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精选

英语搭配字典

实用英语词库系列

The LTP Dictionary
of Selected Collocations

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TRIBUTE

The inspiration for this collocation dictionary came from the work of two academics working in Poland – Christian Douglas Kozłowska and Halina Dzierżanowska.

Halina Dzierżanowska, the late deputy head of the Institute of Applied Linguistics at Warsaw University, was a pioneer of collocation studies. She started a collaboration with Christian Douglas Kozłowska in the late seventies which resulted in 1982 in the noun-based dictionary *Selected English Collocations*. In 1981 they began work on a new dictionary of verb-adverb and adjective-adverb collocations which appeared in 1991 as *English Adverbial Collocations*. Both dictionaries were based on a corpus of post-1960 British English writing.

The aim of the original authors was to produce reference material which learners and translators would find of practical use. It is to their great credit that they published their work many years before anything similar was available to students in the West.

We are grateful to the original Polish publishers – the Polish Scientific Publishers PWN Ltd – for giving us permission to combine the two original books and to edit and up-date them extensively to make them suitable for ELT learners worldwide.

This book is dedicated to Halina Dzierżanowska and Christian Douglas Kozłowska, who understood the importance of collocation long before the rest of us.

Jimmie Hill and Michael Lewis
Hove 1997

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INTRODUCTION

The LTP Dictionary of Selected Collocations

The LTP *Dictionary of Selected Collocations* is not a traditional dictionary. It is a new kind of dictionary to help learners of English to use the words they know more effectively. Most dictionaries help you to find the meaning of words you do not know. This book helps you to **use** the words you know.

Who is the dictionary for?

You will find this dictionary of most use if you are an intermediate or advanced learner. It answers the kind of questions you will have when you need to write, translate or speak English accurately.

How is this dictionary different?

In most dictionaries the entries give the meaning of single words. But words are very rarely used alone. If you want to speak and write naturally, it is the way words combine with other words which is important. This is a dictionary of collocations – word combinations.

Different kinds of collocation

When you speak or write, many different word combinations are **possible**, but some are much more **probable** than others. Some pairs of words occur together very rarely but other pairs occur together so often that when you see one word, you strongly expect that the other word may be there too. These special combinations are called **collocations** and they occur in all languages. The most important kinds listed in this dictionary are:

adjective + noun   *fatal accident, golden opportunity*
verb + noun   *accept responsibility, undermine (my) self-confidence*
noun + verb   *the gap widened, a fight broke out*
adverb + adjective *highly desirable, potentially embarrassing*
verb + adverb   *discuss calmly, lead eventually to*

This dictionary does not contain all the collocations of English. If it did, it would be very long and difficult to use. The collocations have been selected to make it as useful and easy to use as possible for learners of English.

Very common collocations

The most frequent collocations are almost all made with some of the most common words in English:

a *big* house   *give* a *quick* report

very different   *rather* strong

Many of these are very common in spoken English. When we write or prepare what we are going to say, we use language more precisely and choose our words and combinations more carefully, so we might prefer:

a *magnificent* house   *present* a *preliminary* report

significantly different   *relatively* strong

The lists in this dictionary help you to find combinations like these.

Strong collocations

Some rare collocations are very strong – these usually express fairly unusual ideas, but when you do write about one of these ideas, the particular collocation is almost the only natural way of doing it:

He's been found guilty of *serious professional misconduct*.

One of the most important ways to make your English sound natural is to use these strong collocations. Storing combinations like *declare war, impose rigid discipline* in your memory is one of the best ways to build an effective vocabulary. Collocations of this kind are listed in this dictionary. Browsing through an entry will often remind you of strong collocations you have met, but which may not come to mind when you need them.

Which collocations are included and which are not?

