

CAMBRIDGE

ENGLISH COLLOCATIONS IN USE

How words work
together for fluent
and natural English

Self-study and
classroom use

Second Edition

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Intermediate

Michael McCarthy
Felicity O'Dell

Experience
Better
Learning

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*promising start, bring something to an end
make a breakthrough, fail miserably
cause alarm, adverse effects, have a major impact
vaguely remember, blot out a memory, have a feeling
settle a dispute, agree to differ, heated argument
firmly believe, colour someone's judgement
arrive at a decision, have second thoughts, tough choice
make the point that, contradictory evidence
have a liking, state a preference, take offence
offer your congratulations, speak highly of*

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1

What is a collocation?

A

A collocation is a pair or group of words that are often used together. These combinations sound natural to native speakers, but students of English have to make a special effort to learn them because they are often difficult to guess. Some combinations just sound 'wrong' to native speakers of English. For example, the adjective *fast* collocates with *cars*, but not with *a glance*.

We say ...	We don't say ...
fast cars fast food	quick cars quick food
a quick glance a quick meal	a fast glance a fast meal

Learning collocations is an important part of learning the vocabulary of a language. Some collocations are fixed, or very strong, for example **take a photo**, where no word other than *take* collocates with *photo* to give the same meaning. Some collocations are more open, where several different words may be used to give a similar meaning, for example **keep to / stick to the rules**. Here are some more examples of collocations.

You must **make an effort** and study for your exams (NOT ~~do~~ an effort)

Did you **watch TV** last night? (NOT ~~look at~~ TV)

This car has a very **powerful engine**. It can do 200 km an hour. (NOT ~~strong~~ engine)

There are some **ancient monuments** nearby. (NOT ~~antique~~ monuments)

Sometimes, a pair of words may not be absolutely wrong, and people will understand what is meant, but it may not be the natural, normal collocation. If someone says *I did a few mistakes*, they will be understood, but a fluent speaker of English would probably say **I made a few mistakes**.

B

Compounds and idioms

Compounds are units of meaning formed with two or more words. Sometimes the words are written separately, sometimes they have a hyphen and sometimes they are written as one word. Usually the meaning of the compound can be guessed by knowing the meaning of the individual words. Some examples of compounds are **car park, post office, narrow-minded, shoelaces, teapot**.

It is not always easy to separate collocations and compounds and, where they are useful for learners or an important part of the vocabulary of a topic, we include some compounds in this book too.

Idioms are groups of words in a fixed order that have a meaning that cannot be guessed by knowing the meaning of the individual words. For example, **pass the buck** is an idiom meaning 'to pass responsibility for a problem to another person to avoid dealing with it oneself'. We deal with idioms in detail in the book *English Idioms in Use* in this series.

C

Why learn collocations?

Learning collocations is a good idea because they can:

- give you the most natural way to say something: *smoking is **strictly forbidden*** is more natural than *smoking is strongly forbidden*.
- give you alternative ways of saying something, which may be more colourful/expressive or more precise: instead of repeating *It was **very cold and very dark***, we can say *It was **bitterly cold and pitch dark***.
- improve your style in writing: instead of saying *poverty **causes crime***, you can say *poverty **breeds crime***; instead of saying *a **big meal*** you can say *a **substantial meal***. You may not need or want to use these in informal conversations, but in writing they can give your text more variety and make it read better: this book includes notes about formality wherever the collocations are especially formal or informal.

Exercises

1.1 Read A and B and answer these questions.

- 1 What is a collocation?
- 2 Which of these words does *fast* collocate with: *car, food, glance, meal*?
- 3 Which of these are compounds: *computer, narrow-minded, teapot, ancient monument, car park*?
- 4 What do we call expressions like *pass the buck* and *be over the moon*?

1.2 Make ten collocations from the words in the box.

an effort ancient bitterly make breakfast cold dark
engine forbidden mistakes have make meal monument
pitch powerful strictly substantial TV watch

1.3 Are these statements about collocations true or false?

- 1 Learning collocations will make your English sound more natural.
- 2 Learning collocations will help you to express yourself in a variety of ways.
- 3 Learning collocations will help you to write better English.
- 4 Using collocations properly will get you better marks in exams.
- 5 You will not be understood unless you use collocations properly.

1.4 Put the expressions from the box into the correct category in the table below.

make a mistake a storm in a tea cup live music checkpoint key ring
pull somebody's leg heavy snow valid passport teapot bitterly disappointed

compound	collocation	idiom

1.5 Underline the collocations in this text.

When I left university I made a decision to take up a profession in which I could be creative. I could play the guitar, but I'd never written any songs. Nonetheless, I decided to become a singer-songwriter. I made some recordings but I had a rather heavy cold, so they didn't sound good. I made some more, and sent them to a record company and waited for them to reply.

So, while I was waiting to become famous, I got a job in a fast-food restaurant. That was five years ago. I'm still doing the same job.



COLIN LIVERPOOL, ENGLAND

A

Finding collocations

There are two main ways in which you can find collocations.

- You can train yourself to notice them whenever you read or listen to anything in English. Look at the collocations that are worth learning from this short text in English.

After **giving** Mark a **lift** to the airport, Julie **made her way** home. What an exciting **life** he **led**! At times Julie felt **desperately jealous** of him. She **spent her time** doing little more than **taking care of** him and the children. Now her sister was **getting divorced** and would doubtless be **making demands on** her too. Julie had promised to **give** her sister a **call** as soon as she got home but she decided to **run herself a bath** first. She had a **sharp pain** in her side and hoped that a hot bath might **ease the pain**.

