

Learning vocabulary

A

What do you need to learn?

Did you know that there are over half a million words in English but that the average native speaker only uses about 5,000 in everyday speech? You already know many of those 5,000 words. This book will help you to learn many of those that you do not yet know and it will help you to use them appropriately and accurately.

B

What does knowing a new word mean?

It is not enough just to know the meaning of a word. You also need to know:

- which words it is usually used with;
- its grammatical characteristics;
- how it is pronounced;
- whether it is formal, informal or neutral.

So when you learn a word you should make sure that you:

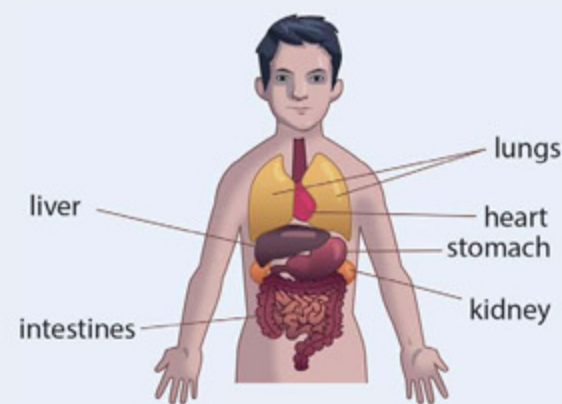
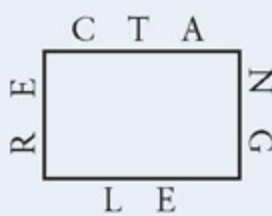
- Learn new words in phrases not in isolation.
- Notice how words commonly go together. These are called **collocations** and include:
 - adjectives + nouns, e.g. *rich vocabulary, classical music, common sense*;
 - verbs + nouns, e.g. *to express an opinion, to take sides*;
 - nouns in phrases, e.g. *in touch with, a train set, a sense of humour*;
 - words + prepositions, e.g. *at a loss for words, in particular*.
- Notice special grammatical characteristics of new words. For example, note irregular verbs, e.g. *undertake, undertook, undertaken*; uncountable nouns, e.g. *luggage*; or nouns that are only used in the plural, e.g. *scissors*.
- Notice any special pronunciation problems with new words.
- Check if the word is particularly formal or informal in character, in other words if it has a particular register.

C

How can you help yourself to memorise words?

Research suggests that some students find it easier to learn words if they (a) learn them in groups and (b) make use of pictures, as shown here.

You can group words in any way you like – topic, grammatical feature, word root, and so on. The unit titles in this book might give you some ideas.



D

How can you help yourself learn more words?

This book will help you to learn vocabulary in a systematic way. However, you can also help yourself to learn more words and expressions by reading and listening to as much English as possible. Here are some ideas about things you can read or listen to:

Exercises

4.1 Look at the following text. Before you read it, see if you know what the underlined words mean.

A tortoise is a shelled reptile famed for its slowness and longevity. The Giant Tortoise of the Galapagos may attain over 1.5 metres in length and have a lifespan of more than 150 years. Smaller tortoises from Southern Europe and North Africa make popular pets. They need to be tended carefully in cool climates and must have a warm place in which they can hibernate.



Which of the underlined words can you guess from the context or using any other clues? First make a guess and then check your guesses in the Answer key.

4.2 Use the context to work out what the underlined words mean. Explain them using one or other of the expressions in B on the opposite page.

- 1 Above the trees at the edge of the meadow, a buzzard hangs for a moment on the wind before soaring towards the hills. *I think a buzzard must be a kind of bird.*
- 2 According to some sources, the water vole is one of the most rapidly declining creatures in Britain and a new survey is now being carried out to determine how serious the threat of extinction really is.
- 3 Using a large chisel and a hammer, Jack managed to knock down the old garden wall.
- 4 Kate carried in a delicious chicken and noodle soup in a large tureen and we enjoyed several bowls each.
- 5 We often used to walk up to the cliff top where we would clamber over the farmer's gate and go right to the edge where the view was better.
- 6 Some people get really ratty when they haven't had enough sleep.

