

Collins

柯林斯 **高阶**  
COBUILD  
英语学习词典

第8版

Collins COBUILD

ADVANCED LEARNER'S  
ENGLISH DICTIONARY  
(8th Edition)

The source of authentic English

外语教学与研究出版社  
FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING AND RESEARCH PRESS

Collins

柯林斯 **高阶**  
COBUILD  
英语学习词典

第  
8  
版

Collins COBUILD

ADVANCED LEARNER'S  
ENGLISH DICTIONARY  
(8th Edition)

外语教学与研究出版社

FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING AND RESEARCH PRESS

北京 BEIJING

京权图字：01-2016-7674

©HarperCollins Publishers 2014

### 图书在版编目 (CIP) 数据

柯林斯 COBUILD 高阶英语学习词典：第 8 版 / 英国柯林斯出版公司编著. —  
北京：外语教学与研究出版社，2017.5  
ISBN 978-7-5135-8892-8

I. ①柯… II. ①英… III. ①英语—词典 IV. ①H316

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字 (2017) 第 114322 号

出版人 蔡剑峰  
责任编辑 谢金霞  
封面设计 李双双  
出版发行 外语教学与研究出版社  
社 址 北京市西三环北路 19 号 (100089)  
网 址 <http://www.fltrp.com>  
印 刷 南京爱德印刷有限公司  
开 本 787 × 1092 1/16  
印 张 123.25  
版 次 2017 年 6 月第 1 版 2017 年 6 月第 1 次印刷  
书 号 ISBN 978-7-5135-8892-8  
定 价 139.00 元

购书咨询：(010) 88819926 电子邮箱：club@fltrp.com  
外研书店：<https://waiyants.tmall.com>  
凡印刷、装订质量问题，请联系我社印制部  
联系电话：(010) 61207896 电子邮箱：zhijian@fltrp.com  
凡侵权、盗版书籍线索，请联系我社法律事务部  
举报电话：(010) 88817519 电子邮箱：banquan@fltrp.com  
法律顾问：立方律师事务所 刘旭东律师  
中咨律师事务所 殷 斌律师  
物料号：288920001

# 出版说明

柯林斯 COBUILD 系列词典由英国柯林斯出版公司和伯明翰大学资深词典学家共同编写出版。该系列词典自 1987 年第一版问世以来,作为新一代英语词典的开山之作,广受全球英语学习者青睐。

蒙柯林斯出版公司惠允,外语教学与研究出版社(简称“外研社”)在 2011 年出版了 *Collins COBUILD Advanced Learner's Dictionary* 的英文版和英汉双解版,受到国内广大英语学习者和英语教师的高度评价。此次,外研社与柯林斯出版公司再度携手,合作推出本词典第 8 版的英文版,再次为广大读者奉上一部值得信赖的英语学习词典。

《柯林斯 COBUILD 高阶英语学习词典》(第 8 版)中的全部释义、例证及专栏均基于收词规模达 45 亿词的柯林斯英语语料库;所有单词及短语均采用整句释义,凸显词汇在典型语境中的典型用法。在沿袭上版易用性、可读性等优点基础上,本版还具有以下特色:

1. 全面涵盖新词新义。基于每月更新的柯林斯英语语料库,提炼出当今英语世界涌现的大量新表达及新词义,例如 crowdfunding, cyberbullying, fangirl, feedback 等。

2. 强化词典的学习功能。增设七类语言学习栏: Picture Dictionary, Word Web, Word Partnership, Word Link, Thesaurus, Usage, Pragmatics。鼓励读者深入探究英语单词,积极扩展词汇,掌握更深更广的英语知识。

3. 特设语法结构提示。第 8 版词典在释义及例证前增设 4 万余条语法提示(grammatical pattern),直观呈现单词在具体语境中的常用语法结构,帮助读者更加准确地使用英语。

本版词典从策划、编校、设计、排版到印制,历经多道工序,倾注了编者的心血,力求为读者呈现一部尽善尽美的词典。当然,我们深知,限于人力和知识水平,词典在出版过程中难免有疏漏之处,在此恳请广大读者不吝赐教指正。

