

to combine (with) combination

in conjunction with

If things **combine** they exist and are effective together.

- ▶ ‘Innovative design, high performance and total reliability **combine** to make our products the best money can buy.’

If you **combine** different things you put them together, or you do them at the same time.

- ▶ ‘In an attempt to cut costs, they **combined** the Marketing department with Sales.’
- ▶ ‘Trying to **combine** being his friend with being his boss was far from easy.’

A **combination** is a mixture of different things or qualities.

- ▶ ‘Marcel de Diqued’s new show is a bizarre **combination** of mime, ‘life sculpture’, poetry and sound effects.’
- ▶ ‘It was a **combination** of factors that caused the company to go out of business.’

If two things happen **in conjunction with** each other they happen at the same time and **combine** to have a single effect on something. **In conjunction with** is used in formal English.

- ▶ ‘High mortgage rates **in conjunction with** the current economic climate have led to a slump in the housing market.’
- ▶ ‘There is no really conclusive evidence that moderate amounts of coffee has a damaging effect on our health, but it is now very clear that even relatively low levels of coffee intake, **in conjunction with** regular tobacco consumption, can be significantly harmful.’

If one person or organisation works **in conjunction with** another they work together.

- ▶ ‘Forte Hotels Group, **in conjunction with** the Irish Tourist Board, are organising a series of major sporting events throughout the summer.’
- ▶ ‘This coupon is not valid when used **in conjunction with** other promotional offers.’

- *How easy do you think it is to combine being a parent with a having a career?*
- *What are some good colour combinations?*
- *In what kind of activity could you combine an interest with a job?*
- *What kind of events are often organised in conjunction?*
- *When do police forces work in conjunction with Interpol?*

mate pal

In informal British English your **mates** are your friends of the same sex. Another informal word for friend is **pal**.

- ▶ ‘I’m not too keen on those new **pals** that Mark’s hanging around with.’

The word **mate** is also used in compound nouns like, **work-mate** or **class-mate**, meaning the people you work with, or the people you study with.

- ▶ ‘I’m furious! that new **flat-mate** of mine just disappeared owing me last month’s rent.’

In the animal world, when animals form couples they are called **mates**.

- ▶ ‘The female looks after the young while her **mate** hunts for food.’

When animals **mate** they reproduce to give birth to young animals.

- ▶ ‘The female platypus **mates** with several males to increase the chance of fertilisation.’

- *Do you think it’s easy for a newcomer to your town to make pals?*
- *How often do couples who split up remain pals?*
- *Do animals keep the same mates for life?*
- *What do you get when donkeys and horses mate?*

nasty

If we describe something as **nasty** we mean that it's very unpleasant.

- ▶ 'He fell off his bike and gave himself a **nasty** cut on his knee.'
- ▶ 'There was such a **nasty** smell in the factory that I had to leave.'

When we describe a person or an action as **nasty** we mean that they intend to cause harm.

- ▶ 'He's a **nasty** child - he's always pulling the wings off insects and things like that.'
- ▶ 'That was a **nasty** thing to say - you must have known she'd be upset.'

In informal English we say that someone is a **nasty piece of work** if we think they are cruel or wicked.

- *What effect do nasty smells have on you?*
- *Do you ever say nasty things to people? -Do you regret it?*
- *Did you ever use to do nasty things as a kid?*

to fit in (with) to fit (something) in

When a person **fits in with** a group of other people it means they are able to get on with them easily and they share the same ideas or attitude.

- ▶ 'When my family moved into a big city, I never really **fitted in** at school. All the other kids were into totally different things.'
- ▶ 'There's nothing wrong with his work, but somehow he just doesn't seem to **fit in**. The rest of us are all pretty wild I suppose, but he's so serious all the time.'

If you **fit in with** someone's plans, you arrange things to suit them.

- ▶ 'I know it's a bit inconvenient but can't you just move your appointment? You know that I always make the effort to **fit in with** your schedules.'

If you **fit something in** it means that you manage to find the time to do it.

