

Chapter One

Lesson One

Quite a few – Quite a number of (Quite a lot)

Examples:

- *We've got **quite a few** Americans working here.*
- *I'd like to order another one hundred boxes of red wine; we sold **quite a number of** them last summer.*

It should be noted that **Quite a few** is used for countable nouns only, whilst for uncountable nouns one could use **Quite a bit of**:

- e.g. 1. *They had **quite a bit of** money in their Clients' Account.*
2. *Don't worry, there's **quite a bit of** time left yet.*

Quite a bit (and **Quite a lot**) can also mean **quite often**:

- e.g. *I've been to Japan **quite a bit** this year.*

Also note the use of **Quite a while** which means for **quite a long time**,

- e.g. 1. *I've been studying English for **quite a while** now.*
2. A: *How long are you intending to stay here?*
B: *I'm not sure but probably **quite a while**.*

Ages (A very long time)

Examples:

- *I meet your brother **quite a bit** these days but I haven't seen your sister in/for* **ages**.*
- *It seems **ages** since I was last here.*

* **In** would only be used after a negative or superlative construction,

- e.g. *It's the **best** film I've seen **in** ages.*

But not in the future, i.e. we would **not** say: *We won't arrive **in** ages.*

Well off (Rich)

Examples:

- *He is so **well off**, he doesn't know what to spend his money on.*
- *If I were as **well off** as she is, I'd retire.*

Well off does not necessarily have to refer to money; it can also be used in respect of opportunities, facilities etc.,

- e.g. *Young people today don't know how **well off** they are.*
i.e. children nowadays do not appreciate the opportunities which are open to them and which were not available to their parents.

Better off is the comparative form of **Well off**, i.e. **richer**.

- e.g. *He is far **better off** than I am.*

However, it can also be used to mean "It would be/it is better for you, him, it, etc.",

- e.g. 1. You'd be **better off** going on the motorway than taking a country route, if you want to arrive there by 6 o'clock.
2. She's **better off** without her husband; he made her life a misery.

Note that this meaning of **Better off** is still used in the comparative sense. This construction should not be confused with **Had better** which is a slightly stronger form of **should**,

- e.g. **I'd better** go now; I've got quite a few things to do.

The opposite of **Better off** is **Worse off**, i.e. **poorer**.

- e.g. Even though my brother has been working for quite a number of years, he is **worse off** than me.

To hear of (To be familiar with/to know the existence of/to recognise the name of a person, thing or situation – usually famous in a particular field of entertainment, art or profession)

Examples:

- Have you ever **heard of** a company called ABC Limited?
- I'm surprised you've never **heard of** him; he's quite well-off.
- Before we came to London, we had never **heard of** this type of crime.*

To hear and **To hear of**, therefore, have different meanings and it is quite possible to **hear of** a musician without ever having **heard** him or her play.

* i.e. We never knew that this type of crime occurred.

To hear about

i. (To hear, find out what has happened to someone)

Example:

- **A:** Have you **heard about** John?
B: No, tell me.
A: Unfortunately he has lost his job.

ii. (To find out about something)

Examples:

- I found this school in the Yellow Pages.
How did you **hear about/of*** it?
- I was very happy to **hear about/of*** the recent addition to your family.

* Note that **To hear of** can be used in the same way as **To hear about** for this meaning only.

iii. (To receive information about someone/something from somebody else – e.g. reputation, character etc.)

Examples:

- At long last we have met; I've **heard** quite a bit **about** you.
- I'm surprised you haven't **heard** more **about** our company; we've got quite a reputation.*

*There is a slight difference between the above sentence and "I'm surprised you haven't **heard of** that company....." which means that the person being spoken to does not know that the company exists. The sentence above (**about**), on the other hand, suggests that the person is aware of the company's existence but knows nothing more about it.

To hear from (To receive news, communication from someone)

Examples:

- *I haven't **heard from** him in ages.*
- **A:** *When was the last time you **heard from** your daughter?*
B: *Oh, quite a while ago.*

Fussy (Difficult to please, not easily satisfied)

Examples:

- *Tell me what you want to eat before I make dinner because I know you're a **fussy** eater/how **fussy** you are.*
- *She's not very **fussy** about whom she goes out with, providing he's well-off.*

Note also the words **Choosy**, **Particular** and **Picky** which have the same meaning as **Fussy**.

To make a fuss (To complain, to be difficult, i.e. a person, not a thing)

Examples:

- *If I'm in a restaurant and the service is slow, I can't help making a **fuss**.*
- *I do wish you'd stop making a **fuss** and continue with your work.*

Do not confuse this expression with **To make a fuss of** / **To fuss over** which means to show affection towards a person or animal, to give someone a lot of care and attention.