Tip

Get into the habit of making a note of any good collocations you come across in any English text you read.

- You can find them in any good learner's dictionary.

For example, if you look up the word *sharp* you will find some of these collocations:

a **sharp pain**
 a **sharp bend/turn**
 a **sharp contrast/difference/distinction**
 a **sharp rise/increase/drop**

Tip

When you look up a new word, make a point of noting it down in several different collocations.

B

Recording collocations

The best way to record a collocation is in a phrase or a sentence showing how it is used. Highlight the collocation by underlining it or by using a highlighting pen.

For example: I don't have access to that kind of secret information.

Or: Jim gave me a very useful piece of advice.

C

Learning collocations

Learning collocations is not so different from learning any vocabulary item. The key things are to:

- regularly revise what you want to learn
- practise using what you want to learn in contexts that are meaningful for you personally
- learn collocations in groups to help you fix them in your memory. You might group together collocations relating to the same topic. Or you might group collocations based on the same word, for example:

I must **find a way** to help him.

Can you **find your way** back to my house?

I **learnt the hard way** that Jack can't be trusted.

Please tell me if I'm **getting in your way**.

You must **give way to** traffic from the left.

I've **tried every possible way** to get him to change his mind.

Exercises

2.1 Underline 11 collocations in this text.

My friend Abigail is desperately worried about her son at the moment. He wants to enrol on a course of some sort but just can't make a decision about what to study. I gave Abigail a ring and we had a long chat about it last night. She said he'd like to study for a degree but is afraid he won't meet the requirements for university entry. Abigail thinks he should do a course in Management because he'd like to set up his own business in the future. I agreed that that would be a wise choice.

2.2 Match the beginning of each sentence on the left with its ending on the right.

- | | |
|----------------|----------------|
| 1 She's having | her duty. |
| 2 She's taking | a lecture. |
| 3 She's giving | a party. |
| 4 She's making | an exam. |
| 5 She's doing | good progress. |

2.3 Correct the eight collocation errors in this text. Use a dictionary to help you if necessary.

In the morning I made some work in the garden, then I spent a rest for about an hour before going out to have some shopping in town. It was my sister's birthday and I wanted to do a special effort to cook a nice meal for her. I gave a look at a new Thai cookery book in the bookshop and decided to buy it. It has some totally easy recipes and I managed to do a good impression with my very first Thai meal. I think my sister utterly enjoyed her birthday.

2.4 Look at this entry for the verb *lead* in the *Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary*. What collocations could you learn from this entry? Underline or highlight them. Then write one new sentence for each of them.

lead [CONTROL] **E** /li:d/ verb [I or T] (led, led) to control a group of people, a country, or a situation: *I think we've chosen the right person to lead the expedition.* ◦ *I've asked Gemma to lead the discussion.* ◦ *Who will be leading the inquiry into the accident?*
● **lead sb by the nose** *INFORMAL* to control someone and make them do exactly what you want them to do

See also **Unit 3, Using your dictionary.**

Over to you

Use a dictionary to find three or four other good collocations for each of these words:

desperately pain wise run

Write the collocations you find in an appropriate way in your vocabulary notebook.

A good learner's dictionary will give you information on collocations. Sometimes the information is highlighted in some special way. In other cases, the examples used in the dictionary include the most common collocations.

In the *Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (CALD), common and useful collocations are given in **bold type**. Look at the CALD entry for the word *pain* and note how useful collocations are highlighted in bold.

pain ^E /peɪn/ *noun* [C or U] **1** a feeling of physical suffering caused by injury or illness: *Her symptoms included abdominal pain and vomiting.* ◦ *Are you in* (= suffering from) *pain?* ◦ *She was in constant pain.* ◦ *These tablets should help to ease the pain.* ◦ *I felt a sharp pain in my foot.* ◦ *He's been suffering various aches and pains for years.* **2** emotional or mental suffering: *It's a film about the pains and pleasures of parenthood.* ◦ *The parents are still in great pain over the death of their child.*
● **a pain (in the neck)** *INFORMAL* someone or something that is very annoying: *That child is a real pain in the neck.*

Online dictionaries are very useful because you can search for a lot more information very quickly. The Cambridge Dictionary (dictionary.cambridge.org) provides definitions as well as more examples including the key word and links to the SMART Thesaurus. The SMART Thesaurus gives synonyms, related words and phrases of the word you are looking up. Here is the entry for 'advice' in the Cambridge online dictionary.

advice

noun [U] · UK [Ⓢ] /ədˈvaɪs/ US [Ⓢ] /ədˈvaɪs/

★ **CE** an opinion that someone offers you about what you should do or how you should act in a particular situation:

Steven gave me some good advice.

I think I'll take your advice (= do what you suggest) and get the green dress.

Can I give you a piece of advice?

I need some advice on which computer to buy.

(+ to-infinitive) *My advice is to go by train.*

We went to Paris on Sarah's advice.

More examples

The centre provides expert advice for people with financial problems.

I decided to follow her advice and go to bed early.

The service offers young people practical advice on finding a job.

I've always valued her advice.

You should get some legal advice before you take any further action.

A good dictionary will also tell you if a collocation is formal or informal. For example, CALD indicates that **to take somebody up on an offer** is an informal collocation (**accept an offer** would be a more formal alternative).

offer ^E /'ɒf.ə/ ^{US} /'ɑː.fə/ *noun* [C] when someone asks you if you would like to have something or if you would like them to do something: *"If you like I can do some shopping for you."* *"That's a very kind offer."* ◦ *I must say the offer of a weekend in Barcelona quite tempts me.* ◦ *INFORMAL* *One day I'll take you up on* (= accept) *that offer.*

Tip

When you buy a dictionary, make sure it gives good, clear information about collocations. When you look up words, if you don't know the collocations, highlight them in your dictionary or transfer them to your vocabulary notebook.

