

Using a Dictionary to Improve English Expression

Using English words and expressions accurately in academic writing is challenging for multilingual students. English learner dictionaries provide a powerful tool for word choice and expression in writing, especially for the many word combinations in English that do not follow grammar rules.

Recommended Online Learner's Dictionaries

Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English -- <https://www.ldoceonline.com/>

Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary -<https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/>

How can a Learner's Dictionary help you?

Word Choice and Idioms

Learn how to use a word or expression in a sentence, which words go together in English, and how changes in word combinations change meanings.

Prepositions that combine with other words to change meanings:

Contrast the difference in meaning between *She threw up her lunch* and *She threw down her lunch*.

Whether to use the **verb + ing** (gerund) or the **to + verb** (infinitive) when a second verb comes after the main verb:

Correct: He appreciated receiving the award.
Incorrect: He appreciated to receive the award.

Correct: We decided to go camping.
Incorrect: We decided going camping.

Countable vs. Uncountable Nouns

Understand whether a noun should end with an "s" or not.

e.g. *Time flies* not *Timesfly*.

Word Form

Recognize which ending to put on a word.

e.g. She recognizeded me. (verb)
I was pleased by the recognition. (noun)
His blue jacket is very recognizable. (adjective)

Learning to use a dictionary effectively takes practice, so it's important to frequently use the dictionary to improve how you use this tool. The more you use the dictionary, the more it will help you use English expression accurately.