And Andre needs to use more of these phrasal verbs when he's speaking.

Rob

So, are we saying that these Latinate verbs are wrong? Or not as good as the multi-word verbs? Can we forget about learning Latinate verbs then?

Catherine

Well, that would be good, Rob. But, actually no, you do need to learn them and they're not wrong: it's just a question of context. You'll see a lot more of the Latinate verbs in written English and in formal English, so yep, you do need to learn both types, and use the right one in the right situation. So, for example, Andre said he said he planned to **rendezvous** with friends. Now, if he changes the Latin **rendezvous** to **meet up with**, the meaning doesn't really change, it just makes his speaking sound more natural.

Rob

OK, well, let's listen to one more example.

INSERT

Andre

I think they just invented a story!

Catherine

This would sound better as **I think they just made up a story**. When you **make something up**, you say something that isn't true.

Rob

And now, let's listen to Andre again, this time with the multi-word verbs...

INSERT

Andre

I wanted to **meet up with** friends at the shopping centre, but I couldn't find them. In the end, I **gave up on** the day. They said they couldn't find me, but I think they just **made up** a story!

Catherine

Well done Andre. That's a lot better.

IDENT

6 Minute Vocabulary from BBC Learning English.

Rob

And now it's quiz time! What goes in this gap? I'm going to _____ my family next weekend. Is it a) meet on with b) meet up to or c) meet up with?

Catherine

The verb is c) meet up with. Number 2. My brother isn't very reliable. He's always a) making up excuses b) making up excuses or c) inventing up excuses.

Rob

He's always... b) making up excuses. And number 3. What multi-word verb has a similar meaning to the verb **abandon**?

Catherine

And the answer is: **give up on**. Well done if you got those right at home.

That brings us almost to the end of today's programme.

Rob

But before we go, here's today's top tip for learning vocabulary: try to learn phrasal verbs and their Latin-based partners in pairs. That way, you'll have the right verb for the right situation. So, we're almost out of time, but Catherine very quickly can you remind us of some of these multi-word verbs we've heard today?

Catherine

Most certainly. We had **look into**, **made up of**, **find out about**, **meet up with**, **give up on** and **made up**.

Rob

Thanks. Very useful. There's more about this at BBC learning English dot com. Join us again for more 6 Minute Vocabulary.

Both

Bye!

Vocabulary points to take away

Latin-based verb	Phrasal verb
rendezvous	meet up with
abandon	give up on
invent (a story/an excuse)	make up (a story/an excuse)

BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

6 Minute Vocabulary

Onomatopoeia

The logo for BBC Learning English, featuring the letters 'BBC' in a white box above the words 'LEARNING ENGLISH' in white text on a teal background.

NB: This is not a word-for-word transcript

Rob

Hi! I'm Rob...

Catherine

...and I'm Catherine. Hello! Welcome to 6 Minute Vocabulary.

Rob

Our subject for today is onomatopoeia. That means, words that sound like the thing they mean. And Catherine and I will be trying to demonstrate some of these words today.

Catherine

Yes, like that sound most people's phones make when you get a text messages. We call that sound a **beep**.

Rob

Beep!

Catherine

That's it Rob, yeah. That's onomatopoeia: the word sounds like the thing it means. **Beep!**

Rob

Beep beep! Yes, have I got a message? Hold on. Right, OK. There are lots of examples of onomatopoeia in the English language, and we'll take a look at some of them on today's show.

Catherine

So let's start with a clip of Oliver. And he's talking about living in the city.

Rob

While you listen, try to answer this question: How does Oliver feel about city life?

INSERT

Oliver

It's too noisy for me! All the cars **zooming** around and **honking** their horns, music **blaring** in shops, machines **buzzing** and **bleeping**... even at night, it isn't quiet, you can

still hear the fridge **humming**, and the **rumble** of the traffic outside. Then I wish I was far away from the city, sleeping in a tent, with no sound except the **rustle** of the wind in the trees.

Catherine

So that's Oliver. And we asked you how he feels about city life.

Rob

And Oliver said it's too noisy for him.

Catherine

I know how he feels – London: same. Anyway, here's another question: what words did Oliver use to talk about the sounds of the city in the daytime? Listen again.

INSERT 1 CLIP 1

All the cars **zooming** around and **honking** their horns, music **blaring** in shops, machines **buzzing** and **bleeping**.

Rob

Lots of lovely vocabulary there! Oliver talked about cars **zooming** around. **Zoom**, spelt **z - o - o - m**, is a verb, which means 'to move very quickly, making a **zooming** sound'.

Catherine

Zoom, zoom.

Rob

Watch out!

Catherine

Then he mentioned the cars **honking** their horns. A **honk** – spelt **h - o - n - k** – is a short, loud sound – like a car horn makes. **Honk honk!**

Rob

OK, next, Oliver talked about music **blaring**. The verb to **blare**: that's **b - l - a - r - e**, means 'to make a loud, unpleasant sound' – like music that's much too loud. **Blaring!!!**

Catherine

You got teenage kids Rob?

Rob

Not yet, no.

Catherine

They'll be blaring their music soon enough. OK, and Oliver also mentioned machines **bleeping** and **buzzing**. Now a **bleep**...

