

The 100 Most Common English Adjectives

Adjectives are where learners most often reach for a word they half-know. These are the 100 most frequent in a one-billion-word corpus of real American English — the ones worth owning completely before collecting synonyms.

	#	WORD	CEFR	MEANING AND EXAMPLE
☐	1	other	A1	different from the one already mentioned <i>Let's try the other door.</i>
☐	2	good	A1	of a high standard, or pleasant <i>That was a really good film.</i>
☐	3	new	A1	recently made, bought or discovered <i>She's wearing a new coat.</i>
☐	4	great	A1	very good, or very large in degree <i>We had a great time in Porto.</i>
☐	5	big	A1	large in size or importance <i>They live in a big old house.</i>
☐	6	high	A1	tall, or far above the ground; also large in amount <i>Prices are very high this year.</i>
☐	7	old	A1	having lived or existed for a long time <i>My grandmother is ninety years old.</i>
☐	8	bad	A1	of poor quality, or unpleasant <i>The weather was bad all weekend.</i>
☐	9	different	A1	not the same as something else <i>This recipe is different from the last one.</i>
☐	10	American	A2	relating to the United States <i>She has an American accent.</i>
☐	11	little	A1	small in size, or small in amount <i>A little dog followed us home.</i>
☐	12	sure	A1	certain about something <i>Are you sure you locked the door?</i>
☐	13	small	A1	not large in size or amount <i>We rented a small flat near the centre.</i>
☐	14	right	A1	correct, or the opposite of left <i>That's the right answer.</i>
☐	15	large	A2	big in size or quantity <i>A large crowd waited outside.</i>

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☐	16	real	A2	actually existing, not imagined or fake <i>Is that a real diamond?</i>
☐	17	best	A1	better than all the others <i>This is the best coffee in town.</i>
☐	18	long	A1	measuring a lot from end to end, or lasting a lot of time <i>It was a very long meeting.</i>
☐	19	young	A1	not having lived for many years <i>She started singing when she was young.</i>
☐	20	important	A2	having a big effect or great value <i>This is an important decision.</i>
☐	21	only	A2	being the single one of its kind <i>He's the only person who replied.</i>
☐	22	national	B1	relating to a whole country <i>It became a national scandal.</i>
☐	23	black	A1	of the darkest colour <i>She was wearing a black dress.</i>
☐	24	social	B1	relating to society or to spending time with others <i>It's a social problem, not a personal one.</i>
☐	25	able	A2	having the skill or chance to do something <i>I wasn't able to finish in time.</i>
☐	26	political	B1	relating to government and power <i>The article takes a clear political position.</i>
☐	27	public	A2	open to or shared by everyone <i>There's a public library two streets away.</i>
☐	28	white	A1	of the colour of snow or milk <i>He painted the walls white.</i>
☐	29	better	A1	of higher quality than something else <i>This route is better in the morning.</i>
☐	30	late	A1	after the expected time, or near the end of a period <i>Sorry I'm late.</i>
☐	31	free	A1	costing nothing, or not restricted <i>Entry is free on Sundays.</i>
☐	32	sorry	A1	feeling regret or sympathy <i>I'm sorry about the mess.</i>
☐	33	low	A2	not far above the ground, or small in amount <i>Wages here are still very low.</i>

	#	WORD	CEFR	MEANING AND EXAMPLE
☐	34	human	B1	relating to people rather than animals or machines <i>It was a simple human mistake.</i>
☐	35	true	A2	matching the facts; not false <i>Everything he said turned out to be true.</i>
☐	36	whole	A2	complete, with nothing missing <i>She read the whole book on the flight.</i>
☐	37	easy	A1	not difficult <i>The instructions are easy to follow.</i>
☐	38	hard	A1	difficult, or firm and solid <i>That was a hard question.</i>
☐	39	early	A1	before the usual or expected time <i>We caught an early train.</i>
☐	40	possible	A2	able to happen or be done <i>It's possible she missed the message.</i>
☐	41	wrong	A1	not correct, or not morally right <i>I got the wrong platform.</i>
☐	42	full	A1	holding as much as it can <i>The bus was full.</i>
☐	43	local	A2	belonging to the area you are in <i>We ate at a local restaurant.</i>
☐	44	strong	A2	physically powerful, or hard to break or resist <i>The coffee here is very strong.</i>
☐	45	fine	A2	good enough, or of high quality <i>Don't worry, everything's fine.</i>
☐	46	federal	B2	relating to the central government of a country made of states <i>It falls under federal law.</i>
☐	47	nice	A1	pleasant or kind <i>That was a nice thing to say.</i>
☐	48	special	A2	different from what is usual, in a good way <i>Tonight is a special occasion.</i>
☐	49	major	B1	large, serious or important <i>There's been a major change of plan.</i>
☐	50	economic	B2	relating to money, trade and industry <i>The economic outlook is uncertain.</i>
☐	51	happy	A1	feeling pleased <i>She looked genuinely happy.</i>

