



VOCABULARY



Vocabulary is a large subject and it really requires a book to itself: in other words, a **dictionary**. In fact, a good monolingual English dictionary is the best book that you, as a student of English, can buy. Many good dictionaries have free online versions of reasonable quality, as well as more detailed fee-based online subscriptions and hardcopy books. Recommended ones, especially compiled for the student of English, are:

- Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary
- Collins COBUILD English Language Dictionary
- Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English
- Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners
- Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary

Often a wrong word is used because a wrong choice has been made between similar words or *synonyms*. The choice of synonyms will often depend on usage or context, as much as on meaning. A good English dictionary will give examples of usage or context that will help you to choose the correct word. Good dictionaries also often have other features such as a **thesaurus** and **wordlists** designed to help language learners and those looking to increase their vocabulary.

Some attention is given below to a few words which frequently cause difficulty to students. Read the information and examples carefully.

VERBS

MAKE AND DO

Make: construct, produce, form, shape, create

Do: perform, carry out, act

There are large numbers of idiomatic expressions containing these two verbs, many of which can be found in the dictionaries referred to above. Consider these examples:

- He found that he could not **do** the research.
- Many discoveries have been **made** this century.
- He **made** a number of attempts to finish the work.
- She had some difficulty in **doing** her homework.
- Considerable progress has been **made** with the experiment

RISE, ARISE, RAISE AND INCREASE

Rise	a) go up, get up, go higher (intransitive, i.e. without a direct object)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prices continue to rise. • The cost of living index rose by 10% last year. • The sun usually rises at 5 am in the summer.
	b) rise is also a noun, meaning an increase.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was a rise in prices caused by a rise in wages.
Arise	a) come into existence, appear (intransitive)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new problem has arisen in the college. • An unexpected difficulty arose when he was analysing the results.
	a) lift up, make higher, cause to rise (transitive, i.e. takes a direct object)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bus fares were raised three times last year. • The landlord said he was going to raise the rent.
Raise	b) to bring up for discussion or attention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He raised a new point in the seminar.
	c) to manage to get; obtain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He raised a loan. • He tried to raise money for a new project.
Increase	a) make or become greater in size, number, degree, etc. (transitive and intransitive)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Treasurer increased the tax on petrol in his last Budget. • The population of the Chinese port city of Shenzhen increased from 30,000 in 1980 to 7 million in 2005.
	b) increase can sometimes be used instead of raise or rise.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Treasurer raised the tax on petrol in his last Budget. • The population of the Chinese port city of Shenzhen has risen from 30,000 in 1980 to 7 million in 2005.
	c) increase is also a noun, meaning rise.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was a steady increase in population.

WORDS OFTEN CONFUSED



VOCABULARY



<u>NOUN</u>	<u>ADJECTIVE</u>	<u>NOUN</u>	<u>VERB</u>	<u>ADJECTIVE</u>	<u>VERB</u>
politics	political	practice	practise	loose	lose
mathematics	mathematical	advice	advise		
statistics	statistical	effect	affect		
logic	logical	choice	choose		
economics	economic				

The adjective economical relates to saving money, not to the economy:

- My car is very **economical**. It hardly uses any petrol.
- Prices rose because of the **economic** downturn.

a) Two adjectives are often confused:

later late, later, latest

latter the second of two things already mentioned (contrasted with the *former*, meaning the first of two)

- I will see you **later**.
- She wore the **latest** style.
- He could not decide between red and green. He chose the **latter**.