Some very common adjectives such as *good, bad, big, small, old, new* combine with almost any noun. These are not usually included in the lists, but they **are** included if the collocation is very strong, for example, *good/bad luck*. In a similar way, we have omitted very common adverbs such as *really, very, rather, quite*. The most common words are not included and neither are the most common collocations made with common words – *a fast car, have dinner, a bit tired*. If you are using this dictionary, we are confident you will already know these. Nor have we included technical collocations from specialist areas such as medicine or economics. We have also excluded highly colloquial collocations which may sound unnatural if used by learners.

This is a dictionary of **selected** collocations. We have included only those about which we think you may be uncertain or which you will need when you want to use English carefully and precisely.

Grammatical information

If you want to check grammatical information, you will need to consult your ordinary dictionary, grammar book, or teacher. You need to be particularly careful with articles *(a, an, the)*. If in doubt, check. There are several reasons why we have not given detailed grammatical information in the lists:

- you already know a lot about common grammatical patterns
- slightly different meanings of a word sometimes mean different grammar patterns
- giving full grammatical information would make the entries so complicated that the collocational information would be less accessible

Our aim is to make the entries in this dictionary as easy as possible to scan or browse.

How to look something up

The dictionary has two parts. In the first part all the headwords are nouns. You use this section to find the verbs and adjectives which combine with the noun. In the second part the headwords are verbs and adjectives. You use this section to find the adverbs and adverbial expressions which combine with the verbs and adjectives.

Headwords

The noun is often the most important word in a sentence because it is 'what you are talking about'. The other words are built round the noun. Complicated ideas are built in a logical order:

1. What am I talking about? a noun
2. What kind? adjective + noun
3. What happened to it? verb + adjective + noun
4. How did it happen? verb + adjective + noun + adverb/adverbial

NOUN	> ADJECTIVE	> VERB	> (ADVERB)
order	*> urgent*	*> dispatch*	*> by air*
proposal	*> original*	*> modify*	*> drastically*

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Then, when you have all the words, you need to put them into the correct grammatical form to say exactly what you want:

We dispatched your urgent order by air yesterday.
The original proposal had been drastically modified before it was accepted.

How to find the collocations you need

Start from the noun and scan all the verbs under the headword quickly. Scanning the words in the entry will help you think more clearly about what exactly you want to say. Ignore any words you do not recognise, and all those where you know the meaning is not what you want. You should find either exactly the verb you are looking for or, perhaps, several verbs with similar meanings so you can choose the one that best expresses what you want to say.

Browsing

Apart from looking for the collocation which says exactly what you mean, you can use an entry, particularly one of the longer ones, to help you to re-activate lots of half-remembered combinations. Use the entry in this way when you are preparing an essay or a talk.

Translating

Scanning the whole entry is particularly helpful if you are trying to translate from your own language. Scanning the entry should refresh your memory and remind you of possibilities. This is particularly the case for those words which are difficult to translate because they have rather little meaning – but they have very long lists of collocations, for example, *idea, information, evidence, manner, plan, scheme.*

Words with more than one meaning

Sometimes there is more than one entry for the same headword. This happens when the word has two or more **clearly distinct** meanings:

SPACE	**SPACE** (cosmic)	
SENSE	**SENSE** (smell, sight)	**SENSE** (meaning)

A small number of headwords are given in the plural when this is the **most common** use of the word, for example, *congratulations, circumstances.* Sometimes the plural has a different meaning from the singular:

TALK	**TALK** (lecture)	**TALKS** (negotiations)

Sometimes, where the headword is singular, some expressions which are always plural are listed at the end of the entry:

> **RIGHT**
> P: the ~ of free speech, to have/reserve the ~ to, to know/stand up for your *rights*, within (your) *rights*, animal, human, women's *rights*

Many nouns have only one meaning; a few have two or more clearly different meanings (*state = condition; state = nation*). Many words have a range of similar or overlapping uses. The differences in meaning can be very small – *a spelling test, a driving test* and *medical tests* – are all slightly different uses of the word *test*. A word like *story* is much more complicated. Here are some examples:

Shall I tell you a funny story?
Despite intensive cross-examination, both witnesses stuck to their stories.
The Government made a statement as soon as the story broke.