- ▶ ‘Well, if you’re going to London you must try and **fit in** a ride on the London Eye.’
 - ▶ ‘Drop the kids off at school, get the groceries, pick up the photos, take the car to the mechanic’s, get back home and then get lunch ready! I’ll never **fit all that in** by midday!’
 - ▶ ‘I realise your tooth is giving you pain, Mrs. Boome, but I just can’t **fit you in** before this afternoon.’
- *How busy is your typical day? - Is it an effort to fit this course in?*
 - *Could you fit an extra lesson in?*
 - *What would you recommend anyone visiting your town for a day to fit in?*
 - *Do you try to make the effort to fit in with other people’s plans?*
 - *Do you think your dentist could fit you in within a couple of days?*
 - *What about your hairdresser?*

former

When something is described as **former**, it refers to it as it was in a past state that is no longer true.

- ▶ ‘John very bravely, or stupidly, invited all his **former** girlfriends to his wedding.’
 - ▶ ‘This delightful small hotel is the **former** country home of Lord Tennyson.’
 - ▶ ‘The artist **formerly** known as Prince, gave his first press conference yesterday since joining his new record label.’
 - ▶ ‘In the complex world of post cold war international politics, **former** enemies can become allies and **former** allies, enemies.’
- *Do you still see any of your former schoolmates?*
 - *Which countries made up the former Soviet Union? – And the former Yugoslavia?*
 - *What was Istanbul formerly known as?*

dialogue

- Charlie** Hi, Sandra! Nice to see you back! How were the hols?
- Sandra** Marvellous thanks! Apart from getting robbed!
- Charlie** You're joking!
- Sandra** I wish I was!
- Charlie** Was it, I mean - serious?
- Sandra** Well, we weren't mugged or anything, fortunately. No, our hotel room got broken into when we were out. They took quite a bit of stuff - some jewellery I had, our camera, Geoff's mobile phone, his watch ...
- Charlie** Any cash?
- Sandra** Not much, luckily.
- Charles** Well, that's really bad news. I'm really sorry, Sandra. Inside job, was it?
- Sandra** Well, the proprietor of the hotel was horrified - it had never happened before, apparently. It was a pretty small place - just a couple of maids, so it doesn't seem really likely.
- Charles** Probably one of the guests, then!
- Sandra** Right! you never know!
- Charlie** Anyway, you had everything insured, I suppose?
- Sandra** Oh, sure - but it was still a nasty experience.
- Charlie** Oh, yeah - I know what you mean. Well, you could always make it worth your while with the insurance.
- Sandra** What do you mean - make a false claim?
- Charlie** Well, yeah - everyone does it! Couple of extra earrings, a handbag - you know, it doesn't have to be a fortune!
- Sandra** No, no, no! We wouldn't do that. That's not us!
- Charlie** Well, just think of all the times you've taken out holiday insurance and never had anything happen. Try and work out how much you've given the insurance company over the years and you'll get a shock! They never do anyone any favours, you know! I wouldn't have any qualms about ripping them off a bit.
- Sandra** I'm not going to start breaking the law just for a couple of hundred quid!
- Charlie** Why not? I mean, is it breaking the law you're worried about or the possibility of getting found out. They'll never bother checking it out. Just look at it as compensation for your 'nasty experience'!

everyday English

inside job

When a crime is committed by someone who works in the place where it happens, it is called an *inside job*.

make it worth your while

If something is *worth your while* it means that your effort will be rewarded.

‘I realise it’s a nuisance for you to come into work on Sunday but I promise *I’ll make it worth your while.*’

‘You’ll find *it’s worth your while* doing a bit of research into the company before going for the interview.’

Would you work on Sunday? - What would make it worth your while?

qualms

If you ‘have *qualms* about something’ it means that you are unwilling to do it because you feel it is wrong, unfair or dishonest. It’s normally used in the negative -

‘*I have no qualms* about telling her about her husband’s affair.

She deserves to know what that swine is like!’

‘He looked through his wife’s personal diary without the slightest *qualm.*’

Would you have qualms about these things?

Looking through someone else’s address book.

Using the phone at work for personal calls.

Cheating in an exam.

Listening in on someone’s phone calls.

Keeping the change if you are given too much.

quid

In informal English a ‘quid’ is a pound.