

Common Collocations

Phadet Kakham*

Collocation runs through the whole of the English language. No piece of natural spoken or written English is totally free of collocation. Choosing the right collocation will make your speech and writing sound much more natural, more native-speaker-like and more easily understood. You will have alternative and richer ways of expressing yourself. Furthermore, it is easier for our brains to remember and use language in chunks or blocks rather than as single words.

What is collocation?

Collocation is a word or phrase that is often used with another word or phrase, in a way that sounds correct to people who have spoken the language all their lives, but might not be expected from the meaning. For example: listen to music / watch a movie / take care / (<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/collocation>)

These combinations just sound “right” to native English speakers, who use them all the time. On the other hand, other combinations may be unnatural and just sound “wrong”.

Special types of collocation

A high percentage of useful collocations occur in one of four key grammatical relations:

- 1: v + N (commit a crime, conduct a survey)
- 2: adj + N (detailed analysis, compelling argument)
- 3: grammatical relations like adj + N, v + N, adv + V (criticize severely, correlate closely)
- 4: adv + ADJ (highly influential, historically accurate)

**Lecturer in Educational Innovation Management for Sustainable Development Program, Graduate School, Bansomdejchaopraya Rajabhat University*

Common Collocations

Common Collocations are combinations of easy words that are often used together. Many of the most common collocations include a verb such as *make* and **do**, together with a particular noun or noun phrase.

There are some collocation words that have a wide number of collocation combinations - they may be 'weak', but they are extremely useful.

Collocations with make and do

The verbs **do** and **make** can be confusing in English because the meaning is similar but they co-occur with different words. For example, you can say: **do an exercise**. But you can't say: **do a cake***

There are other things to consider when using *do* and *make*. Here are some tips to help you make the right choice.

Use **do when someone *performs an action, activity or task*.**

Examples:	do the dishes	- I <i>do the dishes</i> every day, so I'm used to it.
	do an exercise	- Julie likes <i>doing exercise</i> , especially running. -The teacher asked us to <i>do a lot of grammar exercises</i> over the holidays.
	do the laundry	- He <i>did the laundry</i> and cleaned the house.
	do the ironing	- My mother listens to the radio while she <i>does the ironing</i> .
	do the shopping	- I'll <i>do the shopping</i> tomorrow morning. We need milk, bread, pasta and bananas.
	do your work	- Unfortunately, Lucy <i>does a lot of work</i> at the weekends.
	do homework	- Have you finished <i>doing your homework</i> ?
	do housework	- Let's <i>do the housework</i> quickly this morning, then we can go out for lunch.

- do your job - I think the students *did a great job* with this essay. It's excellent.
- do business - It's been a pleasure *doing business* with you.
- do your hair - Allie spends ages *doing her hair* in the morning.
- do your nails - Jenny likes to *do her nails* each week.

Use the verb **make** to *construct, build or create*. The result is something that you can touch.

- Examples:** make arrangements - Let's *make some arrangements*. I'll find a hotel, and you can look at flights.
- make an attempt - I know we might not catch the plane, but let's at least *make an attempt* to be on time.
- make choice - Which job are you going to take? You need to *make a choice*.
- make trouble - That employee is trying to *make trouble*. He is always telling the boss bad things about his colleagues.
- make noise - Please try not to *make a noise* when you come home, because I'll be asleep.
- make a mistake - She *made so many mistakes* in her essay that the teacher couldn't understand it.
- make an appointment - She had toothache, so she *made an appointment* with the dentist for the following day.
- make a decision - Have you *made a decision* yet?
- make a profit - Apparently, the company wasn't *making a profit*, so they shut down.
- make progress - Finally, after being stuck in a traffic jam for an hour, we're *making some progress*! We'll arrive by 8pm.
- make coffee - I fell into the habit of *making some coffee* for my breakfast.

- make a phone call - I'm going to go outside and *make a phone call*. It's too noisy in here.
- make a speech - The bride's father often *makes a speech* at her wedding.
- make a presentation - They will then *make a presentation* to the employer who will evaluate it.

Conclusion

In conclusion, collocations are important because they make your language sound natural. If you master collocations, your English will be more idiomatic, that is, more similar to the way it is spoken by native speakers. Using some common collocations like “**make**” and “**do**” correctly can be one of the smartest ways to learn English.

References

- Collocation with Make*. Retrieved August 15, 2022 from
https://7esl.com/collocations-with-make/#Examples_of_Collocations_with_Make
- Common Collocations*. Retrieved August 15, 2022 from
<https://www.englishclub.com/vocabulary/collocations-common.htm>
- Creating and Using the Macmillan Collocations Dictionary*. Retrieved August 10, 2022 from
<https://www.macmillandictionary.com/collocations/features.html>
- 'Make' or 'Do'?* Retrieved August 10, 2022 from
<https://www.perfect-english-grammar.com/make-or-do.html>
- Meaning of Collocation*. Retrieved August 9, 2022 from
<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/collocation>