

# 5 Compounds

## A Nouns

English has a large number of compound nouns formed from a *noun + noun*. Cover the compounds below and read the meanings. Do you know these compounds, or can you guess them?



drawing pin



paper clip



barbed wire



nail polish/varnish

| Meaning  | Compound noun     |
|--|-------------------|
| an official document that shows you are qualified to drive   | driving licence   |
| an official document showing when and where someone was born   | birth certificate |
| a card given to customers by a shop to encourage them to shop there regularly. Each time they shop, they get money off goods they buy in the future. | loyalty card      |
| a part for a car or machine to replace an old or broken part   | spare part        |
| confidence in yourself and your abilities  | self-confidence   |
| the number of years that a person is likely to live  | life expectancy   |
| a path or route that is quicker than the normal way  | shortcut          |
| the language that you first learn to speak as a child  | mother tongue     |
| food that is quick and easy to prepare and eat but not good for your health  | junk food         |
| a person that you admire and try to copy   | role model        |

### 1 Replace the crossed-out word with a word that forms a compound noun.

- 1 Do you know a short ~~way~~ to the school from here? .....
- 2 Have you got any nail ~~paint~~? .....
- 3 Does she have enough ~~personal~~ confidence? .....
- 4 I ripped my shirt on the ~~twisted~~ wire around the field. .....
- 5 What's the average life ~~length~~ for men in your country? .....
- 6 I stepped on a drawing ~~rail~~ – it really hurt. .....
- 7 I need some paper ~~staples~~ to put these notes together. .....
- 8 Is it easy to get ~~new~~ parts for your car? .....

### 2 Complete the compound in each sentence.

- 1 What is your mother .....? What other languages do you speak?
- 2 Have you got a driving .....? How long have you had it?
- 3 Do you know where your birth ..... is? If so, where?
- 4 Do you have any ..... cards for different shops? If so, which?
- 5 Are there any short ..... you often take? If so, where to?
- 6 Who has been the most important role ..... in your life?
- 7 Do you ever wear ..... polish? If so, what colour?
- 8 Do you often eat ..... food? If so, what, and why?

### 3 ABOUT YOU Write answers to the questions in Exercise 2, or ask another student.

### 4 Eight of the words below form compounds with *card*, one forms a compound with *pass*, and one forms a compound with *pass* and *card* (with the same meaning). Can you complete the compounds correctly?

greetings identity bus credit rail post boarding debit SIM gift



TEST YOURSELF

## B Adjectives

Most compound adjectives have a hyphen (-).

It was very much a **last-minute** decision to go, but the kids loved it and were very **well behaved**.

My cousin is very **absent-minded**. We have a **long-standing** joke that whenever we meet, he pretends he doesn't know me.

These boots are **worn out** now, but they've been incredibly **hard-wearing**.

I have an uncle who is very **narrow-minded** and **self-righteous**. He thinks I'm **bad-tempered**, but it's only him who makes me angry; we argue all the time.

### GLOSSARY

|                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| <b>last-minute</b>    | happening at the last possible moment (compounds with <i>well</i> are hyphenated before a noun but not after a noun) |
| <b>well behaved</b>   | behaving in a way that people think is correct and polite: <i>a well-behaved child</i>                               |
| <b>long-standing</b>  | that has existed or lasted for a long time   |
| <b>worn out</b>       | 1 (of a thing) no longer useful because it has been used so much<br>2 (of a person) exhausted from work or exercise  |
| <b>hard-wearing</b>   | (of a product) remaining in good condition for a long time   |
| <b>self-righteous</b> | believing that what you say or do is right and other people are wrong  |
| <b>bad-tempered</b>   | often angry and easily annoyed   |

### SPOTLIGHT adjectives with *-minded*

You can be **narrow-minded** (= not willing to listen to the ideas and opinions of others) OPP **broad-minded, open-minded**; **absent-minded** (= forgetful); or **single-minded** (= thinking in a concentrated way about sth and determined to achieve it).

#### 5 Answer the questions.

- 1 If something is worn out, is it *no use* or *very comfortable*?
- 2 If something is last-minute, is it *very quick* or *at the last possible moment*?
- 3 If someone is single-minded, are they *determined* or *closed to new ideas*?
- 4 If something is hard-wearing, is it *uncomfortable* or does it *last a long time*?
- 5 If someone is worn out, are they *exhausted* or *unhealthy*?
- 6 If someone is absent-minded, are they *stupid* or *forgetful*?

#### 6 Form six compound adjectives using words from the box.

|          |      |         |          |           |      |
|----------|------|---------|----------|-----------|------|
| long     | worn | behaved | standing | minded    | self |
| tempered | well | narrow  | bad      | righteous | out  |

#### 7 Complete the dialogues with a suitable compound adjective.

- 1 He always thinks he's right, doesn't he? ~ Yes, he's very ..... .
- 2 Had you planned to go? ~ No, it was a ..... decision.
- 3 Do you often meet up? ~ Yes, we have a ..... arrangement.
- 4 She's very determined, isn't she? ~ Yes, she's extremely ..... .
- 5 He gets angry very easily. ~ I know, he's a very ..... man.
- 6 Your parents are always open to ideas. ~ Yes, they're very ..... .

#### 8 Can you complete these compound adjectives using either *self* or *well*?

|         |           |           |
|---------|-----------|-----------|
| known   | confident | employed  |
| behaved | dressed   | conscious |
| service | informed  |           |

