

Word-Formation Processes in EPS

COMPOUNDING

(part two: compound adjectives)

The following examples, in *italics*, show some patterns of **compound adjectives**:

- *student-friendly* (n + adv = adj) coursebooks
- *purpose-built* (n + past part. = adj) premises
- *family-run* (n + past part. = adj) business
- *market-oriented* (n + past part. = adj) policy
- *government-led* (n + past part. = adj) investment initiatives
- *state-owned* (n + past part. = adj) concerns

A **compound adjective** is an adjective made up of two parts and usually written with a hyphen (a *trait d'union*, in French): the second part is frequently an *-ing form* or a past participle. Its meaning is usually clear from the words it combines.

COMPOUND ADJECTIVES

FORM 1 Two-word adjectives

Many adjectives are formed by joining two (or more) words with a hyphen (-). There are many types of combinations:

adj + noun:	a small-scale operation, a long-term policy
adj + noun + <i>-ed</i> :	a narrow-minded approach, a short-sighted policy
adj or adv + past participle:	low-paid workers, a well-informed person
adj, adv, noun + present participle:	a high-flying professional, a far-reaching effect, a record-breaking year, a problem-solving approach
noun + adj:	a tax-free salary, a brand-new product
A few compound adjectives consist of three words:	
the day-to-day organisation	up-to-date information
an out-of-court settlement	a down-to-earth approach

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Number	+	(singular!) Noun
five-minute, three-hour, ten-storey, one-way, twenty-page		
Adjective	+	Noun
last-minute, full-length, short-term, long-distance, high-quality		
Adjective	+	Present Participle
good-looking, long-lasting, easy-going, tight-fitting, quick-thinking		
Noun	+	Present Participle
mouth-watering, record-breaking, time-saving, English-speaking		
Noun	+	Adjective
world-famous, smoke-free, ice-cold, gluten-free, family-friendly		
Noun	+	Past Participle
wind-powered, sun-dried, middle-aged, water-cooled		
Adverb	+	Past Participle
brightly-lit, well-known, densely-populated, highly-respected		
Adjective	+	Past Participle
old-fashioned, long-forgotten, ready-made, short-lived		

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A particular group of compound adjectives are those where the second part is a preposition. Some of these adjectives are listed below along with a typical noun:

- an *all-out*¹ strike
- a *run-down*² area
- a *built-up*³ area
- *well-off*⁴ bankers

¹ A synonym for *total*.

² A synonym for *in poor condition*.

³ A synonym for *with lots of buildings in it*.

⁴ A synonym for *wealthy*.