

83 Words that only occur in the plural

A Tools, instruments, pieces of equipment



B Things we wear



C Other useful words

When I move to London, I'll have to find **lodgings**. (e.g. a room in a flat)

When will the **goods** be delivered? [articles/items]

The architect inspected the **foundations** before declaring that the **premises** were safe. [under the building] [the building itself]

The military **authorities** have established their **headquarters** in the old Town Hall.

The **acoustics** in the new opera house are near perfect. [quality of the sound]

The **contents** /'kɒntents/ of the house were sold after her death.

Looks are less important than personality in a partner.

As you come to the **outskirts** of the village, there are **traffic lights**. Turn left there. [the beginning or end of the village]

The **stairs** are a bit dangerous – be careful.

The **proceeds** of the concert are going to the children's fund. [money from selling tickets]

A terrorist has escaped from prison. Her **whereabouts** are unknown. [where she is]

D Words with plural form but used mostly with singular verbs

Names of some games: **billiards** **dominoes** **draughts** **darts** **bowls** **cards**

Names of subjects/activities: **physics** **economics** **classics** **gymnastics** **athletics**

Common mistakes

Some words look plural, or may be thought of as plural, but are not, e.g. **news**, **spaghetti** (an Italian plural form), **series**, **means**. *The news is good.* (NOT *The news are good.*) *The spaghetti was delicious.* (NOT *The spaghetti were delicious.*) *There was a series of programmes on TV about Japan.* *Is there a cheap means of transport I could use to get there?*

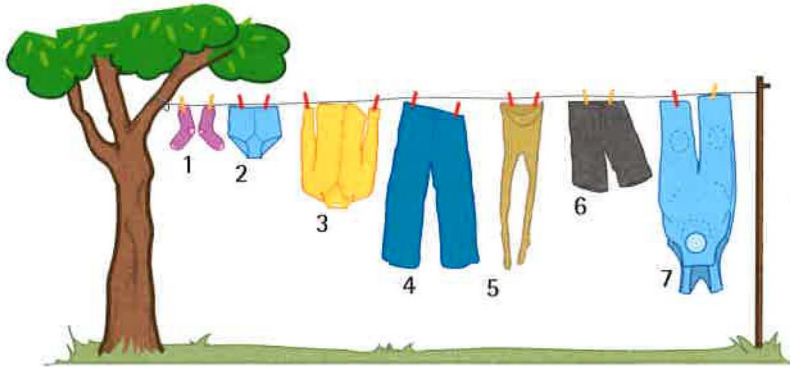
Exercises

83.1 Make a list of subjects you studied at school or elsewhere. How many of the words are plural? Use a dictionary if necessary.

83.2 Which things listed on the opposite page can be used to:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| 1 cut a hedge? <i>shears</i> | 5 protect your clothes if you're repairing a car? |
| 2 help you to read small print? | 6 look at distant objects? |
| 3 cut paper? | 7 get a nail out of a piece of wood? |
| 4 hold your trousers up? | 8 keep a prisoner's hands together? |

83.3 Name the items on the clothes line and tick the words that are only used in the plural.



1 *socks* 2 3 4 5 6 7

83.4 Fill the gaps with an appropriate plural-form noun.

- (to a child) Come on! Get your *pyjamas* on! It's time to go to bed.
- The of the rock concert are going to two charities.
- The in the new concert hall are superb. I've never heard such clear sound.
- The escaped prisoner is tall, dark and has a beard. His are unknown.
- You must use or if you want to listen to your MP3 player on a train.
- The have forbidden the import of all foreign

83.5 Odd one out. In each group, one of the nouns is always used in the plural. Which one?

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| 1 sock, trouser, slipper – <i>trousers</i> | 3 knife, scissor, razor |
| 2 billiard, squash, tennis | 4 tracksuit, costume, dungaree |









83.6 In this silly story, change the singular nouns to plural where appropriate. Change the verbs where necessary.

I decided that if I wanted to be a pop star I'd have to leave home and get ^{lodgings} ~~lodging~~ in London. I finally got a room, but it was on the outskirts of the city. The owner didn't live on the premises, so I could make as much noise as I liked. The acoustics in the bathroom were fantastic, so I practised there. I made so much noise I almost shook the foundations! I went to the headquarters of the Musicians' Union, but a guy there said I just didn't have the right looks to be famous. Oh well, never mind!

