

Collins COBUILD

Advanced Learner's
English Dictionary

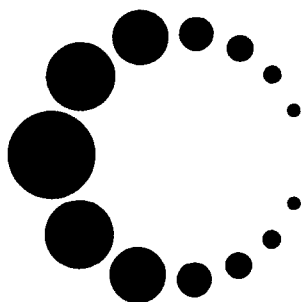
柯林斯 COBUILD 高阶英语学习词典

New EDITION

英语版

外语教学与研究出版社

FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING AND RESEARCH PRESS



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出版前言

哈珀·柯林斯出版公司 (HarperCollins Publishers) 于 1817 年成立于英国, 是一家历史悠久的大型综合性出版社。自 1824 年出版第一部词典以来, 柯林斯公司的词典出版历史至今已将近两百年。而这其中, 由柯林斯公司和伯明翰大学资深词典专家联袂编写出版的 Collins Cobuild 系列词典是其旗下的经典品牌, 至今已畅销英国及欧洲其他国家近 20 年。国内曾于 2000 年引进出版过 *Collins COBUILD Advanced Learner's English Dictionary* 的第二版 (英语版), 受到广大英语爱好者和教师的高度称赞。这次经哈珀·柯林斯出版公司惠允, 外语教学与研究出版社引进了该词典的最新版, 即《柯林斯 COBUILD 高阶英语学习词典 (第五版)》(*Collins COBUILD Advanced Learner's English Dictionary, 5th Edition*)。这部专为非英语国家英语学习者编写的高阶学习词典在中国的出版, 相信对国内的英语学习者会大有裨益。

与其他同类英语词典相比, 本词典突破了传统词典长期沿袭的体例和模式, 更具创新性、可读性和实用性, 其特点具体体现在:

一、全部语料采自 6 亿 4500 万词的语料库 Bank of English®。本词典共收录 75, 000 余条例证, 全部来源于该语料库, 因而更真实、可靠、自然; 同时语料库内容的不断更新保证了本词典对当代英语进行忠实全面的描述。

二、释义方式独树一帜, 采用整句释义。本词典一改以往词典的释义方式, 将 110, 000 条释义全部纳入自然流畅的完整句子中, 描述出词汇使用的真实语境, 使学习者对词汇的语义和用法一目了然。这种创新性的释义方式得到很多词典专家的高度评价, 并为其他许多词典竞相效仿。此外, 本词典还将释义词汇限定在 2, 500 个常用词汇以内, 清晰易懂, 高中程度以上的读者即可轻松阅读。

三、增设附加栏, 集中提供有关词频、语法、搭配、同义词和反义词、语域和语用等多方面的信息, 版面清晰, 方便读者快速查找释义、例证和与其相关的使用信息。

四、对常用词语给予特殊关注。创新地以 3 个菱形符号的方式提供词目的词频信息, 标注出其使用频率, 更有利于读者掌握鲜活地道的英语。

这部词典以庞大的语料库为依托, 提供了对当代英语权威、全面的描述, 具有不同于其他传统词典的创新优势。对于广大中国英语学习者而言, 实为案头必备工具书。

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Introduction

I am proud to present the Fifth Edition of the Cobuild Advanced Learner's English Dictionary, which continues the distinctive Cobuild tradition established nineteen years ago. This new edition updates the "snapshot" of current English, and contains some attractive features to make the book even easier to use.

The basis for the authority of Cobuild is the *Bank of English*®, part of Collins Word Web, still the largest collection of data of its kind in any language, and now containing 645,000,000 words. Decisions about which words to include as headwords in the dictionary, which meanings to draw attention to, which phrases to recognize as settled expressions in the language, and many other issues, are directly informed by the *Bank of English*®. The regular updating of this *corpus* ensures that this edition is up-to-date; new words and phrases constantly creep into the language, and sometimes establish themselves quickly, so the lexicographers keep a careful watch for them.

All the examples in this book are quoted from the rich selection that the corpus offers, and normally they are printed exactly as they occur in the text. In the choice of examples, we pay careful attention to *collocation* – the significant co-occurrence of words – so that the examples are not only natural forms of expression, but also are reliable models of usage. Important collocations are also highlighted in the definitions, giving help with set lexical and grammatical patterns.

The Cobuild defining style is modelled on the way people explain the meanings of words to each other, and it is refreshingly direct, because the definitions are just normal sentences of English with the headword in bold face. This style is not only easier to understand than the usual way definitions are written, it also allows a lot of extra information to be presented in a natural way. Please read the definitions carefully and learn to take from them all the information that they provide.

Cobuild was the first dictionary to stress the importance of the commoner words for a learner. Dictionaries traditionally try to pack as many headwords in as possible, without always indicating which are the ones that keep coming up in speech and writing. The common vocabulary words often have several senses and are found in phrase patterns which help to distinguish the senses, and all this is carefully set out in this dictionary. Common words have diamond symbols, with a simple code to tell you approximately how common they are.

This dictionary has the unique Cobuild feature of the "Extra Column", which contains a lot of information that does not fit easily into the defining text. This includes information about the grammatical patterns associated with each sense, and some semantic relations like synonyms and antonyms. The information is coded for brevity, and every effort is made to keep the coding clear and easily memorable. This edition makes the Extra Column even easier to use.

The authority of a very large corpus, and the experience of many years in using this corpus to get from it accurate and important information about today's English, makes me very confident that this will be a valuable resource. I know that many native speakers of English, and many whose English, although not native, is extremely fluent, use Cobuild as their dictionary of preference. So while it is primarily aimed at the needs of advanced learners, it does not matter how advanced they are!