Rob
Bleep bleep.

Catherine
That's one **b – l – double e – p** – is a short, high sound, which electronic devices make. Something like this: **Bleep, bleep, bleep.** That sounds like a heart monitor.

Rob
Very good.

Catherine
And a **buzz** – that's **b – u – z – z** – is a low, continuing sound, like machines and insects make.

Rob
Yes. Buzzzzzzzzzzzz...

Catherine
That's it Rob.

Rob
Like that, yes?

Catherine
Well done. Perfect.

Rob
Is there a bee in here? Now, the sounds of the city don't stop, even at night. Here's Oliver.

INSERT 1 CLIP 2
...you can still hear the fridge **humming**, and the **rumble** of the traffic outside.

Catherine
So he can hear the fridge **humming**. The word **hum – h – u – m** – describes a low, continuous sound. And a **hum** [HUMMMMMMMM] is different from a **buzz** [BUZZZZZZZZZ]! Can we listen to your hum and your buzz, Rob?

Rob
OK, why not? Here we go. [HUMMM] and [BUZZZ].

Catherine
Is that your fridge and your bee?

Rob
That's right, yes, in that order.

Catherine

Oliver also spoke about the **rumble** of the traffic out in the street. Now, a **rumble** – **r – u – m – b – l – e** – is a bit like a **buzz**, but there's a difference – a **buzz** [BUZZZZZZZZZZ] continues without changing, but a **rumble** goes up and down, like the wheels of a truck on rough ground going **rumble, rumble, rumble, rumble, rumble**.

Rob

Rumble. You carry on **rumbling**.

Catherine

OK.

Rob

Finally, Oliver spoke about the sound of the wind in the trees. Listen out for the word he used.

INSERT 1 CLIP 3

Then I wish I was far away from the city, sleeping in a tent, with no sound except the **rustle** of the wind in the trees.

Rob

Rustle describes the sound of the wind, A **rustle** is a soft, dry, moving sound. It's spelt **r – u – s – t – l – e**. And in pronunciation, the **t** is silent, so it's **rustle**. Rustle, rustle, rustle...

Catherine

Quite a nice sound really.

Rob

Thank you.

Catherine

Yeah.

IDENT

You're listening to BBC Learning English.

Catherine

And our subject today is onomatopoeia – words that sound like the thing they describe. And it's time for a quiz! Question one. Rob, what sound does a car horn make?

Rob

Easy, it's a **honk**! Question two: what sound does a fridge make?

Catherine

And it's **hum**. And the last question: what sound does the wind make in the trees?

Rob

The correct answer is **rustle**. And that's the end of today's quiz. Well done to you at home if you got them all right.

Catherine

And before we go, here's an idea to help you remember new vocabulary: choose one of your favourite songs in your first language, and write some new words for it, in English.

Rob

Yes, and then, practise singing your song! It will help you to remember the new words.

Catherine

There's more about this at bbclearningenglish.com. Join us again for more 6 Minute Vocabulary.

Both

Bye!

Vocabulary points to take away

noun	example	verb	example
-	-	to zoom	The motorbike zoomed down the road.
a honk	I heard a honk , then a car came around the corner.	to honk	Don't honk at me! I'm driving safely!
-	-	to blare	I can't sleep because of the music blaring next door.
a buzz	There was a buzz of conversation in the audience.	to buzz	There was a mosquito buzzing around the room.
a bleep	That bleep means that my battery is dying.	to bleep	My phone beeps whenever I get a text message.
a hum	There's a problem with my TV. It's making a loud hum .	to hum	I can hear something humming in the kitchen. Did you leave the dishwasher on?
a rumble	We saw the lightning, then we heard the rumble of thunder in the distance.	to rumble	The train rumbled down the track.
a rustle	There was a rustle in the bushes, then the fox appeared.	to rustle	He rustled the pages of the newspaper.

This is not a word-for-word transcript

Neil

Hello! And welcome to 6 Minute Vocabulary with me, Neil...

Catherine

... and me Catherine. Today we're talking about how to pronounce words that begin with the letter **c**.

Neil

We'll look at lots of examples...

Catherine

...we'll give you a quiz and we'll leave you with a top tip for remembering English spellings.

Neil

So, to start off, let's listen to Maria. She works in a circus – do you like circuses Catherine?

Catherine

When I was a kid I think I wanted to join a circus. These days I'm not so sure, performing animals – not my thing really.

Neil

Well Maria is a circus performer and we're going to hear her talking about how she started in the job.

Catherine

And here's a question to think about while you listen:

Neil

What didn't Maria do at weekends? Here she is.

INSERT

Maria

I started performing in my family's **circus** when I was nine years old. I loved it. At the weekends, me and my sisters didn't go to **cybercafes** or the **cinema** or hang around the

park smoking **cigarettes** like other teenagers. We practiced performing. I **celebrated** my 16th birthday by learning to ride a **cycle** that was only 20 **centimetres** high! My brother's bike was so high it reached the **ceiling**!

STING

Catherine

So Maria had an interesting childhood, didn't she?! And we asked you: what didn't she do at weekends?

Neil

And the answer is: She didn't go to the park or the **cinema** like other kids.

