

Real-Life English Collocations

A Practical B2 Collocation Bank for Everyday Conversation

Knowing individual words is useful. Knowing **which words naturally go together** makes those words much easier to use in conversation.

Use this sheet as your personal collocation bank. Choose expressions that are relevant to your life, create your own examples, and practise saying them out loud.

1. EVERYDAY LIFE & ROUTINES

spend time — use time doing something

I spend quite a lot of time working from home.

save time — make something take less time

Ordering online saves me a lot of time.

waste time — use time without achieving anything useful

I sometimes waste time scrolling through social media.

take your time — do something without hurrying

Take your time. We don't need to leave yet.

get ready — prepare yourself

It usually takes me about twenty minutes to get ready.

get some rest — relax or sleep

You look tired. You should get some rest.

get into the habit of — start doing something regularly

I'm trying to get into the habit of reading before bed.

make time for — find time for something despite being busy

I try to make time for exercise during the week.

2. WORK & STUDY

make an effort — try hard to do something

I'm making an effort to use English more at work.

meet a deadline — finish something by the required time

We have to meet the deadline on Friday.

gain experience — develop knowledge and skills through doing something
The job helped me gain valuable experience.

make progress — improve or move towards a goal
I feel like I'm finally making progress with my English.

pay attention — concentrate on something
Try to pay attention to how the expression is used.

take notes — write down important information
I usually take notes during meetings.

solve a problem — find a solution to something
We need to find a way to solve this problem.

take responsibility for — accept responsibility for something
You have to take responsibility for your decisions.

3. PLANS & DECISIONS

make a decision — decide something
I need to make a decision by the end of the week.

change your mind — decide to think or do something differently
I was going to stay home, but I changed my mind.

make plans — arrange what you are going to do
We haven't made any plans for the weekend yet.

have a good chance of — be likely to succeed or happen
You have a good chance of getting the job.

take a chance — do something despite uncertainty or risk
Sometimes you just have to take a chance.

keep your options open — avoid making a final decision so that several possibilities remain
I'm keeping my options open until I know more.

set a goal — decide what you want to achieve
I've set myself a goal of reading two books in English this month.

change your plans — decide to do something different from what you originally intended
We had to change our plans because of the weather.

4. PROBLEMS & DIFFICULT SITUATIONS

deal with a problem — take action to handle a problem

We need to deal with this problem quickly.

face a problem — experience or have to deal with a difficulty

Many small businesses face the same problem.

find a solution — discover a way to solve a problem

I'm sure we'll find a solution.

make a mistake — do something incorrectly

Everyone makes mistakes when learning a language.

learn from your mistakes — use mistakes to improve

The important thing is to learn from your mistakes.

take a risk — do something that could have a negative result

Starting your own business means taking some risks.

cause a problem — create a difficulty

The delay caused a few problems.

deal with stress — manage feelings of stress

Exercise helps me deal with stress.

5. PEOPLE & RELATIONSHIPS

keep in touch — continue communicating with someone

I still keep in touch with some of my old friends.

lose touch — stop communicating with someone

We lost touch after university.

get to know someone — gradually learn more about a person

It takes time to really get to know someone.

have something in common — share interests, experiences or characteristics

We discovered that we had a lot in common.

make a good impression — cause someone to have a positive opinion of you

You want to make a good impression at a job interview.

get along with someone — have a good relationship with someone

I get along really well with my colleagues.

have a conversation — talk with someone

We had a long conversation about travelling.

give someone advice — tell someone what you think they should do
My friend gave me some really useful advice.

6. OPINIONS & COMMUNICATION

express an opinion — say what you think about something
Don't be afraid to express your opinion.

make a point — express an important idea or argument
She made a really interesting point.

have a point — say something that is reasonable or worth considering
I think you have a point.

give an example — provide an example to explain an idea
Let me give you an example.

ask a question — request information
Can I ask you a question?

give an answer — respond to a question
It's difficult to give a simple answer.

keep in mind — remember or consider something
Keep in mind that everyone's situation is different.

make sure — check that something is correct or happens
Make sure you have everything before you leave.

7. MONEY & SHOPPING

save money — keep money instead of spending it
We're trying to save money for a holiday.

spend money on — use money to buy something
I probably spend too much money on coffee.

waste money on — spend money unnecessarily
I don't want to waste money on something I won't use.

afford to buy — have enough money to buy something
We can't afford to buy a new car right now.

pay a bill — pay money that you owe
I need to pay the electricity bill.

make a payment — pay an amount of money

You can make the payment online.

get a refund — receive your money back

I returned the shoes and got a full refund.

good value for money — worth the amount you pay

The hotel was really good value for money.

8. TRAVEL & EXPERIENCES

catch a flight — get on a scheduled flight

We have to leave early to catch our flight.

miss a flight — arrive too late for a flight

We nearly missed our flight because of the traffic.

book a flight — reserve and pay for a flight

We booked our flights a few months ago.

go on a trip — travel somewhere for a period of time

We're going on a short trip next weekend.

have a great time — enjoy an experience very much

We had a great time in Spain.

get the chance to — have an opportunity to do something

I finally got the chance to visit Edinburgh.

try something new — do or experience something for the first time

I always try something new when I travel.

have a bad experience — experience something unpleasant

I had a bad experience with that airline once.

9. HEALTH & WELL-BEING

get enough sleep — sleep as much as you need

I rarely get enough sleep during the week.

get some exercise — do physical activity

I need to get more exercise.

keep fit — stay physically healthy

Walking is a simple way to keep fit.

feel stressed — experience stress

I tend to feel stressed when I have too much work.

take a break — stop an activity for a short time

Let's take a short break.

have trouble sleeping — find it difficult to sleep

I sometimes have trouble sleeping when I'm stressed.

make a difference — have an important effect

Getting enough sleep makes a huge difference to how I feel.

develop a habit — begin doing something regularly

It's easy to develop unhealthy habits when you're busy.

ACTIVATE YOUR COLLOCATIONS

Don't try to memorise the whole list at once.

Choose **10 collocations** that are particularly useful for your life.

Step 1 — Choose

Write your 10 collocations:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Step 2 — Personalise

Choose five of them and create a **true sentence about yourself**.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Step 3 — Speak

Now choose **three collocations** and talk for 60–90 seconds about:

your week • your work • your plans • a problem • a recent experience • your habits • your goals

Try to use all three collocations naturally.

Step 4 — Repeat

Come back tomorrow.

Cover your sentences and try to use the same collocations again **without looking at your examples**.

The goal is not to memorise a long list.

The goal is to make useful combinations of words **easier to retrieve when you speak**.