Cobuild is always keen to know how the dictionaries and other books are appreciated, and we have set up an e-mail address (cobuild@ref.collins.co.uk) for your comments and criticisms, so that future editions can continue to meet your needs.

John Sinclair
Founding Editor-in-Chief
Emeritus Professor of Modern English Language, University of Birmingham
President, The Tuscan Word Centre

Guide to the Dictionary Entries

COLOUR HEADWORDS	<p>afterlife /ɑ:ftə'laɪf, æf-/ (afterlives) also after-life. The afterlife is a life that some people believe begins when you die, for example a life in heaven or as another person or animal.</p>	N-COUNT: usu sing	FULL SENTENCE DEFINITIONS
IMPORTANT GRAMMATICAL STRUCTURES	<p>aftermarket /ɑ:ftə'mɑ:kɪt, æf-/ [1] The aftermarket is all the related products that are sold after an item, especially a car, has been bought. [BUSINESS] [2] The aftermarket in shares and bonds is the buying and selling of them after they have been issued. [BUSINESS]</p>	N-SING	PRONUNCIATION
HYPHENATION POINTS	<p>aftermath /ɑ:ftə'mɑ:θ, æftə'mæθ/ The aftermath of an important event, especially a harmful one, is the situation that results from it. □ <i>In the aftermath of the coup, the troops opened fire on the demonstrators.</i></p>	N-SING: with supp. of the N of n	PRONUNCIATION
HYPHENATION POINTS	<p>afternoon /ɑ:ftə'nʊ:n, æf-/ (afternoons) The afternoon is the part of each day which begins at lunchtime and ends at about six o'clock. □ <i>He's arriving in the afternoon... He had stayed in his room all afternoon... an afternoon news conference.</i></p>	◆◆◆ N-VAR	REGIONAL AND REGISTER LABELS
CORPUS EXAMPLES	<p>afternoon tea (afternoon teas) Afternoon tea is a small meal you can have in the afternoon. It includes a cup of tea and food such as sandwiches and cakes. [BRIT]</p>	N-VAR	REGIONAL AND REGISTER LABELS
CORPUS EXAMPLES	<p>after-sales service (after-sales services) A company's after-sales service is all the help and information that it provides to customers after they have bought a particular product. [BUSINESS] □ <i>...a local retailer who offers a good after-sales service... They are also attempting to keep the car buyer as a long-term customer by offering after-sales service.</i></p>	N-VAR	REGIONAL AND REGISTER LABELS
MEANING SPLITS	<p>after-school After-school activities are those that are organized for children in the afternoon or evening after they have finished school. □ <i>...an after-school childcare scheme.</i></p>	ADJ: ADJ n	INFLECTED FORMS
MEANING SPLITS	<p>aftershave /ɑ:ftə'seɪv, æf-/ (aftershaves) also after-shave. Aftershave is a liquid with a pleasant smell that men sometimes put on their faces after shaving.</p>	N-MASS	INFLECTED FORMS
MEANING SPLITS	<p>aftershock /ɑ:ftə'ʃɒk, æf-/ (aftershocks) [1] Aftershocks are smaller earthquakes which occur after a large earthquake. [2] People sometimes refer to the effects of an important event, especially a bad one, as the aftershock. [mainly JOURNALISM] □ <i>They were already under stress, thanks to the aftershock of last year's drought.</i></p>	N-COUNT N-COUNT: usu with supp	ALTERNATIVE SPELLINGS
NOTES ON ALTERNATIVE FORMS	<p>aftertaste /ɑ:ftə'teɪst, æf-/ also after-taste. An aftertaste is a taste that remains in your mouth after you have finished eating or drinking something.</p>	N-SING: usu with supp	ALTERNATIVE SPELLINGS
NOTES ON ALTERNATIVE FORMS	<p>afterthought /ɑ:ftə'θɔ:t, æf-/ (afterthoughts) If you do or say something as an afterthought, you do or say it after something else as an addition, perhaps without careful thought. □ <i>Almost as an afterthought he added that he missed her.</i></p>	N-COUNT: usu sing, usu n N	ALTERNATIVE SPELLINGS
NOTES ON ALTERNATIVE FORMS	<p>afterwards /ɑ:ftə'wɔ:dz, æf-/ [✓] The form afterward is also used, mainly in American English.</p>	◆◆◆	ALTERNATIVE SPELLINGS
NOTES ON ALTERNATIVE FORMS	<p>If you do something or if something happens afterwards, you do it or it happens after a particular event or time that has already been mentioned. □ <i>Shortly afterwards, police arrested four suspects... James was taken to hospital but died soon afterwards.</i></p>	ADV: ADV with cl	ALTERNATIVE SPELLINGS