Catherine

And **cinema** is an important word in the show today because we spell it with a letter c, but we pronounce it with an /s/ sound. We don't say 'kinema', it's **cinema**. A lot of words that start with the letter **c** are pronounced with a /k/ sound, like **cake... crime, count, my name Catherine, card**, lots of them...

Neil

But most words that start with the letters **c-i** are pronounced with a /s/ sound. Words like **cinema, cigarette, and circus**. And that's rule one. Listen again.

INSERT CLIP I

I **started** performing in my family's **circus** when I was nine years old. I loved it. At the weekends, me and my sisters didn't go to **cybercafes** or the **cinema** or hang around the park smoking **cigarettes** like other teenagers.

Neil

Good. Now let's see how we pronounce words that start with the letters **c-e**. Listen to this clip and see if you can spot those words.

Maria

I **celebrated** my 16th birthday by learning to ride a **cycle** that was only 20 **centimetres** high! My brother's bike was so high it reached the **ceiling**!

Catherine

So we had three **c-e** words there: all pronounced with a /s/ sound. We had **celebrate, centimetre** and **ceiling**. That's our second rule.

Neil

And perhaps you spotted our third rule in that last clip...

Catherine

Yes, well done if you've already noticed that words like **cycle** and **cybercafé** are pronounced with a /s/ sound even though they are spelt with **c-y**. Here's the whole clip again.

Maria

I started performing in my family's **circus** when I was nine years old. I loved it. At the weekends, me and my sisters didn't go to **cybercafes** or the **cinema** or hang around the park smoking **cigarettes** like other teenagers. We practiced performing. I **celebrated** my 16th birthday by learning to ride a **cycle** that was only 20 **centimetres** high! My brother's bike was so high it reached the **ceiling**!

IDENT

6 Minute Vocabulary from BBC Learning English.

Neil

And we're talking about how to spell words that begin with the /s/ sound. When a word starts with the letters **c-e**, **c-i** or **c-y**, we usually pronounce it with a /s/ sound.

Catherine

Right, it's quiz time! How many words in these sentences are spelt with the letter **c** at the beginning? Number one, listen carefully. I **can't** see my **cycle** anywhere.

Neil

And there were two words with c at the beginning – **can't** and **cycle**.

Catherine

Excellent! Number two: **Christopher** has gone to the **cinema** but **Colin** is **coming** to the **cybercafé**.

Neil

There were five that time: **Christopher**, **cinema**, **Colin**, **coming**, **cybercafé**.

Catherine

OK. And get ready for number three: **Crazy coloured circus clowns create chaos in cinema circles**.

Neil

And that was a whopping eight words beginning with the letter c. **Crazy, coloured, circus, clowns, create, chaos, cinema, circles**.

Catherine

And congratulations if you got them all right! That's the end of the quiz!

Neil

And here's a top tip to help you with new vocabulary. When you learn a new group of words, try to put them together in one long crazy sentence like you heard earlier. It'll help you to remember them.

Catherine

Top tip, Neil! There's more about this at bbclearningenglish.com. Join us again for more 6 Minute Vocabulary

Both

Bye!

Vocabulary points to take away:

If a word begins with an /s/ sound, look at the second letter.

If the second letter is **a**, **o** or **u**, the word begins with the letter **s**.

I **saw** a **suitable suit** for **sale** and **so** I bought it.

The letter **c** is pronounced /s/ before **e**, **i** or **y**. So if the second letter is **e**, **i** or **y**, the word might begin with the letter **c** or **s**. Check which it is and learn it.

The man was **selling celery** in the **centre** of the **city**, so I gave some to my **sick sister**.

If the second letter is not a vowel, the word begins with an **s**.

Get **started** and **study** the **spellings**!

BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

6 Minute Vocabulary

Phrasal verbs and context



This is not a word-for-word transcript

Neil

Hello and welcome to 6 Minute Vocabulary. I'm Neil...

Catherine

And I'm Catherine. In this programme we're looking at multi-word verbs like **move in**, **move on**, **move out** and **get on**, and we call these **phrasal verbs**. And prepositions like **in**, **on**, or **out** can completely change the meaning of phrasal verbs...

Neil

...so we'll be looking at these verbs in sentences to help us understand their meanings.

Catherine

Let's start by listening to Robin. He's having problems with his housemate, Pete. And here's a question for you while you listen. Why is Robin unhappy with Pete?

INSERT

Robin

Pete **moved in** three months ago. We **got on** well at first – we were friends – but now it's terrible. He's so messy! And he keeps disturbing me when I'm trying to **get on with** my college work. It's really time for us to **move on** – we can't be friends anymore. I'm going to ask him to **move out** and live somewhere else, but he **gets on with** my family – my brother really likes him – so it'll be difficult.

STING

Neil

Ok. So we asked you: why is Robin unhappy with Pete?

Catherine

It's because Pete is messy and keeps disturbing him. What do you think of that, Neil?

Neil

Well, I'm not surprised then. They were friends at first. Here's what Robin said:

INSERT 1 CLIP 1

We **got on** well at first – we were friends...

Catherine

Right. So, here, **get on** means **have a good relationship**. And we can work out the meaning of **get on** by listening to what Robin said next. He said: **we were friends**.

Neil

What about Pete's relationship with Robin's family?