- e.g.
1. *My dog loves to **be made a fuss of/fussed over**.*
 2. *We've stayed in quite a few hotels recently where the staff **made** too much **fuss of** us.*

Stale (Unfresh – e.g. bread, biscuits or air)

Examples:

- **In a restaurant:**
*Waiter, sorry to make a fuss, but this bread is **stale**.*
- *I think I'd better open the window in the conference room; it's a bit **stale*** in there.*
- *Can you remind me of how the company's accounts system works?
I am sorry, my mind is a little **stale** on this matter.^o*

Note the word **Stalemate** which describes the situation where neither side in a dispute or negotiations can progress or win,

- e.g. *It's clear that we've reached a **stalemate**; we'd be better off starting again.*

*The word **Stuffy** is probably more common as far as air is concerned.

^o i.e. *I have forgotten how it works.*

To go off

i. (To go bad – food/milk)

Examples:

- *This milk smells like it has **gone off**/it's **off**.*
- *Don't be so fussy! I'm sure those sausages haven't **gone off**/aren't **off**.*

ii. (To ring – alarm clock/bell)

Examples:

- *My alarm clock **went off** an hour earlier than it was supposed to this morning.*
- *You'd be better off without a car alarm; they're always **going off** at the wrong time.*

Note that **To go off** can only be used for an alarm and not, for example, for the telephone or a doorbell. One could, however, say *I wasn't happy when the phone **went** at six o'clock this morning.*

iii. (To explode, to fire, i.e. a bomb or a gun)

Examples:

- *Have you heard about that bomb which **went off** in the city centre yesterday?*
- *He claims that the gun **went off** accidentally, but I've heard about his past and I'm a bit suspicious.*

iv. (To stop liking something or someone) **Colloquial**

Examples:

- *I've **gone off** her coffee. I think we'd all be better off if she just offered us tea.*
- *She **went off** her last boyfriend after hearing about his past relationships.*
- *I'm **going off** the idea* of doing business with them, they're far too fussy!*

* i.e. *I'm changing my mind about*

v. (To be sent – a letter or a fax – often used in the office)

Example:

- *Quite a number of letters **went off** this morning but they won't arrive for ages because of the strike.*

vi. (To leave for a particular place, to travel around)

Examples:

- **On the telephone:**
*I'm sorry, you've missed her; she **went (off)** to work quite a while ago.*
- *I heard about your journey; you **went (off)** round the world, didn't you?*

vii. (To be switched off/to stop working – usually something powered by electricity or gas)

Example:

- *This room smells stale because the air conditioning **went off** during the night.**

* Compare with ...the air conditioning **is off**, which means that it was not switched on in the first place.

To get one's own back on someone/To get someone back (To get one's revenge)

Examples:

- *It's no use making a fuss of him. He still wants to **get his own back on you/to get you back** for what you did to him last week.*
- *I've heard that the bomb which went off near the police station was planted by a terrorist organisation, trying to get **their own back** for recent arrests.*

Compare with **To get/come back to someone on/with something** which means to come back to someone **on** a particular matter or **with** the information they require. It is usually used on the telephone,

- e.g.
1. *I'm sorry I don't have the details **on** me now. Would you mind if I **got/came back to you** later (on that matter)?*
 2. *Can you **get/come back to me with** their phone number this afternoon; I want to make a fuss about the stale food they sent us.*

May/Might as well

i. (One should do something only because there is nothing better to do)

Examples:

- *We **may as well** go to John's place again, unless you can think of something more interesting to do.*
- **A:** *Shall we go off to work now?:*
B: *I suppose we **might as well**.*

Might as well and **May as well** are interchangeable, but it is very important to understand the difference between **May/Might as well** and **May/Might**. The difference between *We may/might go to the pub* and *We may/might as well go to the pub* is that the first sentence expresses a **possibility** – *Maybe we won't go*, whilst the second sentence expresses a **suggestion** to go to the pub, but only because there is nothing better to do. This meaning of **May as well**, therefore, has a negative feel about it.

ii. (There is no harm in/it's worthwhile doing something)

Examples:

- **A:** *Do you think I should take a pullover with me to Greece?*
B: *Well you probably won't need it but you **might as well** take it just in case.*
- *Even though I've got quite a number of dictionaries at home, I **might as well** buy this one as it's so cheap.*

i.e. *You will lose nothing so therefore it's worth doing.*

iii. (It would be the same/it wouldn't make any difference, so therefore one should do the easier or cheaper thing)

Examples:

- *As the weather is so hot and sunny this year, I've gone off the idea of going abroad; I **may as well** stay in England.*
- *The office party was so boring, I **might as well** have remained* at home.*

This form of **Might as well** is generally used where one has a choice of two or more things which are of similar quality and, because of this, one should choose the most convenient one.

* Note that the past of I **might/may as well** is I **may/might as well have** [+ past participle].