84 Countable and uncountable nouns with different meanings

A Countable and uncountable nouns

When we use a countable noun we are thinking of specific **things** that can be counted (e.g. two **glasses**). When we use an uncountable noun we are thinking of **stuff** or **material** or the idea of a **thing** in general (e.g. this door is made of **glass**).

stuff/materials	things
glass 	a glass / glasses 
cloth 	a cloth 
fish 	a fish 
work 	a work 











Be careful – there's **broken glass** on the road. I need a **cloth** to wipe the table. We had **fish** for dinner. *Hamlet* is one of Shakespeare's most famous **works**.

Here are some more nouns that can be used in both ways with different meanings.

countable	uncountable
There's a black hair in my soup; it must be yours!	She has beautiful red hair .
Did you buy a paper this morning? [a newspaper]	The printer has run out of paper .
The different peoples of Asia were represented at the festival. [races / national groups]	I love meeting people from different countries. [individuals]
Can I borrow your iron ? My shirt is a bit creased. [instrument]	People used to think ships made of iron would sink. [metal]
I had some interesting experiences during my trip to Latin America. [things that happened to me]	She has little work experience . [knowledge or skill obtained from doing something]
The city has a yearly arts festival. [music, theatre, etc.] He studied arts not sciences at uni. [subjects such as languages or history; always plural and without <i>the</i>]	Have you been to the modern art museum? It's wonderful. [usually refers to painting, drawing and sculpture]
I've seen that film three times . [occasions] We had some good times at university. [experiences]	Time passes very slowly if you have a boring job. [clock time, calendar time]

B Food

The names of food items often have a different meaning depending on whether they are used as countable or uncountable nouns (see **fish** above).

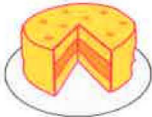






coffee/tea 	→	a coffee and two teas 
potato 	→	just two potatoes, please! 
Would you like some chocolate? 	→	Would you like a chocolate? 
salt and pepper 	→	a pepper 
a hot dog with onion 	→	an onion 

Exercises

84.1 Would you normally expect to find these things in most people's houses, flats, garages or gardens? In which room or place? Answer for both meanings (countable and uncountable).

- 1 an iron / iron Yes, most people have an iron to iron their clothes; they might keep it in the kitchen somewhere. Most people don't normally keep iron (the metal) at home, but they might have things made of iron (e.g. a frying pan) in the kitchen.
- 2 a cloth / cloth
- 3 a fish / fish
- 4 glass / a glass
- 5 a wood / wood
- 6 pepper / a pepper
- 7 paper / a paper

84.2 Which question would you ask? *Could I have/borrow a ...?* or *Could I have/borrow some ...?*

- | | | | | |
|-------------|--|---|----------|---|
| 1 cake | Could I have some cake? |  | 5 paper |  |
| 2 iron |  | | 6 rubber |  |
| 3 pepper |  | | 7 glass |  |
| 4 chocolate |  | | | |

84.3 Complete the answers using the word in brackets. Use *a(n)* or *the* if the meaning is countable.

- 1 Oh dear! I've spilt water on the floor! (cloth) Never mind. Here's a cloth - just wipe it up.
- 2 How did you get that puncture in your car tyre? (glass) I drove through a glass.
- 3 (child) Daddy, what are car tyres made of? (rubber) They're made of rubber.
- 4 Have you worked in a primary school before? (experience) No, I don't have any experience.
- 5 I wonder who won the general election in Sweden? (paper) We could buy some paper.
- 6 (child) Mum, what's the Mona Lisa? (work) It's a work of art.
- 7 What's your favourite ice-cream flavour? (chocolate) My favourite is chocolate.

