

VOCABULARY


COLLECTIVE NOUNS (1)

Look at the following sentences containing **collective nouns** and indicate if they are being used correctly or not. **If the collective noun is being used incorrectly, indicate a correct form of its use.**

i) As we looked towards the east, the sky suddenly filled with colonies of birds migrating in search of warmer climates.

ii) The school of dolphins swam majestically through the ocean in search of alimentionation. As they neared the Pacific coast of America, a large swarm of fish provided 'everything' they needed.

iii) The city centre is having a lot of problems recently with gangs of criminals stealing from local businesses. It is possible that many commercial establishments face future financial ruin.

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COLLECTIVE NOUNS (2)

*Look at the following sentences containing **collective nouns** and indicate if they are being used correctly or not. **If the collective noun is being used incorrectly, indicate a correct form of its use.***

i) It was a ritual that took place every Friday night. The cast of friends would meet at their local club to talk about the week's events and plan their next movements on the stock market.

ii) Due to the political instability in Cyprus, the government has decided to send a cluster of ships in case the situation becomes any worse and civil war breaks out.

iii) I couldn't decide whether to buy the new house or not. It was really expensive but on the other hand it was much bigger and had a large garden. I was a bundle of nerves for a whole week before making a decision.

NOUN COLLOCATIONS (1)

A) The following sentences contain noun collocations used in the incorrect way, find them and correct them.

i) A sudden flight of wind during the afternoon blew down the television aerial.

ii) As we looked through the window of our holiday home, waiting for the weather to improve, a sample of sunshine appeared between the clouds.

iii) Victoria and I had to do the shopping but we didn't know whether to buy a lump of meat for dinner or some fresh fish.

iv) The money bank made visibility difficult and ships needed the guidance of the lighthouse to enter port.

B) Form noun collocations from the following words.

shock

drinks

grain

hair

smoke

clove

pearls

garlic

string

puff

rice

round

DESCRIBING THINGS (1)

Put the adjectives in the correct order.

1. waterproof / expensive-looking / stainless steel / swiss-made WATCH

_____ .

2. bulky / mahogany / weighty / unsafe-looking OFFICE CHAIR

_____ .

3. smoky-grey / woollen / cheap-looking / grubby SHIRT

_____ .

4. revolting / three / pre-packed / off-yellow CHICKENS

_____ .

DESCRIBING THINGS (2)

Form compound adjectives to describe the following.

1. The car's petrol tank holds 50 litres.

_____ .

2. She looked like a doll with those blue eyes of hers.

_____ .

3. Victor lost an arm in the Second World War.

_____ .

4. The flight will take three hours.

_____ .

5. The project for the new office installation looks complicated to me.

_____ .

DESCRIBING THINGS (3)

Look at the following 'short stories' and choose the most appropriate adjectives to fill the gaps.

A) *We had a lot of problems with burglars at the weekend. After entering the house, they stole my husband's _____ trousers and my _____ coat from our _____ wardrobes. However, they left my daughter's _____ , _____ jeans and took Jamie's _____ , _____ , _____ shoes instead.*

Adjectives to choose from:

shoddy pre-shrunk squeaky garish minuscule corduroy

built-in shocking pink fur perforated suede

B) *Peter had an accident while driving to work the other day. His _____ , _____ new car crashed into a _____ old lorry because of the _____ road surface.*

Peter's car was badly damaged, the broken windows leaving _____ edges that were very dangerous.

The lorry had a couple of _____ in the side and was relatively undamaged.

Adjectives to choose from:

octagonal jagged dilapidated abrasive dent
beech

eye-catching uneven inflammable pristine sparse

THE FOLLOWING FIVE PAGES CAN SERVE AS A REMINDER FOR STUDENTS / teachers DOING WORD ORDER EXERCISES.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
quantity	opinion/ general	size	shape	age	colour	condition
8	9	10	11	12	13	
physical quality	origin	pattern	features	material	other	

Here are some example descriptions using the above adjective order:

- 1 2 5 9 12
- three hideous-looking, antique, oriental porcelain vases.
- 3 4 6 7 8 12
- compact, rectangular, reddish, shoddy, makeshift, chipboard tables.
- 1 2 3 10 11 12
- a warm-looking, long, striped, pre-shrunk woollen jacket.

Here are some notes to help you understand the surprisingly complex rules for the use of commas between adjectives. You will, however, find exceptions to some of these rules.

- There is never a comma before and: The insect was small, green and ugly.
- Adjectives before a noun can be separated by and when there are only two: The wood had a lovely and smooth finish.
- A comma is not used after the adjective that comes immediately before the noun: It was a beautiful, bright, sunny day.