外语教学与研究出版社  
综合出版事业部  
辞书工作室

## 工作人员名单

责任编辑 谢金霞

编 辑 车云峰 都楠楠 冯倩倩 蒋 珂

刘文竹 钱垂君 唐 辉 詹莹玥

张 帆 张 蘅 张晶琳 赵观睿

特约编辑 李 云 申 葳 王 莹 徐 宁

杨镇明

# Acknowledgements

The publishers would like to acknowledge the following for their invaluable contribution to the original COBUILD concept and for their work on previous editions of this dictionary:

Founding Editor-in-Chief  
John Sinclair

Maree Airlie  
Sandra Anderson  
Anthony Boswell  
Jane Bradbury  
Ela Bullon  
Stephen Bullon  
Ted Carden  
Ray Carrick  
Joanna Channell  
Michela Clari  
Jeremy Clear  
Katharine Coates  
Rosalind Combley  
Lucy Cooper  
Sue Crawley  
Daphne Day  
Alice Deignan  
Andrew Delahunty  
Michelle Devereux  
Sheila Dignen  
Lynne Farrow  
Kerry Ferguson  
Eileen Fitzgerald  
Gwyneth Fox  
Gill Francis  
Gavin Gray

Isabel Griffiths  
Bob Grossmith  
Patrick Hanks  
Lucy Hollingworth  
Elaine Higgletton  
Susan Hunston  
Zoe James  
Janice Johnson  
Deborah Kirby  
Lorna Sinclair Knight  
Ramesh Krishnamurthy  
Tim Lane  
Michael Lax  
Andrea Lewis  
Helen Liebeck  
Alison Macaulay  
Moira MacDonald  
Dawn McKen  
Carol McCann  
Jill McNair  
Elizabeth Manning  
Duncan Marshall  
Cindy Mitchell  
Kate Mohideen  
Rosamund Moon  
Carole Murphy

Michael Murphy  
Brenda Nicholls  
Susanne Ogden  
Deborah Oprin  
Jonathan Payne  
Luisa Plaja  
Elaine Pollard  
Elizabeth Potter  
Christina Rammell  
Jim Ronald  
Maggie Seaton  
Debbie Seymour  
Pat Smith  
Sue Smith  
Penny Stock  
Elspeth Summers  
Mark Taylor  
Richard Thomas  
Miranda Timewell  
John Todd  
David Wark  
Jenny Watson  
John Williams  
John Wright

---

## Consultant

Paul Nation

# Introduction

Welcome to the eighth edition of the *COBUILD Advanced Learner's Dictionary*.

In keeping with COBUILD's long-established user-friendly tradition, this new edition will help you to understand not only the meanings of words, but also how to use them properly in context.

Even in the two years since our last edition, the English language has undergone dramatic changes, resulting in the addition of a wealth of new words. The language of social media continues to dominate our new word selection, leading to the addition of such items as *YOLO*, *selfie*, *photobomb*, *FaceTime* and *flash mob*. Technology and popular culture, as ever, have had an impact on our language, resulting in new words such as *cashless*, *onesie*, *First World problems* and *bestie* being added.

As well as checking and explaining the meanings of thousands of existing words, COBUILD's lexicographers have continued to ensure that our 4.5-billion-word database – the Collins Corpus – is kept up to date. The corpus contains English language material from thousands of different written and spoken sources. Material is downloaded from websites, and daily feeds are received from newspapers.

The corpus lies at the heart of each entry. Corpus research helps lexicographers to make confident and accurate decisions about the different senses of a word. It also informs the choice of words that are suitable for the dictionary (based on word frequency), the language used in the full-sentence definition, the choice of examples, and the grammatical information given. Finally, it helps us to provide accurate information relating to the connotations of particular words – whether they express approval, disapproval, a particular emotion, or politeness, for example.

Example sentences themselves remain close to the corpus, with minor changes made so that they are more successful as dictionary examples.

This edition contains all the valuable vocabulary-enrichment features of earlier editions, helping you to improve your knowledge of relations between words and the contexts in which they appear. For more information on these features, see 'Guide to key features', page xi.

We are also pleased to announce that the full dictionary text is available for Kindle™ and online, so that COBUILD is always available to you, wherever you are. Set it as your default Kindle™ dictionary, or just go to [www.collinsdictionary.com/cobuild](http://www.collinsdictionary.com/cobuild).