84.4 What is the difference between (a) and (b) in each pair? Check in a dictionary if you're not sure.

- 1 a She was always a great lover of the arts.
b Are you an art lover?
a Arts here means theatre, music, etc. b Art here means the visual arts.
- 2 a (road sign) PLANT AND HEAVY MACHINERY CROSSING
b I've bought you a house plant.
a Plant here means the sign. b A plant here means a house plant.
- 3 a There was a lot of damage to the car as a result of the accident.
b The film star won \$500,000 in damages because the story in the newspaper was untrue.
a Damage here means the harm to the car. b Damages here means the money.
- 4 a I've had some bad times at the dentist's!
b How many times have you been to the dentist's this year?
a Times here means the occasions. b Times here means the number of visits.

85 Making uncountable nouns countable

A *Bit and piece*

You can make many uncountable nouns singular and countable by adding a **piece of** or a **(little) bit of**. Similarly, you can make such nouns plural with **pieces of** or **bits of**. **Bit** is less formal than **piece** and they are not always interchangeable. **Bit** can be used with all types of nouns. **Piece** tends to be used more with uncountable nouns. **Bit** suggests a smaller amount than **piece**.

How many **pieces of** luggage have you got with you?

The police collected **bits of** information from different sources.

Chopin wrote some wonderful **pieces of** music.

Before you go to England I should give you two **bits of** advice ...

He spends all his money buying new **bits of** computer equipment.

Common mistake

We say: *What an attractive piece of furniture!* (NOT *What an attractive furniture!*)

B Words that go with specific uncountable nouns

Weather



rain



sun



lightning



wind

Today's weather will be variable. In the north there are likely to be heavy **showers (of rain)**. The sunny **spell (of weather)** that we have had this last week will continue in much of the south although there may be occasional **rumbles of thunder** and **flashes of lightning** in some areas with some quite loud **claps of thunder** in one or two areas. These will be followed by a few **spots of rain** but **gusts of wind** should soon blow them away and the sunshine will then return.

See Unit 6 for more weather words.

Groceries

'I need a **loaf of** bread, a couple of **slices of** ham, two **bars of** chocolate, a **tube of** toothpaste, two **cartons of** milk and three **bars of** soap.' (slice can also be used with *toast, bread, meat and cheese*)

Nature

Look at the ladybird on that **blade of** grass!

What's happened? Look at that **cloud of** smoke hanging over the town!

We could see little **puffs of** smoke coming out of the volcano.

Let's go out and get a **breath of** fresh air.

Put another **lump of** coal on the fire, please. (**lump** can also be used with *sugar*)

Other words

I had an amazing **stroke of** luck this morning.

I've never seen him do a **stroke of** work. (only in negative sentences, more emphatic than a **bit of** work)

I've never seen him in such a **fit of** temper before.

The donkey is the basic **means of** transport on the island.

Tights must be the most useful **article/item of** clothing ever invented.

There was an interesting **item of** news about France on TV last night.

C *A state of*

Nouns used with a **state of** are usually abstract and include **chaos, tension, confusion, health, disorder, uncertainty, poverty, agitation, disrepair** and **flux** [continuous change], e.g. The transport system is in a **state of** chaos.

Exercises

85.1 Match the words on the left with the words they collocate with on the right.

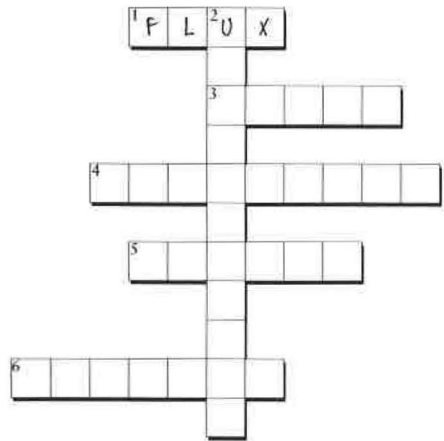
- | | | |
|--------------|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| 1 a stroke | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | a lightning |
| 2 a shower | <input type="checkbox"/> | b coal |
| 3 an article | <input type="checkbox"/> | c grass |
| 4 a lump | <input type="checkbox"/> | of d news |
| 5 a flash | <input type="checkbox"/> | e rain |
| 6 a blade | <input type="checkbox"/> | f clothing |
| 7 an item | <input type="checkbox"/> | g thunder |
| 8 a rumble | <input type="checkbox"/> | h luck |

85.2 Change the uncountable nouns to countable nouns in the following sentences by using *piece*, *bit* or one of the more specific words from B.