Although they all have the same basic meaning, the word *story* refers to three quite different areas – jokes, testimony in court and a news story. Obviously some of the collocations of *story* are common in one use but unusual or even impossible in the others, but some other collocations can be used with all three slightly different meanings. Separating these overlapping areas is both impossible and unhelpful. Scanning one of the longer entries like *story, idea, system, view* will help you to see the similar but slightly different ways in which these important words are used. As we have already seen, this also helps you to re-activate for immediate use words you only half-remember.

Literal and metaphorical uses

Many of the words which cover overlapping areas like this are used both literally and metaphorically:

run the race of a lifetime	*win a gold medal*
run for office	*win the race for the White House*

Metaphorical uses are common in all forms of writing including newspapers, research, essays and reports.

Remember, when looking at adjective + noun collocations, that many adjectives are ungradable when they are used literally, but gradable when used metaphorically. So although you are unlikely to say *My grandmother is very dead,* you can say *The town is very dead at the weekend.*

Part 1 – The Noun Section

Most entries contain:

- V: a list of verbs which come before the noun
- V: a list of verbs (in the most common tense) which come after the noun
- A: a list of adjectives
- P: phrases which contain the noun

They look like this:

CAREER

V: abandon, be absorbed in, be destined for ~ in, boost, carve out, change, choose, concentrate on, cripple, cut short, damage, determine, develop, devote oneself to, embark on, end, enter upon, further, give up, hamper, have a ~ in (banking), help, hinder, interrupt, launch out on, launch sb on, map out, plan, predict, promote, pursue, put an end to, ruin, sacrifice, salvage, set sb off on, spoil, start, take up, wreck ~

V: ~ blossomed, had its ups and downs

A: amazing, brilliant, chequered, colourful, demanding, difficult, disappointing, distinguished, entire, fine, flourishing, glittering, golden, good, great, honourable, ill-fated, meteoric, modest, promising, splendid, steady, strange, successful, turbulent, unusual, varied ~

P: outset of, peak of, pinnacle of, springboard for, summit of ~, a ~ change

---

The verb lists

The ~ marks the position of the headword in the collocation or phrase. When the ~ comes at the end of a list of verbs, those verbs are used **in front of** the noun. For example: *She interrupted her career to have a family.*

When the ~ comes first, the verbs **follow** the noun. For example: *Her career blossomed after she changed jobs.*

When the ~ comes in the middle, it still shows the position of the headword – *have a career in banking.*

The adjective lists

Most of the adjectives listed can be used before the noun (attributively – *a distinguished career* – and after the noun (predicatively – *his career in the diplomatic service was very distinguished*). Sometimes adjectives can only be used in one position. If you are in doubt, check in your ordinary dictionary or grammar book. Notice in some entries the adjective list contains some words which are normally used as nouns. For example:

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> **ACCIDENT**
> A: bad, car, dreadful, fatal, happy, horrible, industrial, nasty, road,
> serious, slight, terrible, tragic, unfortunate ~

Collocations such as *car accident* and *road accident* are common in English and indeed it is impossible to express these ideas any other way. Do not be surprised to find more 'nouns' in the adjective lists than you expect.