Exercises

3.1 Answer these questions about collocations and dictionaries.

- 1 How does the *Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary* show collocations?
- 2 Which five collocations can you see in the top box on the opposite page?
- 3 Why is an online dictionary particularly useful?
- 4 What information does the online Thesaurus usually show?
- 5 How does the *Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary* indicate that a collocation is informal?
- 6 Look at the dictionary that you normally use. Does it indicate collocations? If so, how?
- 7 Look up *pain* in your own dictionary. Which of the collocations on the left-hand page does it either highlight or illustrate in example sentences?
- 8 Look up the noun *offer* in your own dictionary. What collocations can you find? Does the dictionary indicate whether the collocations are formal or informal? If so, how?

3.2 Put the expressions from the box into the correct category in the table below.

to alleviate pain to cause pain to complain of pain
 to ease pain to experience pain to feel pain to inflict pain
 to lessen pain to be racked with pain to relieve pain
 to soothe pain pain subsides to suffer pain

making others experience pain	the experience of being in pain	making pain go away

3.3 Look in a good learner's dictionary. What collocations do you find there for the word *ache*?

Over to you

Look up two or three words that you have recently learnt, using a good learner's dictionary. Write down any interesting collocations that are shown for those words.

4

Types of collocation

There are many different types of collocation. Here are some examples.

A

Adjectives and nouns

Notice adjectives that are typically used with particular nouns.

Emma always wears red or yellow or some other **bright colour**.

We had a **brief chat** about the exams but didn't have time to discuss them properly.

Unemployment is a **major problem** for the government at the moment.

Improving the health service is another **key issue** for government.

B

Nouns and verbs

Notice how nouns and verbs often go together. The examples below are all to do with economics and business.

The **economy boomed** in the 1990s. [the economy was very strong]

The company has grown and now employs 50 more people than last year.

The company has expanded and now has branches in most major cities.

The two **companies merged** in 2013 and now form one very large corporation.

The company **launched the product** in 2012. [introduced the product]

The price increase **poses a problem** for us. [is a problem]

The internet has **created opportunities** for our business. [brought new opportunities]

C

Noun + noun

There are a lot of collocations with the pattern *a ... of ...*.

As Max read the lies about him, he felt **a surge of anger**. [literary: a sudden angry feeling]

Every parent feels **a sense of pride** when their child does well or wins something.

I felt **a pang of nostalgia** when I saw the old photos of the village where I grew up.

D

Verbs and expressions with prepositions

Some verbs collocate with particular prepositional expressions.

As Jack went on stage to receive his gold medal for the judo competition you could see his parents **swelling with pride**. [looking extremely proud]

I was **filled with horror** when I read the newspaper report of the explosion.

When she spilt juice on her new skirt the little girl **burst into tears**. [suddenly started crying]

E

Verbs and adverbs

Some verbs have particular adverbs which regularly collocate with them.

She **pulled steadily** on the rope and helped him to safety. [pulled firmly and evenly]

He **placed** the beautiful vase **gently** on the window ledge.

'I love you and want to marry you,' Dylan **whispered softly** to Madison.

She **smiled proudly** as she looked at the photos of her new grandson.

F

Adverbs and adjectives

Adjectives often have particular adverbs which regularly collocate with them.

They are **happily married**.

I am **fully aware** that there are serious problems. [I know well]

Harry was **blissfully unaware** that he was in danger. [Harry had no idea at all, often used about something unpleasant]

Exercises

4.1 Complete each sentence with a collocation from A.

- 1 Come to my office ten minutes before the meeting so we can have ...
- 2 With her lovely dark hair Ella looks best when she wears ...
- 3 In your essay on the influence of TV, don't forget to discuss these ...
- 4 There is some crime in our town but it isn't ...

4.2 Replace the underlined words with a collocating verb from B.

- 1 We are going to introduce an exciting new product in June.
- 2 The economy was extremely high 30 years ago.
- 3 The new university they are planning will provide a lot of job opportunities.
- 4 There are always some problems when two companies join together but I think it will be worth it in the long run.
- 5 The increase in oil prices certainly creates a problem for us.
- 6 The company got bigger and has now added children's clothing to its product range.

4.3 Choose the correct feeling from the box to complete each sentence.

anger	horror	tears	nostalgia	pride	pride
-------	--------	-------	-----------	-------	-------

- 1 Most older people feel a slight pang of as they think back on their schooldays.
- 2 Grace's father was filled with when he saw that she had dyed her beautiful black hair blonde.
- 3 When Daniel saw how harshly the poor were treated by the wealthy landowners he felt a surge of
- 4 Swelling with, Jack watched his daughter pick up her violin and play.
- 5 When she saw her exam results, Kate burst into
- 6 If people have a sense of in their town, they are more likely to behave well there.

4.4 Look at E and F and choose the correct adverb to complete these sentences.

- 1 Perhaps it's a good thing that Liam's unaware of what people really think of him.
- 2 I am aware that there will be problems whatever we decide.
- 3 Stella smiled as she watched the children playing happily in the garden.
- 4 My grandparents have been married for 45 years.
- 5 Place the glasses in the box - they're very fragile.
- 6 William whispered in Anna's ear that he would always love her.

