

# Exercises

16.1 Which of the collocations in A opposite do these drawings illustrate?



16.2 Which of the collocations in the box have a positive meaning (+) and which have a negative meaning (-)?

relaxed atmosphere	lively bar	over-priced restaurants	urban wasteland	no-go area
imposing building	shanty town	fashionable club	run-down buildings	

16.3 Answer these questions using collocations from the opposite page.

- 1 What might prevent you from sleeping in a house near a busy motorway?
- 2 Exhaust fumes will get worse if what increases?
- 3 What is the opposite of a restaurant which is good value?
- 4 What kind of area with poor, home-made houses could certainly be called a deprived area?
- 5 If an area is very interesting historically, what may it officially be called?
- 6 What is another way of saying an expensive restaurant?
- 7 What do we call blocks of flats which have many storeys, perhaps 20 or more?
- 8 What adjective could be used about an attractive and perhaps slightly unusual old building?

16.4 Match the beginnings of each sentence on the left with its ending on the right.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1 It is a sprawling                      | traffic all the way to the airport.     |
| 2 It is full of upmarket                 | runs from the castle to the river.      |
| 3 There was bumper-to-bumper             | zones and some large supermarkets.      |
| 4 I get asthma from the terrible exhaust | with shops and cafés.                   |
| 5 I live in a residential                | city covering an enormous area.         |
| 6 Some of the more deprived              | with litter.                            |
| 7 The main street in town                | area but work in the city centre.       |
| 8 The main street is lined               | areas are not far from the city centre. |
| 9 On the outskirts are some industrial   | fumes in the city centre.               |
| 10 The streets were strewn               | shops, which are too expensive for me.  |

**FOLLOW UP**

Find a description in an encyclopaedia, tourist brochure or guide book of a city that you know well or are interested in. Make a note of any interesting collocations that you find there.

## A Your month of birth and your character

<b>January</b>	You are <b>good company</b> <sup>1</sup> but you may have a <b>selfish streak</b> <sup>2</sup> .	<b>July</b>	Although you can be <b>painfully shy</b> in social situations, at work you <b>give the impression of being supremely confident</b> .
<b>February</b>	You have an <b>outgoing personality</b> and a <b>good sense of humour</b> .	<b>August</b>	You have a <b>tendency</b> to make <b>snap decisions</b> <sup>4</sup> .
<b>March</b>	You have a <b>vivid imagination</b> , but you tend to <b>lose your temper</b> too easily.	<b>September</b>	You have a strong <b>sense of responsibility</b> and always <b>keep your word</b> <sup>5</sup> .
<b>April</b>	You are <b>highly intelligent</b> with a <b>razor-sharp mind</b> .	<b>October</b>	You are good at <b>keeping secrets</b> and never <b>bear a grudge</b> <sup>6</sup> .
<b>May</b>	You <b>set high standards</b> for yourself and are <b>fiercely</b> <sup>3</sup> loyal to your friends.	<b>November</b>	You find it hard to <b>keep your temper</b> <sup>7</sup> if you think someone is <b>making a fool out of you</b> <sup>8</sup> .
<b>June</b>	The best <b>aspect of your personality</b> is the way you always <b>put others first</b> .	<b>December</b>	You can be <b>brutally honest</b> <sup>9</sup> and sometimes <b>hurt others' feelings</b> .

- <sup>1</sup> people enjoy being with you  
<sup>2</sup> you sometimes act in a selfish way  
<sup>3</sup> stronger than *extremely*  
<sup>4</sup> quick decisions  
<sup>5</sup> do what you say you will do, keep your promises

- <sup>6</sup> resent for a long time bad things others have done to you  
<sup>7</sup> not get angry  
<sup>8</sup> trying to deceive or trick you  
<sup>9</sup> honest in a way that may hurt