To do up

i. (To tie up, button up, fasten, e.g. zip)

Examples:

- *I don't want to make a fuss, but you'd better **do** your shirt **up** before meeting the boss.*
- **A:** *Do you want me to give you a hand in **doing up** your dress?*
B: *Yes, you may as well.*

The opposite of **To do up** is **To undo**,

- e.g.
1. *Would you mind if I **undid** my jacket?*
 2. *Your shoelaces are **undone**!*

ii. (To decorate, renovate)

Examples:

- *If we don't go away this summer, we might as well **do** the house **up**.*
- *It's been ages since we last had our house **done up**.*



*"I don't want to make a fuss, but you'd better **do** your shirt **up** before meeting the boss."*
(see Page 6)

Chapter One

Lesson Two

To take after (To be similar to an elder member of the same family – usually in character rather than in appearance)

Examples:

- *My daughter likes to be made a fuss of; she **takes after** me in that respect.*
- *You **take after** your grandfather; he also used to go off people quickly.*

To bet (to be almost certain something will or will not happen) **Colloquial**

Examples:

- *I **bet** you won't be able to do up the bathroom yourself.*
- *A: He says that he'll be better off than all of us in a few years.
B: I wouldn't **bet on it!***

The literal meaning of the verb **To bet** is to put money on something happening; e.g. the winner of a race, competition or a match,

e.g. *I **bet** £10 on Liverpool winning the cup this year.*

Also note the informal expression *Do you want a bet?* which means that the speaker is challenging something someone else has just said,

e.g. *A: I'll get my own back on you one day
B: Do you want a bet?*

What's the point? (What's the use/purpose, what for?)

Examples:

- ***What's the point in/of** coming to England, if you don't want to meet English people? You may as well stay in your own country.*
- *A: Shall we employ another Accounts Clerk?
B: **What's the point?** We've already got quite a few.*

We can also use **Point** in a negative form with **There is** i.e. "It's useless, a waste of time",

e.g. ***There's no point (in)** speaking to him; he takes after his father, in that he never listens to anything anyone says.*

Also be careful not to confuse this expression with *What's the point you are trying to make?* which means, *What are you trying to say?*

To tread (To step on something)

Examples:

- *When I was in the army, I had to be careful not **to tread** on unexploded bombs in case they went off.*
- *You've just **trodden on** my clean floor with your dirty shoes. I'll get you back for this!*

The paradigm of **To tread** is “tread, trod, trodden” and is always followed by the preposition **on** unless it is a liquid or something like a liquid, in which case **in** must be used,

e.g. *Some children enjoy **treading in** puddles after it has been raining.*

Also note that **To tread** can be used in a figurative sense with people, meaning to treat people as though they do not matter;

e.g. *Just because she is well-off, she thinks she can **tread on** everyone.*

This meaning of **To tread** is only used to describe a person's general attitude or character towards others and not for an action against one person. For example, one would **not** say *She trod on me yesterday.*

Overdraft, To be/go overdrawn (An agreement with a bank to be able to withdraw money in excess of one's account, to withdraw more money from the bank than one has in one's account)

Examples:

- *Instead of relying on your **overdraft** facility, you'd be better off **taking out** a loan.*
- *I bet she won't be able to clear her **overdraft** by the end of the year.**
- Letter from a bank:
Dear Mr Smith,
*It has come to our attention that your account is **overdrawn**[°] in the sum of £200[†].*

* i.e. *I'm sure she won't be able to pay back the money she owes the bank.*

[°] Note that in conversation, it is more common to say *I'm overdrawn* than *My account is overdrawn*.

[†] The phrase *in the sum of* is very often used in formal letters concerning money. In spoken English, one would normally use **by**.

To look forward to (To wait with pleasure)

Examples:

- *I was really **looking forward to** seeing* Alice; I hadn't heard from her in ages.*
- *A: We're going to start doing up our new house next week.*
*B: Are you **looking forward to** it?**
- *I'm not **looking forward to**[°] receiving my bank statement; I must be overdrawn by at least £500.*

* This expression is extremely common in written and spoken English. In the final paragraph of a letter, either formal or informal, we often write, *I look forward to hearing from you soon*. It is important to note the irregular construction, i.e. "**Look forward to + gerund**" (not infinitive) or we can simply use a noun or it,

e.g. *I am looking forward to **Christmas**.*

One should also be careful not to make the common mistake of confusing *To look forward to* with *To look for* which means to search for,

e.g. *I'm **looking for** my glasses. I hope no one has trodden on them.*

° Note that when *Look Forward To* is used in the negative, it still means the event **is** going to happen (i.e. the bank statement is definitely going to arrive) but the speaker is **not** happy about it.

e.g. *I'm not **looking forward to** going out tonight.*

This means the person **is** going out, but would rather not.

Day off (A day's holiday)

Examples:

- *Can we get back to you tomorrow? The person dealing with this matter has got the **day off** today.*
- *I have two extra **days off** next month. I'm really looking forward to them!*

Do not confuse **Day off** with *Off-day* which means a bad day or a day in which one does not perform as well as one usually does,

e.g. 1. *I would have bet a million pounds on her passing her exams but she failed.*

*She must have had an **off-day**.*

2. *The captain of the football team is having an **off-day**; he might as well not have played!*

One should also note that **Off-day** can only be used with the auxiliary verb **To have**, i.e. one cannot say *It's an off-day*.