Guide to the Dictionary Entries

MENU TO HELP
NAVIGATE LONGER
ENTRIES

CLEAR
SENSE
SPLITS

- still**
- ① ADVERB USES
 - ② NOT MOVING OR MAKING A NOISE
 - ③ EQUIPMENT

① **still** /stɪl/ ① If a situation that used to exist **still** exists, it has continued and exists now. □ *I still dream of home... Brian's toe is still badly swollen and he cannot put on his shoe... If you don't like the job, why are you still there?* ② If something that has not yet happened could **still** happen, it is possible that it will happen. If something that has not yet happened is **still** to happen, it will happen at a later time. □ *Big money could still be made if the crisis keeps oil prices high... The details have still to be worked out.* ③ If you say that there is **still** an amount of something left, you are emphasizing that there is that amount left. □ *There are still some outstanding problems... There's still time to catch up with them.* ④ You use **still** to emphasize that something remains the case or is true in spite of what you have just said. □ *I'm average for my height. But I still feel I'm fatter than I should be... Despite the ruling, Boreham was still found guilty.* ⑤ You use **still** to indicate that a problem or difficulty is not really worth worrying about. □ *'Any idea who is going to be here this weekend?' — 'No. Still, who cares?'* ⑥ You use **still** in expressions such as **still further**, **still another**, and **still more** to show that you find the number or quantity of things you are referring to surprising or excessive. □ *We look forward to strengthening still further our already close co-operation with the police service.* ⑦ You use **still** with comparatives to indicate that something has even more of a quality than something else. □ *Formula One motor car racing is supposed to be dangerous. 'Indycar' racing is supposed to be more dangerous still.*

② **still** /stɪl/ (**still**, **stillest**, **stills**) ① If you stay **still**, you stay in the same position and do not move. □ *David had been dancing about like a child, but suddenly he stood still and looked at Brad... He played the tape through once, then sat very still for several minutes... Gladys was still, then she shook her head slowly.* ② If air or water is **still**, it is not moving. □ *The night air was very still... He watched the still water over the side of the boat.* ③ Drinks that are **still** do not contain any bubbles of carbon dioxide. □ *...a glass of still orange.* ④ If a place is **still**, it is quiet and shows no sign of activity. □ *In the room it was very still.* ♦ **stillness** *Four deafening explosions shattered the stillness of the night air.* ⑤ A **still** is a photograph taken from a cinema film which is used for publicity purposes.

③ **still** /stɪl/ (**stills**) A **still** is a piece of equipment used to make strong alcoholic drinks by a process called distilling.

FREQUENCY
INFORMATION

GRAMMATICAL
INFORMATION
AND PATTERNS

INFORMATION
ON PRAGMATICS

SYNONYMS
AND ANTONYMS

DERIVED WORDS

◆◆◆
ADV:
ADV before v,
ADV group

ADV:
ADV before v

ADV:
be ADV n

ADV:
ADV before v
= non-
-theless

ADV:
ADV with cl

ADV:
ADV n/adv
[emphasis]
= even

ADV:
ADV with compar
[emphasis]

◆◆◆
ADJ:
ADJ after v,
v-link ADJ

ADJ

ADJ
sparkling

ADJ
= quiet

N-UNCOUNT

N-COUNT:
oft N n

The Bank of English

The Bank of English®, part of Collins Word Web, is a collection, or corpus, of around *645 million* words of written and spoken English held on computer for the study of language use. It contains a vast range of different types of writing and speech from hundreds of different sources. The material is up to date, with nearly all of the texts dating from 1990 onwards. Approximately 40% of the sources are British, while 30% of the data comes from American English and another 30% from Australia, New Zealand and Canada.

Written texts come from newspapers, magazines, fiction and non-fiction books, websites, brochures, leaflets, reports, and letters. International, national, and local publications are included to capture a broad range of subject matter and style. Apart from the thousands of books of all kinds in The Bank of English®, media language from a wide range of newspaper and magazine data, radio, and TV makes up about half of the corpus. Informal spoken language is represented by recordings of everyday casual conversation, meetings, interviews, and discussions as well as transcriptions of radio and TV programmes. Currently, about 40 million words of The Bank of English® are transcriptions of spoken language of this kind.

Using The Bank of English®

The purpose of collecting all this valuable data on our computers was to enable the lexicographers – the dictionary writers – to have access to as much information as possible about each of the words being defined. The corpus, and the software we use to analyse it, helps the COBUILD team to sort through the information and gain valuable insights into the way words are actually used: their meanings, their typical grammar patterns, and the ways in which they relate to other words.

The corpus lies at the heart of each entry. As a lexicographer begins writing an entry, he or she can call up onto the computer screen all the occurrences of the word in question. These appear in the form of concordance lines, and the lines can be examined in a number of different ways to show different aspects of the word's behaviour. Many words have more than one grammatical word class and it is often helpful for the lexicographers to look at only one word class at a time. Software has been developed which allows them to do this, and so helps them to make decisions about the different senses of words, the language of the definitions, the choice of examples, and the grammatical information given. We could, of course, make statements about these things without a corpus, but having a corpus enables us to make them with confidence and accuracy. And the larger the corpus, the more confident and accurate we can be.

Examples

Examples of how words have been used form a very important part of COBUILD dictionaries. Users are often looking for an example that is similar to one that they have heard or read, or that will confirm the way they want to use the word.

This means, of course, that the examples given in a dictionary should be characteristic of the ones that users will come across. The examples given in this dictionary have been carefully chosen to show typical contexts in which the word is used. For most words and phrases, we have hundreds, or even thousands, of instances in The Bank of English®, and we have selected those which show typical grammatical patterns, typical vocabulary, and typical contexts.

The majority of the examples in the dictionary are taken word for word from one of the texts in The Bank of English®. Occasionally, we have made very minor changes to them, so that they are more successful as dictionary examples.

Throughout the whole dictionary, there are over 75,000 examples. This makes the dictionary a valuable resource for both students and teachers, showing how the words have been used in books, newspapers, magazines, broadcasting, and conversation. All the examples in the dictionary have been chosen with care, and contain important information about the typical patterning associated with a word. In the case of verbs, we give examples for all the main grammatical structures in which they are used. The examples are given in the same order as the patterns shown in the Extra Column. These patterns are explained in the **Grammar** section on pages xv-xxii.