b) Two adverbs are often confused:

very to give emphasis

too excessively

- The seminar was **very** good.
- The car was **too** expensive

WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
ACCEDE (<i>verb</i>)	to give one's consent or agreement	• They acceded to our request.
EXCEED (<i>verb</i>)	to surpass; to go beyond the limit	• The car exceeded the speed limit.
ACCEPT (<i>verb</i>)	to agree to [take] something	• They accepted my research proposal.
EXCEPT (<i>preposition/conjunction</i>)	aside from; otherwise	• Everyone went except John.
ADAPT (<i>verb</i>)	to make suitable	• The machine was adapted for indoor use.
ADEPT (<i>adjective/noun</i>)	skilled, expert	• They are adept at their job.
ADHERENCE (<i>noun</i>)	clinging quality	• The prime minister was known for his strict adherence to the constitution.
ADHERENT (<i>noun/adjective</i>)	a person who clings to something, a supporter; sticking to	• Her life-like depiction of human subjects on canvas has gained her many adherents .
ADHESION (<i>noun</i>)	quality of sticking together physically	• Although the operation was successful, he was left with adhesions .
ADVERSE (<i>adjective</i>)	unfavourable (thing)	• The adverse weather caused them to change their plans.
AVERSE (<i>adjective</i>)	reluctant	• He is averse to going to the seaside



WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
AFFECT (<i>verb</i>)	to influence or to pretend	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The weather will affect the outcome. He affected not to know what they were talking about.
AFFECT (<i>noun</i>)	(used in psychology) a feeling or emotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Depression is a disorder of affect.
EFFECT (<i>verb</i>)	to accomplish, to bring about a result	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please effect the following changes.
EFFECT (<i>noun</i>)	result	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Their criticism had a negative effect.
AFFLUENT (<i>adjective</i>)	wealthy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The USA is an affluent nation.
EFFLUENT (<i>noun</i>)	waste, outflow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The effluent from the factories has polluted the Parramatta River.
AGGRAVATE (<i>verb</i>)	to make worse or to make someone annoyed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The bad weather aggravated her rheumatism. What aggravates you most about your condition?
ANNOY (<i>verb</i>)	to irritate, upset emotionally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The bad weather annoyed him because he could not go swimming, and he was very angry.
IRRITATE (<i>verb</i>)	to upset emotionally and physically	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The constant noise irritated me and made me nervous.
ALL TOGETHER (<i>determiner + adverb</i>)	all in one place or at one time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We decided to go all together.
ALTOGETHER (<i>adverb</i>)	completely, without exception	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The view was altogether wonderful.
ALREADY (<i>adverb</i>)	by this time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The sun had already begun to rise when they set out.
ALL READY (<i>determiner + adjective</i>)	prepared, completely ready	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I was all ready to go when they arrived.
ALLUDE (to) (<i>verb</i>)	to mention indirectly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The lecturer did not tell the story directly but alluded to it in her talk.
ELUDE (<i>verb</i>)	to avoid, escape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The outlaws eluded the police for several days.
ALLUSION (<i>noun</i>)	an indirect reference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> He made an allusion to the story in his talk.
ILLUSION (<i>noun</i>)	unreal image; false impression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The effect was not real; it was only an illusion.
DELUSION (<i>noun</i>)	false belief, especially one held psychologically	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> He suffered from the delusion that he was the king.
AMONG (<i>preposition</i>)	used when referring to more than two people or objects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There were several left-handed candidates among the participants.
BETWEEN (<i>preposition</i>)	used when referring to two people or objects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is little difference between the two authors.
AMOUNT (<i>noun</i>)	used when referring to a quantity that cannot be counted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There was a small amount of grain in the bag.
NUMBER (<i>noun</i>)	used for the plural form of something that can be counted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There was a small number of students in the room.
ANY BODY (<i>determiner + noun</i>)	any human form; any corpse; any group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They looked in the tomb but they could not find any body.
ANYBODY (<i>noun / pronoun</i>)	(used in questions and negatives) any single person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They looked round the room but they could not see anybody there. Is anybody home?
ASSENT (<i>noun or verb</i>)	agreement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> He gave a verbal assent.
ASCENT (<i>noun</i>)	act of going up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ascent of Mt Everest is one of the world's hardest climbs.



WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
ASSURE (<i>verb</i>)	to make something certain; to promise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They assured him they would finish the assignment on time.
ENSURE (<i>verb</i>)	to make sure or certain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Their careful preparation ensured the success of the experiment.
INSURE (<i>verb</i>)	to protect against loss, or risk, by payment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They had to insure their car against fire or theft.
ASSURANCE (<i>noun</i>)	policy on life: life assurance (mainly British English); a promise; self-confidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do you have a life assurance policy? The military commander requires an assurance that our forces will not attack. She is an excellent singer but she lacks assurance.
INSURANCE (<i>noun</i>)	policy on life; policy on material possessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Life insurance is a highly competitive industry in Australia. We have a musical instruments insurance policy.
COMPARABLE (<i>adjective</i>)	capable of being compared; worthy of comparison	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Australia is hardly comparable with China. She is comparable to a rose.
COMPARATIVE (<i>adjective</i>)	something which relates to a standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The meeting was a comparative success.
COMPARE (<i>verb</i>) May be used in two ways:	<u>compare to</u> - points out resemblances where they are not apparent <u>compare with</u> - points out differences essentially of the same order	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Life can be compared to an actor's role on the stage. Adelaide can be compared with Perth.
CONTRAST (<i>noun / verb</i>)	comparison of things which are unlike	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The pictures present a contrast.
COMPLEMENT (<i>noun</i>)	complete quantity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The hotel had a full complement of staff.
COMPLEMENT (<i>verb</i>)	to provide completeness to go well with	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The written exam will complement the oral exam. Honey, lemon and jam all complement the flavour of the pancakes.
COMPLIMENT (<i>noun</i>)	approving comment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The singer's beautiful performance earned her many compliments.
COMPLIMENT (<i>verb</i>)	to praise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jim complimented Paul on his work.
CONTINUAL (<i>adjective</i>)	always going on or recurring at short intervals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continual chatter annoys her.
CONTINUOUS (<i>adjective</i>)	incessant, with no break at all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The continuous noise of the compressor was unrelenting.
COUNCIL (<i>noun</i>)	a group of people elected to govern a town or city	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adelaide has a city council.
COUNSEL (<i>noun</i>)	advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listen to an old man's counsel.
COUNSEL (<i>verb</i>)	to advise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They counselled him to continue with his studies.
CREDIBLE (<i>adjective</i>)	believable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is hardly credible that a country as small as the Netherlands won 22 medals at the 2004 Olympics.
CREDITABLE (<i>adjective</i>)	worthy of credit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> That was a creditable performance.
CREDULOUS (<i>adjective</i>)	believing anything that is said	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Santa Claus does not really exist. You should not be so credulous.
DEPENDENT (<i>adjective</i>)	reliant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project is dependent on finance.
DEPENDANT (<i>noun</i>)	someone supported financially within a family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> He had two dependants: his aged mother and his young son.



WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
DEPRECATE (verb)	speak against	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We deprecate the actions of the rioters.
DEPRECIATE (verb)	fall in value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cars depreciate rapidly.
DEVALUATE (verb)	reduce the value of something (usually devalue is used instead)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The currency was devaluated/devalued.
DISCREET (adjective)	tactful and judicious	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fred Gee is not very discreet in his remarks.
DISCRETE (adjective)	separate, distinct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I used several discrete steps to solve the problem.
DISINTERESTED (adjective)	impartial, unbiased	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regarding current events in the Solomon Islands, Australia is by no means a disinterested observer.
UNINTERESTED (adjective)	not interested	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We were so uninterested in the result that we didn't bother to turn on the TV.
DUE TO (adjective)	because of (<i>relates to a noun, a noun phrase, or an "-ing" form, not a verb</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ben's accident was due to his drinking and driving.
EMINENT (adjective)	distinguished	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professor Wright was an eminent surgeon.
IMMINENT (adjective)	close at hand, threatening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A storm is imminent.
FARTHER (adjective / adverb)	a comparative form of far	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wanganeen kicked the ball farther than McLeod.
FURTHER (adjective / adverb)	a comparative form of far	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many people live further from the city centre than they did in the 1960s. According to the Macquarie Dictionary (1997) further is used more in Australian English than farther.
FORMALLY (adverb)	according to accepted rules	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The chairperson conducted the meeting formally.
FORMERLY (adverb)	previously, in time gone by	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bangladesh was formerly known as East Pakistan.
HONORARY (adjective)	a position with no payment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> She was the honorary secretary.
HONOURABLE (adjective)	worthy of honour or respect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> He is an honourable gentleman.
	with capital 'H', a title, meaning a Member of Parliament who has held Cabinet rank.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Would the Honourable Member for Norwood please stand.
IMPLY (verb)	to hint, to suggest, to indirectly indicate something	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The speaker implied that there were errors in the previous speech.
INFER (verb)	to come to a conclusion, to gain an impression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A listener or reader infers things from what has been implied.
INCREDULOUS (adjective)	showing disbelief, sceptical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When I said Santa Claus was real they were incredulous.
INCREDIBLE (adjective)	extremely or unusually good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The radio reception was incredible. It was as if the presenter was in the same room.
INGENIOUS (adjective)	clever	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The apple peeling machine is an ingenious device.
INGENUOUS (adjective)	innocent, trusting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> He seemed too ingenuous to be a used car salesman.



WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
IRRELEVANT (<i>adjective</i>)	not connected with what you are discussing or focusing on	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Age is irrelevant for this job; it's experience we need.
IRREVERENT (<i>adjective</i>)	lacking in respect, especially for religion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The comedian Dave Allen had an irreverent attitude to religion.
INVALUABLE (<i>adjective</i>)	so valuable as to be beyond price	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Her advice about subject choices was invaluable to me.
VALUELESS (<i>adjective</i>)	having no value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This 'antique' is a valueless piece of junk.
LAY (<i>verb</i>)	to produce (an egg)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The hen laid an egg.
	to put in position	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> She laid the book carefully on the table.
LIE (<i>verb</i>)	to be in a horizontal position	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The patient was lying in bed.
	to tell untruths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They deliberately lied in order to avoid the consequences of their actions.
LEARN (<i>verb</i>)	to gain knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A student learns many things at university.
TEACH (<i>verb</i>)	to give instructions to enable someone to do something	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A lecturer may teach several subjects.
LEND (<i>verb</i>)	to give on condition of return	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> He asked the bank to lend him \$10 000.
LOAN (<i>noun</i>)	item borrowed or lent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Government loan is for \$3 billion.
LESS (<i>adverb</i>)	the comparative form of little; indicates a smaller amount of something (frequently also used incorrectly in Australia for a smaller number of people or things)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The student would have preferred less noise in the flat.
FEWER (<i>adverb</i>)	comparative form of few	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> James made fewer mistakes in this essay.
MAY (<i>modal verb</i>)	indicates permission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You may leave if you have finished.
	indicates possibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It may rain on the weekend.
CAN (<i>modal verb</i>)	indicates permission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You can leave now.
	indicates ability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> She can run faster than her brother.
OFFICIAL (<i>adjective</i>)	approved by a person in authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A passport is an official document.
OFFICIOUS (<i>adjective</i>)	too eager to give orders or offer advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> He became such an officious person when he put on his uniform.
PASSED (<i>verb</i>)	to go by (past simple or past participle)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> He passed the window.
	to succeed in an exam (past simple or past participle)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They both passed the music exam.
PAST (<i>preposition</i>)	further than (Also: adjective / adverb / noun)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Go past the post office and down the street.



WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
PRACTICABLE (adjective)	able to be put into practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Israelis proved it is practicable to grow crops in the desert.
PRACTICAL (adjective)	useful, sensible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is a practical card-table which folds up and fits into the car boot.
PSYCHOLOGIST (noun)	person who is trained in the knowledge of mental states and processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The parents took the child to a psychologist, who diagnosed ADHD.
PSYCHIATRIST (noun)	doctor trained in the study and treatment of disorders of the mind	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The psychiatrist treated the child with medication.
RESPECTABLE (adjective)	worthy of respect; showing character and standards approved by society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The mayor was a very respectable person.
RESPECTIVELY (adverb)	in the same order as the items mentioned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elisa and John won a gold and silver medal respectively. (i.e. Elisa won gold and John won silver)
RESPECTFULLY (adverb)	Courteously	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They answered the professor respectfully.
SHALL (modal verb)	used to make offers or suggestions or to ask for advice: <i>I/we only</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shall I buy the vegetables?
	used for an intention or promise, or when referring to something you believe is certain to happen (This use is not common in Australia.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We shall be arriving at 6 pm.
WILL (modal verb)	used to make offers: <i>you / he / she</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will you have a cup of coffee?
	used to ask or tell someone to do something: <i>you</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will you email the pdf to me?
	used (like shall) for an intention or promise, or for something you believe is certain to happen: <i>I / you / he / she / it / we / they</i> used for something you hope/believe is going to happen in the future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They will come tomorrow. The car will not be fixed until next month.
SHOULD (modal verb)	expresses advice, obligation or advisability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you want to get there tonight you should leave soon.
WOULD (modal verb)	expresses a condition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I would go if I could
	used when offering something used when politely requesting something	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Would you like a chocolate? Would you tell me the time?
SIGHT (noun)	something which is seen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The view from Centrepoint Tower at night is a spectacular sight.
SITE (noun)	place, location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We visited an archaeological site during the holidays.
CITE (verb)	to bring forward as proof, to quote an authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> He cited a short clause in the contract to prove that the company was not responsible.
	to provide a citation (academic use)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unfortunately he failed to cite the author and date following the quote.
STIMULANT (noun)	agent which makes the body work faster, often by increasing the heart rate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoid taking stimulants, such as coffee at night, or you may find it difficult to sleep.
STIMULUS (noun)	spur, incentive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Devaluation proved a stimulus to overseas trade.



VOCABULARY



WORD	MEANING	EXAMPLE
STORY (noun)	tale, narrative	• They always told the children bedtime stories .
STOREY (noun)	floor of a building	• The office block had thirty storeys .
TO (preposition)	(followed by noun, noun phrase or “-ing” form) may indicate a destination (part of the infinitive, followed by verb)	• We are going to the bank. • They are looking forward to meeting you. • We have to plan carefully.
TOO (adverb)	in addition more than enough	• I'm coming too . • That is too much.
TWO (noun, determiner, pronoun)	number	• There are two types of photocopier in the faculty office.

EXERCISE



In the spaces in the following sentences, write the correct form of the appropriate word in brackets.

- He _____ a big effort to finish in time.
(make / made / done)
- The painting was _____ by a famous artist.
(make / made / done)
- His supervisor _____ him to prepare a talk.
(tell / told / said)
- It is possible to _____ four books at a time from the library.
(lend / borrow)
- The oil crisis _____ the price of petrol.
(rise / arise / raised)
- Last year the price of food _____ by 15%.
(rise / rose / arise / raise)
- Tutors often give good _____ but students sometimes _____ not to follow it.
(advice / advise) (choice / choose)
- The former is, perhaps, more _____ than the _____.
(logic / logical) (later / latter)

ANSWER

- He **made** a big effort to finish on time.
- The painting was **done** by a famous artist.
- His supervisor **told** him to prepare a talk.
- It is possible to **borrow** four books at a time.
- The oil crisis **raised** the price of petrol.
- Last year the price of food **rose** by 15%.
- Tutors often give good **advice** but students sometimes **choose** not to follow it.
- The former is, perhaps, more **logical** than the **latter**.