4.5 Which of the sections A-F on the opposite page would each of these collocations fit into?

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| 1 make a decision | 6 roar with laughter |
| 2 blissfully happy | 7 a key factor |
| 3 tread carefully | 8 prices rise |
| 4 a surge of emotion | 9 a ginger cat |
| 5 acutely embarrassing | 10 burst into song |

Over to you

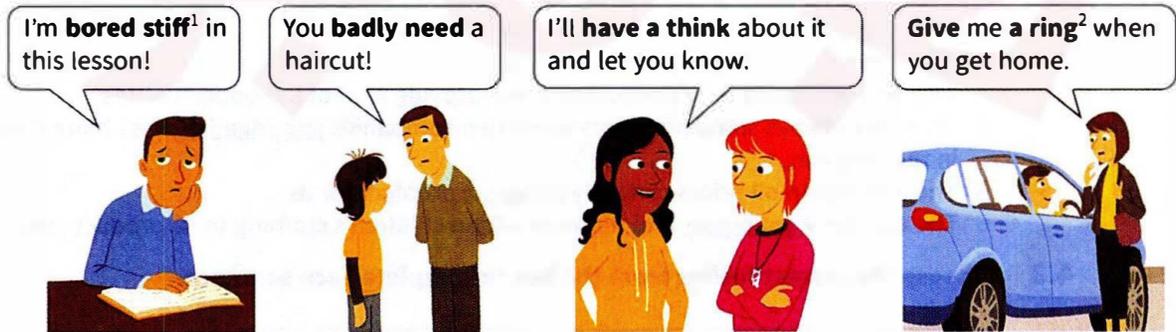
Make a page in your vocabulary notebook for each of the types of collocation listed on the opposite page.

Often, collocations rather than individual words suggest a particular register. For example, phrases using *pretty* meaning *fairly* sound informal when used with negative adjectives (**pretty awful**, **pretty dreadful**, **pretty dull**), and are typical of spoken English.

A

Spoken English

Here are some more collocations which are almost exclusively found in spoken English.



¹ extremely bored

² give me a phone call

B

Formal English

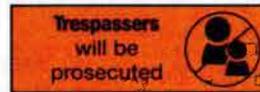
Some collocations are typical of formal English and are most likely to be found in an official, often legal, context, such as in notices.



[get off the bus]



[get off their bicycles]



[people who go onto someone's land or enter their building without permission will be taken to court]



¹ throw away
² container used for storing or putting objects in

C

Newspaper English

Some collocations – particularly ones that use short, dramatic words – are found mainly in newspapers. In most cases they would not normally be used in everyday conversation.

COMPUTER FACTORY TO AXE JOBS

[make staff redundant]

AIRLINE SLASHES PRICES

[cuts prices drastically]

Government spending will rocket this year

POLICE CRACK DOWN ON SPEEDING

[start dealing with it in a more severe way]

POLICE QUIZ 16-YEAR-OLD IN MURDER ENQUIRY

[ask questions]

FLU OUTBREAK HITS SOUTHERN EUROPE

D

Business English

Some collocations are characteristic of business English.

to **submit a tender** [present a document offering to do a job and stating the price]

to **raise capital** [get money to put into a business]

to **go into partnership with** someone [agree to start or run a business with someone]

to **start up a business**

Exercises

5.1 Underline formal (F) or informal (I) collocations in these sentences (one per sentence) and put F or I in the brackets at the end.

- 1 Cyclists should dismount before crossing the footbridge. ()
- 2 Never dispose of batteries and similar items by throwing them onto a fire. ()
- 3 The students were all bored stiff by the lecture. ()
- 4 Passengers must alight from the bus through the rear door. ()
- 5 The grass badly needs cutting. ()
- 6 Please place all used tickets in the receptacle provided as you leave the building. ()

5.2 Underline typical news/media collocations in these newspaper clips.

1 **OIL COMPANIES SLASH PRICES**
There was good news for motorists today as pump prices were lowered by the major oil companies.

3 **FLOODS HIT CENTRAL REGION**
Towns and villages in the Central region were battling against floods tonight as heavy rain continued.

2 **DETECTIVES QUIZ BUSINESSMAN OVER MISSING TEENAGER**
Senior detectives interviewed a man who has been named as prime suspect in the case of a missing 18-year-old who is feared to have been abducted.

4 **CAR FIRM TO AXE 200 JOBS**
The Presco car firm has announced that 200 workers will be made redundant at its Kenton factory. The job losses are the result of falling profits.

5.3 Rewrite the headlines in exercise 5.2 using collocations more typical of ordinary conversation, as if you were telling a friend the news. Start each answer with 'Have you heard ...?' Use a dictionary if necessary.

5.4 Match the beginning of each sentence on the left with its ending on the right to make typical collocations used in business English.

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| 1 We raised | partnership to develop a new range of products. |
| 2 They submitted | capital to expand the business. |
| 3 They went into | a business to supply sports equipment to schools. |
| 4 We started up | a tender for the new stadium. |

5.5 Choose a formal or informal collocation as instructed at the end of each sentence. Use a dictionary if necessary.

- 1 She was *dead / extremely* keen to meet the new coach. (informal)
- 2 We will be *boarding the aircraft / getting on the plane* in about ten minutes. (formal)
- 3 Mr Trotter *paid for / bore the cost of* the repairs. (formal)
- 4 I *withdrew from / dropped out of* my university course after a year. (informal)
- 5 The marketing manager *launched into / embarked upon* a detailed explanation of her new strategy. (informal)

6

Intensifying adverbs

In English there are lots of other ways of saying *very* or *very much*. For example, we can use words such as *highly*, *utterly*, *bitterly*, *deeply*. These alternatives collocate strongly with specific words, and other combinations often sound unnatural.