INSERT 1 CLIP 2

... he **gets on with** my family – my brother really likes him ...

Catherine

So Pete and Robin's family have a good relationship. And to add an object to the verb **get on**, we use the preposition **with**.

Neil

That's right. We can say: Pete and Robin's family **get on**. And we can also say: Pete **gets on with** Robin's family.

Catherine

We can. Now listen to **get on** in this clip.

INSERT 1 CLIP 3

... and he keeps disturbing me when I'm trying to **get on with** my college work.

Neil

This time, **get on with** isn't about a relationship.

Catherine

No, it isn't. In this one, **get on with** means **do**, or **continue doing**, something.

Neil

But Robin can't **get on with** it because Pete keeps disturbing him. Pete stops Robin finishing his work. And to understand what **get on with** means in each of these contexts, we have to pay attention to the words around each verb phrase.

Catherine

We do. So, **get on with** usually means **have a good relationship** when the sentence around it is talking about people.

Neil

Get on with is usually about finishing something if we're talking about work, studies or a project.

IDENT

6 Minute Vocabulary, from BBC Learning English

Neil

And we're talking about **phrasal verbs**. We've looked at **get on** and **get on with** to talk about relationships.

Catherine

My brother and sister don't **get on**, but I **get on with** both of them.

Neil

Oh, lucky you.

Catherine

I know.

Neil

And **get on with** when we're talking about work.

Catherine

I'm **getting on with** my work, Neil.

Neil

Good! And we work out which meaning is which by listening to the context. Let's **get on with** the programme and take a look at some phrasal verbs with **move**. Here's a clip.

INSERT CLIP 3

Pete **moved in** three months ago ... It's really time for us to **move on** ... I'm going to ask him to **move out** and live somewhere else ...

Catherine

So we had **move in**, **move on** and **move out**.

Neil

Move in means **start to live in a place**. If you want to say **who** you're starting to live with, use **with**, like this:

Catherine

Pete **moved in with** Robin six months ago.

Neil

To say **the place** that someone started living, use **into** instead of **in**.

Catherine

Pete **moved into** Robin's house six months ago.

Neil

Now, **move out** is the opposite. It's when you stop living somewhere and go to live somewhere new. So it describes a change.

Catherine

It does. And **move on** also describes a change, but not just about housing: **move on** has a sense of progressing to something different. So, Robin is going to end his friendship with Pete, Neil.

Neil

Well that's certainly a change. And now we must **move on** too: It's quiz time! Number one. I'm **getting on with** my school project. Is getting on with here about a) a relationship or b) finishing something?

Catherine

And it's b). **It's about finishing something** – a school project. Number two. I'm not very happy with my job. I'll have to a) move in, b) move out, or c) move on.

Neil

And it's c) **move on**. It's about changing to something new. Last one. I've just found a new flat. I'm a) moving in or b) moving on next week.

Catherine

And it's a) **moving in**. That's what we say about starting to live somewhere.

Neil

And that's the end of the quiz.

Catherine

But before we go, here's that top tip for learning vocabulary. When you see or hear a phrasal verb, pay close attention to all the words in the sentence. Write the sentence down if you can. That will help you learn and remember the meaning.

Neil

That's a good tip. There's more about this at bbclearningenglish.com. Join us again soon for more 6 Minute Vocabulary.

Both
Bye!

Vocabulary points to take away

get on (with)

have a good relationship (when talking about people)

Jack and John get on really well.

I've always got on with Abid. He's good fun.

get on (with)

make progress (when talking about work, studies or a project)

Right, enough talking. Time to get on!

I'm getting on really well with this report. It's nearly finished.

move in(to)

start living somewhere new

We moved into our new house six months ago. We wanted to move in sooner, but we couldn't afford it.

move on

change from one situation to another, usually because you are progressing to something better or something has gone wrong in your current situation

I don't like my colleagues. Time to move on and find another job.

move out

stop living somewhere

I'm moving out next Friday. I've already packed my bags.

BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

6 Minute Vocabulary

Business jargon



This is not a word-for-word transcript

Neil

Hello and welcome to 6 Minute Vocabulary. I'm Neil ...

Catherine

And I'm Catherine. And our topic today is business jargon – that's words and phrases you hear mostly in the world of business. So Neil, are you ready for some **blue-sky thinking**?

Rob

Blue-sky thinking – that's an expression often heard in the workplace. It means **being creative** – coming up with new, original ideas.

Catherine

Exactly, and in this programme we've got lots more business phrases for you. We'll explain what they mean and when to use them.

Neil

But first, listen to Sophie, talking to her marketing team.

Catherine

And here's a question to think about while you listen: What does Sophie ask Joe to do?

INSERT

Good: it seems we're all **reading from the same page**. We need to reach the **upscale** customers. So, can we **think out of the box** and come up with something quite different? We have to **push the envelope** if we want to succeed in the market. Now, if we take **the helicopter view**, we can see that we've **effected** lower costs. We've targeted **low-hanging fruit** and got rid of several distributors. **Going forward** now, Joe, can you **action** advertising? Is everyone clear now?

Catherine

Lots of business jargon there. We usually don't use so many at one time, do we Neil?

