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## A) WORD FORMATION

### 1. Adjective formation: *-less* / *-ful*

#### 1.1. Morphemes, prefixes and suffixes

When studying word formation we are dealing with *the minimal unit of grammatical description*, i.e. **the morpheme**, because words are composed of morphemes. Words may have one or more morphemes: the word *friend* is composed of only one morpheme, but *friendly* and *girl-friend* are composed of two. We distinguish two main types of morphemes: 1) **Free**, and 2) **Bound**. *Friend* and *girl* are free morphemes because they can be used independently; *-ly*, however, is a bound morpheme because it can not. Compound words (see 3 below) are an example of the combination of two free morphemes in one word.

Bound morphemes belong to the category of **affixes**, in which we find two main types: **Prefixes** and **Suffixes**.

**Prefixes** in English are always of a **derivational** nature, i.e. they are added to the root in order to produce a new word. E.g.: *pre-cook*, *de-frost*, *in-sane*.

**Suffixes** may be derivational or **inflexional**. **Inflexional** morphemes mark such distinctions as the singular/plural contrast in nouns (*head: head-s*), the present tense/past tense contrast in verbs (*walk: walk-ed*), or the positive/comparative contrast in adjectives (*small: small-er*). Examples of **derivational suffixes** are: *child-hood*, *king-dom*, *care-less*, etc.

#### 1.2. The suffixes *-less* and *-ful*

- a) These suffixes are normally added to an abstract noun to form adjectives. Abstract nouns refer to a quality or idea rather than to a physical object. The suffix **-ful** is usually added to abstract nouns meaning “having the quality of” or “full of”:

|                      |                   |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| E.g.: <i>delight</i> | <i>delightful</i> |
| <i>beauty</i>        | <i>beautiful</i>  |
| <i>truth</i>         | <i>truthful</i>   |

- b) The suffix **-less** can be added to nouns to form adjectives meaning “not having the quality of”:

|                    |                            |
|--------------------|----------------------------|
| E.g.: <i>charm</i> | <i>charmless</i>           |
| <i>breath</i>      | <i>breathless</i>          |
| <i>color</i>       | <i>colorless</i> (line 7)* |
| <i>taste</i>       | <i>tasteless</i> (line 8)  |

## 2. Adverb formation: *-ly*

- 2.1. Adverbs in English can be formed by adding the derivational suffix **-ly** to adjectives. In most cases, the resulting adverb is an adverb of manner:

|                          |                                   |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| E.g.: <i>exceptional</i> | <i>exceptionally</i> (line 34)    |
| <i>complete</i>          | <i>completely</i> (line 35)       |
| <i>kind</i>              | <i>kindly</i>                     |
| <i>suspicious</i>        | <i>suspiciously</i>               |
| <i>malevolent</i>        | <i>malevolently</i> (lines 14-15) |

Note that some adverbs of time (frequency adverbs) can also end in **-ly**: *monthly*, *weekly*, *hourly*.

- 2.2. This type of adverb can be placed in almost any position in the sentence. It can go in initial position:

E.g.: **Carefully**, Jane unlocked the door.

Middle position:

E.g.: Jane **carefully** unlocked the door.

And, final position:

E.g.: Jane unlocked the door **carefully**.

\* The numbers refer to the lines in the corresponding text in the course book (in this case, *Tea*, in Chapter 1).

### 3. Compound nouns

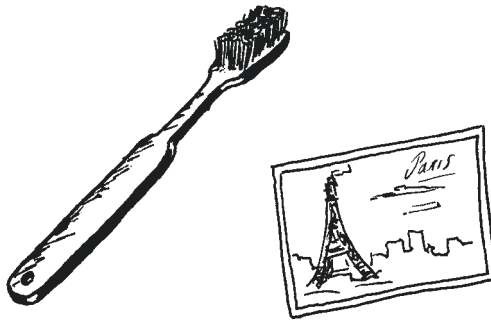
**3.1.** A compound noun is a combination of two words which have independent meanings (i.e. two free morphemes). They usually have two parts, one of which modifies the other. The second part identifies the object or person we are talking about and the first part describes or qualifies the second one.

E.g.: *toothbrush*: a brush you can use to clean your teeth.

