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Learning about collocations

- 1 Introducing collocations
- 2 Strong, fixed and weak collocations
- 3 Grammatical categories of collocation
- 4 Using your dictionary and other resources
- 5 Finding and working on collocations in texts
- 6 Register

Varieties of collocations

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|---|---|
| 7 Metaphor | <i>foot the bill, heavy burden, run into trouble</i> |
| 8 Intensifying and softening adverbs | <i>deeply offensive, spotlessly clean, wildly inaccurate</i> |
| 9 <i>Make</i> and verbs that mean <i>make</i> | <i>make a contribution, make a habit of, turn in a profit</i> |
| 10 Communicating | <i>generally speaking, talk business, get a message across</i> |
| 11 Collocations with phrasal verbs | <i>take up office, work up an appetite, see off an intruder</i> |

Topics: work and study

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|--|---|
| 12 Working life | <i>make a living, take up a post, move up the ladder</i> |
| 13 New employment | <i>fit the job description, land a new job, menial tasks</i> |
| 14 Thoughts and ideas | <i>bear in mind, widespread belief, jump to conclusions</i> |
| 15 Business reports | <i>fierce competition, stimulate growth, hike in prices</i> |
| 16 Customer services | <i>fit for purpose, kick up a fuss, grounds for complaint</i> |
| 17 Student life | <i>gifted child, mature student, thirst for knowledge</i> |
| 18 Writing essays, assignments and reports | <i>working hypothesis, confront issues, critical analysis</i> |

Topics: leisure and lifestyle

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|-------------------------------|---|
| 19 Social life | <i>call for a celebration, social whirl, play host to</i> |
| 20 Talking | <i>juicy gossip, broach the subject, opening gambit</i> |
| 21 News | <i>declare independence, reach agreement, bow to pressure</i> |
| 22 Current affairs | <i>refuse point-blank, decline to comment, gauge reaction</i> |
| 23 Festivals and celebrations | <i>date back to, movable feast, propose a toast</i> |
| 24 Advertisements and fashion | <i>set the trend, fashion victim, flawless complexion</i> |
| 25 Traffic and driving | <i>lengthy delays, grind the gears, bear left</i> |
| 26 Travel and adventure | <i>get itchy feet, off the beaten track, leg of the journey</i> |
| 27 Sport | <i>keep in shape, reach fever pitch, score an own goal</i> |
| 28 Plans and decisions | <i>toy with an idea, tentative suggestion, deciding factor</i> |
| 29 Film and book reviews | <i>star-studded cast, glowing reviews, hold one's attention</i> |

Topics: the modern world

30 Regulations and authority	<i>minimise danger, grant permission, faceless bureaucrats</i>
31 The environment	<i>dump waste, searing heat, offset carbon emissions</i>
32 Town and country life	<i>back of beyond, rural idyll, urban regeneration</i>
33 Personal finance	<i>clear one's debts, agreed credit limit, identity theft</i>
34 The economy	<i>curb inflation, safeguard one's interests, plummeting profits</i>
35 Social issues	<i>antisocial behaviour, dysfunctional family, unfit for human habitation</i>
36 Science and technology	<i>harness technology, cutting edge design, wireless hotspots</i>
37 Health and medicine	<i>build up resistance, adverse reaction, shake off a cold</i>
38 Criminal justice	<i>custodial sentences, beyond reasonable doubt, trumped-up charges</i>
39 War and peace	<i>deploy troops, pre-emptive strike, collateral damage</i>

Topics: people

40 Friendship	<i>lifelong friends, platonic relationship, heal the rift</i>
41 Youth and age	<i>child prodigy, go through a midlife crisis, senior moment</i>
42 Celebrities and heroes	<i>go into rehab, kiss and tell, heap praise on</i>
43 Criticising people	<i>bone idle, poison the atmosphere, nasty piece of work</i>
44 References	<i>act as a referee, accumulate experience, financial acumen</i>
45 Appearance and personality	<i>boundless energy, stubborn streak, act one's age</i>

Basic concepts

46 Time and space	<i>cramped conditions, waste of space, go down in history</i>
47 Sound	<i>husky voice, incessant noise, let out a cry</i>
48 Making things easier	<i>viable options, simplicity itself, take the easy way out</i>
49 Difficulty	<i>severe blow, hinder progress, encounter difficulties</i>
50 Quantity and size	<i>finite number, endless supply, unknown quantity</i>
51 Change	<i>sweeping changes, would make a change, sudden shift</i>

Functions

52 Stopping and starting	<i>bring a halt to, close off a street, dispel rumours</i>
53 Cause and effect	<i>root cause, provoke an outcry, dire consequences</i>
54 Describing groups and amounts	<i>swarm of bees, flurry of activity, stroke of genius</i>
55 Comparing and contrasting	<i>bear little resemblance to, polar opposites, draw a comparison between</i>
56 Making an effort	<i>give it one's best shot, abortive attempt, worth a try</i>
57 Social English	<i>not lose any sleep, to be brutally honest, be on the go</i>
58 Discussing issues	<i>make a commitment, give a straight answer, miss the point</i>
59 Negative situations and feelings	<i>nasty shock, take exception to, suffer at the hands of</i>
60 Positive situations and feelings	<i>sense of achievement, state of euphoria, derive pleasure from</i>
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