4.3 Use your knowledge of other basic English words to help you work out the meanings of the underlined words and expressions. Rewrite them using simpler words or explanations for the underlined words and phrases.

- 1 It says on the can that this drink is sugar-free. *this drink doesn't contain sugar*
- 2 I find Caitlin a very warm-hearted person.
- 3 I've been up to my eyes in work ever since I got back from holiday.
- 4 We walked down a tree-lined street towards the station.
- 5 The little boys were fascinated by the cement-mixer.
- 6 More and more shops now have their own special store cards and offer you a discount if you use one of them.

4.4 Use your knowledge of prefixes and suffixes to suggest what these phrases mean.

- 1 to redirect a letter *to send it to a different address*
- 2 uncontrollable anger
- 3 pre-dinner drinks
- 4 bi-monthly report
- 5 my ex-boss
- 6 anti-tourist feelings
- 7 to disconnect the telephone
- 8 undelivered letters

A Positive and negative qualities

positive

She has a **heart of gold**. [very kind, generous]
 He's **as good as gold**. [helpful, well-behaved; used generally for children]

negative

She's **as hard as nails**. [no sympathy for others]
 He's a **nasty piece of work**. [unpleasant]

Note also:

Her **heart's in the right place**. [is a good and kind person even though they do not always seem so]
 He's such an **awkward customer**. [difficult person to deal with]
 She's a **pain in the neck**. Nobody likes her. [nuisance, difficult]
 He **gets on everyone's nerves**. [irritates everybody]

B Idioms based on 'head'

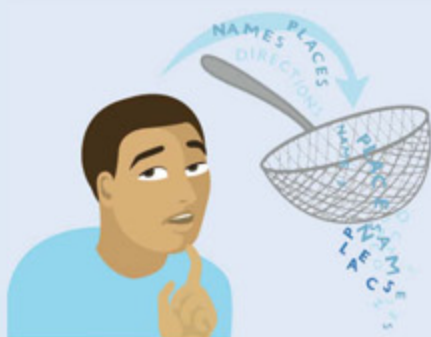
You can learn idioms by associating them with a key word or words. Two of the idioms in A, for example, are based on *gold* and two on *heart*. Here is a set of idioms describing people based on the word *head*.

to have { **your head screwed on** [be sensible, informal]
a head for heights [not suffer from vertigo]
a head like a sieve [bad memory]
a good head for figures [be good at maths]
your head in the clouds [unaware of reality]

to be head and shoulders above someone [much better than]

to bury your head in the sand [refuse to think about a difficult situation in the hope you won't have to deal with it]

to keep your head [stay calm in a difficult situation]



C How people relate to the social norm

She's a bit of an **odd-ball**. [peculiar, strange]

He's really **over the top**. [very exaggerated in behaviour]

He's (gone) **round the bend**, if you ask me. [absolutely crazy/mad]

My politics are very **middle-of-the-road**. [very normal; no radical ideas; neither left- nor right-wing]

D Who's who in the class? Idioms for people in the classroom

Sam's **teacher's pet**. [teacher's favourite] Laura's **top of the class**.