Sometimes two grammatically related adjectives collocate with the noun:

realistic / unrealistic assumption

Sometimes the negative word collocates, but there is no positive equivalent, or the positive equivalent does not collocate:

unwarranted assumption

These features appear in the dictionary like this:

> **ASSUMPTION**
> A: arrogant, basic, bold, cautious, charitable, conventional, crucial, fair, false,
> far-fetched, feeble, foolish, fundamental, (un)likely, logical, obvious, optimistic,
> pessimistic, plausible, preliminary, (im)probable, (un)realistic, reasonable,
> reliable, ridiculous, rigid, risky, safe, tacit, (un)tenable, unfounded, unjustified,
> unwarranted, valid, well-founded, wild ~

Lists of phrases

All the phrases contain the headword in the position shown by the ~. For example – *the peak of his career, a successful career change.*

Only two other symbols are used in the entries:

sb = somebody – *invite sb out for a meal, establish sb's guilt*

sth = something – *entirely, perfectly, totally, wholly consistent with sth*

Sometimes these are combined. If the phrase needs to be completed, this is shown by three dots. For example:

> **CONTEMPTUOUS**
> faintly, openly, privately *contemptuous* of sb/sth
>
> **REPORT**
> V: ~ calls for sth, came out, draws attention to sth, identifies ...,
> makes clear that ...

Part 2 – The Adverb Section

The lists in this section tell you which adverb goes with a particular verb or adjective. For the adjectives the adverbs come in front; for the verbs the lists show you where the word or phrase **usually** occurs. In English it is very difficult to give absolute rules for the position of the adverb. Here is some guidance:

1. Adverbial expressions nearly always follow the verb:
      enter *without permission*   disappear *into thin air*
2. Adverbs of manner usually follow the verb:
      manage *efficiently*   nod *approvingly*
3. Time adverbs usually come in front of the verb:
      seldom see   *often* come
but as these are very common we do not usually list them in this dictionary.
4. One important group of words which behave differently consists of certain adverb + verb collocations which function almost like two-word verbs:
      I *strongly disapprove.*
      They were *completely excluded.*
These are shown in the lists, which show you the **most probable** position of the adverb like this:

> **SUGGEST**
> *suggest* diffidently, hesitantly, in good faith, obliquely, politely, repeatedly, wearily
> seriously, strongly, tentatively *suggest* sth/that...

Sometimes there is only one adverb + adjective collocation given:

    greatly encouraged   *highly excitable*

The collocation which is given is very strong although of course you will occasionally find other combinations.

Sentence Adverbs

On pages 286 and 287 we list adverbs which are used at the beginning of a sentence to refer to the whole sentence or paragraph which follows. They explain the status of what follows. Using these sentence adverbs and adverbials makes your writing easier to read because you show the reader the connections between one part of your text and another. For example:

Equally,	Finally,
Essentially,	Firstly,
Even so,	Fortunately,
Eventually,	Fundamentally,
Explicitly,	

Building your vocabulary

One of the best ways to build your vocabulary is to remember collocations rather than single words. If you work or study in a particular area, it helps if you record collocations you find when you are reading. Collocation is one of the best ways to improve your English.

Michael Lewis, Jimmie Hill, Hove 1997

Abbreviations used in this dictionary

~	=	the headword
V	=	verb
A	=	adjective
P	=	phrase
adj	=	adjective
sth	=	something
sb	=	somebody

THE NOUN SECTION

Using the noun section

As you read in the Introduction, the noun is often the most important word in a sentence because it is 'what you are talking about'. The other words are built round the noun.

1. What am I talking about?   a noun
2. What kind?   adjective
3. What happened to it?   verb
4. How did it happen?   adverb/adverbial

noun	> adjective	> verb	> (adverb)
language	*> foreign*	*> learn*	*> naturally*

This example shows you **the order** in which you build an idea:

1. from **noun** to **adjective**
2. from **adjective + noun** to **verb**
3. from **verb + adjective + noun** to any **adverb** or **adverbial expression**
4. add the grammar: *If you want to learn a foreign language naturally . . .*

From noun to verb

Surprisingly, the **last** word in a sentence is often where the idea starts.

I mustn't forget to feed the cat.

As you can see, the sentence is about 'the cat', and although that word comes last, it is the starting point for what you want to say.

A few nouns are typically the grammatical subject and are followed by a large range of verbs. These are often words for kinds of writing. Look, for example, at the entry for *report*.