Neil

No, it can sound a bit much if you use all of them. Though these are things you probably will hear in a business context.

Catherine

Most definitely. So back to our question. We asked you: What does Sophie asked Joe to do?

Neil

And the answer is: She asks him to **action** advertising.

Catherine

That's right. She wants him to deal with advertising. Sophie used the noun **action** as a verb – more on that later. But first let's look at some jargon she used to talk about having new ideas. Here's a clip.

INSERT CLIP 1

So, can we **think out of the box** and come up with something quite different? We have to **push the envelope** if we want to succeed in the market.

Catherine

So Sophie wants her team to come up with a new and exciting idea. And she uses the expression **think out of the box**, which means **be creative; don't feel limited to the same old ideas**.

Neil

And she tells them to **push the envelope**, which means **go further than before; do things that might be new or risky**.

Catherine

Yes, that's similar to that expression we had earlier – **blue-sky thinking**, which means **being creative – coming up with new and original ideas, even if they are not very practical or realistic**. So Neil, are you a **blue-sky thinker**?

Neil

Oh, yes, of course, I'm incredibly creative, you know.

Catherine

I do. Yes, that's true.

Neil

Sophie also said everyone was **reading from the same page**. Now this expression means they all **had similar ideas and agreed with each other**. Here's another clip.

INSERT CLIP 2

Now if we **take the helicopter view**, we can see that we've **effected** lower costs. We've targeted **low-hanging fruit** and got rid of several distributors.

Neil

Some interesting phrases there, and you can guess their meaning if you actually picture what the words mean. For example, **take the helicopter view**.

Catherine

Exactly. Now, picture yourself up in the sky in a helicopter and you're looking down at the ground – and you can see a lot more from up there than you can see when you're down on the ground. So this expression means: **looking at the whole situation and not just one or two details**.

Neil

Sophie also said that they'd lowered costs by targeting **low-hanging fruit**. **Low-hanging fruit** means **the easiest, or most obvious, things**. In reality, on a fruit tree, the fruit that hangs low down is easier to pick, so there's a link between this idea and the idiomatic meaning of the phrase in a business situation.

Catherine

Good. Now, Sophie used two nouns as verbs: **effect** and **action**. She said: **We've effected lower costs**. And **to effect** means **to achieve something**. She also asked Joe to **action** advertising, this means she wants him to deal with the advertising. And nouns used as verbs like this sound very strong. They give the speaker's ideas greater force.

Neil

Sophie used the word **upscale** to describe customers. **Upscale** describes people with money or things that are high quality.

Catherine

I often think that we could do with some **upscale** coffee in our office.

Neil

That's a good idea.

IDENT

6 Minute Vocabulary from the BBC.

Catherine

And it's time for a quiz. Number one: If I want you to be creative and original, would I tell you to a) **push the envelope** or b) target **low-hanging fruit**?

Neil

And the answer is a) **push the envelope**.

Catherine

Well done if you got that right. Number two: If I want you to look at the wider picture and not concentrate on detail, would I tell you to a) **think out of the box** or b) **take the helicopter view**?

Neil

And it's b) **take the helicopter view**.

Catherine

Good. And finally, if I want you to do something, would I ask you to: a) **action** it or b) **effect** it.

Neil

And the answer is a) **action**.

Catherine

Well done if you got those right. And before we go, here's a top tip for learning vocabulary: when you learn new words, make a picture in your head of the meaning. And when you hear or see the word again, you can think of the picture.

Neil

There's more about this at bbclearningenglish.com. Join us again for more 6 Minute Vocabulary.

Both

Bye!

Vocabulary points to take away

blue-sky thinking: having ideas which are very original, even if they are not practical or realistic

Our blue-sky thinking gave us some totally new ideas

push the envelope: to go even further than others and do things that might be new or even risky

We're not just a normal airline. We're going to push the envelope and offer balloon flights.

think out of the box: to be creative and not limit your thinking

Jayne's so good at thinking of solutions to problems. She manages to think out of the box.

read from the same page: think about or understand a situation in the same way as other people

Pat wants the Middle East to be our target market, but I think we should aim for the Far East. I don't think we're reading from the same page.

take the helicopter view: look at the general view of a situation and not the details

Taking the helicopter view, we can see that the company has steadily expanded over the last few years, but this month's sales figures are rather low.

action (verb): deal with

I had 100 emails in my inbox this morning. I've actioned 80 of them so far.

effect (verb): bring about a change or influence

The company effected many changes in the pay and conditions of their employees last year.

low-hanging fruit: the easiest targets

To cut energy consumption, we need to reduce worldwide air traffic, rather than making petrol and car tax more expensive – these are just the low-hanging fruit.

BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

6 Minute Vocabulary

British and American English



NB: This is not a word-for-word transcript

Catherine

Hello and welcome to 6 Minute Vocabulary. My name is Catherine, and I'm here today with our special guest presenter Doug. Welcome to the show Doug.

Doug

Hi Catherine, how are you?

Catherine

I'm fine thank you. How are you Doug?

Doug

Fine.

Catherine

Tell us a bit about yourself Doug – you're originally from Canada, right?

Doug

Yes, I'm from Vancouver, which is in western Canada, but I moved here a long, long time ago.

Catherine

But you've still got an American English accent I noticed.