At COBUILD, great emphasis is placed on describing and explaining the English language accurately, through the evidence in our corpus. The Bank of English® helps our dictionaries to be more effective and reliable. Our choices of representative examples, taken from the corpus, will give students and teachers information which, we believe, they will find very useful.

Definitions

One of the features of the Collins COBUILD Advanced Learner's English Dictionary is that the definitions (or explanations) are written in full sentences, using vocabulary and grammatical structures that occur naturally with the word being explained. This enables us to give a lot of information about the way a word or meaning is used by speakers of the language. Whenever possible, words are explained using simpler and more common words. This gives us a natural defining vocabulary with most words in our definitions being amongst the 2,500 commonest words of English.

Information about collocates and structures

In our definitions, we try to show the typical collocates of a word: that is, the other words that are used with the word we are defining. For example, the definition of meaning 1 of the adjective **savoury** says:

Savoury food has a salty or spicy flavour rather than a sweet one.

This shows that you use the adjective **savoury** to describe food, rather than other things.

Meaning 1 of the verb **wag** says:

When a dog **wags** its tail, it repeatedly waves its tail from side to side.

This shows that the subject of meaning 1 of **wag** refers to a dog, and the object of the verb is 'tail'.

Information about grammar

The definitions also give information about the grammatical structures that a word is used with. For example, meaning 1 of the adjective **candid** says:

When you are **candid** about something or with someone, you speak honestly.

This shows that you use **candid** with the preposition 'about' with something and 'with' with someone.

Other definitions show other kinds of structure. Meaning 1 of the verb **soften** says:

If you **soften** something or if it **softens**, it becomes less hard, stiff, or firm.

This shows that the verb is used both transitively and intransitively. In the transitive use, you have a human subject and a non-human object. In the intransitive use, you have a non-human subject.

Finally, meaning 1 of **compel** says:

If a situation, a rule, or a person **compels** you to do something, they force you to do it.

This shows you what kinds of subject and object to use with **compel**, and it also shows that you typically use the verb in a structure with a to-infinitive.

Information about context and usage

In addition to information about collocation and grammar, definitions can also be used to convey your evaluation of something, for example to express your approval or disapproval. For example, here is a definition of **awful**:

If you say that something is **awful**, you mean that it is extremely unpleasant, shocking, or bad.

In this definition, the expressions 'if you say that', and 'you mean that' indicate that these words are used subjectively, rather than objectively.

Other kinds of definition

We sometimes explain grammatical words and other function words by paraphrasing the word in context. For example, meaning 3 of **through** says:

To go **through** a town, area, or country means to travel across it or in it.

In many cases, it is impossible to paraphrase the word, and so we explain its function instead. For example, the definition of **unfortunately** says:

You can use **unfortunately** to introduce or refer to a statement when you consider that it is sad or disappointing, or when you want to express regret.

Lastly, some definitions are expressed as if they are cross-references. For example:

hr is a written abbreviation for **hour**.

A **banker's draft** is the same as a **bank draft**.

If you need to know more about the words **hour** or **bank draft**, you look at those entries.

Style and Usage

Some words or meanings are used mainly by particular groups of people, or in particular social contexts. In this dictionary, when it is relevant, the definitions also give information about the kind of people who are likely to use a word or expression, and the type of social situation in which it is used. This information is usually placed at the end of the definition, in small caps and within square brackets.

Although English is spoken as a first language in many parts of the world, two groups of speakers are especially important; those who speak British English, and those who speak American English. Most of the books, newspapers, radio and TV programmes, and teaching materials for international use are produced in Britain or the USA.

This dictionary focuses on both British and American English using evidence from The Bank of English®. Where relevant, the British or American form is shown at its equivalent word or meaning; this information is given after the examples in a ticked box.

Geographical labels

BRIT: used mainly by speakers and writers in Britain, and in other places where British English is used or taught. Where relevant the American equivalent is provided.

AM: used mainly by speakers and writers in the USA, and in other places where American English is used or taught. Where relevant the British equivalent is provided.

Other geographical labels are used in the text to refer to English as it is spoken in other parts of the world, eg **AUSTRALIAN**, **IRISH**, **NORTHERN ENGLISH**, **SCOTTISH**.

Style labels

BUSINESS: used mainly when talking about the field of business, e.g. **annuity**

OFFENSIVE: likely to offend people, or to insult them; words labelled **OFFENSIVE** should therefore usually be avoided, e.g. **cripple**

COMPUTING: used mainly when talking about the field of computing, e.g. **chat room**

OLD-FASHIONED: generally considered to be old-fashioned, and no longer in common use, e.g. **dashing**

DIALECT: used in some dialects of English, e.g. **ain't**

RUDE: used mainly to describe words which could be considered taboo by some people; words labelled **RUDE** should therefore usually be avoided, e.g. **bloody**

FORMAL: used mainly in official situations, or by political and business organizations, or when speaking or writing to people in authority, e.g. **gratuity**

SPOKEN: used mainly in speech rather than in writing, e.g. **pardon**

HUMOROUS: used mainly to indicate that a word or expression is used in a humorous way, e.g. **gents**

TECHNICAL: used mainly when talking or writing about objects, events, or processes in a specialist subject, such as business, science, or music, e.g. **biotechnology**

INFORMAL: used mainly in informal situations, conversations, and personal letters, e.g. **pep talk**