We hope you will find this new edition of the *COBUILD Advanced Learner's Dictionary* a valuable resource that complements and enhances all areas of language study.

## About COBUILD dictionaries

When the first COBUILD dictionary was published in 1987, it revolutionized dictionaries for learners. It was the first of a new generation of dictionaries that were based on actual evidence of how English was used, rather than lexicographer intuition.

Collins and the University of Birmingham, led by the outstanding linguist John Sinclair, developed an electronic corpus in the 1980s, called the Collins Birmingham University International Language Database (COBUILD). This corpus, which is also known as the Collins Corpus, became the largest collection of English data in the world, and COBUILD dictionary editors use the corpus to analyse the way that people really use the language.

The Collins Corpus contains 4.5 billion words taken from websites, newspapers, magazines, and books published around the world, and from spoken material from radio, TV, and everyday conversations. New data is added to the corpus every month, to help COBUILD editors identify new words and meanings from the moment they are first used.

All COBUILD dictionaries are based on the information our editors find in the Collins Corpus. Because the corpus is so large, our editors can look at lots of examples of how people really use words. The data tells us how words are used; what they mean; which words are used together; and how often words are used.

This information helps us decide which words to include in COBUILD dictionaries. Did you know, for example, that around 90% of English speech and writing is made up of approximately 3,500 words? The corpus tells us which words these are, and helps us ensure that when you use a COBUILD dictionary, you can be sure that you are learning the words you really want to know.

All of the examples in COBUILD dictionaries are examples of real English, taken from the Collins Corpus. The examples have been carefully chosen to demonstrate typical grammatical patterns, typical vocabulary, and typical contexts for each word.

The corpus lies at the heart of COBUILD and you can be confident that COBUILD will show you what you need to know to be able to communicate easily and accurately in English.

# Guide to dictionary entries

**Colour headwords** → **afternoon** <sup>ˈtɪə</sup> (afternoon teas) N-VAR **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]

**Hyphenation points show where a word may be split across lines.** → **after****shock** /ˈɑːftəˈʃɒk, ˈæf-/ (aftershocks) N-COUNT **Aftershocks** are smaller earthquakes which occur after a large earthquake. N-COUNT People sometimes refer to the effects of an important event, especially a bad one, as the **aftershock**. [mainly JOURNALISM] □ [+of] *They were already under stress, thanks to the aftershock of last year's drought.*

**Authentic examples from the Collins Corpus** → **after****taste** /ˈɑːftəˈteɪst, ˈæf-/ also **after-taste** N-SING An **after-taste** is a taste that remains in your mouth after you have finished eating or drinking something.

**Pronunciation** → **around** ⇨ /əˈraʊnd/

**Language notes provide more information on how to use the word correctly.** → **Around** is an adverb and a preposition. In British English, the word 'round' is often used instead. **Around** is often used with verbs of movement, such as 'walk' and 'drive', and also in phrasal verbs such as 'get around' and 'hand around'.

**Geographical labels** → **Around** is an adverb and a preposition. In British English, the word 'round' is often used instead. **Around** is often used with verbs of movement, such as 'walk' and 'drive', and also in phrasal verbs such as 'get around' and 'hand around'.

**Plural forms** → **Around** is an adverb and a preposition. In British English, the word 'round' is often used instead. **Around** is often used with verbs of movement, such as 'walk' and 'drive', and also in phrasal verbs such as 'get around' and 'hand around'.

**Full-sentence definitions show the ways in which the headword is used.** → **Around** is an adverb and a preposition. In British English, the word 'round' is often used instead. **Around** is often used with verbs of movement, such as 'walk' and 'drive', and also in phrasal verbs such as 'get around' and 'hand around'.

**Alternative spellings of headwords** → **Around** is an adverb and a preposition. In British English, the word 'round' is often used instead. **Around** is often used with verbs of movement, such as 'walk' and 'drive', and also in phrasal verbs such as 'get around' and 'hand around'.

