

Collocations

A collocation is when two or more words often go together. Today, we'll focus on collocations formed with verbs.

Usage

Some common verbs used in collocations are: have, go, make, do, take, break, catch, save, keep, pay, among many others.

Form

The verb comes first and is

followed by a noun or a phrase

We have a meeting every Monday.

.....

verb

noun

The kids made a mess in the kitchen baking a cake.

.....

article!



A phrasal verb is very close to a collocation but the main difference is that a phrasal verb is made up of a verb + preposition.

I made up with my best friend after our fight. **(phrasal verb)**

I **made** new friends when I changed jobs. **(collocation)**

I want to **take up** tennis this year. **(phrasal verb)**

I want to **take part** in tennis classes this year. **(collocation)**

**Practice
activity**

Let's start by looking at some more examples of natural collocations versus unnatural ones.

”

I made an appointment with the doctor

“

Take a look at the following collocations and decide whether they sound natural or not.

Have a rest

Do a rest

Make a noise

Make a haircut

Commit a crime

Commit a goal

Answers

Have a rest (natural).

Do a rest (unnatural).

Make a noise (natural).

Make a haircut (unnatural).

Commit a crime (natural).

Commit a goal (unnatural).

- Have children
- Have surgery
- Have a good time
- Have difficulty
- Have a (adjective) feeling
- Have breakfast / lunch / dinner
- Have no fear
- Have a bite
- Have a busy day

”

I'll have knee surgery next month.

“

”

Did you have a good time on your break?

“

”

Thanks, I'm not hungry. I had a bite to eat earlier.

“

Practice activity

Try to write a few practice sentences using these collocations.

Share your sentences in the Intrepid English community or ask your teacher to check them for you.

- Make a mess
- Make a noise
- Make a fuss
- Make a fool of yourself/someone
- Make a cup of tea
- Make some food
- Make friends
- Make a profit
- Make a phone call
- Make a comment

”

I made you a cup of green tea.

“

”

Our company made good profit last year.

“

”

Sorry, I need to step out to make a phone call.

“

Practice activity

Try to write a few practice sentences using these collocations.

Share your sentences in the Intrepid English community or ask your teacher to check them for you.

- Do the ironing
- Do the dishes
- Do research/work
- Do someone's hair
- Do someone a favour
- Do nothing
- Do without
- Do one's best
- Do business with
- Do a (adjective) job

”

I'll do the dishes if you cook dinner.

“

”

It's a pleasure doing business with you!

“

”

My sister did a great job on her school presentation.

“

Practice activity

Try to write a few practice sentences using these collocations.

Share your sentences in the Intrepid English community or ask your teacher to check them for you.

- Go on an adventure
- Go out of business
- Go to the beach/cinema...
- Go bankrupt
- Go through someone
- Go on holiday
- Go to university
- Go online
- Go mad

”

I'm going on holiday next week.

“

”

My favourite cafe went bankrupt last month.

“

”

I went online to check the price before buying it.

“

Practice activity

Try to write a few practice sentences using these collocations.

Share your sentences in the Intrepid English community or ask your teacher to check them for you.

- Break a habit
- Break a promise
- Break the law/rules
- Break even
- Break loose
- Break new ground
- Break a window
- Break someone's heart
- Break free
- Break the news
- Break a record

”

I threw a rock and broke a window.

“

”

The police had to break the news to the family.

“

”

The business broke even this year for the first time.

“

Practice activity

Try to write a few practice sentences using these collocations.

Share your sentences in the Intrepid English community or ask your teacher to check them for you.

- Take a bow
- Take a look
- Take a message
- Take a photo
- Take a nap
- Take a risk
- Take an opportunity
- Take (adjective) care of
- Take part
- Take an exam

”

I'll take a look at it and let you know.

“

”

Can you take a photo of us in front of the bridge?

“

”

He takes good care of his new puppy.

“

Practice activity

Try to write a few practice sentences using these collocations.

Share your sentences in the Intrepid English community or ask your teacher to check them for you.

**Practice
activity**

Match the words below to make collocations that sound natural.

- Make
 - Have
 - Do (x2)
 - Take (x2)
 - Fast
 - Commit
 - Break
 - Go
1. a photo
 2. the dishes
 3. part
 4. a crime
 5. a habit
 6. over
 7. bankrupt
 8. a fuss
 9. food
 10. a rest

Answers

1. Take a photo, 2. Do the dishes, 3. Take part,
4. Commit a crime, 5. Break a habit, 6. Do over,
7. Go bankrupt, 8. Make a fuss, 9. Fast food, 10. Have a rest