- Could you buy me some bread, please? *Could you buy me a loaf of bread, please?*
- My mother gave me some advice that I have always remembered.
- Suddenly the wind almost blew him off his feet.
- We had some terribly windy weather last winter.
- Would you like some more toast?
- He never does any work at all in the house.
- Let's go to the park – I need some fresh air.
- I can give you some important information about that.
- We could see smoke hovering over the city from a long way away.
- I need to get some furniture for my flat.

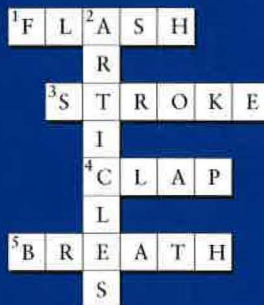
85.3 Use words from C opposite to fit the clues for the puzzle below.

- The reforms mean that the country's education system is in a state of at the moment but hopefully things will soon settle down.
- We are still in a state of as to who has won the election.
- The country's infrastructure is in a state of after the earthquake.
- We fell in love with the house although it was in a dreadful state of
- My granny wouldn't be in such a bad state of now if she hadn't smoked all her life.
- Although this is supposed to be an affluent society, many people are still living in a state of



85.4 *Over to you*

Make up sentence clues like those in 85.3 to match this puzzle.



36 Collective nouns

A People

Collective nouns are used to describe a **group** of the same people or things.



a **group** of people
(smaller number)



a **crowd** of people
(large number)



a **gang** of thieves
(rather negative)

B Words associated with certain animals

A **flock** of sheep or birds, e.g. geese/pigeons; a **herd** of cows, deer, goats; a **shoal** of fish (or any particular fish, e.g. a **shoal** of herring/mackerel – note the use of singular here); a **swarm**

/swɔ:m/ of insects (typically flying ones, e.g. a **swarm** of bees/gnats).

A **pack** of ... can be used for dogs, hyenas, wolves, etc. as well as for (playing) cards.

C People involved in the same job/activity

These nouns are used with singular or plural verbs, depending on your point of view.

A **team** of experts/reporters/scientists/rescue workers was/were at the scene of the disaster.

The **crew** was/were saved when the ship sank. [workers on a ship/ambulance/plane]

The **company** is/are rehearsing a new production. [group of actors]

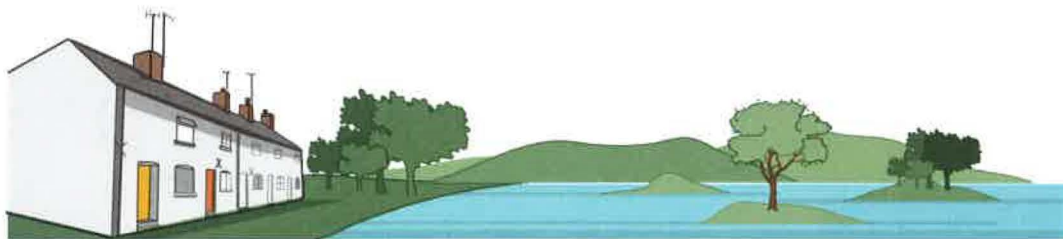
The **cast** is/are all amateurs. [actors in a film or theatre production]

The **public** has/have a right to know the truth. [the people as a whole]

The **staff** are on strike. (normally used with a plural verb; general word for groups who share a place of work, e.g. teachers in a school, people in an office)

D Physical features of landscapes

In the picture we can see a **row** of cottages near a **clump** of trees with a **range** of hills in the background. Out on the lake there is a small **group** of islands.



E Things in general

a **pair** of birds sitting on a branch [two of anything that are the same]

a **couple** of strawberries [vague way of saying two, not necessarily exactly the same]

a **pile/heap** of papers (or clothes, dishes, toys, etc.)

a **bunch** of flowers (or grapes, bananas, etc.)

a **stack** of chairs (or tables, boxes, logs, etc.)

a **set** of tools (or pots and pans, dishes, etc.)