**Stress markers for compound headwords.** → **black** <sup>ˈpeɪpə</sup> **pepper** N-UNCOUNT **Black pepper** is pepper which is dark in colour and has been made from the dried berries of the pepper plant, including their black outer cases. → see **spice**

**Important grammatical structures are shown in bold within definitions.** → **ocean** ⇨ /ˈoʊʃn/ (oceans) N-SING **The ocean** is the sea. □ *There were few sights as beautiful as the calm ocean on a warm night.* N-COUNT An **ocean** is one of the five very large areas of sea on the Earth's surface. □ *They spent many days cruising the northern Pacific Ocean.* □ ...the Indian Ocean. N-COUNT If you say that there is an **ocean of** something, you are emphasizing that there is a very large amount of it. [INFORMAL, EMPHASIS] □ [+of] *I had cried oceans of tears.* □ [+of] *APEC seems to be drowning in an ocean of jargon.* PHRASE If you say that something is a **drop in the ocean**, you mean that it is a very small amount which is unimportant compared to the cost of other things or is so small that it has very little effect on something. [EMPHASIS] □ *His fee is a drop in the ocean compared with the real cost of broadcasting.* → see **Word Web: ocean** → see **beach, earth, ship, tide, whale**

**Style labels indicate words that are used in formal and informal language, and in certain areas such as business or computing.** → **ocean** ⇨ /ˈoʊʃn/ (oceans) N-SING **The ocean** is the sea. □ *There were few sights as beautiful as the calm ocean on a warm night.* N-COUNT An **ocean** is one of the five very large areas of sea on the Earth's surface. □ *They spent many days cruising the northern Pacific Ocean.* □ ...the Indian Ocean. N-COUNT If you say that there is an **ocean of** something, you are emphasizing that there is a very large amount of it. [INFORMAL, EMPHASIS] □ [+of] *I had cried oceans of tears.* □ [+of] *APEC seems to be drowning in an ocean of jargon.* PHRASE If you say that something is a **drop in the ocean**, you mean that it is a very small amount which is unimportant compared to the cost of other things or is so small that it has very little effect on something. [EMPHASIS] □ *His fee is a drop in the ocean compared with the real cost of broadcasting.* → see **Word Web: ocean** → see **beach, earth, ship, tide, whale**

**Pragmatics labels give you information about additional ideas or emotions that a word expresses.** → **ocean** ⇨ /ˈoʊʃn/ (oceans) N-SING **The ocean** is the sea. □ *There were few sights as beautiful as the calm ocean on a warm night.* N-COUNT An **ocean** is one of the five very large areas of sea on the Earth's surface. □ *They spent many days cruising the northern Pacific Ocean.* □ ...the Indian Ocean. N-COUNT If you say that there is an **ocean of** something, you are emphasizing that there is a very large amount of it. [INFORMAL, EMPHASIS] □ [+of] *I had cried oceans of tears.* □ [+of] *APEC seems to be drowning in an ocean of jargon.* PHRASE If you say that something is a **drop in the ocean**, you mean that it is a very small amount which is unimportant compared to the cost of other things or is so small that it has very little effect on something. [EMPHASIS] □ *His fee is a drop in the ocean compared with the real cost of broadcasting.* → see **Word Web: ocean** → see **beach, earth, ship, tide, whale**

**Cross-references to other relevant entries and to illustrated features** → **ocean** ⇨ /ˈoʊʃn/ (oceans) N-SING **The ocean** is the sea. □ *There were few sights as beautiful as the calm ocean on a warm night.* N-COUNT An **ocean** is one of the five very large areas of sea on the Earth's surface. □ *They spent many days cruising the northern Pacific Ocean.* □ ...the Indian Ocean. N-COUNT If you say that there is an **ocean of** something, you are emphasizing that there is a very large amount of it. [INFORMAL, EMPHASIS] □ [+of] *I had cried oceans of tears.* □ [+of] *APEC seems to be drowning in an ocean of jargon.* PHRASE If you say that something is a **drop in the ocean**, you mean that it is a very small amount which is unimportant compared to the cost of other things or is so small that it has very little effect on something. [EMPHASIS] □ *His fee is a drop in the ocean compared with the real cost of broadcasting.* → see **Word Web: ocean** → see **beach, earth, ship, tide, whale**

**Verb forms** → **per****mit** ⇨ (permits, permitting, permitted)

**Pronunciation notes provide information on how to pronounce words correctly.** → **per****mit** ⇨ (permits, permitting, permitted) The verb is pronounced /pəˈmɪt/. The noun is pronounced /ˈpsːmɪt/.