Finally, one should note that although people often use a *week off*, a *month off* or a *year off*, etc. *Off-week* and *Off-month* are not so common.

To show off (To show that one is very proud of one's abilities, achievements or possessions, to boast)

Examples:

- *I don't want to **show off** but I must tell you that I came first in all my exams when I was at university.*
- *One tennis player to another:
Just because I'm having an off-day today, (it) doesn't mean you have to **show off** in front of everyone watching.*
- *It's surprising his friends haven't gone off him, after the way* he keeps **showing off** his new car.*

Show-off can also be used as a noun, i.e. a person who shows off,

e.g. *I am looking forward to getting my own back on that **show-off**.*

We can also say that someone is a *big-head* (noun) or that he or she is *big-headed* (adjective).

* Note that *After the way* means considering, as a consequence of. It very often follows *It is (not) surprising*.

Posh (Upper class, sophisticated) Colloquial

Examples:

- *There's no point (in) speaking with a **posh** accent; they can tell where you really come from.*
- *You can undo your jacket. This restaurant isn't that* **posh**.*

* If **that** is stressed, it means the restaurant is **posh**, but not as much as the person thinks. If, on the other hand, **that** is not stressed, it means the restaurant is not **posh** at all.

Turnover

- i. (The total amount of money/income that a business receives during a certain period of time)

Examples:

- *A **turnover** of a million pounds should help to clear our overdraft.*
- *Have you heard them showing off about how much their **turnover** has increased this year?*

Note that the profit of a company is its turnover less its expenses.

- ii. (The speed, rate at which staff* join and leave a company/business etc.)

Examples:

- *The company has such a high **turnover** of staff^o that I hardly recognise anyone from week to week.*
- *I've gone off the idea of spending more money on advertising for new employees. What we really need to do is reduce our **turnover** of staff.*

* Note that one could have a high **turnover** of students at a school, meaning that there is a constant flow of students.

^o i.e. *There are so many people coming and going.*



*“There’s no point in speaking with a **posh** accent; they can tell where you really come from.”*

Chapter One

Lesson Three

To cope with (To be able to tolerate, manage, bear a situation or person)

Examples:

- *Sometimes I think I'd be better off without a job:
I can't **cope with** this one any longer.*
- *I'm really looking forward to my parents going away.
I can hardly **cope with** them at the moment.*

Note the verb **To handle** which has the same meaning as **To cope with** but is also used to express the idea of dealing with something or someone,

- e.g.
1. *I've got the day off tomorrow. Would you mind **handling** this matter?*
 2. *It's OK, I'll **handle** Mr Jones – I'm dying to get my own back on him.*

To handle is probably more colloquial than **To cope with**. One should also note that **To handle** always requires an object. This is not necessarily the case with **To cope with**, although the preposition **with** is dropped.

- e.g.
1. *How is he **coping**?*
 2. *I can't **cope**.*
 3. *How is he **handling** it?*
 4. *I can't **handle** it.*

To come/go over

i. (To come/go to someone's house) **Colloquial**

Examples:

- *Would you like to **come over*** tomorrow, as you've got the day off?*
- *I'm **going over** to Peter's* tonight to help him do up his bathroom.*

* Note that it is not necessary to mention the word **house**.

ii. (To visit from abroad the country where the speaker is situated – **To come over**, to visit another country for a specific purpose – **To go over***)

Examples:

- *My wife's parents are **coming over** from France for a month.
I don't think I'll be able to **cope**!*
- *I'm really looking forward to you **coming over** and seeing me.*
- *We heard about your trip. Didn't you **go over** to see your son in Italy?*

* Note that **To go over** (not **To come over**) also means to revise, check, explain/discuss,

- e.g.
1. *I'm not looking forward to **going over** that subject again with them.
We always end up arguing.*
 2. *I'll get back to you tomorrow and we can **go over** it together.*

- iii. (To happen to someone, to make someone do or say something strange or out of character – generally used with *I don't know what* or *I wonder what*)*

Examples:

- A: *Just because you've gone off him, there's no need to behave like that.*
B: *Yes you're right – I don't know what **came over** me.*
- *It's most unusual for my son to call me three times in the same week; I wonder what has **come over** him.*

- iv. (To give a certain impression – generally the first one – i.e. a person or what a person says)*

Examples:

- *He **comes over** as a real show-off but actually he's quite shy.*
- *I know you didn't mean to sound ungrateful, but that's how it **came over** to us.*

- v. (To be successfully communicated, understood – e.g. a message, idea, speech or way of expressing oneself)*

Examples:

- *I could understand what he was saying about the company's turnover, but I don't know if it **came over** to the other Directors.*
- *I've been going off him recently and besides, his style of humour doesn't really **come over** very well on television.*

* Note that only **To come over** and not **To go over** can be used for these three meanings. However, **To come across** has the same meanings as **iv.** and **v.** above.