Exercises

86.1 Fill each gap with a suitable collective noun.

- There are swarms of mosquitoes in the forests in Scandinavia in the summer.
- As we looked into the water, we saw a of brightly coloured fish.
- There was a of youths on the corner; they didn't look very friendly.
- There's a of cards on the bookshelf. Will you fetch them for me, please?
- A of biologists is studying marine life in this area.
- Look at that of birds on that tree. Both of them have beautiful markings.
I wonder what they are?
- Could you put a of spoons of sugar in this coffee for me, please? It's very bitter.
Yes, just two, that's fine. Thanks.

86.2 In each case, one of the examples is wrong. Which one? Put a line through it.

- Company is often used for *actors / ~~swimmers~~ / opera singers*.
- Cast is often used for people in *a play / a book / a film*.
- Crew is often used for the staff of *an ambulance / a plane / a hospital*.
- Pack is often used for *cats / dogs / wolves*.
- Flock is often used for *sheep / pigeons / pigs*.
- Herd is often used for *cows / fish / goats*.

86.3 Match the collective nouns on the left with the words on the right.

- | | | |
|--------------|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| 1 a clump of | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | a houses |
| 2 a range of | <input type="checkbox"/> | b flies |
| 3 a gang of | <input type="checkbox"/> | c fir trees |
| 4 a swarm of | <input type="checkbox"/> | d deer |
| 5 a row of | <input type="checkbox"/> | e grapes |
| 6 a heap of | <input type="checkbox"/> | f mountains |
| 7 a herd of | <input type="checkbox"/> | g criminals |
| 8 a bunch of | <input type="checkbox"/> | h bed linen |

86.4 Rewrite these sentences using collective nouns. Don't forget to change the verb to singular or plural where necessary.

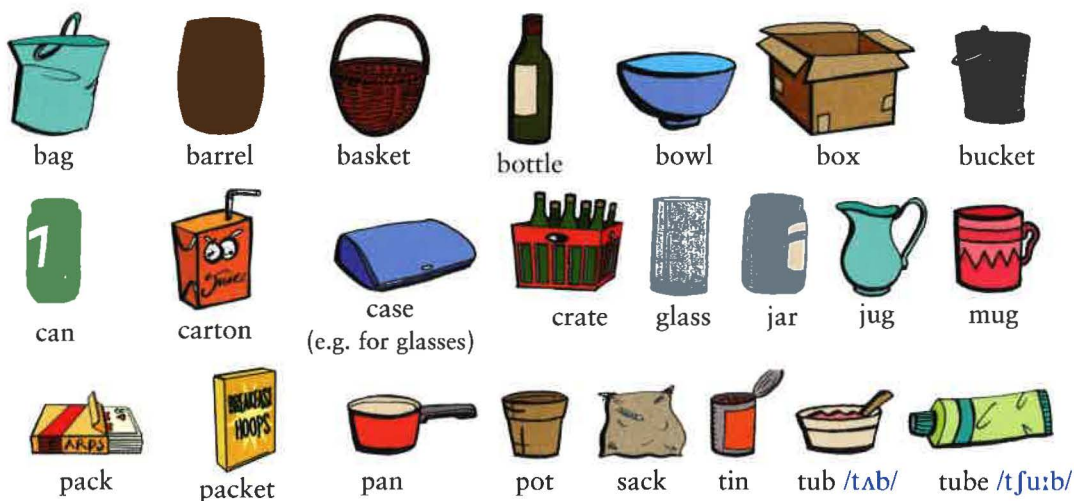
- There are some tables on top of one another in the next room.
There is a stack of tables in the next room.
- There are a large number of people waiting outside.
- The people who work there are very well paid.
- A large number of sheep had escaped from a field.
- She gave me six identical glasses.
- She gave me five or six beautiful roses.

86.5 Some collective nouns are associated with words about using language. Underline any you can see in this text, check their meanings in a dictionary and make a note of them in your vocabulary notebook.