**Meaning splits** → **per****mit** ⇨ (permits, permitting, permitted) **per****mit** V-TRANS If someone **permits** something, they allow it to happen. If they **permit** you to do something, they allow you to do it. [FORMAL, WRITTEN] □ [v n] *He can let the court's decision stand and permit the execution.* □ [be v-ed to-inf] *Employees are permitted to use the golf course during their free hours.* □ [be v-ed +into] *No outside journalists have been permitted into the country.* □ [v n n] *If they appear to be under 12, then the doorman is not allowed to permit them entry to the film.* N-COUNT A **permit** is an official document which says that you may do something. For example you usually need a **permit** to work in a foreign country. □ *The majority of foreign nationals working here have work permits.*

**Word classes** → **per****mit** ⇨ (permits, permitting, permitted) **per****mit** V-TRANS If someone **permits** something, they allow it to happen. If they **permit** you to do something, they allow you to do it. [FORMAL, WRITTEN] □ [v n] *He can let the court's decision stand and permit the execution.* □ [be v-ed to-inf] *Employees are permitted to use the golf course during their free hours.* □ [be v-ed +into] *No outside journalists have been permitted into the country.* □ [v n n] *If they appear to be under 12, then the doorman is not allowed to permit them entry to the film.* N-COUNT A **permit** is an official document which says that you may do something. For example you usually need a **permit** to work in a foreign country. □ *The majority of foreign nationals working here have work permits.*

**pretty** ♦♦ /'prɪti/ (**prettier, prettiest**) ■ ADJ If you describe someone, especially a girl, as **pretty**, you mean that they look nice and are attractive in a delicate way. □ *She's a very charming and very pretty girl.* • **prettyly** /'prɪtɪli/ ADV □ *She smiled again, prettyly.* • **prettiness** N-UNCOUNT □ *Her prettiness had been much admired.* ■ ADJ A place or a thing that is **pretty** is attractive and pleasant, in a charming but not particularly unusual way. □ *Whitstable is still a very pretty little town.* • **prettyly** ADV □ *The living-room was prettyly decorated.* • **prettiness** N-UNCOUNT □ *...shells of quite unbelievable prettiness.* ■ ADV [ADV adj/adv] You can use **pretty** before an adjective or adverb to mean 'quite' or 'rather'. [INFORMAL] □ *I had a pretty good idea what she was going to do.* □ *Pretty soon after my arrival I found lodgings.* ■ PHRASE **Pretty much** or **pretty well** means 'almost'. [INFORMAL] □ *His new government looks pretty much like the old one.*

Comparative and superlative forms

Derived words

Frequency information indicates which words are the most common.

still

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

Menu to help navigate longer entries

① **still** ♦♦ /stɪl/ ■ ADV [ADV before v] 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?* ■ ADV [ADV before v] 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.* ■ ADV 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.* ■ ADV [ADV before v] 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.* ■ ADV 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?' ■ ADV 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. [EMPHASIS] □ *We look forward to strengthening still further our already close co-operation with the police service.* ■ ADV You use **still** with comparatives to indicate that something has even more of a quality than something else. [EMPHASIS] □ *Formula One motor car racing is supposed to be dangerous. 'Indycar' racing is supposed to be more dangerous still.*

Clear sense splits

② **still** ♦♦ /stɪl/ (**stiller, stillest, stills**) ■ ADJ [ADJ after v, v-link ADJ] 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.* ■ ADJ 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.* ■ ADJ Drinks that are **still** do not contain any bubbles of carbon dioxide. □ *...a glass of still orange.* ■ ADJ If a place is **still**, it is quiet and shows no sign of activity. □ *In the room it was very still.* • **stillness** N-UNCOUNT □ [+of] *Four deafening explosions shattered the stillness of the night air.* ■ N-COUNT A **still** is a photograph taken from a cinema film which is used for publicity purposes.