To come round (To wake up* after an operation or fainting, to regain consciousness)[°]

Examples:

- *We might as well stay at home instead of going to the hospital. He still hasn't **come round** (from the operation).*
- *I couldn't handle the heat yesterday and I fainted but I soon **came round** again.*

To come/go round can be used interchangeably with **To come/go over** to mean to come or to go to someone's house (see Page 12).

* **To come round** does *not* mean to recover. This is something that one would hope to do in the week following the operation – *after* one has **come round**.

[°] Note that **To come to** has the same meaning as **To come round** in this sense only.

To come round to (To agree with something eventually – often after a lot of persuasion, to accept the idea of something when it can be seen that there is no alternative)

Examples:

- *The other partners don't agree with our plan at the moment but when they see how much turnover we are losing, I'm sure they'll **come round to** it.*
- *She can't cope with the thought of moving so soon after her husband's death, but give her a couple of months and she'll almost certainly **come round to** the idea.*

To ask/have round/over

i. (To invite to one's house) Colloquial

Examples:

- *I used to like her friends but now I've gone off the idea of **asking/having them round**.*
- *I'm sorry the place is in a mess, but we **asked/had** some friends **over** last night.*

To have is generally not used in the imperative, i.e. it would be more common to say *Ask him round tonight!* Also note the possible difference between *I asked them round/over last night* and *I had them over/round last night*. The first sentence does not tell us whether or not the people actually came, only that they were invited. The second sentence, however, assures us that not only were the people invited but they did actually come. In the second example above, we know the people came because the place was in a mess.

ii. (To ask for information, to enquire about something from various people)

Examples:

- *I don't know if what you're saying will come over very well to my colleagues but I'll **ask round** (the office) just in case anyone is interested in attending your conference.*
- *Can you **ask round** (your circle of friends) to see if there's any accommodation available? It doesn't have to be anything too posh.*

Note that only **To ask round** can be used for this meaning and *not* **To ask over** or **To have round/over**.

Reluctant (Unwilling, unhappy about doing something)

Examples:

- *After the way he behaved, I'm **reluctant** to ask him round again.*
- *I'll try to get back to you on it tomorrow but I must warn you that the boss is **reluctant** to let us give out information over the phone.*

Note the difference between *I was reluctant to go to the party* and *I reluctantly went to the party*. The first sentence means the person did not want to go to the party, but we do not know whether or not he actually went. *I reluctantly went to the party* tells us for sure that the person attended the party, even though he had no desire to do so.

To turn up

i. (To increase the volume, power)

Examples:

- *What's the point of **turning up** the radio?
You're not listening to it anyway.*
- *Can you **turn up** the heating please?
I take after my mother, in that I'm always cold.*

ii. (To arrive/come)

Examples:

- *I'm sorry I didn't **turn up** yesterday but
I had to go over to my brother's.*
- *Thanks for asking us round.
What time do you want us to **turn up**?*

iii. (To appear – often something/someone which has been lost or is difficult to find)

Examples:

- *A: Has your watch **turned up** yet?
B: No, I think I left it on the train. I don't know what came over me.*
- *I know you've been looking for a job for ages now, but don't worry,
I'm sure something will **turn up**.*

Remember, it is the lost object that does the **turning up** and not the person looking for it. Therefore, one cannot say *I **turned up** my pen yesterday*, but *My pen **turned up** yesterday*.

Also note the word **Upturn** which means a positive change, an improvement, usually in business or the economy of a country,

e.g. *The Minister was reluctant to admit that an **upturn** in trade was not likely in the near future.*

A turn-up for the books (A great surprise)

Examples:

- *I couldn't believe it when I heard about his appointment as
Managing Director. What a **turn-up for the books**!*
- *After making a fuss for so long, it was a real **turn-up for the books**
for my mother-in-law to agree to come over from Italy to see us.*

To turn down

i. (To decrease the volume, power)

Examples:

- *Can you please **turn** the stereo **down**? I can't cope with all that noise.*
- *There's no point in **turning** the air conditioning **down**; you might as well turn it off.*

Note **To keep down** would be used for voices and noise.

e.g. ***Keep** your voices **down**. This is a very posh restaurant.*

ii. (To refuse, reject an offer, invitation, application, request)

Examples:

- *Reluctantly, the university had to **turn down** his application.*
- *We've asked them round quite a few times, but they've always **turned us down**.*
- **A:** *If I promise to have the house done up, will you marry me?*
B: *Look, I'm not **turning you down**, but give me time to come round to the idea.*

Note that **Downturn** is the opposite of **Upturn** (see Page 15, above), i.e. a negative change in the economy, trade etc,

e.g. *His speech about the economy taking a **downturn** came over quite clearly to the bankers at the conference.*

To afford (To have enough money to buy something/time to do something)