TRADEMARK: used to show a designated trademark, e.g. **hoover**

JOURNALISM: used mainly in journalism, e.g. **glass ceiling**

VERY OFFENSIVE: highly likely to offend people, or to insult them; words labelled **△ VERY OFFENSIVE** should be avoided, e.g. **wog**

LEGAL: used mainly in legal documents, in law courts, and by the police in official situations, e.g. **manslaughter**

VERY RUDE: used mainly to describe words which most people consider taboo; words labelled **△ VERY RUDE** should be avoided, e.g. **fuck**

LITERARY: used mainly in novels, poetry, and other forms of literature, e.g. **plaintive**

MEDICAL: used mainly in medical texts, and by doctors in official situations, e.g. **psychosis**

WRITTEN: used mainly in writing rather than in speech, e.g. **avail**

Pragmatics

People use language to achieve different goals – they invite, give compliments, give warnings, show their emotions, tell lies, and make commitments. The ability to use language effectively to fulfil intentions and goals is known as pragmatic competence, and the study of this ability is called pragmatics. The analysis of language which has been used to prepare this dictionary is based on the idea that speakers and writers plan and fulfil goals as they use language. This in turn entails choices. Speakers choose their goals and they choose appropriate language for their goals.

Different languages use different pragmatic strategies. In order to use a language effectively, and be successful in achieving your goals, you need to know what the pragmatic conventions are for that particular language. It is therefore important that learners of English are given as much information as possible about the ways in which English speakers use their language to communicate.

Because of the large amounts of data in The Bank of English®, COBUILD is uniquely placed to help learners with pragmatics. We have analyzed the data and have found, for example, the ways in which English speakers express approval and disapproval, show their emotions, or emphasize what they are saying.

In the dictionary, we draw attention to certain pragmatic aspects of words and phrases of English, paying special attention to those that, for cultural and linguistic reasons, we feel may be confusing to learners. We do this by having a label in the Extra Column to show the type of pragmatic information being given. The following labels are used in the dictionary.

approval

You can choose words and expressions to show that you approve of the person or thing you are talking about, e.g. **angelic**.

disapproval

You can choose words and expressions to show that you disapprove of the person or thing you are talking about, e.g. **brat**.

emphasis

Many words and expressions are used to emphasize the point you are making, e.g. **never-ending**.

feelings

Another function of pragmatics is to express your feelings about something, or towards someone, e.g. **unfortunately**.

formulae

There are many words and expressions in English which are fairly set, and are used in particular situations such as greeting and thanking people, or acknowledging something, e.g. **hi**, **congratulations**.

politeness

Certain words and expressions in English are used to express politeness, sometimes even to the point of being euphemistic, e.g. **elderly**.

vagueness

Speakers and writers use many words and expressions in English to show how certain they are about the truth or validity of their statements. We have called this type of pragmatic information 'vagueness', though it is sometimes also called 'hedging' or 'modality', e.g. **presumably**.

We hope that you will enjoy learning about pragmatics in the English language. Pragmatics, in any language, is central to communication. When you can understand the context and subtle meanings of a word, you can give and receive accurate messages. This should enable you to achieve your pragmatic goals whether you are intending to criticize, to praise, to persuade, and so on. Good communication is vital. We hope that by giving you a great deal of pragmatic information in this dictionary, we will encourage you to improve your communication skills.

List of Grammatical Notations

Word classes

ADJ	adjective
ADV	adverb
AUX	auxiliary verb
COLOUR	colour word
COMB	combining form
CONJ	conjunction
CONVENTION	convention
DET	determiner
EXCLAM	exclamation
FRACTION	fraction
LINK	see V-LINK
MODAL	modal verb
N-COUNT	count noun
N-COUNT-COLL	collective count noun
N-FAMILY	family noun
N-IN-NAMES	noun in names
N-MASS	mass noun
N-PLURAL	plural noun
N-PROPER	proper noun
N-PROPER-COLL	collective proper noun
N-PROPER-PLURAL	plural proper noun
N-SING	singular noun
N-SING-COLL	collective singular noun
N-TITLE	title noun
N-UNCOUNT	uncount noun
N-UNCOUNT-COLL	collective uncount noun
N-VAR	variable noun
N-VAR-COLL	collective variable noun
N-VOC	vocative noun
NEG	negative
NUM	number
ORD	ordinal
PASSIVE	see V-PASSIVE
PHRASAL VERB	phrasal verb
PHRASE	phrase
PREDET	predeterminer
PREFIX	prefix
PREP	preposition
PREP-PHRASE	phrasal preposition
PRON	pronoun
QUANT	quantifier
QUANT-PLURAL	plural quantifier
QUEST	question word
RECIP	see V-RECIP
SOUND	sound word
SUFFIX	suffix
VERB	verb
V-LINK	link verb
V-PASSIVE	passive verb
V-RECIP	reciprocal verb
V-RECIP-PASSIVE	passive reciprocal verb

