

ability

1 Verb + ability

Use the correct form of these verbs:

affect	assess
overestimate	lose
doubt	show

- Examinations are not the only means of someone's ability. There are other ways of measuring potential.
- At first I questioned his abilities, but he has done the job so well. I'm now ashamed that I had so little confidence in him and that I his abilities in the first place.
- It is a well-known fact that even small amounts of alcohol can your ability to drive safely.
- She was so shocked by the accident that she the ability to speak.
- Although Peter a lot of ability as a teenager, he just wasn't good enough to go professional.
- I had to give up half way through the race. I had obviously my ability to run a marathon.

Go back and underline all the verb collocations with *ability*.

2 Noun + preposition + ability

Use these nouns in the sentences:

confidence	best
lack	reflection
test	use

- Tiger Woods may be the best golfer in the world, but the Open Championship next week will be a real of his ability.
- Raymond is very clever, but he doesn't make full of his abilities.
- I was surprised when he failed his examinations. His results are certainly not a true of his abilities.
- He's extremely competent and will do the job properly. I have every in his ability.
- He said that he would try to do the job to the of his ability.
- I believe he lost confidence. His failure was not due to a of ability.

Go back and underline all the noun + preposition + *ability* collocations.

3 Common adjective collocations

Use these adjectives in the sentences:

average	considerable
mixed	natural
incredible	proven

- Most of us have to work hard to learn to play a musical instrument. However, there are people who are born with a ability and who learn effortlessly.
- The students in my class are of ability, so I teach them in groups according to their level.
- I have no doubts that he has ability, but I don't think his personality is suited to this kind of work.
- We need somebody who has done this before – with the ability to do the job.
- I'm not a genius and I'm not stupid. I would describe myself as being of ability.
- I don't know how she does it, but Annie Lennox has this ability to electrify her audience.

Go back and underline all the adjective + *ability* collocations in this exercise.

Notes

- Here are three ways to describe 'great' ability:
She has a remarkable ability to recall long poems after only reading them once.
She has exceptional abilities as a musician.
His examination results are proof of his outstanding ability.
- Remember that an adjective collocation can come before or after the noun:
She has remarkable ability.
Her ability is remarkable.
- Notice the use of 'best' in 2-5. 'Best' is usually an adjective, but it is used as a noun in the expression to 'do something to the best of your ability'.
- We can talk about specific abilities:

<i>musical ability</i>	<i>physical ability</i>
<i>linguistic ability</i>	<i>technical ability</i>
<i>artistic ability</i>	<i>acting ability</i>
- When we talk about very intelligent children, we often call them 'children of above average ability'.