Doug

Yes, I haven't lost that.

Catherine

And that's cool, because this show is all about the differences between British English and American English vocabulary. So, tell me Doug, do Canadians like you speak American English?

Doug

I don't think Canadians would say that. Let's say they speak North American English. But it is very similar.

Catherine

Fantastic. So American English and British English aren't really that different; I'm British and me and Doug can understand each other perfectly – yes?

Doug

Yes, usually. No, of course we can. Of course we understand you.

Catherine

We can. But there are a few vocabulary differences between American and British English that it's very helpful to learn. And today, with Doug's help, we're going to take you through some of them. So, over to you Doug...

Doug

OK, thanks Catherine. Let's start with some examples. This is John, from the US, talking about his recent visit to Britain. Here's a question for you while you're listening: Did John enjoy his visit? Here's John.

INSERT

John

I went to Britain for two weeks last **fall**. Actually, British people don't say **fall**, they say **autumn**. In the States we pay the **check**, but in Britain they pay the **bill**... we **mail** a letter, but the British **post** a letter... we go to a **store** to buy **candy** and **cookies**, but the British go to a **shop** to buy **sweets** and **biscuits**. But I had a great time there.

STING

Doug

So, the question was: according to John, did he enjoy his visit?

Catherine

And the answer is: yes, he did. He said he had a great time. Well done if you got that right at home. Now, let's have a closer look at some of the vocabulary John used. Here's a clip, and another question for you: what's the name of the season after summer?

INSERT | CLIP |

British people don't say **fall**, they say **autumn**...

Catherine

So, in Britain the season after summer is called **autumn**.

Doug

Yes, but in American English it's called **fall because the leaves fall**.

Catherine

Fall.

Doug

Next question: when you're in a restaurant, and you've finished the meal, what do you ask for, what do you pay? Listen again:

INSERT 1 CLIP 2

In the States we pay the **check**, but in Britain they pay the **bill**...

Doug

In America, the word is **check**. You pay the **check** at the end of a meal.

Catherine

You pay the check. But in Britain, we pay the **bill**.

Doug

Here's another difference between British and American English: what do we do when we 'send a letter'? Can you remember the British word, or the American word, or both? Listen again:

INSERT 1 CLIP 3

...we **mail** a letter, but the British **post** a letter...

Catherine

So, in Britain we **post** a letter, but Doug, North Americans say...?

Doug

Mail a letter. OK, now, John said that British people go to a **shop** to buy **sweets** and **biscuits**. Well, where do Americans go, and what do they buy there? Listen one more time:

INSERT 1 CLIP 5

...we go to a **store** to buy **candy** and **cookies**...

Catherine

The British say **shop**...

Doug

...but the Americans say **store**...

Catherine

...the British say **sweets**...

Doug

...but the Americans say **candy**...

Catherine

...the British say **biscuits** ...

Doug

...and in North America, that's **cookies**.

IDENT

6 Minute Vocabulary, from BBC Learning English dot com.

Doug

And our topic for today is British and American vocabulary.

Catherine

Doug - a question for you: A lot of learners of English want to know which one is better – is it British English or American English? What do you think?

Doug

To be honest, there's no difference -just use the one you like.

Catherine

Good. And now it's time for a quiz. Doug is going to say an American English word, and you have to say the British English word with the same meaning.

Doug

Ok, so, the first American English word is **check**. What's the British word for **check**?

Catherine

And the answer is: **bill**.

Doug

Next word: **candy**. What do British people say instead of **candy**?

Catherine

And the British word for **candy** is **sweets**.

Doug

Good, and the last American word is **mail**. What's the British word for **mail**?

Catherine

The British word for **mail** is **post**. And that's all our questions for today. Before we go, here's a tip to help you with your vocabulary studies.

Doug

Yes - people speak English with many different accents: Australian, Indian, Nigerian, Singaporean, West Indian... so, it's a good idea to practice listening to lots of accents, not only British accents or American English! It's easy to find examples of many different accents, just go online!

Catherine

Top tip Doug, thanks very much and thanks for being with us today. Well, that's the end of the programme, but there's lots more about this at bbclearningenglish.com. Join us again soon for more 6 Minute Vocabulary.

Both

Bye!

Vocabulary points to take away

American English	British English
the fall	the autumn
the check	the bill
to mail	to post
a cookie	a biscuit
a store	a shop
some candy	some sweets

BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

6 Minute Vocabulary

Pronouncing verbs and nouns



This is not a word-for-word transcript

Catherine

Hello and welcome to 6 Minute Vocabulary. I'm Catherine...

Neil

And I'm Neil. Oh... Catherine.

Catherine

Yeah.

Neil

A **present**?

Catherine

Yes.

Neil

How kind. It's not even my birthday.

Catherine

I know, Neil. But every day's a present day in Learning English. Actually, I bought it because the word **present** is a key word for the topic we're going to **present** in this programme...

Neil

Ah... **PREsent** and **preSENT**. They are spelt same way but we say them differently.

Catherine

That's right, because today we're talking about words that are spelt the same, but pronounced differently, depending on whether we're using them as nouns or verbs.

Neil

Like **PREsent** and **preSENT**. So the **present** you gave me is the noun.