* Gradable adjectives (eg. large, useful, nice) can be modified by an intensifying adverb such as **very**, **a little**, **extremely**. Non-gradable adjectives (eg. furious, English, striped) are already complete and do not require an intensifier.

- **Adjectives in the predicative position, that is after a verb such as be, become, seem, etc., with no following noun, are always separated by commas: *The book was large, thick, green and uninteresting.***
- **Two colour adjectives are separated by and: *Jane has green and blue curtains in her living room***
- **Commas are generally used between adjectives that come before a noun: *The waiter brought us a long, cool, fizzy drink.* However, when short common adjectives are used they are sometimes left out: *I was met by a short fat dark woman who showed me to my room.* They can also be left out when the adjectives are not connected in any way and give completely different kinds of information. Compare these two sentences:**

I bought a new German technical dictionary.

I can't wait to get into a lovely, deep, hot, relaxing bath.

- **Commas cannot be left out when they define different parts or aspects of something:**

He was riding a red, blue, green and yellow bike.

It was a metal, plastic and fibreglass boat.

2

OPINION / GENERAL

cheap-looking
dangerous-looking
delightful
expensive-looking
frightening-looking
hideous-looking
nice-looking
pretty-looking
revolting
risky-looking
safe-looking
silly

3

SIZE

broad (avenue)
bulky (25-inch TV in its box)
compact (mini stereo system)
massive (road-building
machinery)
minuscule (microchip)
towering (skyscraper)

4

SHAPE

conical (ice-cream cone)
crescent-shaped (scythe)
curved (line)
cylindrical (tube)
half-moon shaped / semicircular
misshapen / out of shape (melted chocolate)
oblong / rectangular (table)
octagonal
oval (egg)
pear-shaped
pyramid-shaped
rounded (edge)
spiral (staircase)
symmetrical / asymmetrical (form)
three-sided (form)
triangular (piece of cheese)

Expressions:

it has a cross- / T-shape

it gets narrower / wider / harder
it is shaped like

6
COLOUR

blurred
bottle green
coffee-coloured
eye-catching
faded
flesh-coloured
garish
golden
greenish / yellowish
mottled
off-white
pitch-black
ruby red
shocking pink
silver / silvery
sky blue
smoky grey

7
CONDITION / STATE

blunt (knife)
chipped (cup)
dented (car)
faulty (machinery)
grubby (clothes)
pristine (car)
rusty (metal)
shoddy (finish)
threadbare (old carpet)
dilapidated (old car)
squeaky (floorboards)

8
PHYSICAL QUALITY

brittle (biscuit)
built-in (wardrobe)
flat (surface)
flimsy (structure)
jagged (edge)
makeshift
perforated (paper)
porous (sponge)
prickly (rose bush)
rickety (staircase)
serrated (knife)
slanting / inclined (roof)
slippery (wet floor)
squashy (soft rubber ball)
tiered (cake)
uneven (road surface)
upholstered (armchair)
with all the mod cons (luxury apartment)

Density / weight:

hollow (drum)
dense (forest vegetation)
hefty (oak table)
hard-packed (earth)
solid (block of wood)
sparse (desert vegetation)
weighty (oak table)

Texture:

abrasive (pan scourer)
coarse (straw)
fluffy (towel)
furry (teddy bear)
rough (canvas)
silky (satin)
smooth (polished table)

Expressions:

It has a coarse feel
It is silky to the touch

9

ORIGIN

American-engineered
factory-produced
German-built
handmade (vase)
Italian-designed
Turkish-made (carpet)

11

FEATURES

airtight (jar)
cut-price (bargain)
environmentally-friendly (car)
hand-painted (vase)
high- / low-priced (antiques)
ozone-friendly (fridge)
inflammable (material)
mass-produced (microchips)
non-flammable (material)
pre-packed (food)
pre-shrunk (jeans)
remote-controlled (TV)
recyclable (plastic)
rustproof (metal)
up to date (technology)
upgraded (machine)
user-friendly (computer)
varnished / unvarnished (wood)
waterproof (watch)

12

MATERIALS

acrylic (sweater)
aluminium
cardboard (box)
cast iron (frying pan)
cork (bottle stopper)
corrugated cardboard (packaging)
corrugated iron (roof)
fake fur (coat)
fibreglass (boat)
marble (floor)
polyester (sheets)
polystyrene (packaging)
polythene (bag)
rubber (tyre)
stainless steel (cutlery)
suede (shoes)
timber (building)
tin (can)

Textiles:

canvas (tent)
corduroy (trousers)
denim (jeans)
linen (handkerchief)
velvet (curtains)

Wood:

beech
mahogany
oak
pine
walnut
ebony
chipboard (kitchen cupboard)