Examples:

- *On my salary, I don't think I will be able to **afford** such a posh car.*
- *There's no point (in) (my) having guitar lessons; I can't **afford*** the time.*

* If we mean money, it is not necessary to mention the word **money** but if we mean **time**, we must state it,

e.g. *I can't **afford** to go to the cinema = money;*
*I can't **afford the time** to go to the cinema = time.*

We can also use **To afford** to mean it wouldn't be advisable/sensible/it would be stupid to do something, otherwise you may suffer;

- e.g.
1. *You can't **afford** to turn down an offer like that.*
 2. *I'm not very keen on mobile telephones but, in my business, I can't **afford** not to have one.*

Handy

i. (Useful, convenient)

Examples:

- *You must be really looking forward to moving; it'll be so **handy** living near the station.*
- *You may as well take an umbrella with you; you never know when it'll come in* **handy**.*
- *When your sister goes over to Japan, can you ask her to bring back one of those **handy** personal computers?*
- *A: There's a very affordable French restaurant around the corner.
B: Oh, that's **handy** to know!*

* i.e. when you're going to need it.

ii. (Nearby, with me/you etc.)

Example:

- *I don't appear to have his number **handy**.
I'll have to get back to you with it this afternoon.*

Note that when **Handy** comes after the noun, it means **nearby**. Compare *Have you got a **handy** dictionary?* (i.e. useful) with *Have you got a dictionary **handy**?* (i.e. nearby).

To own up (To confess, admit guilt/ignorance, responsibility or incapability)

Examples:

- *The Government will never **own up** to being responsible for the downturn in the economy.*
- *When the young boy comes round after his operation, the police are going to try to persuade him to **own up** to the robbery.*
- *There's no point (in) trying to hide it; you might as well **own up** to the fact that you've no idea what you're doing.*

To go on

i. (To continue, go ahead, last)

Examples:

- *I'm just going to turn down the television; please **go on** (with what you were saying).*
- *We can't **go on** like this! I can barely* handle it.*
- *This programme is very handy. It tells you exactly how long the show **goes on** for.*

* **Barely** means the same as **Hardly** and is therefore negative.

ii. (To happen)

Examples:

- *Unfortunately, he was reluctant to tell us what was **going on**/had **gone on**.*
- *It was a turn-up for the books. I didn't know there was so much **going on*** in this little town.*

Note that this meaning of **To go on** is not generally used in the future. For example, one would **not** say *What do you think will go on?*

* i.e. *there were so many things to do, a lot of entertainment.*

iii. (To keep talking about something, complaining, or asking someone to do something)

Examples:

- *I wish you'd stop **going on** about it; I've already apologised twenty times for turning up late!*
- *I'm sorry to **go on** at you, but could you please turn your stereo down?*
- *I'm going to **go on** at the Directors until they come round to my way of thinking.*

iv. (To rely on as proof, to judge a situation after having seen or heard something relating to it)

Examples:

- *As no one had owned up, the police had nothing more **to go on** than a blood-stained handkerchief.*
- *We really need something more concrete to **go on** before we can go on* with our enquiries*
- *I'm only **going on** what I've seen/heard but I have a strong feeling that she is going to turn down his marriage proposal.*

* Note that it is not considered to be good style to repeat a word in a sentence. It is done here merely to show the different meanings of **To go on**.

- v. (To go to another place after the one in question, to proceed to the next level or stage)

Examples:

- A: *What are you doing on your day off?*
B: *Well, I'm going round to my mother's in the morning and then I'll probably **go on** to Sue's in the afternoon.*
- Wife to husband:
W: *Come on, own up! What did you really do after the meeting?*
H: *I told you; we **went on** to a Chinese restaurant.*
- *It was a turn-up for the books that he passed his advanced exams. We didn't think he was ready to **go on** to this level.*



*"I'm sorry to **go on** at you, but could you please turn your stereo down?"*
(see Page 18)

Chapter One in Use

TELEPHONE CONVERSATION BETWEEN TWO FRIENDS:

JANE: *Hi Anne, it's Jane.*

ANNE: *Hello, it's been ages since I last heard from you. How are you?*

JANE: *Not too well, actually. I've had the flu for about a month. I take after my mum; she's always ill.*

ANNE: *Hadn't you better call the doctor?*

JANE: *I'm rather reluctant to do that, and anyway there's no point. He can't help me.*

ANNE: *Yes, but you may as well see him. You could go on your day off.*

JANE: *I suppose so. I don't think I could cope with another month like the last one. I think you are much better at handling illness than I am... Anyway, what's been going on in your life?*

ANNE: *I've just found a new flat. Actually, it's in a very posh street.*

JANE: *Show off! I bet it's lovely.*

ANNE: *Well, you know how choosy I am and I'm much better off than I was a few years ago so I can afford to live in such an area. You'll have to come round when I've got the place done up.*

JANE: *I'd love to. Incidentally, did your cat turn up? I asked round everyone at work but no-one had seen it.*