*postcard*: a card which is meant to be sent by the post.

*dining-room*: the room where you have dinner.

*washbasin*: a basin you use to wash your hands, etc. (line 20)



Note that sometimes a new word with a completely new meaning comes up:

E.g.: *blueprint*: a plan or set of proposals.

*breakfast*: the first meal of the day. (line 21)

*pickpocket*: someone who steals things from people's pockets.

**3.2.** It is important to take into account the difference between expressions like:

a) a *tea cup*: a cup in which tea is served;

b) a *cup of tea*: a cup filled with tea (line 10)



- c) a *milkbottle*: a container for milk made of plastic or glass (it can be full or empty)
- d) a *bottle of milk*: a bottle containing milk.
- e) a *cigarette packet*: a small container in which cigarettes are sold
- f) a *packet of cigarettes*: the packet containing cigarettes.

**Note** that the apposition of two nouns is used to refer to the container whereas the **of**-construction is used to refer to both, the container and the content.

- g) a *race horse*: a horse that is trained to run in races
- h) a *horse race*: a competition where horses ridden by jockeys run.

**3.3.** Some common types of compound nouns are:

**3.3.1.** ADJECTIVE + NOUN / NOUN + ADJECTIVE.

E.g.: *Englishwoman* (line 35)

greenhouse

handful

wet suit

**3.3.2.** NOUN + NOUN.

E.g.: *river bank*

*kitchen table*

*tea-time* (line 31)

**3.3.3.** -ing + NOUN.

E.g.: *waiting list*

*driving licence*

*gargling-water* (line 8)

*washing-machine*

**3.3.4. PRONOUN + NOUN.**

E.g.: *he-goat*  
*she-elephant*

**3.3.5. VERB + NOUN.**

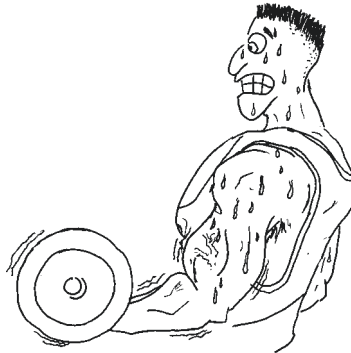
E.g.: *washbasin* (line 20)  
*grindstone*  
*workbook*  
*travel agent*

**3.3.6. PARTICLE + NOUN / NOUN + PARTICLE.**

E.g.: *underwear*  
*passer-by*

**3.3.7. NOUN + -ing.**

E.g.: *fox-hunting*  
*fruit picking*  
*weight-lifting*  
*bird-watching*

**3.3.8. Whole phrases.**

E.g.: *good-for-nothing*  
*mother-in-law*  
*forget-me-not*

**3.4. Pronunciation of compound nouns.**

There is a distinction between compound nouns and combinations of words that just come up together. For example, in the adj. + N combination, compound nouns have only one stress that nearly always falls on the first syllable, whereas if it is only a noun preceded by an adjective, the noun is usually stressed:



| <u>Compound</u>   | <u>Adjective + noun</u> |
|-------------------|-------------------------|
| E.g.: 'greenhouse | green 'house            |
| 'blackboard       | black 'board            |
| 'wet suit         | wet 'suit               |

### 3.5. Written form of compound nouns.

**3.5.1.** Compound nouns are sometimes written as one word (e.g.: *yearbook*, *screwdriver*, etc.), sometimes with a hyphen (e.g.: *tongue-twister*, *coat-hanger*, etc.) and sometimes as two words (e.g.: *dance hall*, *credit card*, etc.).

**3.5.2.** Very common compounds are usually written as one single word, as well as those consisting of two short words:

E.g.: *teacup*, *handbag*, *toothpaste*, *briefcase*, *outlet*, *offset*, etc.

**Notice** that new compounds are being invented all the time, and it is sometimes difficult to know how to write them. If you hesitate, the best thing to do is to look them up in an updated dictionary.

