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Formal Lexicon

Formal words in English

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Preface

English has a rich vocabulary. There are, roughly speaking, three basic types of English vocabulary: formal, informal and neutral; that is, they are neither formal nor informal. Formal English is used in "serious" texts and situations, for example in official and legal documents, in academic and literary contents, in books, news reports, articles, business and cover letters or official speeches. You need to know formal English because you want to be able to read a book, give a formal presentation or write an official letter. In other words, Formal English is typically used in careful, edited writing — when the writer has a lot of time to polish his text. Formal English also occurs in speech, usually when the speaker is saying something that was prepared beforehand, for example, reading the news or delivering an official speech. Formal English is associated with particular choices of grammar and vocabulary. However, it must be warned that the use of formal words in both speech and writing must not be taken to extremes because it can make your speech and writing sound pompous or pretentious. In short, formal words should be used in an appropriate context in which they are not distracting not just in the hope of sounding more impressive or sophisticated. Remember that a long word is not necessarily better than a short one — it's just longer! In order to fulfill the above-written objectives, this book has been compiled to help the learners expand their formal vocabulary. The words along with their definitions and examples were extracted from the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English. They were alphabetized so that they could easily be looked up. The first chapter includes the formal nouns. The second chapter includes the formal adjectives. The third and the fourth chapters include formal verbs and conjunctions respectively.

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