

Collocations with phrasal verbs

News items

The Justice Minister said he would **abide by the decision**¹ of the High Court to free the prisoner.

The police, **acting on a tip-off**³, arrested the thieves as they left the building.

Hollywood star Glenda Nixon has **filed for divorce**⁴. She and her husband Kevin Lomax have lived apart for the last six months.

The new Regional Governor will **take up office**² on 1 March, following his party's recent election victory. The Education Commission has been asked by the government to **come up with an alternative** to the present schools examination system.

The police intend to **come down heavily on**⁵ anyone causing trouble at tomorrow's football final.

¹ (formal) accept the decision

³ a secret warning

² (formal) start work in an official position

⁴ made an official request for a divorce

⁵ punish very strongly

Everyday conversation

Note how B uses a collocation with a phrasal verb to repeat A's ideas.

A: It was great just sitting in the town square and enjoying the feel of the place, wasn't it?

B: Yes, it was nice to just sit there **soaking up the atmosphere**.

A: I think we should both arrange our work schedules so we don't have to work in May.

B: Yes, I'll try to **free up some time** so we can go away together.

A: I'm finding it hard to find time to practise the French I learnt at school.

B: Yes, I have a similar problem **keeping up my Spanish**.

A: Well, all that gardening has made me hungry.

B: Yes, it certainly helps to **work up an appetite**.

A: It'd suit my arrangements if we could meet up at lunch-time.

B: Yes, that would fit in perfectly with **my plans too**.

A: The hotel wasn't as good as I thought it would be.

B: No, it didn't **live up to my expectations** either.



Other phrasal verbs with strong collocations

burst into laughter/tears [suddenly start to laugh/cry]

When she saw the damage the floods had done to her house, she **burst into tears**.

dip into savings/funds [spend part of some money which was being saved]

The club had to **dip into** their emergency funds to pay for the repairs to the roof.

jot down an address / a phone number / a room number [write down quickly]

Can I **jot down** your email address?

see off an intruder/opponent [get rid of, defeat]

He's a tough guy. He **saw off** several intruders who were trying to break into his house.

adhere to principles / beliefs / ideals / a philosophy [formal: continue to maintain a belief]

It's difficult to **adhere to one's beliefs** when one is being constantly attacked.

11.1 Complete the collocations using prepositions from the box.

by down for in with to up up to up with

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1 file divorce | 5 live expectations |
| 2 come an alternative | 6 abide a decision |
| 3 take office | 7 jot someone's address |
| 4 adhere a philosophy | 8 fit plans |

11.2 Complete each sentence using a collocation from 11.1 in the appropriate form.

- 1 I'd been looking forward to the course but unfortunately it my expectations.
- 2 Has anyone a good alternative to the petrol- or diesel-fuelled car yet?
- 3 I should your address in case I forget it.
- 4 The new president of our club is due to office next week.
- 5 We have to the decision of the committee; we have no choice.
- 6 Most members of the group a common philosophy.
- 7 I don't have any special arrangements, so can easily your plans.
- 8 Hilda Bragg has divorce in a New York court.

11.3 Answer these questions using collocations from the opposite page.

- 1 What can you do with savings or funds in an emergency?
- 2 What can you do with principles or ideals?
- 3 What can you try to do with a language if you don't want to lose it?
- 4 What can guard dogs help you to do if you have intruders?

11.4 Correct the collocation errors in these sentences.

- 1 Everyone broke into laughter when she told the story.
- 2 We had a run along the beach to work in an appetite before lunch.
- 3 The police have said they intend to go down heavily on anyone carrying an offensive weapon at the match.
- 4 Do you think you could free out some time to have a quick meeting this afternoon?
- 5 The police acted on a rip-off and managed to avert a possible disaster.
- 6 I hope the party will live on to your expectations.
- 7 We sat on our hotel balcony, soaking through the atmosphere of the carnival.
- 8 Tanya quickly saw out her opponent in the semi-final and now goes on to the final.