THE JOURNALISTS raised a host of difficult questions about the actions of the police during the demonstration. There had been a barrage of complaints about police violence. The Chief of Police replied that he was not prepared to listen to a string of wild accusations without any evidence. In the end, he just gave a series of short answers that left everyone dissatisfied.

37 Containers and contents

A



B More information about these containers

container	usually made of	typical contents
bag	cloth, paper, plastic	sweets, shopping, mail
barrel	wood and metal	wine, beer
basket	wicker, metal	shopping, clothes, waste paper
bottle	glass, plastic	milk, lemonade, wine
bowl	china, glass, wood	fruit, soup, sugar
box	cardboard, wood	matches, tools, toys, chocolates
bucket	metal, plastic	sand, water
can	tin	cola, beer
carton	card	milk, juice, 20 packets of cigarettes
case	leather, wood, cardboard	jewellery, spectacles, wine*
crate	wood, plastic	bottles
glass	glass	milk, water, wine
jar	glass, pottery	jam, honey, olives, instant coffee
jug	pottery	milk, cream, water
mug	pottery	tea, coffee, cocoa
pack	card	cards, six cans of cola/beer
packet	card, paper	cigarettes, tea, biscuits, cereal
pan	metal	food that is being cooked
pot	plastic, metal, pottery	yoghurt, plant, paint
sack	cloth, plastic	coal, rubbish
tin	tin	tomatoes, sardines, fruit
tub	wood, plastic, card	flowers, rainwater, ice cream
tube	soft metal, plastic	toothpaste, paint, ointment

* A case of wine is usually a cardboard box of wine, containing 12 bottles. Half a case is six bottles.

Exercises

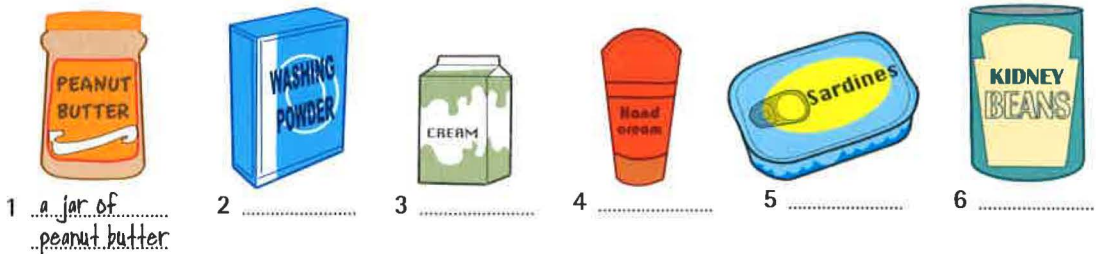
87.1 Complete the blanks in the shopping list without looking at the opposite page.

- 1 a tube of toothpaste
- 2 two _____ of milk
- 3 four _____ of cola
- 4 a _____ of condensed milk
- 5 a _____ of chocolate biscuits
- 6 a _____ of yoghurt
- 7 a large _____ of matches
- 8 a _____ of honey
- 9 six _____ of crisps

87.2 Try the following quiz about the words on the opposite page.

- 1 Which two of the containers listed would you be most likely to find holding flowers in a garden? a pot, a tub
- 2 Which three are you most likely to find in a cellar?
- 3 Which five of these would you be most likely to see in the drinks section of a large supermarket?
- 4 Which five would you be most likely to see on the breakfast table?
- 5 Which two containers might a postman carry the post in and which is bigger?
- 6 Which two are often used for carrying shopping?

87.3 Name the containers and their contents.



87.4 Think of other words which are often used with the following containers.

- | | | | |
|--|--------|---------|-------|
| 1 <u>shopping, wastepaper, linen</u> | basket | 5 | jug |
| 2 | box | 6 | glass |
| 3 | bottle | 7 | pot |
| 4 | bag | | |

88 Expressions with *do* and *make*

A Phrasal verbs with *do* and *make*

phrasal verb	meaning	example
do without	manage without	We'll have to do without a holiday this year as money is so short.
do away with	abolish, get rid of	It should be our ambition to do away with poverty in the world.
make for	move in the direction of	Let's make for the city centre and look for a restaurant there.
make of	think (opinion)	What do you make of the new software?
make off	leave hurriedly	He made off as soon as he heard their car turn into the drive.
make up for	compensate for	The superb food at the hotel made up for the uncomfortable rooms.

