



Unit 30 – Compound Words (*Bedroom.. Baby shower.. Brother-in-law..*)

A) In grammar, a compound refers to a word that is composed of two or more existing parts or elements. Adjectives, verbs, prepositions, and nouns can all be used to form compounds. For example, you may see a word such as ‘butterfly’ (noun), ‘multi-sided’ (adjective), ‘babysits’ (verb), or ‘outside’ (preposition) as compounds.

Compound Noun – a compound word that functions as a noun. The first part typically states the type or purpose, and the second part states who or what is being named. In the word *lighthouse*, the word ‘light’ refers to what type of house it is (one for guiding ships). The meaning of the word is different than either of its individual parts.

B) In English, there are three main ways that we form compound nouns:

i) Compound nouns as a single word – Formed by combining two words (from various parts of speech) together into a single word. Compare the following:

Parts of Speech	Examples
noun + noun	bedroom, lunchtime, boyfriend, mailman, firefighter, heartburn
verb + noun	bathroom, turntable, sweatshirt, swimsuit, chopsticks
adjective + noun	smartphone, loudspeaker, redhead, greenhouse, shorthand
preposition + noun	downtown, underworld, bystander, overtime, offshore
verb + preposition	breakdown, breakup, holdup, lookout, hangout, turnover

ii) Compound nouns as separate words – Formed by using two separate words that act together, as a single unit.

*Be careful with this type of compound noun as it may look like two separate words that aren’t used together.

Example: ‘hot dog’ refers to food (compound noun) / ‘hot dog’ can indicate an *actual dog* (not a compound noun):

noun + noun	baby shower, mountain bike, sweater vest, bus stop, fish tank
verb + noun	drive inn, search engine, flash flood, taste buds, post office
adjective + noun	quick fix, free trade, secret agent, close call, electric light

iii) Compound nouns with hyphens – very common in new or seldomly used words. If a compound noun contains more than two words, it will almost certainly contain hyphens. Compare:

up-to-date, brother-in-law, court-martial, state-of-the-art, city-state, president-elect, pre-dinner, non-starter

iv) Other notable compound combinations:

verb + preposition	believe(s) in, ask(s) for, rel(ies) on, laugh(s) at	<i>open</i>
noun + preposition	hanger(s)-on, passer(s)-by, runner(s)-up	<i>hyphenated</i>
noun + verb	sunrise(s), sunset(s), phone call(s)	<i>closed; sometimes open</i>

C) Plural Compound Nouns – the rules regarding plural compounds really depend on the compound itself:

i) first noun plural only – **savings account / customs officer / clothes shop / glasses case / arts festival**

ii) second noun plural – **office worker(s) / mountain bike(s) / sweater vest(s) / bus stop(s) / trade union(s)**

Note: -> in most separated compounds, the second noun is plural

When we refer to possession (‘s), we often use an apostrophe after the first noun:

-> **boys’ school / birds’ nest / lion’s den / baby’s bedroom / goat’s milk / girl’s arm / man’s face**

We often use a (noun + preposition + noun) to describe a type of container with contents in it:

-> **cup(s) of coffee / container(s) of juice**

You may also see certain technical items such as: **pen top / computer keyboard / tv remote control**

Note: -> Plural nouns ending in *ful*: -> **spoonful(s) / cupful(s) / handful(s) / bagful(s) / mouthful(s) / truckful(s)**



Unit 30 – Exercises:

30.1 – First, form compound nouns by matching the elements together from each box. Then, read the definitions and choose the most appropriate compound noun for each sentence. (30-A/B)

~~lap~~ / bank / web / brain / first / pass / over / co- / feed
dead / human / credit / business / travel / share

holder / storm / card / seas / resources / loan / back
agency / trip / port / class / ~~top~~ / worker / site / line

- a size and design that makes using it on my lap convenient _____ **laptop** _____
- reaction to a product or a person's performance, that is used to improve _____
- a small plastic card issued by a bank to purchase products on credit _____
- a set of related web pages located under a single domain name _____
- an official document, certifying a person's citizenship and allow travel _____
- a sum of money borrowed by a customer or business from a bank _____
- a spontaneous group discussion to produce ideas and solve problems _____
- a person who owns shares in a company and also gets part of the profits _____
- the latest time or date by which something should be completed _____
- a person who you work with, especially someone in a similar position _____
- the best quality accommodations in a train or other forms of transport _____
- a journey made for work purposes, usually involving travel of distance _____
- relating to a foreign country, especially one across an ocean _____
- an agency that arranges and sells transportation, tours, etc. for travelers _____
- the part of an organization that deals with hiring and training of people _____

30.2 – Determine if the italicized words in each sentence are correct. If not, correct them. (30-B/C)

- My sister really *believes in* maintaining excellent physical and mental well-being. Every morning, she starts off her day with a glass of *goats milk* with two *spoonsful* of protein powder.
- We were shocked after receiving *phone calls* from our bank to confirm that my father's *saving accounts* was suddenly missing money. The *banking officer's* assured my father, however, that they would take responsibility.
- Have you ever experienced an emergency *over seas*? One such incident happened to my *coworkers* just last week. They were riding their *mountain bikes* in the countryside of Peru when a small *earthquake* suddenly caused *land slides* on the mountain above them. Fortunately, both of them survived to tell the story!
- One of the office *personal assistant's* really stands out as an exceptional member of our team. She always meets her *dead lines*, and has even been requested by the *chair man* to support him in the *boardroom*.

30.3 – Underline the **phrasal verb** in sentences #1-4, and then complete sentence #5-8 with the corresponding **compound noun**. (30-A/B)

- One of my jobs at the school festival was to hand out the prizes to the kids who won the games.
- We're going to meet up with some of my old friends after work. Would you like to join us?
- On her last day, the children all hugged Ms. Smith and begged her to come back soon.
- Although some people cannot fall asleep on their back, others find it easier to get to sleep if they turn over.
- The basketball team made an incredible _____ last night and won a thrilling game in overtime!
- Once a year, our company schedules a _____ in a nice location outside of the office.
- Factory _____ is up this year, meaning all employees will receive an annual bonus!
- My teacher often gives us handouts after class with the lesson notes on them.

30.4 – Write out a sentence of your own using the compound noun and related vocabulary provided. (30-B)

- outbreak / Corona virus - _____.
- election / outcome - _____.
- storm / blackout - _____.