	#	WORD	CEFR	MEANING AND EXAMPLE
☐	52	clear	A2	easy to understand or see through <i>The instructions weren't very clear.</i>
☐	53	dead	A2	no longer alive <i>The plant has been dead for weeks.</i>
☐	54	personal	B1	belonging to or about one particular person <i>That's a personal question.</i>
☐	55	military	B2	relating to the armed forces <i>He comes from a military family.</i>
☐	56	open	A1	not closed or blocked <i>The shop is open until nine.</i>
☐	57	international	A2	involving more than one country <i>She works for an international charity.</i>
☐	58	certain	B1	sure about something, or particular but unnamed <i>I'm certain I locked it.</i>
☐	59	recent	B1	having happened a short time ago <i>A recent survey says otherwise.</i>
☐	60	available	A2	able to be obtained or used <i>There are no rooms available tonight.</i>
☐	61	ready	A1	prepared for something <i>Dinner is ready.</i>
☐	62	single	A2	only one; also not married <i>Not a single person complained.</i>
☐	63	current	B1	happening or existing now <i>The current rules expire in May.</i>
☐	64	likely	B1	probably going to happen <i>Rain is likely this afternoon.</i>
☐	65	general	B1	involving most people or things, not detailed <i>The general mood was positive.</i>
☐	66	short	A1	small in length, distance or time <i>It's a short walk from here.</i>
☐	67	red	A1	of the colour of blood <i>She marked the mistake in red pen.</i>
☐	68	close	A2	near in space, time or relationship <i>They're close friends.</i>
☐	69	medical	B1	relating to medicine and treating illness <i>He needs medical attention.</i>

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☐	70	difficult	A2	not easy to do or understand <i>It's a difficult decision.</i>
☐	71	private	B1	for one person or group only, not public <i>This is a private road.</i>
☐	72	simple	A2	easy to do or understand; not complicated <i>The answer is quite simple.</i>
☐	73	poor	A2	having little money, or of low quality <i>The photo is of poor quality.</i>
☐	74	common	A2	happening often, or shared by many <i>That's a common mistake.</i>
☐	75	similar	A2	almost the same but not identical <i>The two designs are very similar.</i>
☐	76	past	B1	having happened before now <i>It has rained for the past three days.</i>
☐	77	hot	A1	having a high temperature <i>Careful, the plate is hot.</i>
☐	78	natural	B1	existing in nature, not made by people <i>The park is a natural habitat for birds.</i>
☐	79	significant	B2	large or important enough to matter <i>There was a significant drop in sales.</i>
☐	80	entire	B1	whole; complete <i>He ate the entire cake.</i>
☐	81	serious	A2	severe or important; not joking <i>This is a serious problem.</i>
☐	82	financial	B2	relating to money <i>They're in financial difficulty.</i>
☐	83	beautiful	A1	very pleasant to look at or hear <i>What a beautiful garden.</i>
☐	84	interesting	A1	holding your attention <i>That's an interesting point.</i>
☐	85	left	A1	on the side of the body where the heart is <i>Take the second street on the left.</i>
☐	86	foreign	B1	belonging to a country that is not your own <i>She speaks three foreign languages.</i>
☐	87	huge	A2	extremely large <i>There was a huge queue outside.</i>

	#	WORD	CEFR	MEANING AND EXAMPLE
☐	88	physical	B1	relating to the body or to material things <i>The job involves physical work.</i>
☐	89	legal	B1	allowed by law, or relating to the law <i>You should get legal advice.</i>
☐	90	final	A2	coming last, or not to be changed <i>That's my final offer.</i>
☐	91	perfect	A2	as good as it could possibly be <i>The weather was perfect all week.</i>
☐	92	safe	A2	not in danger, or not causing harm <i>Is it safe to swim here?</i>
☐	93	supposed	B1	expected or required to do something (in 'supposed to') <i>You were supposed to call me back.</i>
☐	94	central	B1	in the middle, or most important <i>The hotel is very central.</i>
☐	95	main	A2	largest or most important <i>The main entrance is round the corner.</i>
☐	96	dark	A1	with little or no light; deep in colour <i>It gets dark early in December.</i>
☐	97	blue	A1	of the colour of a clear sky <i>He was wearing a blue shirt.</i>
☐	98	specific	B1	particular and clearly defined <i>Can you give me a specific example?</i>
☐	99	global	B2	affecting the whole world <i>It has become a global issue.</i>
☐	100	various	B1	several different <i>We tried various solutions.</i>

Why these 100 adjectives first

The ranking is by raw corpus frequency, not by teaching order. It rewards adjectives that fit almost any noun — good, new, great, big — over the vivid ones learners often study first.

You will notice several pairs sitting near each other: good and bad, big and small, old and new, high and low. English keeps its basic opposites in constant use, and learning them as pairs is far more efficient than meeting them chapters apart.

Ranked by frequency in the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA), a corpus of one billion words. Entries are lemmas: one entry covers all inflected forms of the word. CEFR levels are FluencyRoad's editorial estimate and are not part of the corpus data.

Frequency data from www.wordfrequency.info, derived from the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA).
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