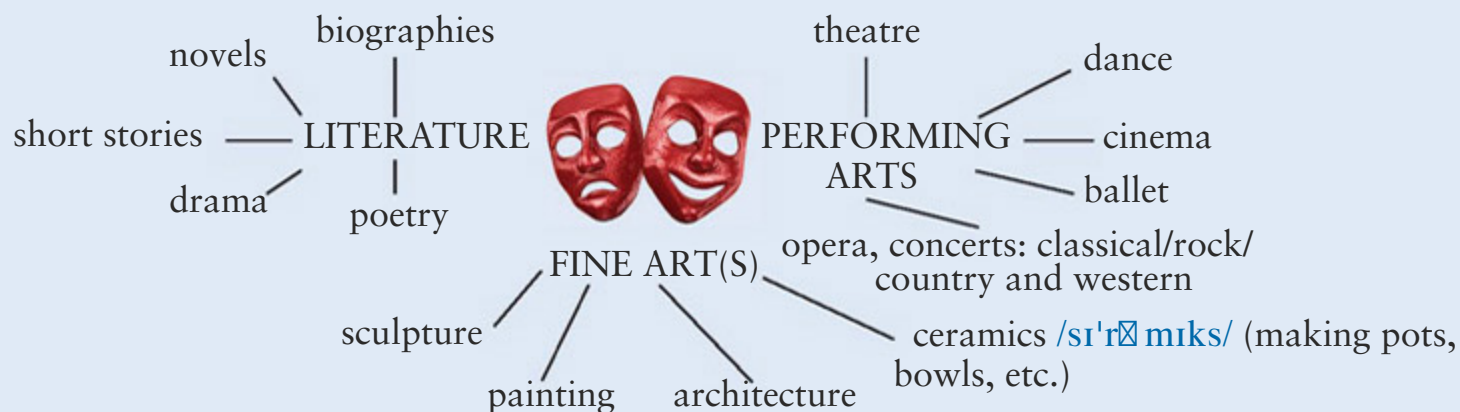
Harry is a real **know-all**. [thinks he knows everything]

Ali's a bit of a **big-head**. [has a high opinion of him/herself] Anna's a **lazy-bones**.

The last three idioms are used of people outside the **classroom situation** too.

A

Art and the arts



The arts (plural) covers everything in the diagram above. **Art** (singular, uncountable) usually means **fine art**, but can also refer to technique and creativity.

Have you read the **arts page** in the paper today? [that part of the newspaper that deals with all the things in the diagram] She's a great **art lover**. [loves painting and sculpture] Shakespeare was skilled in **the art** of poetry. [creative ability] Ask Sara to help you decorate your room - she's very **artistic**. [shows skill and imagination in creating things]

A **work of art** (plural = works of art) is an object made by a skilled artist - typically a painting, drawing or statue.

The phrase **arts and crafts** is used to refer to the skills of making objects such as decorations, jewellery and furniture by hand.

B

Types of art and artists

This is a **sculptor** - he's **creating a statue** - his type of art is called **sculpture**.

This is a **potter** - she's **throwing a pot** - her type of art is called **pottery**.

Henry is an **architect** - he's **designing a building** - his type of art is called **architecture**.

An **abstract** painting involves shapes and colours rather than **images** of real people or things. A **portrait** is a painting of a person. A **landscape** is a painting of a scene in the countryside. A **still life** is a painting of a set of objects that do not move, usually fruit or flowers. An **original** painting is one produced by the painter him/herself rather than a copy or **reproduction**.



C

Literature

Lisa O'Donnell is one of the country's most popular **novelists**¹. She has written a **series**² of romantic novels all with a historical **setting**³. These have all been **bestsellers**⁴ although the **critics**⁵ complain that her **plots**⁶ are predictable and her **characters**⁷ are not very realistic. Her cousin, Lucy Smith, is a more **literary**⁸ writer and her books tend to get better **reviews**⁹ although they do not sell so well. Both writers have a novel which will be ready for **publication**¹⁰ later this year; they will also be available to download as **ebooks**¹¹. We have received advance **copies** of both novels and it is interesting to compare the opening **passage**¹² from Smith's latest book with an **extract**¹³ from the first chapter of O'Donnell's.

¹ people who write long stories about imaginary people and events (remember a novel is typically at least 150 pages long; anything shorter is a **short story**) ² set of books featuring the same characters

³ background for a story or film ⁴ very popular books that sell in large numbers ⁵ people whose job it is to give their opinion of something, typically books, films or music ⁶ stories ⁷ people in a book or film

⁸ serious rather than popular ⁹ what the critics write ¹⁰ making something available in a printed form

¹¹ electronic book ¹² short piece of text ¹³ part of a book chosen to be used in an article or for discussion

Exercises

26.1 Answer the questions about the animals and plants on the opposite page.

- 1 Where does a bird lay its eggs? *in a nest*
- 2 What do bees help to move from one flower to another as they collect nectar to make honey?
- 3 What do we call the hairs that stick out from a cat's face?
- 4 Which part of a flower usually has the brightest colour(s)?
- 5 What do we call a horse's foot?