ANNE: *Oh yes. He soon came back. He missed being made a fuss of and was fed up having to survive on stale food.*

JANE: *What a turn up for the books! I thought he was gone forever..... I'm just going to turn down the television. Hold on a second!*

ANNE: *OK.*

JANE: *Did you know, Manuel's parents are coming over from Spain next month? I'm quite looking forward to it. I'd like to ask you over; they'd love to meet you. It will be very handy having his mum here. She's a wonderful cook.*

ANNE: *Great! Unfortunately if it's next month, I'll have to turn you down. I'm going off to France for a few weeks. Peter has a flat in the South and I thought instead of increasing my overdraft by going to the Caribbean, I might as well go to France again, even though I've been there quite a bit this year.*

- JANE: You lucky thing!..... I've just remembered; I still haven't got my **own back on** you for **going on** to my Mum about how I've **gone off** her cooking. You shouldn't have told her.
- ANNE: Oh stop **making a fuss!** She asked me why you always **go on** to a Chinese restaurant directly after eating her dinner. I thought **what's the point in lying?** I'm sorry if I **came over as** being rather rude.
- JANE: Don't worry. I was going to **own up to** her anyway. Would you like to **come over** tomorrow night, or are you busy?
- ANNE: I have a few letters which must **go off** by Friday but I'd love to see you. What time shall I **turn up?**
- JANE: Well, if you've got nothing better to do, you **may as well come over** to my place for dinner at about seven.
- ANNE: Lovely. See you tomorrow at seven.

DIRECTORS' MEETING

- 1st DIR: Before we discuss the fall in this year's **turnover**, there are a couple of points I'd like to **go over**. Firstly, I must thank John for fixing the computer system when it suddenly **went off** last week. His in-depth knowledge of computers has really **come in handy**. However, we **can't afford** to let this happen again.
- 2nd DIR: I didn't **hear about** this. What's been **going on?**
- 1st DIR: We **can't afford the time** to go into details now, but I think some of the staff were all having an **off-day** at the same time and all I'm saying is that we **can't go on** like this.
- 3rd DIR: I think we'd be **better off** without a few of them. I know it's not always good policy to increase the **turnover** of staff, but if we want to reverse the **downturn** in trade we've been experiencing, we have to improve the quality of our staff.
- 2nd DIR: I wish somebody would tell me what all the **fuss** is about.
- 3rd DIR: Well, if you had **turned up** to our last three meetings, you'd have been aware of the **stalemate** we've reached.
- 2nd DIR: What on earth has **come over** you?
- 1st DIR: Now calm down!..... Wait a minute. I can hear the fire alarm **going off**. We'd **better go over** to the other office.

CONVERSATION BETWEEN MOTHER AND CHILD:

- CHILD: Mum, have you *heard about* John?
- MOTHER: No, what happened to him?
- CHILD: Well, he was *going off* to night school when he saw a firework lying in the road. Not thinking that it was alive, he *trod on* it and the thing *went off* and burnt his leg. He was taken to hospital where they told him it might be *quite a while* before he can walk properly again.
- MOTHER: You see, I've been telling you for *ages* how dangerous fireworks are. Have you *come round to* my way of thinking now?
- CHILD: Not really, it was his fault for *treading on* the firework..... Oh yes, Mum?
- MOTHER: What, my dear?
- CHILD: That cheese you gave me for lunch yesterday had *gone off*.
- MOTHER: Really?
- CHILD: Either that or the bread was *stale*.
- MOTHER: Impossible! You're just too *fussy*.....Oh, by the way: have you seen the *handy* camera your dad has just bought?
- CHILD: Wow! He must have *quite a number* of them by now.
- MOTHER: At least 5.
- CHILD: Can I go out and play football with Peter now?
- MOTHER: Only if you *do* your shoelaces *up*.
- CHILD: OK. Bye.

Chapter One: Exercise

CHOOSE THE CORRECT WORD FROM THOSE IN BLUE

Answers on page 204.

TWO BUSINESS ASSOCIATES MEET IN THE PUB AFTER WORK:

