
THE LEGAL PROFESSION

THE IMPORTANCE OF COLLOCATIONS

Collocations are words that form natural partnerships in English. For example, we say,

'Merry Christmas!'

but

'Happy New Year!'

Why can't we say 'Merry New Year'? It's because a native English speaker wouldn't expect these words to go together. They do not form a good collocation. Legal English is full of collocations. They might be:

- **verb+noun**
Do you **accept liability**?
- **noun+verb**
The **gap** has **widened** between them.
- **verb+adverb**
Could we please **discuss** this matter **rationally**?
- **adjective+noun**
She made a **fatal error**.
- **adverb+adjective**
This is a **highly contentious** dispute.

The key to learning accurate legal English is to have a good familiarity with collocation. Some nouns form good collocations with more than one verb. Some nouns form a good collocation with just one verb. The important thing is to start to notice accurate collocations and memorise them. For example:

Good collocation: to **draft** a contract
to **honour** a contract
to **breach** a contract

Bad collocation: to **write** a contract
to **respect** a contract
to **infringe** a contract

As you work through this book you will see many collocations. To help you notice and remember accurate collocations they have been put into a collocation bank for you. The symbol **m** means 'memorise'.

Collocation bank

- to **draft** a contract
- to **honour** a contract
- to **breach** a contract

m

Exercise 1

Look at these sentences. They contain collocations that are in Unit 1A. Complete the sentences with the correct collocation from the four choices on the next page.

- Solicitors are allowed to _____ clients in court.
- I am afraid I can't help you. I am a commercial lawyer and this is a criminal _____.
- What are the _____ for your case?
- I will _____ my final law exams in June of next year.
- My client is _____ a new factory and he needs advice about the relevant health and safety regulations.

a	A represent	B work for	C stand for	D advocate
b	A issue	B matter	C subject	D point
c	A grounds	B reasons	C motives	D basis
d	A pass	B make	C prepare	D take
e	A starting	B launching	C opening	D initiating

THE IMPORTANCE OF PREPOSITIONS

As you work through this book you will see many prepositions. To help you notice and remember accurate prepositions in a legal context they have been put into a preposition bank for you. The symbol **m** means 'memorise'.

Preposition bank

- an attorney **at** law
'My daughter is an attorney **at** law in Atlanta.'
- to send a cheque **for** an amount of money
'Please send a cheque **for** £2000.'
- to work **on** something
'I'm currently working **on** a merger agreement.'
- subject **to** something
'The goods are for sale at this price subject **to** availability.'

Exercise 1

Complete these sentences with a preposition that you saw in Unit 1A.

- | | |
|--|---|
| a The judge awarded my client £20,000 _____ damages. | d Stephen works for a law firm _____ Manhattan. |
| b Suing someone is a more informal way of saying starting proceedings _____ someone. | e When you are _____ dispute with someone you can start a claim in the civil court. |
| c A small claim is a claim _____ a maximum of £5000. | f Could I take a look _____ your employment contract? |

Exercise 2

Using the knowledge that you have about collocations and prepositions correct the language below.

'My name is Luigi and I am a lawyer (a) **at** Milan. I work (b) **into** a big law firm. Today I am very busy. I am (c) **writing** a contract (d) **to** a new client. This afternoon I am (e) **speaking for** a different client in court. It is a (f) **disrespect** of contract case. I think we will win the case because our (g) **reasons** are very strong.'

'My name is Luigi and I am a lawyer (a) _____ Milan. I work (b) _____ a big law firm. Today I am very busy. I am (c) _____ a contract (d) _____ a new client. This afternoon I am (e) _____ a different client in court. It is a (f) _____ of contract case. I think we will win the case because our (g) _____ are very strong.'

SOLICITORS AND BARRISTERS

Exercise 1

Diana Williams is a lawyer. Today she is going to visit a school in her town to talk to the students about a career in law. Here are some of Diana's notes for her talk. In this section she is talking about the two separate professions that exist in England, solicitors and barristers. Fill in the gaps in the text with the correct word from the box below.

- | | | | |
|----------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| ● partner | ● judge | ● client | ● audience |
| ● qualify | ● practices | ● solicitor | ● associate |
| ● partnerships | ● court | ● attorney | ● issued |

My notes for careers talk at Chatsworth Hill School

In England we have two different types of lawyer. One is known as a (a) _____ and the other is a barrister. Both are called 'lawyers'. This can be a little confusing because in the USA every lawyer is usually known as an (b) _____. An English law student has to decide at some time during their university studies which type of lawyer they would like to (c) _____ as.