Important grammatical patterns

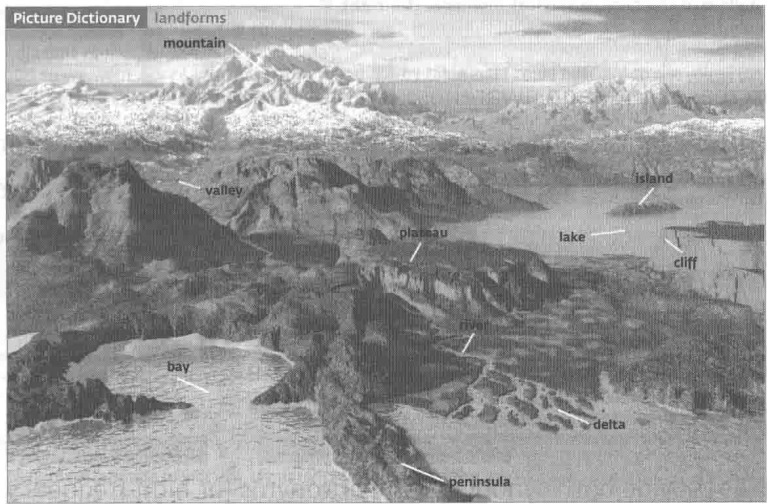
③ **still** /stɪl/ (**stills**) N-COUNT A **still** is a piece of equipment used to make strong alcoholic drinks by a process called distilling. **stillbirth** /'stɪlbɜːθ/ (**stillbirths**) N-VAR A **stillbirth** is the birth of a dead baby.

# Guide to key features

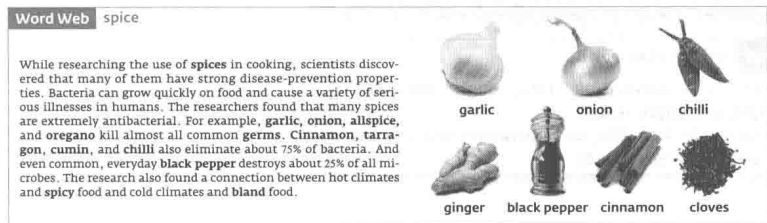
## Vocabulary builders

The vocabulary-building features within the dictionary encourage users to explore and enjoy the English language. In turn, these features help the learner to build both their active and passive vocabulary. These ‘vocabulary builders’ aim to increase language fluency and improve the user’s ability to communicate accurately, whilst providing the learner with a greater depth and breadth of knowledge of English.

**Picture Dictionary** boxes present vocabulary, concepts and processes in an eye-catching and memorable way. The vocabulary has been selected from key topics and is particularly relevant for users studying other subjects in English.



**Word Webs** present topic-related vocabulary in illustrated encyclopedic panels. These features encourage language exploration and provide learners with the opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the language and concepts. The key words from the texts (in bold) are defined in the dictionary and when users look up one word, they discover other related words that will draw them further into the dictionary. The longer the learner spends exploring vocabulary, the greater and richer their language acquisition will be.



**Word Partnerships** highlight the most important collocations of words with the highest frequency in the Collins Corpus. For each collocation, the headword is repeated and the collocate is shown in bold. The numbers refer the student to the correct meaning of the headword.

**Word Partnership** Use *trust* with:

V. **learn to trust** 1  
**build trust, create trust, place trust in someone** 2

ADJ. **mutual trust** 2  
**charitable trust** 10

N. trust **your instincts**, trust **someone's judgment** 2  
**investment trust** 9

**Word Partnership** Use *moment* with:

ADV. **a moment ago, just a moment** 1

N. **moment of silence, moment of thought** 1

V. **stop for a moment, take a moment, think for a moment, wait a moment** 1

ADJ. **an awkward moment, a critical moment, the right moment** 2

**Word Links** increase language awareness by showing how words are built in English. Focusing on prefixes, suffixes, and word roots, each 'Word Link' provides a simple definition of the building block and then shows three examples of it appearing in a word. Providing three examples encourages learners to look up these words to develop and consolidate their understanding.

**Word Link** *port = carrying: export, import, portable*

**Word Link** *geo = earth: geography, geology, geopolitical*

**Thesaurus** boxes provide both synonyms and antonyms for high-frequency words. These features offer an excellent way for learners to expand their knowledge of vocabulary and usage by directing them to other words they can research in the dictionary. The numbers refer the student to the correct meaning within the headword's entry.