26.2 Put these words into two groups: 'animal words' or 'plant words'.

mane petal oak willow fox worm thorn horn bark stem claw owl

animal words	plant words
<i>mane</i>	

26.3 Fill in the blanks in the sentences below using words from the opposite page.

- 1 A tree's *roots* go a long way underground.
- 2 A cat can sharpen its against the of a tree.
- 3 Most fruit trees in spring.
- 4 Plants will not unless they get enough water and light.
- 5 Flowers last longer in a vase if you crush the end of their
- 6 A flower that is just about to open is called a
- 7 Take care not to prick yourself. That plant has sharp
- 8 If we pick up those, we can use them to start the fire.
- 9 use a kind of radar to find their way around.
- 10 move very, very slowly.

26.4 Match the sentence beginnings on the left with the endings on the right.

- | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| 1 A large bough fell | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | a some herbs to put on our pizza. |
| 2 We picked up | <input type="checkbox"/> | b its feathers. It was beautiful. |
| 3 The scientists grew | <input type="checkbox"/> | c into the stream and swam away. |
| 4 The peacock opened | <input type="checkbox"/> | d from the tree during the storm. |
| 5 A frog jumped | <input type="checkbox"/> | e some apples that had dropped from the tree. |
| 6 We picked | <input type="checkbox"/> | f a new type of tomato that was very big. |

26.5 Answer the questions.

- 1 Which moves fastest and which moves slowest: a worm, a snail, or a deer? *a deer, a snail*
- 2 Which is the odd one out: a seal, a whale, or a crab?
- 3 Which of these animals has paws: a frog, a bat, a cat, a pigeon?
- 4 Which is correct? The bird *lay/laid/lie*d three eggs.
- 5 Which is correct: (a), (b), or both? (a) He breeds horses. (b) Rabbits breed very quickly.
- 6 Which is a bird: a bat, a pigeon or both?

26.6 Over to you

A tulip is the national emblem of the Netherlands and a maple leaf represents Canada. What flower or animal is used as the national emblem of your country?

Find out what other plants or animals are national emblems of other countries.



Exercises

31.1 Match the sentence beginnings on the left with the endings on the right.

- | | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1 The customs officer stopped the car | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | a and they couldn't get a cabin. |
| 2 The car broke down | <input type="checkbox"/> | b and they had nothing to eat. |
| 3 The air traffic controllers went on strike | <input type="checkbox"/> | c and they had a wonderful cruise. |
| 4 The buffet was closed | <input type="checkbox"/> | d and the driver had to open the boot. |
| 5 The ferry was full | <input type="checkbox"/> | e and a mechanic came to help them. |
| 6 The liner was very modern | <input type="checkbox"/> | f and their flight was cancelled. |

31.2 Sort the words according to the type of transport. One of the words fits in two places. Which is it?

jumbojet port express steering wheel coach helicopter gangway runway
tram wing chauffeur platform groundstaff van cockpit lorry liner deck

road	rail	air	sea
<i>steering wheel</i>			

31.3 Choose the best word *flight, journey, trip, travel* or *voyage* to fit these gaps.

- I would love to *travel* round the world in a balloon.
- The liner *Titanic* sank on its very first
- How long does the from New York to Rio take?
- She says her hobbies are reading, golf and
- When they were in Cairo they took a to see the Pyramids.
- Getting from London to the north of Scotland involves a long overnight train

31.4 Read these travel blogs and fill the gaps with words from the opposite page.

Erik's Blog (24 June)

The flight from Huascal to Puerto Amlugo was s_____ delayed (six hours!). I was worried I'd get s_____ at the airport (and hoped that the airline would p_____ me u_____ in a nice hotel 😊) but anyway the flight wasn't c_____ and we finally took off. The weather was awful, and we experienced a lot of t_____. In fact, the flight was so b_____ that I got a _____ (very unpleasant!). But the c_____ c_____ were very friendly and helpful, which made me feel better. The l_____ was not so bad and soon we were at the t_____ collecting our baggage. I slept well last night - I think I've got over the j_____ I had after my 12-hour flight from Europe.