Words and abbreviations used in patterns

adj	adjective group
adj-compar	comparative form
adj-superl	superlative form
adv	adverb group
amount	word or phrase indicating an amount of something
as if	clause beginning with <i>as if</i> or <i>as though</i>
brd-neg	broad negative
cl	clause
colour	colour word
compar	comparative form
cont	continuous
def-n	definite noun group
def-n-uncount	definite noun group with an uncount noun
def-pl-n	definite noun group with a noun in the plural
det	determiner
det-poss	possessive determiner
-ed	past participle of a verb
group	noun group, adjective, adverb, or prepositional phrase
imper	imperative
inf	infinitive form of a verb
-ing	present participle of a verb
it	'introductory' or 'dummy' <i>it</i>
like	clause beginning with <i>like</i>
n	noun or noun group
n (not pron)	noun group, but not a personal pronoun
names	names of places or institutions
neg	negative word
non-recip	verb pattern with no reciprocal meaning
n-proper	proper noun
num	number
n-uncount	uncount noun or noun group with an uncount noun
oft	often
ord	ordinal
P	particle, part of a phrasal verb
passive	passive voice
pl	plural
pl-n	noun in the plural, plural noun group, co-ordinated noun group
pl-num	plural number
poss	possessive
prep	prepositional phrase or preposition
pron	pronoun
pron-undef	indefinite pronoun
pron-recip	reciprocal pronoun
pron-refl	reflexive pronoun
pron-rel	relative pronoun
quest	question word
quote	direct speech
sing	singular
sing-n	noun in the singular
supp	supplementary information accompanying a noun
that	'that'-clause
to-inf	the to-infinitive form of a verb
usu	usually
v	verb or verb group
v-cont	continuous verb
V-ed	past participle of the verb
V-ing	present participle of the verb
v-link	link verb
way	way preceded by a possessive determiner
wh	wh-word, clause beginning with a wh-word

Explanation of Grammatical Notations

Introduction

For each use of each word in this dictionary, there is grammar information in the Extra Column. For a very few words, such as abbreviations, contractions and some words of foreign origin, no grammar is given, because the words do not belong to any word class, or are used so freely that every example could be given a different word class, e.g. *AD, ditto, mpg, must've*.

The grammar information that is given is of three types:

1. the word class of the word: e.g. **VERB, N-COUNT, ADJ, QUANT**
2. restrictions or extensions to its behaviour, compared to other words of that word class: e.g. **usu passive, usu sing, also no det**
3. the patterns that the word most frequently occurs in: e.g. **V n, N of n, ADJ that, ADV with v**

For all word classes except verbs, the patterns are given immediately after the word class and any restrictions or extensions. For verbs, the patterns are given next to the examples and in the same order as the examples, so that they are easier to see and understand.

The word class of the word being explained is in CAPITAL LETTERS. The order of items in a pattern is the order in which they normally occur in a sentence. Words in *italics* are words (not word classes) that occur in the pattern. Alternatives are separated by a slash (/).

Word classes

ADJ An **adjective** can be in the comparative or the superlative form. e.g. *He has been absent from his desk for two weeks. ...the most accurate description of the killer to date... The eldest child was a daughter called Fiona.*

Adjective patterns

ADJ n The adjective is always used before a noun, e.g. *...a governmental agency.*

usu ADJ n The adjective is usually used before a noun. It is sometimes used after a link verb.

v-link ADJ The adjective is used after a link verb such as *be* or *feel*, e.g. *She was feeling unwell.* Adjectives with this label are sometimes used in other positions such as after the object of a verb such as *make* or *keep*, but never before a noun.

usu v-link ADJ The adjective is usually used after a link verb. It is sometimes used before a noun.

ADJ after v The adjective is used after a verb that is not a link verb, e.g. *Alan came running barefoot through the house.*

n ADJ The adjective comes immediately after a noun, e.g. *...a trade union leader not a politician proper.*

det ADJ The adjective comes immediately after a determiner and before any other adjectives, and sometimes comes before numbers, e.g. *...a certain limited geographic area.*

If the dictionary does not show that an adjective is used only or mainly in the pattern **ADJ n** and **v-link ADJ**, this means that the adjective is used freely in both patterns.

These main adjective patterns are sometimes combined with other patterns, see pages xix-xxii.

ADV An **adverb** can be in the comparative or the superlative form. e.g. *Much of our behaviour is biologically determined... She blinked hard... Inflation is below 5% and set to fall further. ...those areas furthest from the coast.*

Adverb patterns

For some adverbs in this dictionary, you will see two sets of patterns, the second set introduced by *usu* or *oft*, e.g. everywhere 1: **n ADV, ADV after V, be ADV, oft from ADV, ADV cl/group**. This means that any of the patterns in the second set can occur in combination with any of the patterns in the first set.

AUX An **auxiliary verb** is used with another verb to add particular meanings to that verb, for example, to form the continuous aspect or the passive voice, or to form negatives and interrogatives. The verbs *be, do, get* and *have* have some senses in which they are auxiliary verbs.

COLOUR A **colour word** refers to a colour. It is like an adjective, e.g. *the blue sky... The sky was blue*, and also like a noun, e.g. *She was dressed in red. ...several shades of yellow*.

COMB A **combining form** is a word which is joined with another word, usually with a hyphen, to form compounds, e.g. *grey-haired, lemon-flavoured, heat-resistant*. The word class of the compound is also given, e.g. **COMB in ADJ, COMB in N-UNCOUNT**.

CONJ A **conjunction** usually links elements of the same grammatical type, such as two clauses, two groups, or two words, e.g. *She and Simon had already gone... It is completely waterproof, yet light and comfortable... Racing was halted for an hour while the track was repaired*.

CONVENTION A **convention** is a word or a fixed phrase which is used in conversation, for example when greeting someone, apologizing, or replying, e.g. *hello, sorry, no comment*.