Catherine

That's right. And we're **presenting** 6 Minute Vocabulary – **present** here is a verb.

Neil

We'll be giving you more examples...

Catherine

And we'll have a quiz, so listen carefully ...

Neil

And we'll also bring you a top tip for learning vocabulary. And I've got an **invite** for Catherine to my party...

Catherine

And it's not even your birthday.

Neil

It's my birthday every day.

Catherine

OK. I'll come to your party then.

Neil

Well, more about that **invite** later...

Catherine

But first, let's hear Lucy talking about Sam Smith, her favourite singer. Neil: Sam Smith. Are you a fan?

Neil

I wouldn't say I'm a fan, but I'm aware of his work.

Catherine

Oh good.

Neil

Anyway, here's Lucy. And she is a big Sam Smith fan. Think about this question while you listen: Will the number of people who want to go to his concerts go up, or down?

INSERT

Lucy

I really want to go to a Sam Smith concert but the tickets have already sold out. Sometimes when that happens, they **increase** the number of concert dates. I want to hear him sing *Stay with me* – it won 'Record of the Year' at the Grammys. I hope he'll **record** some new songs soon. But that will mean an **increase** in people wanting concert tickets.

Catherine

So we asked you: Will the number of people who want to go to Sam Smith concerts go up, or will it go down?

Neil

And the answer is: it will go up. Lucy says there will be an **increase** in people wanting concert tickets.

Catherine

Yes, and **increase** here is a noun, so the stress is on the first syllable: **INcrease**. But Lucy also used the same word as a verb. Listen to this clip. Where does the stress fall this time?

INSERT CLIP 1

Sometimes when that happens, they **increase** the number of concert dates.

Neil

This time, the stress falls on the second syllable – **inCREASE**, because Lucy's using the word as a verb.

Catherine

Other nouns and verbs with the same spelling move the stress from the first to second syllable in the same way - like the noun **DEcrease**...

Neil

...which becomes **deCREASE**, when it's a verb.

Catherine

...and there is, of course Neil, the **INvite** you gave me to your party...

Neil

Yes, **INvite** here is a noun with the stress on the first syllable. But if I say to Catherine, I want to **inVITE** you to my party on Saturday, **inVITE** is a verb, with the stress falling on the second syllable... Don't worry Catherine – I haven't forgotten...

Catherine

Nor have I, Neil! Looking forward to it. And here's another clip from Lucy. Listen out for another word she uses as a noun and a verb with different stress patterns.

INSERT CLIP 1

I want to hear him sing *Stay with me* – it won '**REcord** of the Year' at the Grammys. I hope he'll **reCORD** some new songs soon.

Neil

We had **REcord** and **reCORD**. **REcord** is the noun, so the stress is on the first syllable.

Catherine

...And **reCORD** is the verb, so the stress is on the second syllable.

IDENT

6 Minute Vocabulary, from BBC Learning English.

Neil

We're talking about nouns and verbs that are spelt the same but pronounced differently, like a **REcord** and to **reCORD**.

Catherine

And we stress the first syllable when the word is a noun, and the second syllable when the word is a verb.

Neil

And now, it's time for a quiz, so get ready! Which is the correct way to say the missing word in these sentences? Number one: Michael Phelps has the [sfx: beep] for the most Olympic gold medals. Is it a) **reCORD** or b) **REcord**?

Catherine

It's **REcord** because it's a noun.

Neil

Well done if you got that right. Number two: We hope that sales will [sfx: beep] this month. Is it a) **INcrease** or b) **InCREASE**?

Catherine

And the answer is b) **InCREASE** because it's a verb.

Neil

And finally, number three: I need to buy a [sfx: beep] for my friends. They're getting married tomorrow. Is it a) **PREsent** or b) **preSENT**?

Catherine

It's a) **PREsent** because it's a noun.

Neil

And that's the end of the quiz – well done if you got them right.

Catherine

And it's almost the end of the programme.

Neil

But before we go, here's today's top tip for learning vocabulary: when you look up a word

in an online dictionary, listen to the audio and try to copy the word stress. If possible, record yourself saying the word, then compare your pronunciation with the audio from the dictionary.

Catherine

There's more about this at bbclearningenglish.com. Join us again for more 6 Minute Vocabulary.

Both

Bye!

Vocabulary points to take away

a decrease (noun): amount by which something becomes smaller in size or number
The rise in tuition fees has led to a DEcrease in the number of students applying to our courses.

to decrease (verb): make the amount or number of something smaller
We hope that by introducing trams, we can deCREASE the level of pollution in the city centre.

an increase (noun): amount by which something becomes bigger in size or number
There has been a big INcrease in the number of young unemployed people in many European countries in the last few years

increase (verb): make the amount or number of something bigger
After putting the rice in the water, inCREASE the temperature until the water starts to boil.

an invite (noun): invitation, written or spoken, to go somewhere
I'm sorry I can't come for a drink with you tomorrow night, but thanks for the INvite anyway!

invite (verb): ask someone to go somewhere
How many people did you inVITE for dinner? We've only got six chairs!

a present (noun): something you give to someone on a special occasion like a birthday or wedding
My best PREsent was my new mobile. I couldn't believe it when I unwrapped it!

present (verb): show, give or introduce
The Queen is going to preSENT the medals to the winners.

a record (noun): the best ever done, often in sport; music or song you can buy on a CD or download
The Guinness Book of Records has some fascinating REcords, like how far a dog can ride a scooter!

record (verb): store sounds, music or information so they can be used later
A good way to practise speaking English is to reCORD your voice on your phone and listen to yourself.

BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

6 Minute Vocabulary

Words with double letters



This is not a word-for-word transcript

Catherine

Hello! And welcome to 6 Minute Vocabulary with me, Catherine...

Finn

...and me Finn. In this programme, we're looking at spelling.

Catherine

And the area of spelling we're looking at is words with double letters.

Finn

Let's start by listening to David. He's a student welfare officer at London University. He's welcoming a new student to the campus.

Catherine

And while you listen, here's a question for you.

Finn

What word means: the rooms, flats and houses that people live in? Here's David.

INSERT

David

Congratulations on **getting** a place at our University. It's a **brilliant opportunity** and I'm sure that you will be **happy** and **successful** here. I'm here to help you find **accommodation**. We've got rooms, flats and houses all over the city, but I **recommend** that you **apply** as soon as **possible** so you're not **disappointed**. Here's a list of **addresses**.

STING

Catherine

David there. And we asked: what's the word for rooms, flats and houses that people live in?

Finn

And the answer is: **accommodation**.

Catherine

Now **accommodation** is one of our words with double letters. How do you spell it, Finn?

Finn

a-double c-o-double m-o-d-a-t-i-o-n.

Catherine

Well done Finn. Now listen to this clip. Which 6 words have double letters?

INSERT | CLIP |

Congratulations on **getting** a place at our University. It's a **brilliant opportunity** and I'm sure that you **will** be **happy** and **successful** here!

Finn

So we had **getting** – with **double t**, **brilliant** with **double l**, **opportunity** with **double p**, **will** with **double l**, **happy** – also with **double p** and **successful** – with **double c** and **double s**.

Catherine

Correct! Let's take a look at some spelling rules. The first rule is about verbs. If the final three letters of a verb are consonant, vowel, consonant, we double the final consonant before we add **i-n-g** or **e-d**. So **get**, spelt **g-e-t** becomes **getting** with **double t**, and **begin** ends in **g-i-n** so it becomes **beginning** with **double n**. Now, our next rule is to do with short vowel sounds. Finn can you demonstrate some short vowel sounds please?

Finn

a, o, i, e, a, u

Catherine

Fantastic. Thanks enough, thank you. And now some long vowel sounds?

Finn

u, e, a, ei

Catherine

Ok, so, when there is a **short** vowel sound before a consonant, like **a** in **happy**, we often double the consonant after it. The **short a** in **happy** gives us a **double p**. The short **o** in **opportunity** gives us a **double p**, the short **i** in **brilliant** gives us **double l**.

Finn

And this can happen more than once in the same word. So in the word **successful**, we get **u double c** and **e double s**, and in **accommodation** we get **a double c** and **o double m**. Easy!

Catherine

Exactly. And lots of short words like **summer**, **coffee**, **apple** and **will** follow this general rule.

Finn

So let's listen to another clip and put this general rule to the test. Listen carefully...

INSERT 1 CLIP 2

But I **recommend** that you apply as soon as **possible** so you're not **disappointed**. To start with, here's a list of **addresses** ...

Catherine

So: following the rule, we've got **recommend** with **o double m**, **possible** with **o double s** and **disappointed** with **a double p**.

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6 Minute Vocabulary from BBC Learning English.

Catherine

And we're talking about words with double letters.

Finn

Right, quiz time! Number one: Is there a double **n** in the verb **happening**?

Catherine

No, there isn't.

Finn

Well done! Number two: Are there any double letters in the word **immediately**?

Catherine

Yes, there's a double M.

Finn

Very good! Number three: Which of these words have a **double c**? **occasion**, **accident**, **succeed**?

Catherine

And the answer is – they all do! They all have a short vowel sound followed by **double c**. That was a Finn trick question.

Finn

It was indeed. And that's the end of the quiz. You're **brilliant** with **double l** if you got them all right!

Catherine

And now here's a top tip for vocabulary learning. If you're struggling to learn the spelling of a word, get a keyboard and type it a hundred times and your fingers might learn the spelling more quickly than your brain! What do you think Finn – would that work for you?

Finn

My fingers are much quicker than my brain, Catherine. It's a good idea. It's a very good tip. There's more about this at bbclearningenglish.com. Join us again soon for more 6 Minute Vocabulary.

Both

Bye!

Vocabulary points to take away:

For verbs ending in a consonant, vowel, consonant like **get** and **begin** double the final consonant before **-ing** and **-ed**:

I've **stopped** **sitting** in the sun because it's **beginning** to get too hot.

BUT If the final syllable of the verb is not stressed, don't double the consonant:

They've been **listening** to what's **happened** on the news.

When there is a short vowel sound before a consonant, we often double the consonant:

He sent me a **message** asking me to **collect** him at the station.

BUT this is only a general guide, so you need a technique for learning how to spell these words:

Cheerful **C**harlie and **M**ad **M**ary share **a**ccommodation.