A **Highly**

collocations	comments
(un)likely unusual successful competitive profitable effective controversial recommended	<i>Highly</i> is used with some probability words (<i>likely</i> , <i>unusual</i>). With the exception of highly controversial it usually combines with very positive words. Extremely can also be used with all the opposite adjectives except <i>recommended</i> .

It is **highly unlikely** that I'll finish my work on time.
Julia's **highly unusual** behaviour began to worry her parents.

B **Absolutely, utterly**

collocations	comments
ridiculous stupid impossible wrong alone appalled convinced devastated miserable	<i>Absolutely</i> and (slightly more formal) <i>utterly</i> combine with adjectives with very extreme meanings where we can't use <i>very</i> . For example, we say absolutely/utterly exhausted , not <i>very exhausted</i> , whereas we say <i>very tired</i> , but not <i>absolutely</i> or <i>utterly tired</i> . Often, but not always, these words have negative connotations.

It was an **absolutely stupid** comment to make.
The whole area was **utterly devastated** after the earthquake.

C **Bitterly, deeply, ridiculously, strongly**

word	collocations	comments
bitterly	disappointing/disappointed resent criticise regret complain cry weep	carries a feeling of deep sadness; used slightly more in writing than in conversation
deeply	ashamed concerned shocked committed moved affected hurt (of feelings) regret care religious unhappy	collocates mainly with words associated with feelings; used slightly more in writing than in conversation
ridiculously	cheap expensive easy low high long short small large early	suggests something extreme, which seems unbelievable or unreasonable
strongly	oppose influence believe deny recommend support condemn suggest feel argue object	collocates with verbs, particularly verbs that relate to having an opinion

I was **bitterly disappointed** when I failed the exam.
Professor McDellvit was always **deeply committed** to her students.
The restaurant was **ridiculously expensive**. I don't think we'll go there again.
I would **strongly recommend** that you learn a foreign language.

Exercises

6.1 Choose an adverb from the box to replace *very* in each of these expressions.

utterly strongly bitterly ridiculously highly deeply

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| 1 very ashamed | 6 very disappointing |
| 2 very cheap | 7 very opposed |
| 3 very controversial | 8 very ridiculous |
| 4 very stupid | 9 very easy |
| 5 very successful | 10 very concerned |

6.2 Use a collocation from exercise 6.1 to complete each of these sentences.

- The flight from London to Rome was It only cost 20 euros.
- Some people love her new book, others are very angry about it. It is
- His father was a peace campaigner all his life and was to war.
- The exam results were for the whole class. We had all expected to do much better.
- When I realised how much my selfish behaviour had upset everyone, I was
- In the 1990s she ran a(n) company which made outstanding profits.
- Everyone got more than 95% correct in the test; it was
- You must apologise immediately. It was a(n) remark to make.
- She has always been about the environment and would like to work for a conservation agency.
- That you should even *think* that I would steal money from you is ! You must be crazy!

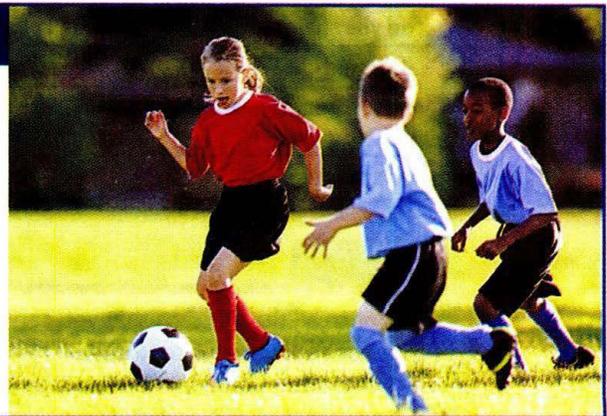
6.3 In each of these sets of phrases, one is not a correct collocation. Cross out the incorrect one.

- strongly recommend strongly influence strongly love strongly dislike
- highly educated highly profitable highly unusual highly exhausted
- bitterly regard bitterly regret bitterly resent bitterly criticise
- absolutely convinced absolutely tired absolutely devastated absolutely absurd
- deeply unhappy deeply religious deeply successful deeply committed

6.4 In this short text, the writer has often misused the word *strongly*. Correct the wrong collocations using adverbs from the box. Use each adverb once only.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Everyone was complaining strongly when they heard about the new plan. People were strongly shocked to hear that children would be strongly forbidden to use the sports ground and most people were strongly opposed to the new rules. Even people who normally never expressed an opinion were strongly appalled by the proposals.



bitterly strictly deeply utterly

This unit deals with *make* and *do*, two verbs that many learners have problems with. If you remember that the basic meaning of *make* is about producing something and the basic meaning of *do* is about performing an action, then the collocations on this page may seem more logical.

A

Make

collocation	example
make arrangements for	The school can make arrangements for pupils with special needs.
make a change / changes	The new manager is planning to make some changes .
make a choice	Amelia had to make a choice between her career and her family.
make a comment / comments	Would anyone like to make any comments on the talk?
make a contribution to	She made a useful contribution to the discussion.
make a decision	I'm glad it's you who has to make the decision , not me.
make an effort	Michael is really making an effort with his maths this term.
make an excuse	I'm too tired to go out tonight. Let's make an excuse and stay at home.
make friends	Caroline is very good at making friends .
make an improvement	Repainting the room has really made an improvement .
make a mistake	They've made a mistake in our bill.
make a phone call	I've got to make some phone calls before dinner.
make progress	Holly is making progress with all her schoolwork.

B

Do

collocation	example
do your best	All that matters in the exam is to do your best .
do damage	The storm did some damage to our roof.
do an experiment	We are doing an experiment to test how the metal reacts with water.
do exercises	We'll do some exercises practising these collocations tomorrow.
do someone a good turn / do someone a favour	Could you do me a favour and pick me up some milk from the supermarket? Jess did me a good turn by lending me her car while mine was in the garage.
do harm	Changing the rules may do more harm than good.
do your hair	No, I'm not ready. I haven't done my hair yet.
do your homework	My son has to do his homework straight after school.
do the ironing/shopping/washing, etc.	I'll do the washing if you do the ironing .
do some work	We'll do some work on our project and then we'll go to the cinema.

Tip

Notice all the patterns that you can see in these tables. For example, *make a comment*, *make an excuse* and *make a contribution to a discussion* are all connected with saying things. Noticing connections like this may help you to remember the correct collocation.

Exercises

7.1 Use a collocation with *make* and a noun instead of the underlined words in each of these conversations.

- 1 Naomi: The bill says we've had three desserts. We only had two.
 Stella: The waiter must have been mistaken.
- 2 Avery: It's so difficult. Should I take the job or not?
 Owen: I know it's difficult. But you have to decide one way or the other.
- 3 Grace: Can you and Ethan come to dinner on Saturday?
 Lily: Yes, we'll have to arrange to get a babysitter, but it should be OK.
- 4 Zoe: Did you hear about the air traffic controllers' strike in the USA?
 Aaron: Yes. We had to change our travel itinerary because of it.
- 5 Luke: Can I have chips *and* rice with my lunch?
 Clare: No, you have to choose chips or rice, but not both.
- 6 Gavin: Do you intend to speak at the meeting?
 Victoria: Yes, I hope I can contribute to the debate.

7.2 Choose the correct collocation, *do* or *make*.

- 1 Did the fire *do / make* much damage to the factory?
- 2 I hate *doing / making* my homework at the last minute.
- 3 You must *do / make* an effort to work harder.
- 4 Did you *do / make* any work at the weekend?
- 5 We are trying to *do / make* improvements to the system for registering.
- 6 Do you think it would *do / make* any harm if I cut some leaves off this plant?

7.3 You are designing a questionnaire for your school website. Complete each question with *do* or *make*.

80%

HOW NICE ARE YOU?

- 1 Do you your best to be on time when meeting a friend?
 ALWAYS SOMETIMES NEVER
- 2 Do you ever the cooking at home?
 ALWAYS SOMETIMES NEVER
- 3 Do you excuses if someone asks you to a big favour for them?
 ALWAYS SOMETIMES NEVER
- 4 Do you ever negative comments about your friends' hair, clothes, etc?
 ALWAYS SOMETIMES NEVER
- 5 Do you find it easy to friends?
 ALWAYS SOMETIMES NEVER



Give yourself three points for 'always', two for 'sometimes', one for 'never'. Turn the page to find out how nice you really are.

Get is a very common verb in English, but it is not always appropriate for talking about changes. Note also alternatives to *get* which can improve your style.

A

Go, not get

Go is used for changes in people's personality, appearance and physical abilities: People **go mad/bald/grey/blind/deaf**.

Go is often used for sudden, usually negative, changes: He was very embarrassed and his face **went red**. Suddenly the sky **went** very **dark** and it started to rain.

Go can also be used for slower colour changes: The pages of the book had **gone yellow** over the years.

B

Turn, not get

Turn often collocates with colours:

The sky **turned gold** as the sun set.

When the tomatoes **turn red**, the farmers pick them and sell them.

The news gave his mother such a shock that her hair **turned white** overnight.

C

Get and become

Get and *become* can often be used with the same collocations, but *become* is more formal and is therefore more appropriate in essays:

She gave up smoking when she **became pregnant**.

I would like to **become involved** in raising money for charity.

The same is true for collocations with adjectives such as *angry, bored, excited, depressed, upset, impatient, violent*:

He **became depressed** after his wife's death.

Become, not *get*, is used with the following: *extinct, (un)popular, homeless, famous*.

Our local baker's has **become famous** for its apple tarts.

D

Alternatives to get and become

She **fell ill** and was taken to hospital.

Everyone **fell silent** when they heard the shocking news.

As my father **grew older**, he spent less time working.

The noise **grew louder** and soon we realised it was a plane approaching.

E

Overusing and misusing get

Here are some sentences from students' essays where *get* is wrongly used.

sentences with <i>get</i>	more appropriate alternatives
I was able to get new friends.	I was able to make new friends .
A year ago he got a heart attack.	A year ago he had/suffered a heart attack .
If I get a child of my own one day ...	If I have a child of my own one day ...
I was getting crazy.	I was going crazy .
In June, I got a baby, James.	In June, I had a baby , James.

Exercises

8.1 Answer these questions using collocations from A and B.

- 1 What can happen to men as they get older? (Clue: Think of their hair.)
- 2 What can happen if you are embarrassed? (Clue: Think of your face.)
- 3 What can happen if you get bad news? (Clue: Think of your face or hair.)
- 4 What can happen to the pages of a newspaper after a long time?
- 5 What happens to strawberries as they ripen?
- 6 The poet John Milton lost his eyesight at the end of his life. What is another way of saying that?
- 7 The composer Beethoven lost his hearing at the end of his life. What is another way of saying that?
- 8 At the end of Shakespeare's play, Hamlet loses his mind. What is another way of saying that?
- 9 If it is about to rain, what might happen to the sky?

