

50 Collocations with FOOD

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Hey students! I hope you're hungry... I mean, hungry to learn some new vocabulary today! I'm going to teach you 50 common collocations with the word "food" - these are words we often use together – so you'll be able to talk about food more fluently in English!

The collocations we'll cover can be divided into 3 groups:

- adjectives with food
- verbs with food
- nouns with food

Adjectives with FOOD

If the food is good, you can say the food is **delicious**, **tasty**, **scrumptious**, or **wonderful**. Children often say that food is **yummy**.

Some other adjectives used for specific types of food are...

- **luscious** – usually used for fruits that are fresh and juicy
- **mouth-watering** – often describes foods with a pleasant aroma or that are visually attractive, and which make your mouth produce saliva in anticipation of eating it
- **tempting** – describes a food that makes you want to eat it (often an indulgent food like a high-calorie dish or sweet dessert)

If the food was merely OK, you can describe it as **decent** (has a positive connotation) or **mediocre** (has a more negative connotation).



If the food didn't seem good, you can describe it as **unappetizing** – something about the food's appearance or smell made you not want to eat it.



If the food was bad, you can say it was **disgusting**, **horrible**, or even **inedible** (meaning it was so bad it couldn't be eaten).

If the food is unusual and includes elements from other countries, it is **exotic**. High-quality food can be described as **gourmet** or **fine food**.

Food that provides the elements your body needs is **nutritious**. Food that isn't good for you is **unhealthy**. Another term for unhealthy food is **junk food**.



If a particular food fills your stomach and satisfies you, you can say the **food is filling**.

When you don't eat your entire portion of food (regular amount of food for one person), you have **leftover food** (or simply leftovers) which you can eat later, or on the next day.

If food is **fresh**, it means it's new and good to eat. Many supermarkets have a section for **frozen food**, which is stored in the freezer at very low temperatures so that it stays good for a longer time.

If a food is past its expiration date and is no longer safe to eat (it smells or tastes strange), then the food has **gone bad**. You can also say it's **spoiled**. When food is very old and starts decomposing, it is **rotten**.



Food that stays good for a long time is **non-perishable** (such as rice, beans, sugar, etc.) and food that has the potential to go bad quickly is **perishable** (such as fruit, meat, etc.)

Organic food is grown in a natural way without using dangerous chemicals. There's also **processed** food which has gone through a lot of changes in factories.

Perhaps the best kind of food is **homemade** – food that is prepared at home, in a traditional way, by a real person.

Verbs with FOOD

Of course, the most common verb we use with food is **eat**!

You can also use **have** (have lunch, have a bite of your sandwich, have some potatoes) and a more formal word is **consume**.

When you eat, you first **take a bite of your food** (cut it with your teeth), then you **chew your food** (crush it with your teeth), and **swallow** (make the food go down your throat into your stomach). Then your stomach will **digest your food**.

If you eat very fast, you **gulp down** or **wolf down your food**. This is usually considered bad manners.

If you're not very hungry, or if you're preoccupied with something, you might **pick at** or **play with your food**. This means to eat very little and to just push the food around on your plate instead of eating it normally.

People who are on a diet need to **avoid** or **cut down on** (reduce) certain types of food. They may even need to **cut out** (completely remove) some foods.

If you're in a restaurant, you **order food** (ask for food) from the waiter or waitress. You can also order food for delivery to your house.

Animals need to **hunt for**, **look for**, or **search for food** – they need to find it.

Finally, you can **store food** (keep it) in your refrigerator or cabinets, on shelves, in the pantry, and in other places in your house.



Nouns with FOOD

Your **food bill** (or grocery bill) is the amount of money you spend regularly on food. It will be higher or lower depending on your **food intake/consumption** (the amount of food you eat).

If the **food supply** (amount of food available) in a country gets low, the country may have to ration its food (control how much is distributed). Eventually, a **food**

shortage (lack of sufficient food) may turn into a food **crisis** (very serious problem with not enough food).

In some cities there are certain neighborhoods that are considered **food deserts** (not enough supermarkets or fresh/healthy food available in the area).

Restaurants and **food trucks** (vehicles equipped with a kitchen that serves food) must worry about **food hygiene** or **food safety** when they prepare food for clients. If someone eats food that has gone bad, they might get **food poisoning** (getting sick as a result of bacteria in the food).

Finally, some countries provide **food stamps** to poor people – coupons that allow them to get food from supermarkets for free. Some communities also have **food banks** – places that distribute food to families who need it.

Wow, those were a lot of expressions! Try the quiz on the next page to review.

If you'd like to take the next step in learning from me, check out my e-book with [1000 collocations](#) on all sorts of topics. You can find that along with all my other courses at my website EspressoEnglish.net

Well, now I am really getting hungry, so I'm gonna go grab a snack. Bye for now!

Quiz: Food Collocations

Complete each sentence with a term from the box:

bank	delicious	leftover	order	store
bill	filling	mediocre	picked at	trucks
cut down on	fresh	nutritious	spoiled	wolfed down

- After she and her husband both lost their jobs, they visited the food _____ every week.
- He seems preoccupied; during dinner he just _____ his food.
- I didn't make anything for dinner, but there's some _____ chicken in the fridge if you're hungry.
- The festival will have several food _____ with different options for lunch.
- I was pressed for time in the morning, so I _____ my breakfast and ran out the door.
- If you want to lose weight, you should _____ high-calorie foods.
- It can be hard to get kids to eat _____ food like fruits and vegetables.
- The cafe was so busy that we waited in line for 20 minutes just to _____ our food.
- The pasta was _____ - I really liked the sauce.
- Ugh, smells like this milk is _____.
- We use coupons to lower our food _____.
- Wow, that stew was quite _____ - I don't have any room for dessert.
- You don't need to _____ tomatoes in the fridge - they can be left at room temperature.
- I hate having to eat _____ airplane food when I travel.
- While on vacation at the beach, we ate lots of _____ fish at seafood restaurants.

Answers - Quiz: Food Collocations

1. After she and her husband both lost their jobs, they visited the food **bank** every week.
2. He seems preoccupied; during dinner he just **picked at** his food.
3. I didn't make anything for dinner, but there's some **leftover** chicken in the fridge if you're hungry.
4. The festival will have several food **trucks** with different options for lunch.
5. I was pressed for time in the morning, so I **wolfed down** my breakfast and ran out the door.
6. If you want to lose weight, you should **cut down on** high-calorie foods.
7. It can be hard to get kids to eat **nutritious** food like fruits and vegetables.
8. The cafe was so busy that we waited in line for 20 minutes just to **order** our food.
9. The pasta was **delicious** - I really liked the sauce.
10. Ugh, smells like this milk is **spoiled**.
11. We use coupons to lower our food **bill**.
12. Wow, that stew was quite **filling** - I don't have any room for dessert.
13. You don't need to **store** tomatoes in the fridge - they can be left at room temperature.
14. I hate having to eat **mediocre** airplane food when I travel.
15. While on vacation at the beach, we ate lots of **fresh** fish at seafood restaurants.