**Thesaurus** *talk* Also look up:

V. chat, discuss, gossip, say, share, speak, tell; (ant.) listen 2

N. argument, conversation, dialogue, discussion, interview, negotiation; (ant.) silence 2  
 chatter, chitchat, conversation, gossip, rumour 2

**Thesaurus** *difficult* Also look up:

ADJ. challenging, demanding, hard, tough; (ant.) easy, simple, uncomplicated 1  
 disagreeable, irritable, uncooperative; (ant.) accommodating, co-operative 2

**Usage** notes explain shades of meaning, clarify cultural references, and highlight important grammatical information.

**Usage** **less and fewer**

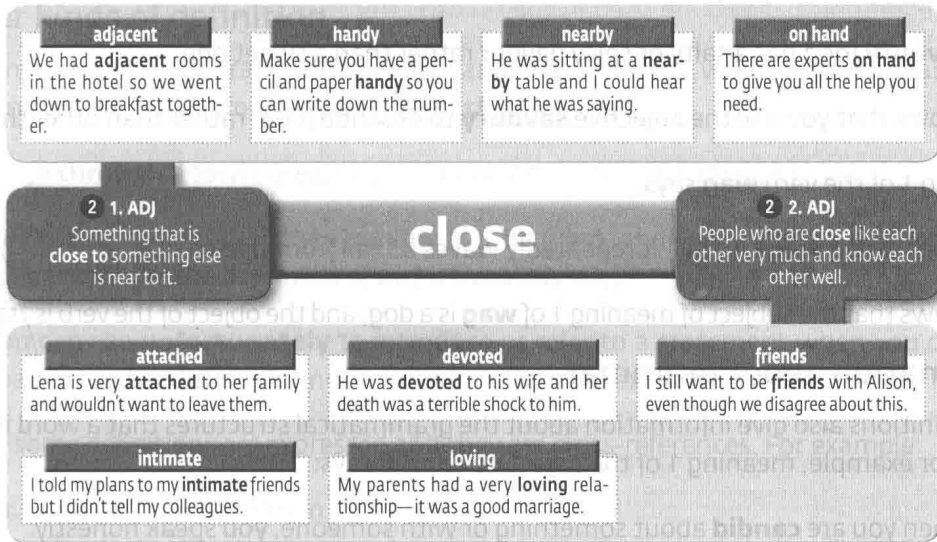
*Less* is used to describe general amounts (or noncount nouns). *Less snow fell in December than in January.* *Fewer* is used to describe amounts of countable items. *Maria is working fewer hours this term.*

**Usage** **one and you**

Sometimes *one* is used to refer to any person or to people in general, but it sounds formal: *One has to be smart about buying a computer.* In everyday English, use *you* instead of *one*: *You should only call 999 in an emergency.*

## Visual thesaurus

Find alternatives to the 50 most over-used words in English.



## Definitions

One of the most striking features of the *Collins COBUILD Advanced Learner's 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 structure

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** is 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 **candid** is followed by the preposition 'about' when you are talking about something, and that it is followed by the preposition 'with' when you are talking about 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 also can be used to convey your evaluation of something, for example to express your approval or disapproval. For example, here is the 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 CAPITAL LETTERS 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 Collins Corpus. Where relevant, the British or American form is shown at its equivalent word or meaning.

## 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, e.g. **AUSTRALIAN**, **IRISH**, **NORTHERN ENGLISH**, **SCOTTISH**.

## Style labels

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**MILITARY:** used mainly when talking or writing about military terms, e.g. **armour**

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

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

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

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

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

**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**

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

**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**

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

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

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

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

## Frequency banding

Information on the frequency of words in this dictionary is given using three frequency bands, shown as blue diamonds in the headword line. The most frequent words have three diamonds, the next most frequent two, and the ones which are less frequent have one diamond. Words which occur less frequently still, but which deserve an entry in the dictionary, do not have any diamonds.

## 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 Collins Corpus, COBUILD is uniquely placed to help learners with pragmatics. We have analysed 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.