- STEPHEN: *Hello Trevor, I haven't seen you for ¹(long time/few/ages/year).*
- TREVOR: *Yes, it must be quite a ²(number/often/few/while). I heard ³(about/of/from/with) your promotion. Were you expecting it or was it a ⁴(put/turn/keep/do) up for the ⁵(road/day/books/ time)?*
- STEPHEN: *I must ⁶(own/take/speak/break) up, I was quite shocked. I had applied for a promotion last year but I was ⁷(turned/had/brought/put) down. I didn't think there was any ⁸(reason/point/ideas/ excuse) in applying again this year; I'd be ⁹(well/worse/good/better) off getting a job elsewhere. However, I ¹⁰(arrived/ran/turned/left) up to work last Tuesday and found a memo from the boss asking me to see him as soon as possible. I was a bit ¹¹(unpleasant/pleased/happy/reluctant) to go to his office because I thought he was going to make a ¹²(complain/fussy/noise/fuss) about some work which I had recently done for him. However, he greeted me with the words, 'Well done, Stephen, your sales have helped us double last year's ¹³(turnover/expenses/tax/loss), and we would like to reward you with a promotion.*
- TREVOR: *You must have been delighted.*
- STEPHEN: *Well, I wasn't quite sure of its significance. He told me I'd have to move to our City office, but actually this is quite ¹⁴(boring/useless/handy/particular) for me because it's a direct line from where I live.*
- TREVOR: *And you must be a lot ¹⁵(richer/better/poorer/well) off financially.*
- STEPHEN: *Yes, I must say, it has helped me clear my ¹⁶(overdrawn/repayment/money/overdraft), and I've treated myself to a ¹⁷(posh/old/slow/renovated) car. How are things with you?*
- TREVOR: *Not too bad. We're in the middle of ¹⁸(making /doing/do/done) up our house at the moment. We thought we ¹⁹(could/might/can/ should) as well, considering it hadn't been touched for fifteen years.*
- STEPHEN: *I ²⁰(bet/believe/wish/think) you're having fun!*

- TREVOR: Well, actually it's not so easy. My wife is really ²¹(pretty/bossy/fussy/clever) and always expects me to ²²(come/be/turn/take) round to her way of thinking, but I keep telling her we can't ²³(want/sell/ afford/spend) half the things she wants, and one minute she chooses a colour for a room and the next minute she's ²⁴(taken/been/done/gone) off it.
- STEPHEN: I know the feeling. I can't ²⁵(deal/cope/help/handle) my wife at all when it comes to shopping. She always ²⁶(speaks/goes/ plays/tries) on at me about my taste and then she buys the thing I chose in the first place.
- TREVOR: Anyway, at the end of all this we'll be in the mood for our holiday. We're ²⁷(telling/walking/going/passing) off to the South of Spain for three weeks.
- STEPHEN: That'll be nice.
- TREVOR: Well, we've had a villa there for quite a few years. It has ²⁸(come/been/used/taken) in very ²⁹(convenient/handy/useless/good) during the summer holidays. I really look forward to ³⁰(go/going/coming/come). I love the way the Spanish ³¹(break/do/like/make) a fuss of my kids. They all ³²(come/go/move/ask) over as such warm friendly people.
- STEPHEN: Yes it's true. The only problem for me is that I can't ³³(cope/handle/bear/endure) with the heat. Last time I went to Spain, it was so hot that I fainted. It took me quite a ³⁴(few/number/bit/little) of time to come round. My wife was quite anxious. She said a bomb could have ³⁵(gone/taken/exploded/broken) off, and I wouldn't have come ³⁶(up/down/free/to).
- TREVOR: Really?..... Well, I've told Jim that I'd be ³⁷(coming/going/ running/flying) on to the club this afternoon, so I'd ³⁸(better/should/ really/ought) be on my way.
- STEPHEN: OK. It was good to see you again.

RADIO NEWS BULLETIN:

The talks in Geneva between the Bosnian Serbs and Muslims have reached a ³⁹(record/stalemate/draw/breakthrough) once again. The angry Muslim leader said that they had ⁴⁰(come/rent/gone/ask) over the same ground many times without success and that his people could not ⁴¹(want/manage/succeed/afford) to give up more territory. The Serb leader, on the other hand, complained that the Muslims were just interested in ⁴²(making/getting/bringing/having) their own ⁴³(up/front/together/back) for the battles they had lost. The Muslim leader then accused the Serbs of ⁴⁴(showing/blowing/sharing/speaking) off their gains in the war. The UN mediator, who had ⁴⁵(brought/gone/come/been) over from Japan, said that he had never heard of any negotiations which had ⁴⁶(lasted/gone/made/continued) on for as long as these had, without a result.

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The Treasury has announced that there has been an ⁴⁷(turn-up/change /worsening/upturn) in trade in the last six months and that the country could now ⁴⁸(able/afford/spend/pay) to borrow again. In addition, there were more people who could be considered to be ⁴⁹(well/worse/poorer/richer) off than at any other time since records began.

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Yesterday, a man was ordered to pay compensation for the nuisance caused by his car alarm repeatedly ⁵⁰(coming/going/making/ringing) off in the middle of the night. One of his neighbours said, "I went to bed looking forward to my ⁵¹(week/ holiday/year/day) off the next day but I was woken by this terrible piercing noise which ⁵²(went/gone/came/put) on for half the night. I wondered what was ⁵³(happening/trying/doing/going) on. I had a torch ⁵⁴(around/handy/convenient/ useful) which enabled me to see outside my house. There was a crowd of people gathered around this car shouting at one person in particular. The following morning the noise had stopped, but I was so tired I felt I ⁵⁵(should/could/might/would) as ⁵⁶(if/will /very/well) not have gone to bed.