## B Behaviour: verb + noun collocations

collocation	example	comment
play a joke/trick	The children <b>played a joke on</b> the teacher by hiding under their desks before she came into the room.	NOT <del>make</del> a joke/trick
take a joke	Fortunately, the teacher could <b>take a joke</b> and didn't punish them.	= didn't mind a joke being played on her
swallow your pride	Jane <b>swallowed her pride</b> and admitted that she was wrong.	= she did it even though it was embarrassing for her
throw a tantrum	The child <b>threw a tantrum</b> when I wouldn't buy him any sweets.	= behaved in a very uncontrolled manner
lose your patience	Finally I <b>lost my patience</b> and shouted at her.	= lost my temper, became angry
come to terms with	Nick has found it hard to <b>come to terms with</b> his illness.	= accept something psychologically
reveal your true character	Jack's failure to support her has certainly <b>revealed his true character</b> .	opposite = conceal/hide your true character

## TIP

Associating these collocations with people you know may help you to learn them.

## Exercises

17.1 Which of the collocations in A describe negatives aspects of character?

17.2 Add the missing words in these letters to a magazine where readers are discussing their and others' characters. You are sometimes given the first letter.

1 I know that I ..... a tendency to ..... a grudge, but I just can't forget something bad a friend did to me recently. She has a selfish s..... and doesn't care sometimes how much she ..... my feelings. I am finding it increasingly hard to k..... my temper with her. But perhaps it might be better to l..... my temper and let her know how I really feel?  
**Silvia M.**

2 I have always tried to ..... others first and not to think of myself. I believe you should not lose your p..... with your friends, but if someone seems to enjoy ..... a fool out of you in front of other people, do those rules of friendship still apply?  
**Stefan P.**

3 I'm a little shy, though not p..... shy, but sometimes I think I ..... the impression that I'm unfriendly. How can I convince people that I'm good c..... and worth getting to know?  
**Tom W.**

4 Should I talk about personal matters to my closest colleague at work? She is not very good at ..... secrets and she has a very v..... imagination. She always promises not to tell other people, but I'm not sure she always ..... her word.  
**Jan H.**

5 My boyfriend has a really friendly, o..... personality and a great ..... of humour. He's ..... intelligent and has a .....-sharp mind. The perfect man. We've been together now for a year, and I like him a lot, but don't love him any more. Should I be b..... honest with him and tell him?  
**Lydia T.**

6 I think a friend is destroying himself with drugs. I feel a ..... of responsibility towards him. He has always been f..... loyal to me in good and bad times, which is a wonderful a..... of his personality. I feel I ought to contact the police or social services, but I don't want to make a s..... decision which I'll regret later.  
**Gary J.**

17.3 Complete B's remarks in these conversations so that they mean more or less the same as A's, using collocations from the opposite page.

- 1 A: Bob's found it hard to accept psychologically the fact that he's now divorced.  
B: Yes, he's found it hard ..... with his new situation.
- 2 A: Kevin's problem is he can't laugh when people play jokes on him.  
B: No, it's true. He just can't ....., can he?
- 3 A: Well, Sara's behaviour last night certainly showed the truth about her.  
B: Yes, it certainly .....
- 4 A: She always has very high expectations of both herself and her children.  
B: Yes, she always .....
- 5 A: Sam started screaming and stamping his feet when I tried to put him to bed.  
B: Well, two-year-olds often .....

17.4 Look in your dictionary. Can you find any other collocations ...

- 1 ... where *word* has the meaning of promise?
- 2 ... where *temper* relates to behaviour?
- 3 ... where *sense of* ... relates to an aspect of character?

## A

## Words describing people's physical appearance

Read these quotations taken from essays where students were asked to describe their family members.



My father has a **round face**, with **chubby<sup>1</sup> cheeks** and a **droopy<sup>2</sup> moustache**. My mother has a more **pointed face** and a **straight nose**. My younger sister is more like my father. She has an **oval<sup>3</sup> face** and an **upturned nose**. My older sister is like a model. She has a **slim figure** and a **slender<sup>4</sup> waist**. She has a **lovely complexion<sup>5</sup>** and beautiful **sleek<sup>6</sup>, shoulder-length hair**, and she's always **immaculately groomed<sup>7</sup>**. I feel so ordinary next to her – I've got **coarse<sup>8</sup> hair** and rather **broad hips**, but she always says I look nice.