B Meanings of phrasal verbs

Some phrasal verbs have a number of different meanings, e.g. **do up** can mean not only 'fasten' but also 'renovate' and 'put into a bundle'. Similarly, **make out** can mean 'claim', 'manage to see' and 'understand'; **make up** can mean 'compose' or 'invent'; it can also mean 'constitute' or 'form', 'put cosmetics on', 'prepare by mixing together various ingredients' and 'make something more numerous or complete'.

C Collocations with *do* and *make*

There are a lot of other common collocations based on **do** and **make**. Note that most combinations referring to activities, work or duty use **do** whereas those which lead to an end product (e.g. tea, a cake, a noise, a toy boat, a profit) use **make**.



You do: your homework / the housework / some gardening / exercise / the washing-up / your best / the shopping / the cooking / business with ... , and so on.

You make: a cup of tea / arrangements / an agreement / a suggestion / a decision / war / an attempt / a phone call / the best of ... / an effort / an excuse / a mistake / a profit / a loss / love / the most of / a noise / a good or bad impression / a success of ... / allowances for ...¹ / a gesture / a face / fun of ... / a fuss of ...² / a go (a success) of ... , and so on.

¹ consider someone's situation and not judge them harshly ² give someone a lot of attention and treat them well



Common mistake

We say: *When I do my homework, I try not to make too many mistakes.* (NOT *When I make my homework, I try not to do too many mistakes.*)

Exercises

88.1 Here are some different ways in which *do up*, *make up* and *make out* can be used. What is the meaning of the phrasal verb in each case?

- 1 Take this prescription to the chemist and she'll make it up for you. *prepare it so you can use it*
- 2 Can you make out the little white house on the mountain side?
- 3 A human being is made up of many, often conflicting, desires.
- 4 If you do up the newspapers, I'll put them in the recycling box.
- 5 I just can't make Joe out. He's so strange.
- 6 Let's advertise the talk and hope we make up the numbers a bit.
- 7 He made out that he had never loved anyone else. She believed him.
- 8 We're planning to do up our bathroom at the weekend. It's looking rather old and dull.

88.2 Add the necessary prepositions or particles to complete this story.

Last weekend we decided to start doing ¹ *up* _____ our bedroom. We agreed that we could do ² _____ the old fireplace in the corner. As we began to remove it from the wall we found some old photographs done ³ _____ in a bundle behind a loose brick. At first we could not make ⁴ _____ what they were but we wiped them clean and realised they were all of the same young man. We spent an enjoyable evening making ⁵ _____ stories to explain why the pictures had been hidden.

88.3 In each sentence below, there is an error with choice of particle. Correct the mistakes.

- 1 I'm going to do ~~out~~ ^{away} with my old laptop and buy a new one. It's too old and too slow.
- 2 This weekend we are planning to make to the seaside.
- 3 Vast amounts of money do not always make of happiness.
- 4 Your shoelaces are untied. Do them in or you'll trip over.
- 5 They like to make away that they are very important people.
- 6 Thieves robbed the bank and made out with £1,000,000.

88.4 Complete the following sentences using an appropriate expression from C.

- 1 Pacifist posters in the 1960s used to say 'MAKE LOVE NOT ~~WAR~~
- 2 It doesn't matter if you pass the exam or not, as long as you do
- 3 Companies that once made a huge are now going bankrupt.
- 4 I don't like doing but someone has to clean, wash, iron and cook!
- 5 You must make the fact that he's only seven years old.
- 6 Dressing smartly for an interview helps you to make
- 7 Her company does a lot of in East Asia selling educational software.
- 8 Do you do much ? Yes, I go to the gym three times a week.

88.5

Over to you

Which of these things do you think you could do without and why?
mobile phone TV set sunglasses cap/hat
How often do you do the shopping, the cooking, the washing-up?