DET A **determiner** is a word that is used at the beginning of a noun group, e.g. *a tray, more time, some books, this amount*. It can also be used to say who or what something belongs or relates to e.g. *his face, my flat*, or to begin a question e.g. *Whose care are they in?*

EXCLAM An **exclamation** is a word or phrase which is spoken suddenly, loudly, or emphatically in order to express a strong emotion such as shock or anger. Exclamations are often followed by exclamation marks, e.g. *good heavens!, Ouch!*

FRACTION A **fraction** is used in numbers, e.g. *three and a half, two and two thirds*; before *of* and a noun group, e.g. *half of the apple, a third of the biscuits, three eighths of the pie*; after *in* or *into*, e.g. *in half, into thirds*. A fraction is also used like a count noun, e.g. *two halves, the first quarter of the year*.

LINK see **V-LINK**

MODAL A **modal** is used before the infinitive form of a verb, e.g. *You may go*. In questions, it comes before the subject, e.g. *Must you speak?* In negatives, it comes before the negative word, e.g. *They would not like this*. It does not inflect, for example, it does not take an -s in the third person singular, e.g. *She can swim*.

N-COUNT A **count noun** has a plural form, usually made by adding -s. When it is singular, it must have a determiner in front of it, such as *the, her, or such*, e.g. *My cat is getting fatter... She's a good friend*.

N-COUNT-COLL A **collective count noun** is a count noun which refers to a group of people or things. It behaves like a count noun, but when it is in the singular form it can be used with either a singular or plural verb, e.g. *Their audience are much younger than the average... The British audience has a huge appetite for serials... Audiences are becoming more selective*.

N-FAMILY A **family noun** refers to a member of a family, e.g. *father, mummy, and granny*. Family nouns are count nouns which are typically used in the singular, and usually follow a possessive determiner. They are also vocative nouns. They are also proper nouns, used with no determiner, e.g. *My mummy likes marzipan... Tell them I didn't do it, Mummy... Mummy's always telling me I'm too old for dolls*.

N-IN-NAMES The **noun** occurs in **names** of people, things, or institutions.

N-MASS A **mass noun** typically combines the behaviour of both count and uncount nouns in the same sense. It is used like an uncount noun to refer to a substance. It is used like a count noun to refer to a brand or type, e.g. *Rinse in cold water to remove any remaining detergent... Wash it in hot water with a good detergent... We used several different detergents in our stain-removal tests*. Other examples of mass nouns are: *bleach, butter, shampoo*.

N-PLURAL A **plural noun** is always plural, and is used with plural verbs. If a pronoun is used to stand for the noun, it is a plural pronoun such as *they* or *them*, e.g. *These clothes are ready to wear... He expressed his condolences to the families of people who died in the incident*. Plural nouns which end in -s usually lose the -s when they come in front of another noun, e.g. *trousers, trouser pocket*. If they refer to a single object which has two main parts, such as *jeans* and *glasses*, the expression *a pair of* is sometimes used, e.g. *a pair of jeans or a pair of glasses*. This is shown as **N-PLURAL: also a pair of N**.

N-PROPER A **proper noun** refers to one person, place, thing, or institution, and begins with a capital letter. Many proper nouns are used without a determiner, e.g. ...higher education in America ... Father Christmas; some must be used with *the*, and this is indicated: **N PROPER, the N**, e.g. the Ice Age.

N-PROPER-COLL A **collective proper noun** is a proper noun which refers to a group of people or things. It can be used with either a singular or a plural verb, e.g. The Boy Scouts is sending a message to all of these kids... The Boy Scouts have a different view.

N-PROPER-PLURAL A **plural proper noun** is a proper noun which is always used in the plural with a plural verb, e.g. ... a salesman from the Home Counties.

N-SING A **singular noun** is always singular, and needs a determiner, e.g. ...damage to the environment... He looks the epitome of personal and professional contentment. When only *a* or *the* is used, this is indicated: **N-SING: a N or N-SING: the N**, e.g. Production is more or less at a standstill. ...a come-down, the vicinity.

N-SING-COLL A **collective singular noun** is a singular noun which refers to a group of people or things. It behaves like a singular noun, but can be used with either a singular or plural verb, e.g. Her shop clientele are mostly women with babies... The clientele is a mixed bunch.

N-TITLE A **title noun** is used to refer to someone who has a particular role or position. Titles come before the name of the person and begin with a capital letter, e.g. Sir Isaac Newton, Lady Macbeth.

N-UNCOUNT An **uncount noun** refers to things that are not normally counted or considered to be individual items. Uncount nouns do not have a plural form, and are used with a singular verb. They do not need determiners, e.g. ...an area of outstanding natural beauty.

N-UNCOUNT-COLL A **collective uncount noun** is an uncount noun which refers to a group of people or things. It behaves like an uncount noun, but can be used with either a singular or plural verb, e.g. ...in a country where livestock outnumber people by ten to one... Any kind of livestock is totally dependent on its owner for all its needs.

N-VAR A **variable noun** typically combines the behaviour of both count and uncount nouns in the same sense (see **N-COUNT, N-UNCOUNT**). The singular form occurs freely both with and without determiners. Variable nouns also have a plural form, usually made by adding *-s*. Some variable nouns when used like uncount nouns refer to abstract things like *hardship* and *injustice*, and when used like count nouns refer to individual examples or instances of that thing, e.g. *He is not afraid to protest against injustice*... *It is never too late to correct an injustice*. ...*the injustices of world poverty*. Others refer to objects which can be mentioned either individually or generally, like *potato* and *salad*: you can talk about a *potato*, *potatoes*, or *potato*.

