

# English Collocations **in Use**

How words work  
together for  
fluent and  
natural English

Self-study and  
classroom use

**Michael McCarthy**  
**Felicity O'Dell**



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## Learning about collocations

- 1 What is a collocation?
- 2 Finding, recording and learning collocations
- 3 Using your dictionary
- 4 Types of collocation
- 5 Register

## Grammatical aspects of collocations

- |                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| 6 Intensifying adverbs | <i>highly unlikely, utterly ridiculous, strongly object</i> |
| 7 Everyday verbs 1     | <i>make a mistake, do your best, do damage</i>              |
| 8 Everyday verbs 2     | <i>go bald, become extinct, fall ill</i>                    |
| 9 Everyday verbs 3     | <i>have fun, take action, pay a compliment</i>              |

## Special aspects of collocation

- |                                    |   |
|------------------------------------|---|
| 10 Synonyms and confusable words 1 | <i>close a meeting, antique furniture, only child</i>     |
| 11 Synonyms and confusable words 2 | <i>gain power, achieve your goals, defeat an opponent</i> |
| 12 Metaphor                        | <i>sunny smile, ideas flow, heated discussion</i>         |

## Topics: Travel and the environment

- |                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| 13 Weather          | <i>strong wind, blanket of fog, river bursts its banks</i> |
| 14 Travel           | <i>tiring journey, aisle seat, family-run hotel</i>        |
| 15 Countryside      | <i>surrounding countryside, well worth seeing</i>          |
| 16 Towns and cities | <i>lined with shops, sprawling city, volume of traffic</i> |

## Topics: People and relationships

- |                                    |   |
|------------------------------------|---|
| 17 People: character and behaviour | <i>have a vivid imagination, lose your patience</i>     |
| 18 People: physical appearance     | <i>slender waist, immaculately groomed</i>              |
| 19 Families                        | <i>distant cousin, expecting a baby, stable home</i>    |
| 20 Relationships                   | <i>casual acquaintance, love at first sight</i>         |
| 21 Feelings and emotions           | <i>lasting happiness, worried sick, emotional wreck</i> |

## Topics: Leisure and lifestyle

- |                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| 22 Houses, flats and rooms | <i>move into a flat, spacious living room</i>                |
| 23 Eating and drinking     | <i>nourishing meal, spoil your appetite, dying of hunger</i> |
| 24 Films and books         | <i>film critic, go on the stage, renew a library book</i>    |
| 25 Music                   | <i>give a performance, go on tour, strum a guitar</i>        |
| 26 Sport                   | <i>go snowboarding, take a penalty</i>                       |
| 27 Health and illness      | <i>catch a cold, vigorous exercise, be taken ill</i>         |

## Topics: Work and study

- |                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| 28 Computers          | <i>forward a message, e-mail bounces</i>                  |
| 29 Study and learning | <i>do research, attend a lecture, first draft</i>         |
| 30 Work               | <i>high-powered job, hand in your notice</i>              |
| 31 Business           | <i>set up a business, launch a product, rival company</i> |

32 Academic writing 1: giving opinions	<i>key factor, challenge a theory, carry out research</i>
33 Academic writing 2: structuring an argument	<i>make reference to, argue convincingly, research suggests</i>

Topics: Society and institutions

34 Laws and punishments	<i>break the law, bend the rules, fair trial</i>
35 Crime	<i>hardened criminal, juvenile crime, tackle crime</i>
36 News	<i>hit the headlines, hold talks, take hostage</i>
37 Money	<i>squander money, price soars, go cheap</i>
38 War and peace	<i>war breaks out, restore order, call a truce</i>
39 Global problems	<i>irreparable damage, eradicate poverty, earthquake hits</i>

Basic concepts

40 Time	<i>save time, ungodly hours, from dawn till dusk</i>
41 Sound	<i>break the silence, excessive noise, almighty bang</i>
42 Distance and size	<i>within commuting distance, painfully thin</i>
43 Colour and light	<i>bright colour, beam of light, shed some light on</i>
44 Texture	<i>choppy sea, soft pillow, ice melts</i>
45 Taste and smell	<i>fragrant perfume, have a taste, smell danger</i>
46 Number and frequency	<i>significant number, come to a total of, rare species</i>
47 Movement and speed	<i>prompt payment, painfully slow, lose your balance</i>
48 Change	<i>make an adjustment, break a habit, change the subject</i>
49 Ways of speaking	<i>brief chat, raise a subject, drop a hint</i>
50 Ways of walking	<i>pace up and down, wander aimlessly, faltering steps</i>

Functions

51 Starting and finishing	<i>promising start, bring something to an end</i>
52 Talking about success and failure	<i>make a breakthrough, fail miserably</i>
53 Talking about cause and effect	<i>cause alarm, adverse effects, have a major impact</i>
54 Remembering and sensing	<i>vaguely remember, blot out a memory, have a feeling</i>
55 Agreeing and disagreeing	<i>settle a dispute, agree to differ, heated argument</i>
56 Talking about beliefs and opinions	<i>firmly believe, colour someone's judgement</i>
57 Deciding and choosing	<i>arrive at a decision, have second thoughts, tough choice</i>
58 Claiming and denying	<i>make the point that, contradictory evidence</i>
59 Liking and disliking	<i>have a liking, state a preference, take offence</i>
60 Praising and criticising	<i>offer your congratulations, speak highly of</i>

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