Most English law students decide to become a solicitor. These are the lawyers that a (d) _____, the person who pays for the services of a lawyer, will usually meet first. Often the solicitor can help the client without the need for a barrister.

Most solicitors work in small private businesses, known as (e) _____, in what are called 'High Street firms'. This phrase 'High Street firm' refers to a typical, small group of solicitors working together in the type of offices that you can find on the major streets of any English town or city. Many law firms are set up as (f) _____. A new lawyer will usually work first as an (g) _____ of the firm and gain some experience while being paid a fixed salary before being offered the opportunity to become a (h) _____. A typical High Street solicitor usually specialises in a particular area of law, such as family, employment or commercial law. Many people believe that solicitors cannot act for their clients in (i) _____ but this is untrue. Thousands of solicitors appear in court every day, especially in the County Courts where most claims are (j) _____.

The second type of lawyer found in England is known as a barrister. Barristers are usually specialists in a very particular area of law. They give advice and opinions to solicitors and their clients. Barristers have the right of (k) _____ (the right to be heard by a judge) in all of the courts in the land. Barristers often share offices, known by the traditional name of 'chambers', although they usually work alone as individuals rather than in partnerships.

After several years of experience, members of either profession may apply to preside over cases and sit as a (l) _____. Within the English legal system a law student cannot take an exam to be a judge but has to wait to be appointed after some years of experience as a lawyer.

m

Collocation bank

- to **qualify** as a lawyer
- to **act for** a client
- to **sit** as a judge
- to **gain** some experience
- to **issue** a claim
- to **take** an exam

m

Preposition bank

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● to be known as something
'They are known as barristers.' ● to qualify as something
'She qualified as a lawyer two years ago.' ● to go into partnership with someone
'He is going to go into partnership with his brother.' | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● to specialise in something
'Tom specialises in commercial litigation.' ● to work in/for a business
'He works in a law firm but she works for a bank.' ● to preside over a case
'The insurance case has started and Judge Mortimer is presiding over it.' |
|--|---|

Exercise 2

Look at the solicitors' advertisements on the opposite page. Give the name and the telephone number of the firm of solicitors that I should call if I have the following legal problems.

- a I have reached the age of 50 and I am thinking about what I want to happen to my property after my death.
- b I want to begin a business importing electrical goods from one European Union country into another and I want to know what the rules are.
- c I am a woman who is angry that a man doing the same job in the factory where I work is paid more than I am.
- d I am a visitor to England from the USA. I came to work in London 18 months ago, with the permission of the British authorities. However, I only had permission to be here for a year and now I am afraid because I have broken the law.

Firm of solicitors	Telephone number
a	
b	
c	
d	

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*subject to assessment

Exercise 3

Find a word in the advertisements that matches the following definitions.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>a Not taking enough care over something that you are responsible for with the result that mistakes are made or someone is hurt.
The word is _____</p> <p>b The process of legally transferring the ownership of land or buildings from one person to another.
The word is _____</p> <p>c A situation where someone has to leave their job because they are no longer needed by their employer.
The word is _____</p> | <p>d An organisation that exists in order to collect money, food or goods and give them to people who need them.
The word is _____</p> <p>e The state of a business not having enough money to pay what it owes.
The word is _____</p> <p>f A person or company which pays rent to another person to allow them to live in or use land or buildings.
The word is _____</p> |
|--|---|

Exercise 4

Say whether the following statements about the advertisements are true or false.

- | | | |
|--|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| a If I invent a new type of water heater that I don't want anyone else to be able to copy, I should call 0771 777 5454. | <input type="checkbox"/> True | <input type="checkbox"/> False |
| b If I want to study law, I should call McCarthy Kyle & Co. | <input type="checkbox"/> True | <input type="checkbox"/> False |
| c Matthew Morrison will always accept any client on a no win no fee basis. | <input type="checkbox"/> True | <input type="checkbox"/> False |
| d The 1st Call Accident Centre specialises in the law of tort. | <input type="checkbox"/> True | <input type="checkbox"/> False |
| e Matthew Morrison deals with complaints about other solicitors. | <input type="checkbox"/> True | <input type="checkbox"/> False |

Collocation bank

- to **make** a will
- a **breach** of contract
- to be **made** redundant

m

Preposition bank

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">● to import goods from another country
'She imported her car from Belgium.'● to import goods into a country
'She imported her car into England.' | <ul style="list-style-type: none">● to take care over/with something
'Please take care over/with that document because it is very important.'● to deal with something or someone
'Could you please deal with Mr Jones for me as I am busy this morning?' |
|---|---|

m