

What is collocation?

- Collocation refers to words that are frequently used together, for example which prepositions are used with particular verbs, or which verbs and nouns are used together.
- For instance, in English the verb *perform* is used with *operation*, but not with *discussion*:

a. *The doctor performed the operation.*

b. **The committee performed a discussion.*

instead we say:

The committee held/had a discussion

perform is used with (collocates with) *operation*, and *hold* and *have* collocates with *discussion*.

DO

karate
judo
taekwondo
kung-fu
athletics
acrobatics
aerobics
ballet
exercise
yoga
archery
a crossword-
puzzle
tai-chi

PLAY

basketball
baseball
tennis
golf
volleyball
football
rugby
chess
cricket
board games
hockey
snooker
squash
badminton

GO

swimming
hiking
jogging
running
fishing
bowling
fencing
wrestling
skiing
horseriding
fencing
riding
sailing
windsurfing
snowboarding
dancing
skating
cycling

TAKE**GET**

take an exam
take an English course
take some Japanese lessons
take the bus/train/plane/taxi

take a photo
take a break
take a decision (also "make")
take a shower (also "have")
take your time
take a sit (sit down)
take time off (away from
work for holidays or to do sth.)
take your time

get a letter (=receive)
get the ticket (=buy)
It's getting dark (=become)
"get a bus/train/plane/taxi" is
also used, but is not as common.

get home (=arrive)
get married
get divorced
get dressed / undressed
get changed (change clothes)
get lost (lose your way)
get a job
get up
get time off work

Categories for collocations

Strong

A large number of collocations are strong or very strong. For example, we most commonly talk of rancid butter, but that does not mean that other things cannot be rancid.

Weak

These are words which co-occur with a greater than random frequency. Many things can be long or short, cheap or expensive, good or bad.

Medium strength

These are words that go together with a greater frequency than weak collocations. Some examples are: hold a meeting; carry out a study.

Do someone a favour, your hair, the shopping, your
→ best, your homework, the dishes, your taxes

Make a cake, a mess, money, lunch, progress,
→ a difference, an effort, time

Have a baby, fun, a rest, a shower, a problem, dinner,
→ a chat, a party, a relationship

Take a photo, a break, a chance, a taxi, your time,
→ notes, a risk, an interest in, a vote

Go abroad/overseas, online, shopping, crazy/mad
→ bald, blind, quiet/silent

Get drunk, a job, a shock, lost, married, ready, permission