Mona's Blog (5 July)

I didn't have a reservation for the Eurostar train from Paris to London, but they put me on s_____ and I got a s_____ on a later train. It was a good journey, everything ran s_____ and it arrived _____ time. In London, I enquired if there was a s_____ c_____ on the train to Scotland so I could travel overnight. The alternative was a hotel and the e_____ m_____ train at 6.30 am (too early for me!). When I get to Scotland I want to go to some of the islands. I hope the sea is c_____. I hate r_____ seas - I always get s_____!

31.5 Over to you

Give answers that are true for you, and reasons.

- How often do you travel by train? Have you ever been on a high-speed train?
- Which do you prefer on a plane, a window or an aisle seat? Why? Do you usually visit the duty-free shop? What do you look for? What do you do before going through security?

A

Hardware [computer equipment or machinery]

personal computer / PC / desktop computer: a computer that fits on a desk, used by individuals at work or at home

laptop (computer): a lightweight portable computer that usually fits in a briefcase

tablet: a portable personal computer operated by a touch screen

hard disk: a device [piece of equipment] inside a computer that stores large amounts of information

disk drive: a device that allows information to be read from a disk

scanner: device for transferring pictures and texts into a computer

memory stick: a small device that lets you carry computer data anywhere conveniently; you can then **plug** the stick **into** any machine

RAM (random access memory / memory): the **memory** available on a computer to store and use information temporarily; can be measured in **gigabytes**

(micro) chip: a very small piece of semiconductor, especially in a computer, that contains extremely small electronic circuits and devices, and can perform particular operations

network: when a number of computers, for example in one office, are connected together (or **networked**) so that they can share information

B

Software [computer programs that you install]

An **application** is a piece of software designed for a specific purpose. This is often shortened to **app**. You can get mobile phone apps for all sorts of things these days.

word-processing: writing and storing printed text on a computer

spreadsheet (program): a program, or the grid you create with it, to perform mathematical operations

database: a large amount of information stored in a computer system in such a way that it can be easily looked at or changed

(computer) graphics: pictures, images and symbols that you can form on a computer

virus: hidden instructions in a program designed to destroy information

display: what you see on the screen of an electronic device

A computer shows a range of **icons** on its **display**. You put the **cursor** on the one you want to use and click on it to open it.

C

Some computing verbs

You probably **store** a lot of important information on your computer. So, it's sensible to **back up** all your files on a regular basis. Then it'll be less of a problem if you **delete** something accidentally or if your computer **crashes**.

A particularly useful feature of most applications is the one that allows you to **undo** what you have just done – just **click** on Undo and it's quick and easy to correct anything that you have **keyed in** by mistake.

After a few years you may want to **upgrade** your computer as they are always developing machines which are faster and more powerful. If you don't do this you may not be able to **run** all the software you need. You can usually just **download** upgrades to your computer's operating system or to your applications from company websites.

A

Crimes and criminals

crime	definition	criminal	verb
murder	killing someone	murderer	murder
shoplifting	stealing something from a shop	shoplifter	shoplift
burglary	stealing something from someone's home	burglar	burgle
smuggling	taking something illegally into another country	smuggler	smuggle
kidnapping	taking a person hostage in exchange for money or other favours, etc.	kidnapper	kidnap
terrorism	violent action for political purposes	terrorist	(terrorise)
fraud	deceiving people in order to take money from them	fraudster	defraud
abduction	taking someone, especially a child, usually in order to harm them	abductor	abduct

All the verbs in the table above are regular. Note that the verb *terrorise* is mainly used in a general way, meaning to make others very frightened, rather than just relating to the crime.

B

Investigating crime

Ross **committed** a crime when he robbed a bank. Someone **witnessed** the crime and told the police. The police **arrested** Ross and **charged** him **with** bank **robbery**. They also **accused** his twin brother, Ben, of being his **accomplice**¹. The police investigated the **case**² and collected **evidence**³ at the **crime scene**. They found Ross's **fingerprints** and they also found **DNA evidence**⁴ that linked him to the crime, so they were confident they had **proof**⁵ that the two men were guilty.

