

8 Compound adjectives for physical characteristics

Activity A

Common combinations

It is common to describe people and animals using compound adjectives involving body parts. Examples: *The tribe hunt the long-necked, sharp-beaked bird in the forest canopy. She has a beautiful pink-cheeked, green-eyed baby girl. Take a look at this smooth-skinned lizard which, like all reptiles, is of course cold-blooded.* In these examples the adjectives relate to physical aspects of the creature/person described. There are also some that can be used to describe character, behaviour or ability. Match the beginnings and endings of the sentences below which have been separated in the middle of a compound adjective. Look up the words in the dictionary to check your guesses.

Match the beginnings and endings of these sentences:

1 I remember he was the kindest boy at school but now he's a hard	a -fingered he makes growing your own vegetables look really easy.
2 I am pleased to say that she is a level	b -handed and doesn't really listen to other people's ideas at all.
3 I can't believe how two	c -faced she has been. I've just found out that she has been saying horrible things behind my back.
4 My grandfather is so green	d -skinned.
5 She's miserable because her new boss is very high	e -tailed in the morning.
6 Make sure you put your belongings in a locker as there are a few light	f -headed person and I would be happy to recommend her for a career in nursing.
7 Go to sleep now. We have to be bright-eyed and bushy	g -fingered people working in this building.
8 Don't worry too much about offending her because she's very thick	h -nosed city businessman.

To broaden your vocabulary you could work with a partner and each look up one of the following body parts in the dictionary: **-faced**, **-eyed**. These two body parts are used to form a considerable number of adjectives. Each of you could teach the meanings to your partner.

Activity B

There are a few compound adjectives with body parts that do not relate to people or animals. What objects/things would you expect the following adjectives to describe? Check your ideas in the dictionary.

- 1 V-necked or round-necked
- 2 dog-eared
- 3 full-bodied