- <sup>1</sup> fat in a pleasant and attractive way  
<sup>2</sup> long and hanging down heavily  
<sup>3</sup> shaped like an egg  
<sup>4</sup> attractively slim (a rather formal, poetic word)

- <sup>5</sup> the natural colour and quality of a person's skin  
<sup>6</sup> smooth and shiny  
<sup>7</sup> her appearance is always tidy and looked after with great care  
<sup>8</sup> rough, and not smooth or soft

My father and my two older brothers are all **well-built<sup>9</sup>** with **broad shoulders**. My father is **going bald** but he still has a very **youthful appearance** for someone who is over forty. My brothers both have **thick hair** and **bushy<sup>10</sup> eyebrows**. My younger brother is only two – he's just a **tiny tot<sup>11</sup>**, but he's very cute. My mother's side of the family mostly have **dark hair** – in fact my mother had **jet-black hair<sup>12</sup>** when she was younger, before she **went grey** – but on my father's side some have **fair hair** and some have **ginger<sup>13</sup> hair**.

- <sup>9</sup> have strong, attractive bodies  
<sup>10</sup> very thick  
<sup>11</sup> a small child

- <sup>12</sup> completely black  
<sup>13</sup> a red or orange-brown colour; used of people's hair

## B More collocations describing appearance

A short, **dumpy woman** was selling flowers at a stall on the street corner. [short and quite fat woman; used more often of women than of men]

A **portly gentleman** answered the door. [fat and round; usually used of middle-aged and older men]

A **lanky youth** was standing at the street corner. [tall and thin and tending to move awkwardly]

I wouldn't like people to see me with **dishevelled hair** and dirty clothes. [very untidy; used of people's hair and appearance]

He **bears a striking resemblance** to his father. [looks remarkably like]

The lady who entered the room **had a very striking appearance**. [unusual appearance, in a positive, attractive sense]

## TIP

Sometimes words are very restricted in what they can collocate with. The colour adjectives *blonde*, *ginger* and *auburn<sup>1</sup>* are only used of people's hair (not, for example, their clothes or other objects). When a word has restricted collocations, make a special note in your vocabulary notebook.  
<sup>1</sup> reddish brown

# Exercises

18.1 Put the words from the box into the 'fat' or 'thin' column, then answer the questions.

portly lanky slender dumpy slim chubby

'fat' words	'thin' words

- Which words could be used to describe someone's waist?
- Which word is likely to be used of a rather physically awkward young person?
- Which word means 'fat but in a pleasant way'?
- Which word is more likely to be used to describe a man rather than a woman?
- Which word is more likely to be used to describe a woman rather than a man?

18.2 Look at B. Then match the adjectives in the first box below with the nouns in the second box.

bushy tiny oval striking broad droopy chubby dishevelled

cheeks moustache shoulders hair eyebrows resemblance tot face

18.3 Fill the gaps with appropriate collocations. You are sometimes given the first letter(s).

I hadn't seen Will since he was just a (1) t..... t....., so I was surprised to see that he was now a tall young man. He was (2) im..... gr....., smart and elegant. He was with a pretty young woman with (3) j.....-black, (4) shoulder-..... hair and a (5) l..... com..... . She could have been a model, she had such a (6) str..... ap..... . He had his arm round her (7) s..... wa..... . With them was a (8) po..... g....., who looked as though he enjoyed good food, and who was probably her father. When I introduced myself to Will, he smiled. 'Of course, I remember you,' he said. 'You used to work with my father. But you haven't aged at all! You have a much more (9) y..... a..... than my father now does. Dad has (10) ..... very grey.' I felt very pleased when he said that; he obviously didn't notice I was beginning to (11) ..... bald. Everyone likes to think they look young when they get older.

18.4 Use the words from the box to fill the gaps to give contrasting meanings.

round coarse upturned fair pointed straight dark sleek

- Her hair's not ....., it's quite ....., in fact it's almost black.
- She has an ..... nose but her brother has a ..... nose.
- Her mother has a ..... face but her father has a ..... face.
- My hair is so ..... and ugly; Sally's is so ..... and lovely.

**FOLLOW UP**

Find a description of the hero or heroine in an English novel or short story. Note down any interesting collocations that you find there.