¹ someone who helps someone commit a crime ² a crime that is being investigated ³ information used in a court of law to decide whether the accused is guilty or not
⁴ evidence from hair or skin that can be analysed scientifically and be shown to come from a particular person ⁵ evidence that shows conclusively whether something is a fact or not

C

Trial and punishment

The **case** came to **court**¹, and Ross and Ben **were tried**². The **trial**³ did not last very long. Ross and Ben both **pleaded not guilty**⁴ in court. Their lawyer did her best to **defend** them, but the **prosecuting** lawyer produced a very strong case against them. After brief **deliberations**⁵, the jury **passed verdict** on them. They decided that Ross was **guilty**, and he was **convicted of**⁶ robbery, but Ben was **innocent**⁷. The judge **acquitted** Ben **of** any involvement in the robbery, but **sentenced** Ross to three years in **prison/jail**. As well as a prison **sentence**, Ross also had to **pay** a large **fine**. Ross **served** two years in prison, but **was released from** prison a year early. He **got time off** for good behaviour.

¹ the place where a judge makes legal decisions ² were put through a legal process to decide whether they committed the crime or not ³ the legal process in court whereby an accused person is investigated and tried
⁴ said they did not commit the crime ⁵ discussions ⁶ found to be guilty of a crime ⁷ not guilty of a crime

D

People connected with crime and the legal process

offender: someone who commits an illegal act (an **offence**)

judge: the person who leads a trial and decides on the sentence, i.e. the punishment when someone is found guilty

jury: group of citizens (12 in the UK and, usually, the US) who decide on the verdict, i.e. whether the accused is guilty or not

victim: a person who suffers as the result of a crime

suspect: a person who is **suspected of** committing an offence

witness: a person who sees a crime being committed

Exercises

41.1 Answer these questions relating to the adjectives in A opposite.

- Which is artificial - silk or lycra? *lycra*
- Which is more delicate when it comes to washing - silk or cotton?
- Would you say a watch that looks like a snake has a conventional or a bizarre design?
- How could you describe car brakes that are not working properly?
- Which would cost more - a genuine Monet painting or a fake one?
- Which of these materials is more fragile - china or wood?
- Which is more flexible - metal or rubber?

41.2 Choose the correct option to complete each sentence.

- Jana's clothes are never frivolous - they're always rather *B* .
A delicate B severe C precise D bizarre
- This painting is of the works of Rembrandt.
A characteristic B solid C entire D plain
- I'd like to buy the salami, please, not just a small piece of it.
A precise B trivial C entire D solid
- Do have the to put on a new shirt, not that one with the hole.
A decency B severity C vividness D characteristic
- Writing a good job application is not a matter.
A solid B conventional C trivial D transparent
- Making beautiful jewellery requires a high degree of
A entirety B precision C character D triviality

41.3 Choose words from the box to complete the dialogue.

reasonably	nowhere	half	great	unusually	pretty
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- NINA:** I love this room, Mark. Those ¹ *great* big windows are wonderful, and the views from them are ² amazing too.
- MARK:** Thanks. And I'm sure it isn't ³ as expensive as you might imagine. I only pay 1,000 euros a month.
- NINA:** Wow! That's ⁴ near as much as I pay. And my flat's very noisy too. It seems ⁵ quiet here - you don't seem to hear too much noise from the street.
- MARK:** No, it's not too bad. And I've certainly got ⁶ quiet neighbours. I never hear a sound from their flat.
- NINA:** Lucky you! I wish I could say the same about mine.

41.4 Some words in this unit can be used to talk about abstract ideas as well as objects. Use your knowledge of these words to answer the questions.

- If someone gives you a genuine smile, do they feel friendly or not particularly friendly towards you? *They feel friendly*
- Do you think a transparent argument is one that is easy or difficult to follow?
- If a writer describes something vividly, is their writing effective?
- If a person behaves in a stiff way, are they more likely to be relaxed or tense?
- If the teacher says your work is 'solid', are you likely to be pleased or not?