N-VAR-COLL A **collective variable noun** is a variable noun which refers to a group of people or things. It behaves like a variable noun, but when it is singular it can be used with either a singular or a plural verb, e.g. ...*the recent fall in party membership*.

N-VOC A **vocative noun** is used when speaking directly to someone or writing to them. Vocative nouns do not need a determiner, but some may be used with a possessive determiner, e.g. *I want you to enjoy yourself darling*... *How are you, my darling?*

NEG A **negative word** indicates the absence or opposite of something, or is used to say that something is not the case, e.g. *I was not in Britain at the time*.

NUM A **number** is a word such as *three* and *hundred*. Numbers such as *one*, *two*, *three* are used like determiners, e.g. three bears; like adjectives, e.g. the four horsemen; like pronouns, e.g. *She has three cases and I have two*; and like quantifiers, e.g. Six of the boys stayed behind. Numbers such as *hundred*, *thousand*, *million* always follow a determiner or another number, e.g. *two hundred bears, the thousand horsemen, She has a thousand dollars and I have a million, A hundred of the boys stayed behind*.

ORD An **ordinal** is a type of number. Ordinals are used like adjectives, e.g. *He was the third victim*; like pronouns, e.g. *She took the first place and I took the second*... *the second of the two teams*; like adverbs, e.g. *The other team came first*; and like determiners, e.g. Fourth place goes to Timmy.

PASSIVE see **V-PASSIVE**

PHRASAL VERB A **phrasal verb** consists of a verb and one or more particles e.g. *look after*, *look back*, *look down on*. Some phrasal verbs are reciprocal, link or passive verbs. See **V-RECIP, V-LINK** and **V-PASSIVE**.

PHRASE Phrases are groups of words which are used together with little variation and which have a meaning of their own, e.g. *They are reluctant to upset the applecart.*

PREDET A predeterminer is used in a noun group before *a, the,* or another determiner, e.g. *What a busy day! ...both the parents. ...all his skill.*

PREFIX A prefix is a letter or group of letters, such as *un-* or *multi-*, which is added to the beginning of a word in order to form another word. For example, the prefix *un-* is added to *happy* to form *unhappy*.

PREP A preposition begins a prepositional phrase and is followed by a noun group or a present participle. Patterns for prepositions are shown in the dictionary only if they are restricted in some way. For example, if a preposition occurs only before a present participle, it is shown as **PREP -ing**.

PREP-PHRASE A phrasal preposition is a phrase which behaves like a preposition, e.g. *Prices vary according to the quantity ordered.*

PRON Pronouns are used like noun groups, to refer to someone or something that has already been mentioned or whose identity is known, e.g. *They produced their own shampoos and hair-care products, all based on herbal recipes... She began to consult doctors, and each had a different diagnosis.*

QUANT A quantifier comes before *of* and a noun group, e.g. *most of the house*. If there are any restrictions on the type of noun group, this is indicated: **QUANT of def-n** means that the quantifier occurs before *of* and a definite noun group, e.g. *Most of the houses in the capital have piped water.*

QUANT-PLURAL Plural quantifiers are words like *billions* and *millions* which are followed by *of* and a noun group, e.g. *...for billions of years.*

QUEST A question word is a *wh-*word that is used to begin a question, e.g. *Why do you say that?*

RECIP see **V-RECIP**

SOUND Sound words are used before or after verbs such as *go* and *say*, e.g. *Bang went the door... It went bang.*

SUFFIX A suffix is a letter or group of letters such as *-ly* or *-ness*, which is added to the end of a word in order to form a new word, usually of a different word class, e.g. *quick, quickly.*

V-LINK A link verb connects a subject and a complement. Link verbs most commonly occur in the patterns **V adj** and **V n**. Most link verbs do not occur in the passive voice, e.g. *be, become, taste, feel.*

Some phrasal verbs are link verbs, e.g. *I was sure things were going to turn out fine (**V adj**); Sometimes things don't turn out the way we think they are going to (**V n**).*

V-PASSIVE A passive verb occurs in the passive voice only, e.g. *His parents are rumoured to be on the verge of splitting up. Some phrasal verbs are passive verbs, e.g. *The civilians were just caught up in the conflict.**

V-RECIP Reciprocal verbs describe processes in which two or more people, groups, or things interact mutually: they do the same thing to each other, or participate jointly in the same action or event. Reciprocal verbs are used in the pattern **pl-n V**, e.g. *Fred and Sally met*, where the subject is both participants. The participants can also be referred to separately in other patterns, e.g. **V n** *Fred met Sally*, and **V with n** *Fred argued with Sally*. These patterns are reciprocal because they also mean that *Sally met Fred* and *Sally argued with Fred*. Note that many reciprocal verbs can also be used in a way that is not reciprocal. For example, *Fred and Sally kissed* is reciprocal, but *Fred kissed Sally* is not reciprocal (because it does not mean that Sally also kissed Fred). Non-reciprocal uses of reciprocal verbs are shown as **non-recip**.

Some phrasal verbs are reciprocal verbs, e.g. *He felt appalled by the idea of marriage so we broke up. (**pl-n V P**); My girlfriend broke up with me. (**V P with n**).*

V-RECIP-PASSIVE A passive reciprocal verb behaves like both a passive verb and a reciprocal verb, e.g. *She was reconciled with her mother.*

Words and abbreviations used in patterns

In a pattern, the element in capital letters represents the word in the entry. All the other elements are in small letters. Items in *italics* show the actual word that is used, such as *of*. Items in roman print show the word class or type of clause that is used. For example: