

**Technical English for Engineers**  
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**Lecture - 22**  
**Collocation**

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In our previous class, we were talking about the ways where phrasal verbs convey meanings and the situations where they are used. In today's lecture, we will continue talking about building vocabulary and also word formation. And with particular reference to collocations, collocations and we will see how words come together to form meaning that is what is meant by the word collocations.

So, what are collocations, here I have written collocations for you. And all these look at the list here; reassuring presence, little hesitation, proved feasible, constant disturbance, consistently good, wonderful voice, extraordinarily punctual, habitually late, spoke loudly or said loudly rarely occurring. Now, these are examples of collocations and examples of how certain words come together. Proved feasible, you can also say looked feasible, but try replacing another, the feasible of course is an adjective right; disturbance is a noun, constant is an adjective.

So, I would say what my question was initial question was, if you replace constant disturbance with let us say, habitual disturbance as said habitually late, but if you say habitual disturbance. It may convey the meaning, but it would not be so appropriate. Now, what do collocations do, collocations is the way words come together. Let me repeat, collocation is the way words come together and rarely occurring.

Look at the word. Now try to replace rarely with something else rarely of course is an adverb; frequently occurring, hardly occurring, often occurring, try, they may sound good, but ask yourself which is better. Spoke loudly, wonderful voice, you can also say pretty voice, you can also say extraordinary voice, exceptional voice, all these adjectives would go with the noun voice. Pretty face, wonderful face, perhaps, but which sounds better. Wonderfully expressive, but prettily expressive, hardly expressive, ask yourself, which sounds most natural.

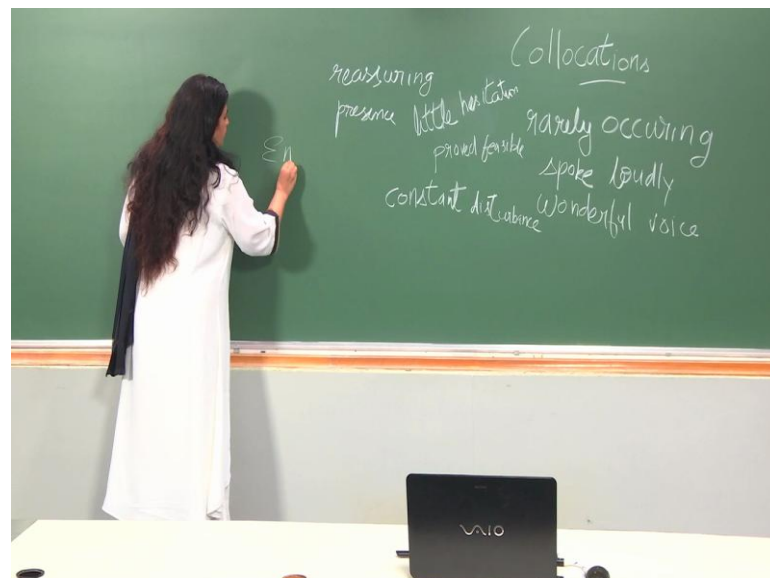
Again, we may say driving ambition. He is driven by ambition. I was propelled by this driving **and** ambition to do something, but you do not say walking ambition or running ambition. Heavy rains, but would you say strong rains; strong wind, but would you say heavy wind; these are the ways words and expressions occur and come together. You have to remember that, all these words they nothing exceptional about these words, but it is the way they come together. So, in order to understand, how do we bring word together, we need or readers need or as user of the English language - we need greater familiarity with the nuances of vocabulary particularly collocations. So, this is what we mean and this is what we are going to do in today's class.

Now again, you have to remember that collocations are not like your phrasal verb, we were doing phrasal verb the other day. So, to understand collocations, now we have to understand or we have to know, which adjective goes with a particular noun, which adjective goes with a particular noun; adjective, noun. You have to say which verb will go with a certain noun, which verb goes with an adjective here, which verb goes with a certain adverb here. So, this is the way you have to do, which adverb will go with a particular adjective.

Now let us see here; reassuring presence, now this is an adjective here, it acts as an

adjective and this is a noun. Little hesitation, you can also say great hesitation or I was really hesitate, but you cannot say rarely hesitating; it looks and sounds quite odd; although the meaning is absolutely clear, but it would not take you from one level to the next higher level. So, you have to also think how adverbs collocate with certain adjectives. We will give you example soon. Now, let me come to another interesting word, which you people may need on a day-to-day basis. Now look at something like energy; if you have your dictionary or if you are using an online dictionary while watching this lecture, please look at this word 'energy'.

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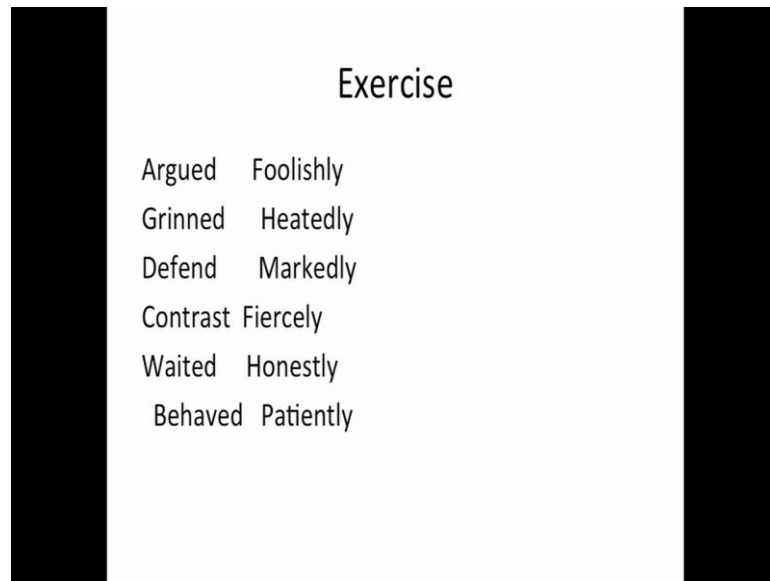
What is energy? Energy is a noun. It is a noun and it is also an adjective. It can be use the way engineers use you know conserve energy, so that becomes your noun, if I use energy as again as a noun and what are the adjectives that can go with it. What are the adjectives; I will repeat my questions, what are the adjectives that go when we use energy as a noun, what adjectives can collocate with energy. Think, I have little energy left; I can give you one example from here itself from this. But can you say wonderful energy, can you say strong energy, but can you say boundless energy, now it sounds more natural and unlimited energy, boundless energy, you can also say inexhaustible energy, creative energy.

All these great writers that we read and admire so much and that is what we use about them or even about a the great scientist, the other day, we were doing a passage about Srinivasa Ramanujam, so why not use his boundless creative energy, sounds natural, sounds all right. Nervous energy, now this is another kind of Nish word, but yes, it goes well. You can also say youthful energy, diminishing energy and the opposite of diminishing surplus energy. So, there is an all these are adjectives. You can say full of energy, now bursting with energy. You can also say channel your energy. Now you are using certain verbs – bursting, channel. Expand energy, conserve energy, save energy, waste energy, dissipate energy, so all these words, what are they? You are using collocating verbs with a very commonly used word that is your energy.

Please consult your dictionaries. See, how many more things, you can do with this one very simple noun. Let me give you another example – help, all right, very common word. Little help, can you use; constant help, you can use; thanks for your wonderful help, the meaning is clear, but of course we understand what **is** the speaker is trying to do. But let us say enormous help, valuable help, real help, timely help, unexpected help; I was not expecting your help, but it came in time; immeasurable helps all these are adjectives, so tremendous help. So, look up your dictionaries, you can also use help along with appeal for help.

Now, here you are collocating verbs with the word help; plea for help, seek help, send for help, shout for help, someone help, so all these show how verb collocates with certain other verbs in case of help. You can do any number of such exercises, and you will find it enormously beneficial to develop your word power and vocabulary. When you write remember that you need to have a variety of expressions to use not just, please do not repeat, please do not use just a set a formulas and this and keep on repeating that as you advance, as you move up in life, you have to understand that is very important to use wide range of vocabulary.

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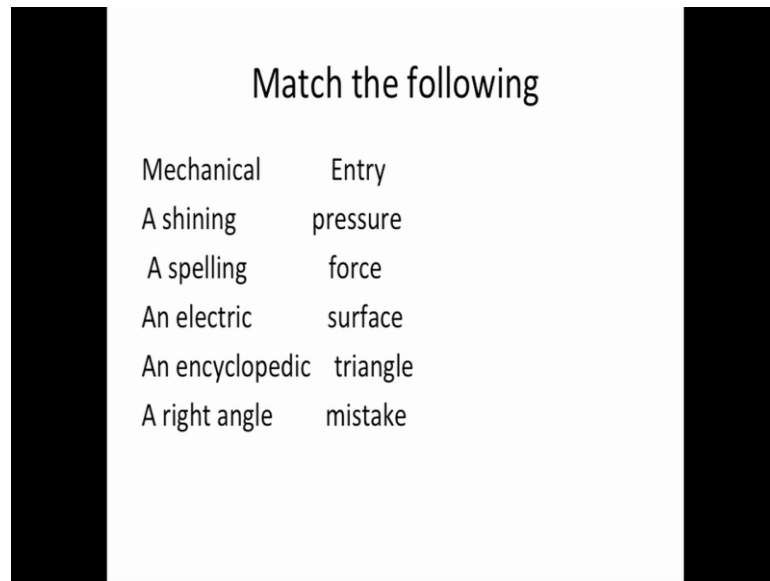
**Exercise**

Argued	Foolishly
Grinned	Heatedly
Defend	Markedly
Contrast	Fiercely
Waited	Honestly
Behaved	Patiently

Now take a look at this exercise. Here is a slide and exercise for you. It is all mixed up, you have to match the correct verb with the correct adverb, collocate them appropriately. Argued foolishly, grinned heatedly, defend markedly, contrast fiercely, waited honestly, behaved patiently, you may say that everything can collocate with everything. To an extent, you may be right, all right, but how to sound better. Now, let us look at the list again. How do you collocate, take a movement.

Now, let us do the exercise together. Argued heatedly, you are arguing confronting someone, having a heated discussion. Grinned foolishly, grinned sheepishly, you know what is a grinning a sort of a smile, but foolishly when you are caught doing or when you find yourself in a situation, which is not too appropriate, and then you grinned foolishly, just as an act of saving face. Defend fiercely, we are going to defend our borders fiercely, our country fiercely. Contrast markedly; there is a mark contrast here. Waited patiently, a waited impatiently; the other way is also correct. Behaved very honestly; can you say behaved foolishly, yes. So, what I am trying to say here is that there are words in this list that can go, there can be more than one word that collocate here with the other word, but you have to be careful about how you use there. So this can come only with practice and consulting your dictionaries.

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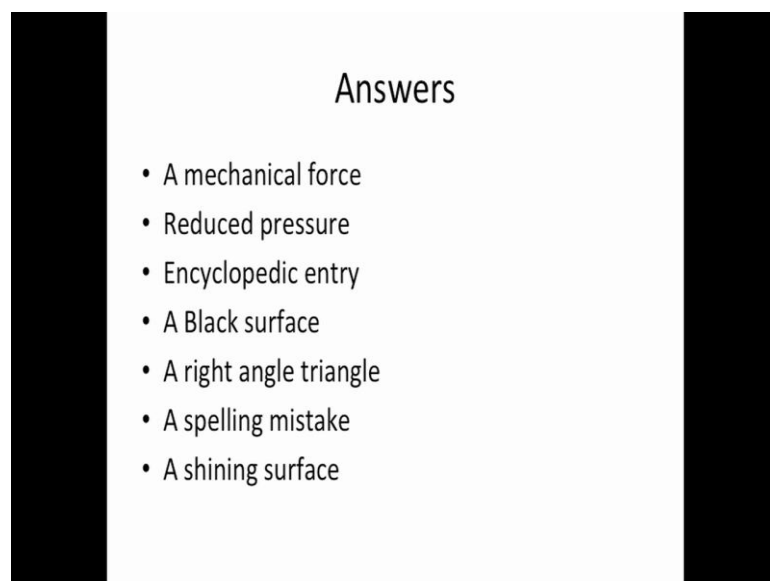


Match the following

Mechanical	Entry
A shining	pressure
A spelling	force
An electric	surface
An encyclopedic	triangle
A right angle	mistake

Now here look at this another list, another exercise for you, match the following. Please look at the slide; mechanical entry, a shining pressure, a spelling force, an electric surface, an encyclopedic triangle, a right angle mistake.

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Answers

- A mechanical force
- Reduced pressure
- Encyclopedic entry
- A Black surface
- A right angle triangle
- A spelling mistake
- A shining surface

Now look at the answers. A mechanical force, reduced pressure, encyclopedic entry, a

black surface, a right angle triangle, a spelling mistake, and you can also have a shining surface, why not a black surface, a shining surface. So, mechanical but a shining force a shining pressure, a spelling mistake, a mechanical mistake perhaps, but think again how appropriate would that word be there in that situation and of course, you cannot have anything else a right angle triangle, it collocates beautifully. And encyclopedic entry, what else can you **have has**, an encyclopedic writing, an encyclopedic knowledge, an encyclopedic brain. Dr. Johnson had an encyclopedic brain, can you use it that way, please try to answer that.

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## Sample Text

- In 1899, Roald Amundsen became a sea captain and **organized an expedition** to go to the North Magnetic Pole. While on the island, the Netsilik Indians taught them Arctic **survival techniques**.
- After reaching the North Pole, Amundsen admitted that he **was heavily in debt** and knew that **his best chance** of raising money was to bring off a **spectacular triumph**. According to Amundsen "If at that juncture I had made **my intention public**, it would only have given occasion for a lot of **newspaper discussion**, and possibly have ended in the project being stifled at its birth. My brother, upon whose **absolute silence** I could **blindly rely**, was the only person I let into the secret of my change of plan, and he did me many **important services** during the time when we alone shared the knowledge".

Source: <http://www.south-pole.com/p0000101.htm>

Now here is a sample text for you. I have highlighted certain commonly and frequently occurring collocations. Please look at it. Let us read the passage together. In 1899, Roald Amundsen became a sea captain and **organized an expedition**. So, you organized an expedition, arranged an expedition could also be one word, but try to think of other words that can go with organization. What I am trying to tell you here is, randomly you cannot bring two words together, you have to have the right kind of word to collocate, to go through to the North Magnetic pole. While on the island, the Netsilik Indian taught them Arctic **survival techniques**. Now, survival techniques these go together. Matter of survival, survival technique, survival, what else can you use, survival techniques, survival methods; think of other words that can go with survival, survival is an adjective;

techniques is a noun.

After reaching the North Pole, Amundsen admitted that **he was heavily in debt**, now there is no such thing as lightly in debt. You are always heavily in debt, slightly in debt, may be, but heavily in debt collocates very naturally, you do not say mildly in debt that, you do not say strongly in debt, and knew that **his best chance** of raising money was to bring off. **Now** **Best chance**, last chance, exceptional chance, perhaps, but there are very few other words that will go with chance. So, the best is an adjective.

Remember, we were doing degrees of comparison, so good, better, best. Would you say good chance, perhaps would you say better chance may be not, ask yourself. Raising money was to bring off a **spectacular triumph**, and this is the way it collocates. Spectacular failure, yes very poetic, very creative, very literary, but generally we say spectacular triumph, spectacular along with triumph. What else you can use an extraordinary triumph, an exceptional triumph, you never you cannot use wonderful triumph perhaps, but you see meaning is clear with nothing wrong, you are able to communicate, but would not sound that proficient, would not sound that natural. Spectacular triumph look good when these two words come together they look good.

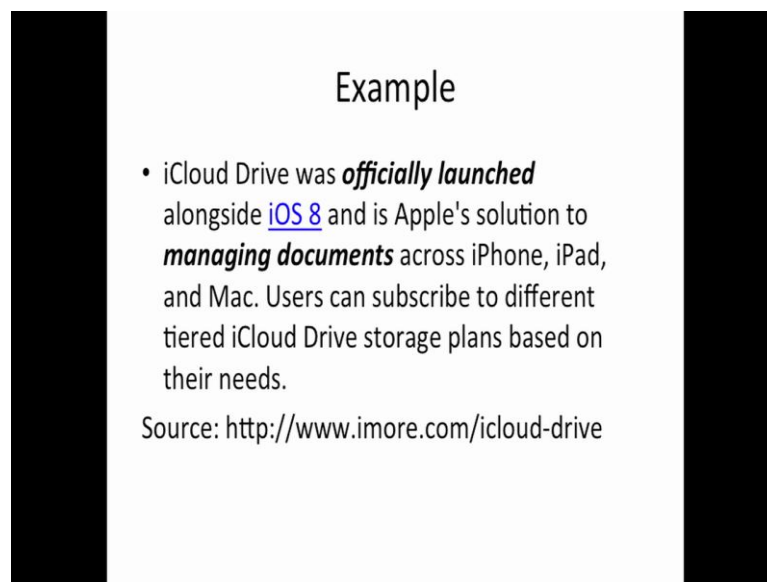
According to Amundsen, if at that juncture I had made **my intention public**. Intention public or my public intentions they collocate well. You can publicize intentions, it would only give occasion for a lot of **newspaper discussion**, you can also say newspaper speculation, newspaper publicity, but try to think of other kinds of nouns that can go with other noun that is your newspaper, and possibly have ended in the project being stifled at its birth. My brother, upon whose **absolute silence**; now you can also say complete silence, you can also say expected silence. You know in this context, I expect my brother to be silence so but what are the other adjectives that you can use with the noun silence, think about that. You cannot say wonderful silence, you cannot say little silence, it has to be absolute silence.

I could **blindly rely** or I could blindly depend on my brother's silence. Now blindly rely how else can you write this, blindly trust, blindly depend what else, so think of the limited number of choices you have for collocations you cannot again let me tell you the



same thing you cannot bring words together randomly. There has to be a method there has to be some thinking that that must go behind this, was the only a person I let into the secret of my change of plan, and he did me many **important services** during the time when we alone shared the knowledge. So, the important services, exceptional services, wonderful services, many services, so many there are so many possibilities, but then there are only so many possibilities not endless possibilities. So, please be careful when you collocate.

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Example

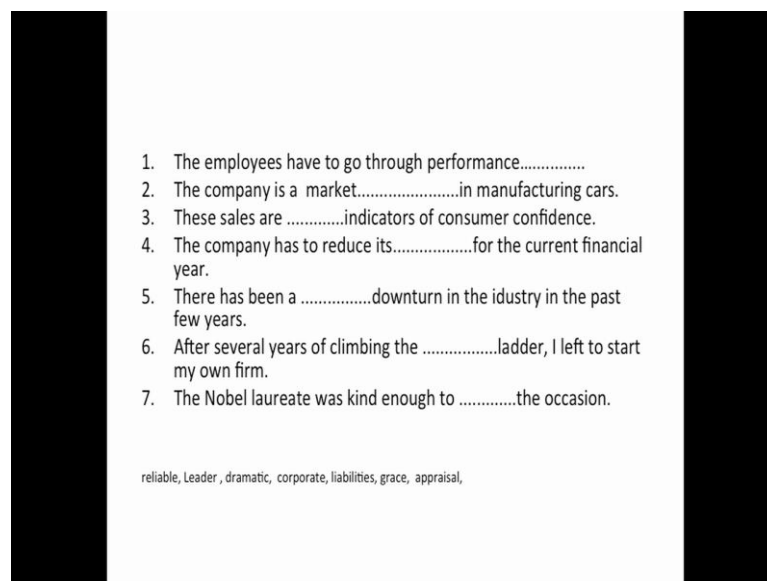
- iCloud Drive was **officially launched** alongside [iOS 8](#) and is Apple's solution to **managing documents** across iPhone, iPad, and Mac. Users can subscribe to different tiered iCloud Drive storage plans based on their needs.

Source: <http://www.imore.com/icloud-drive>

Let me give you another example, please take a look. Let say **officially launched**; iCloud drive was **officially launched** alongside iOS 8 and is Apple's solution to **managing documents** across iPhone, **and** iPad and Mac. Now, if you look at the sentence like this, what are the words that are collocating beautifully; officially launched, you can say properly launched, perhaps you can say finally launched, at last launched. And what else, can you say instead can you replace officially, with legally, socially. Ask yourself which sounds better. Managing documents is another expression in this sentence, so it is Apple's solution to managing documents. Now what else can you use in place of managing ask yourself, but managing documents, filing documents, and what else ask yourself.

Let me give you another example Marie and Pierre curie they were dedicated scientists and also completely devoted to one another. So, dedicated scientist, extraordinary scientist, exceptional scientist, devoted scientist and completely devoted to each other completely devoted to each other. You can say fully devoted to each other, you can say what else can you say exceptionally devoted to each other perhaps. Then ask yourself how natural completely devoted sounds.

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1. The employees have to go through performance.....
2. The company is a market.....in manufacturing cars.
3. These sales are .....indicators of consumer confidence.
4. The company has to reduce its.....for the current financial year.
5. There has been a .....downturn in the industry in the past few years.
6. After several years of climbing the .....ladder, I left to start my own firm.
7. The Nobel laureate was kind enough to .....the occasion.

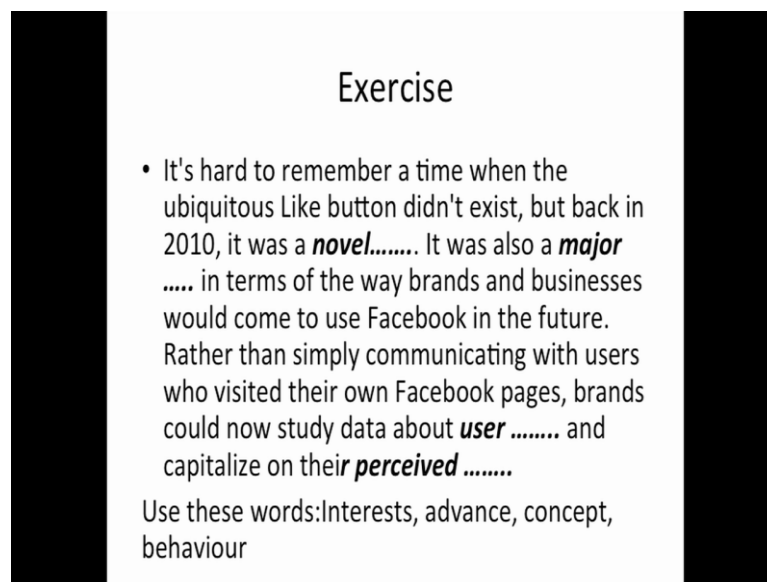
reliable, Leader , dramatic, corporate, liabilities, grace, appraisal,

Here is another exercise for you, please take a look. You have to fill in the blanks using the words given at the end. There is a list given at the bottom reliable, leader, dramatic, corporate, it is of course a very jumbled list, not in the sequential order, liabilities, grace, appraisal. Your sentence is the employees have to go through performance. The company is a marketing dash in manufacturing cars. These sales are indicators of consumer confidence. The company has to reduce its for the current financial year. There has been a downturn in the industry in the past few years. After several years of climbing the ladder, I left to start my own firm. The Nobel laureate was kind enough to the occasion. Now what words would go there.

Let us look at it. The employees have to go through performance, and the word that goes best appraisal you know what is performance appraisal. The company is a market what

look at the other words and we only think that goes the only word that goes very well here is leader in manufacturing cars. These sales are dash indicators of consumer confidence, reliable indicators. That is the way you try to look at the word indicator and then see what the words that go with it **are**. There has been a and what kind of a downturn dramatic downturn that is **the** only word that you can use here. After several years of climbing the word is very clear corporate ladder. And then Nobel laureate was kind enough to grace the occasion.

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**Exercise**

- It's hard to remember a time when the ubiquitous Like button didn't exist, but back in 2010, it was a **novel**..... It was also a **major** ..... in terms of the way brands and businesses would come to use Facebook in the future. Rather than simply communicating with users who visited their own Facebook pages, brands could now study data about **user** ..... and capitalize on their **perceived** .....

Use these words: Interests, advance, concept, behaviour

Now, look at this exercise and fill in the words. This is a passage now; use the words: Interests, advance, concept, and behavior. **It's is** hard to remember a time when the ubiquitous Like button did not exist, but back in 2010, it was a **novel**. It was also a **major** in terms of the way brands and business would come to use Facebook in the future. Rather than simply communicating with users who visited their own Facebook pages, brands could now study data about **user** and capitalize on their **perceived**.

What are the words how are you going to collocate **It's is** hard to remember a time when the ubiquitous Like button did not exist, but back in 2010, it was a novel concept, you always use along with novel what is the other word that can come up with concept, what else can you collocate with concept look up your dictionaries. It was also a major a major

what advance, you know break through you can use another word breakthrough in terms of the way brands and businesses come to use Facebook in the future. Rather than simply communicating with users who visited their own Facebook pages brands could now study data about user behavior, consumer behavior. So, there are certain words that go with each other and capitalize on their perceived interest.

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- <https://www.englishclub.com/vocabulary/collocations.htm>
- <http://dictionary.cambridge.org/grammar/british-grammar/collocation>
- <http://www.better-english.com/strongcollocation/collocations.htm>

Here is a list of useful references, useful links, please take a look here. This is a list of web sources, which are rich in vocabulary development, especially in the area of collocation. If you would wish to know more about collocation, please go through these websites. I would also recommend Oxford Dictionary of Collocation; it is standalone kind of a dictionary on collocations, extremely useful and a very worthy addition to your dictionaries; the other dictionaries that I had recommended the other day to you. So, you can always use Oxford Dictionary of Collocation, if you are interested in this area.

So thank you very much, we will soon meet for our next class.

## *Tags*

Reading English, English for Engineers, English words, English Exercise, Exercises in English, Grammar usage, English Grammar, vocabulary, words and phrases, spoken communication, written communication, English writing, English speaking, scientific English, report writing, CV, formal letter, Speech-Preposition, Noun Phrases, Countable and uncountable nouns, singular, plural, Modals and Voice, Tenses, Effective Speaking

Essay writing, word categories, word formation, formal tone, paragraph writing, tone in writing, speaking tone, signal words, Letter writing, understanding essays, Mechanics of Essays, publishable essays, nouns, pronouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives, propositions, determiners, linking words, 'be' form, linking words, reading, listening, sentence, Subject, Verb, Object, Articles, comparatives, passive voice, Dictionary skills, Presentation, Punctuation, collocation