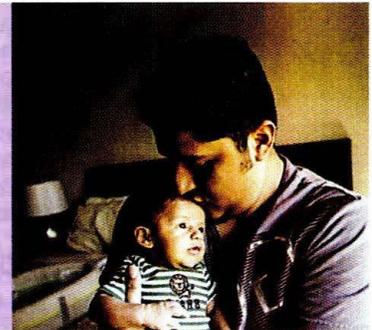
8.2 Look at C, D and E opposite. Correct these sentences.

- 1 Dinosaurs got extinct thousands of years ago.
- 2 When I get married, I'd like to get lots of children.
- 3 Jasmine fell depressed after failing her final exams.
- 4 Niklas has always dreamt of getting famous.
- 5 Would you be interested in growing involved in this project?
- 6 More people have got homeless this year than in any previous year.
- 7 My sister got a baby last week.
- 8 My grandfather got a heart attack last winter.

8.3 Replace each use of get with a verb from the box.

fall	become	grow	have	make
------	--------	------	------	------

As you get older, you'll begin to understand your parents better. Getting angry with them all the time doesn't help. You may not want to go to summer camp when none of your friends will be there, but your parents know you will soon get new friends there. You would all have gone on a family holiday together if your grandmother hadn't got ill, but surely you can understand why they don't want to leave her. You'll feel much more sympathetic to your parents' feelings when you get a child of your own!



8.4 Complete the collocations in these sentences.

- 1 I think I'd go if I had to put up with such a terrible boss!
- 2 It was a wonderful sunset. The sky gold and we sat on the terrace enjoying it.
- 3 Once upon a time the walls were probably cream but they have brown now and badly need repainting.
- 4 When I start grey, I'm definitely going to dye my hair.
- 5 As the head teacher walked into the hall, the children all silent.
- 6 The noise on the street louder and I looked out of the window to see what was happening.
- 7 My grandmother is a little afraid of ill while she is abroad.
- 8 I was so embarrassed that I bright red.

A

Have

Note that these verbs collocate with *have* rather than any other verb (e.g. *get* or *make*).

collocation	example
have an accident	Mr Grey had an accident last night but he's OK now.
have an argument / a row	We had an argument / a row about how to fix the car.
have a break	Let's have a break when you finish this exercise.
have a conversation/chat	I hope we'll have time to have a chat after the meeting.
have difficulty	The class had difficulty understanding what to do.
have a dream/nightmare	I had a nightmare last night.
have an experience	I had a frightening experience the other day.
have a feeling	I have a feeling that something is wrong.
have fun / a good time	I'm sure you'll have fun on the school trip.
have a look	The manager wanted to have a look at what we were doing.
have a party	Let's have a party at the end of term.
have a problem / problems	Ask the teacher if you have problems with the exercise.
have a try/go	I'll explain what to do and then you can have a go/try .

B

Take

Hi, Jean,

We're so glad we decided to **take a holiday** here. Yesterday we **took a trip** to the mountains. First we **took a train** to a little town and then we **took a bus** going to various villages and got off when we saw one that we **took a liking to**. Of course, we were **taking a risk** as we didn't know exactly what we'd find there. But we were lucky. Some kids **took an interest in** us and showed us some great places. We **took a lot of photos**.

Have you done anything yet about your job? I'd **take a chance** and leave if I were you. No point in staying somewhere where the boss has **taken a dislike to** you! **Take advantage of** being in London – there are always plenty of jobs there. You'll soon find something else, so **take action**, that's my advice! Good luck!

Ellen

C

Pay

collocation	example
pay attention	You must pay attention to the teacher.
pay a compliment	I was trying to pay her a compliment but she misunderstood.
pay your (last) respects	At a funeral people pay their last respects to the person who has died.
pay tribute [formal]	When Jack retired, his boss made a speech paying tribute to all he had done for the company.

Tip

There are other common verbs in English which have strong and possibly surprising collocations. Notice any that you find with, for example, *break*, *fall*, *run* and *take*.

Key

Unit 1

- 1.1 1 A collocation is a pair or group of words which are often used together in a way which sounds natural to native speakers of English.
 2 *car and food*
 3 *narrow-minded, teapot and car park*
 4 idioms

- 1.2 make mistakes
 powerful engine
 have breakfast
 make an effort
 watch TV
 ancient monument
 substantial meal
 bitterly cold
 pitch dark
 strictly forbidden
 Other possible collocations are: make breakfast, substantial breakfast.

- 1.3 The first four statements are all true. The final statement is probably not true. You may well be understood if you use less natural collocations but you will not sound as you probably wish to sound.

1.4

compound	collocation	idiom
teapot	make a mistake	pull somebody's leg
key ring	heavy snow	a storm in a tea cup
checkpoint	valid passport	
	bitterly disappointed	
	live music	

- 1.5 The most useful collocations to learn are underlined here.

When I left university I made a decision to take up a profession in which I could be creative. I could play the guitar, but I'd never written any songs. Nonetheless I decided to become a singer-songwriter. I made some recordings but I had a rather heavy cold so they didn't sound good. I made some more, and sent them to a record company and waited for them to reply. So, while I was waiting to become famous, I got a job in a fast-food restaurant. That was five years ago. I'm still doing the same job.

Unit 2

- 2.1 All of the underlined phrases are strong collocations.

My friend Abigail is desperately worried about her son at the moment. He wants to enrol on a course of some sort but just can't make a decision about what to study. I gave Abigail a ring and we had a long chat about it last night. She said he'd like to study for a degree but is afraid he won't meet the requirements for university entry. Abigail thinks he should do a course in Management because he'd like to set up his own business in the future. I agreed that that would be a wise choice.

- 2.2
- 1 She's having a party.
 - 2 She's taking an exam.
 - 3 She's giving a lecture. / She's giving a party.
 - 4 She's making good progress.
 - 5 She's doing her duty. / [informal] She's doing an exam.