### 3.6. The plural form of compound nouns.

**3.6.1.** Most compound nouns form the plural in a regular way.

|                       |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| E.g.: <i>doorbell</i> | <i>doorbells</i>      |
| <i>landlady</i>       | <i>landladies</i>     |
| <i>baby-sitter</i>    | <i>baby-sitters</i>   |
| <i>grown-up</i>       | <i>grown-ups</i>      |
| <i>forget-me-not</i>  | <i>forget-me-nots</i> |

**3.6.2.** If the first element of the compound is a noun followed by a particle, only the first element takes the plural.

|                            |                       |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| E.g.: <i>father-in-law</i> | <i>fathers-in-law</i> |
| <i>hanger-on</i>           | <i>hangers-on</i>     |
| <i>passer-by</i>           | <i>passers-by</i>     |

**3.6.3.** If the first element of the compound is *man* or *woman*, both elements are made plural.

|                           |                      |
|---------------------------|----------------------|
| E.g.: <i>woman doctor</i> | <i>women doctors</i> |
| <i>man-eater</i>          | <i>men-eaters</i>    |

## B) LANGUAGE POINTS

### 1. *Some / any*

#### 1.1. The use of **some**.

**1.1.1.** The partitive **some**, as opposed to **any**, is marked affirmatively and has the meaning of an indefinite quantity, “a certain number or amount”. It can modify both countable and uncountable nouns.

E.g.: [...] to show you how low some people can sink. (lines 32-33)

[...] my wife [...] made some cold coffee and put it in the refrigerator...  
(lines 34-36)

**1.1.2.** You use **some** when you are interested in the quantity but you do not want (or need) to be very specific. It is pronounced /səm/.

E.g.: **Some** of my best friends live in Washington D.C.

**Some** people are always getting into trouble.

**1.1.3.** **Some** can also be used when you are interested in the object itself rather than in the quantity. In this case it would be the plural form of **a/an** and **one** with the meaning of “a number of” or “a few of”. It is pronounced /səm/.

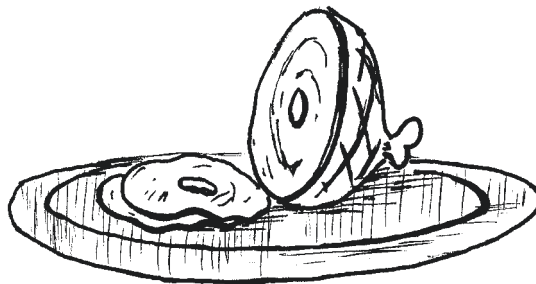
E.g.: Last night I ate **some** cakes.

I have visited **some** good friends recently.

**1.1.4.** As a rule, **some** is used in:

a) affirmative sentences:

E.g.: He wanted **some** more meat.



b) offers and requests:

E.g.: Would you like **some** wine?

c) questions where the answer “yes” is expected:

E.g.: Why don't you buy **some** of those pastries?

### 1.1.5. Notes:

a) **Some** is also used to mean “a certain person or an unknown thing and not a specific one” when it is followed by a count noun in the singular.

E.g.: **Some** philosopher said that love is blind.

There must be **some** bookshop in Madrid where you can find that book.

b) **Some** can also have the value of “approximately” or “around”. In this case, it will be used before a count noun in the plural preceded by a numeral.

E.g.: We found **some** thirty squirrels in the back yard.

c) When **some** is an adjective it can take either the stressed /sʌm/ or unstressed /səm/ pronunciation, but when it is a pronoun, the normal pronunciation is stressed.

/səm/

E.g.: I want **some** cheese.

Bake **some** cookies for the party, please.

/sʌm/

Please give me **some**.

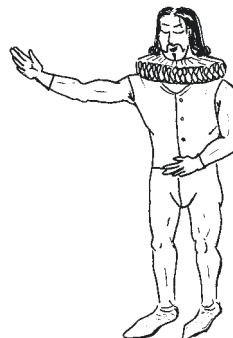
Bake **some**, please.

1.1.6. There is a colloquial use of **some** with an emphasizing function as in the following examples:

E.g.: He's '**some** crazy guy! (= he is very crazy)

You're '**some** lousy student! (= you are really a bad student)

He is '**some** actor (= he's a very good actor)



## 1.2. The use of **any**.

1.2.1. The word **any** is also used to refer to an indefinite quantity and is not marked affirmatively or negatively. It can be used in negative, interrogative and affirmative sentences.