2.3 In the morning I ~~made~~ **did** some work in the garden then I ~~spent~~ **had** a rest for about an hour before going out to ~~have~~ **do** some shopping in town. It was my sister's birthday and I wanted to ~~do~~ **make** a special effort to cook a nice meal for her. I ~~gave~~ **had** (or **took**) a look at a new Thai cookery book in the bookshop and decided to buy it. It has some ~~totally~~ **very/quite/extremely** easy recipes and I managed to ~~do~~ **make** a good impression with my very first Thai meal. I think my sister ~~utterly~~ **thoroughly/really** enjoyed her birthday.

2.4 **lead** [CONTROL] **E** /li:d/ verb [I or T] (led, led) to control a group of people, a country, or a situation: *I think we've chosen the right person to lead the expedition.* ◦ *I've asked Gemma to lead the discussion.* ◦ *Who will be leading the inquiry into the accident?*
 ● **lead sb by the nose** INFORMAL to control someone and make them do exactly what you want them to do

Possible new sentences:

- 1 He led an expedition to the Amazon in 1887.
- 2 She led the discussion very skilfully.
- 3 The Prime Minister appointed a senior judge to lead the inquiry into the scandal.

Over to you

Here are some possible good collocations for the words suggested. You may choose to record them in different ways, of course. The important thing is that they are recorded as collocations in a phrase or sentence that will help you to understand their meaning and to remember them.

desperately ill; desperately busy; desperately keen; desperately in love with an acute pain; a sudden pain; to relieve the pain; to put up with pain (see also Unit 3)
 a wise decision; to be older and wiser; to be wise after the event; a wise guy (informal)
 to run a business; to run smoothly; buses run regularly; to run for political office

Unit 3

- 3.1
- 1 It puts them **in bold**.
 - 2 in pain, constant pain, ease the pain, a sharp pain, aches and pains
 - 3 It can take you to a lot of information about a word or about types of word very quickly.
 - 4 Synonyms, related words and phrases
 - 5 By writing INFORMAL after the relevant use of the word.
 - 6 If your dictionary does not indicate good collocations either by putting them in bold or by using them in example sentences, then you should seriously consider getting another dictionary that will help you in this way. It will be very useful when you are writing English compositions as well as helping you to improve your vocabulary.
 - 7 Your answer will depend on your own dictionary.
 - 8 Your answer will depend on your own dictionary.

3.2

making others experience pain	the experience of being in pain	making pain go away
to cause pain	to complain of pain	to alleviate pain
to inflict pain	to experience pain	to ease pain
	to feel pain	to lessen pain
	to be racked with pain	to relieve pain
	to suffer pain	to soothe pain
		pain subsides

Unit 30

- 30.1
- | | |
|----------|-----------------------|
| 1 work | 5 work |
| 2 career | 6 career |
| 3 career | 7 job |
| 4 job | 8 career; job; career |

30.2 *Suggested answer:*

applicant	1-3	reasons
Kevin Marsh	3	Too young, does not have any experience
Katharina Bauer	1	Enough experience, right qualifications, has worked in a team, short notice
Nuala Riley	2	Wrong kind of experience, long period of notice, person needed immediately

- 30.3
- 1 She has set some difficult targets for us all.
 - 2 We're making preparations for the sales conference.
 - 3 I always keep my appointments.
 - 4 Kate will take the minutes at the meeting.
 - 5 I have to give a presentation to my colleagues.
 - 6 He never achieved his goals in his career.
 - 7 He fielded my phone calls while I took time off.

- 30.4
- dead-end job** – a job that has few prospects of leading somewhere interesting or successful
 - glittering career** – an impressive career, one that is admired by many people
 - career spanning** – a career covering a specified and notably long period of time
 - lucrative job** – a job where the person earns a lot of money for doing the work
 - rewarding job** – a job where the person gets a lot of personal satisfaction – emotional rather than financial – from doing the work

Unit 31

- 31.1
- | | |
|----------|-------------|
| 1 float | 6 go |
| 2 launch | 7 carry out |
| 3 make | 8 go |
| 4 go | 9 set |
| 5 go | 10 make |
- 31.2
- | | | | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 1 d | 2 b | 3 f | 4 a | 5 c | 6 e |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
- 31.3
- 1 win, stiff
 - 2 run
 - 3 doing
 - 4 turnover
 - 5 balance
 - 6 bid
- 31.4
- | | |
|------------|----------------|
| 1 runs | 8 competition |
| 2 up | 9 put |
| 3 does | 10 rival |
| 4 made | 11 done/struck |
| 5 figures | 12 create |
| 6 business | 13 secret |
| 7 won | 14 service |

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ENGLISH COLLOCATIONS IN USE

Intermediate

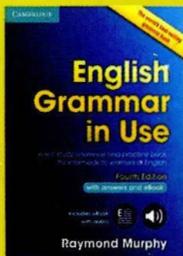
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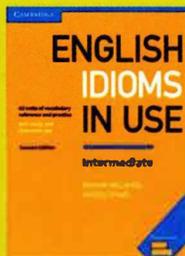
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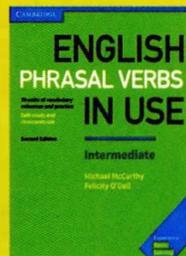
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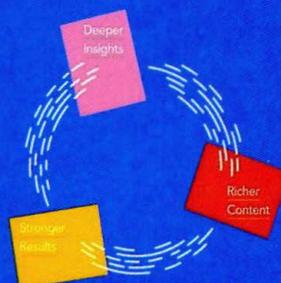
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