



Learn English Through Stories

Intermediate Collocations

**Adopted and modified by
Kulwant Singh Sandhu**

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Banta's New Life in Derby

Banta lives in Derby with his wife Puneet. Banta is a Sikh and his wife comes from a Hindu family. They met at university in Nottingham ten years ago and fell in love quickly. At first, their families were worried about the differences between Sikh and Hindu traditions, but over time everyone accepted the marriage. Now they live happily in a quiet house near the city centre.

Every morning, Banta wakes up early. He goes to the gurdwara to pray and listen to the kirtan. Puneet sometimes joins him, but she also visits the Hindu temple on special days. Their home has pictures of Guru Nanak and Lord Ganesha side by side. This shows how they respect each other's beliefs.

One day, Banta notices his hair going grey at the sides. He laughs and says to Puneet, "Look, I'm going grey already!" Puneet smiles and replies, "Don't worry, many men go bald before they go grey." They joke about it, but Banta feels a little old. As he grows older, he wants to spend more time with family.

Puneet works in a school as a teaching assistant. One afternoon, she comes home tired. "The children were very noisy today," she says. "When I asked them to stop talking, they fell silent immediately." Banta nods. "That's good. Sometimes the class falls silent when the teacher looks serious."

In the evening, they cook dinner together. Puneet makes aloo gobi, and Banta prepares roti. While they eat, Banta tells Puneet about his day at the factory. "The manager asked me to become involved in a new safety project," he says. "I think I will do it. It's a chance to make progress and help the team." Puneet is happy. "That's wonderful. You always do your best."

Later, they watch the news on TV. The sky outside turns gold as the sun sets. Suddenly, the weather changes. Dark clouds appear, and the sky goes very dark. Rain starts falling heavily. "The weather turned bad so fast," Banta says. Puneet agrees. "Yes, it went dark in minutes."

The next day, Puneet feels unwell. She falls ill with a bad cold and has to stay in bed. Banta makes an effort to take care of her. He makes a phone call to the doctor and buys medicine. He also cooks simple khichdi for her. Puneet thanks him. "You always do me a good turn when I need help."

After a few days, Puneet gets better. She returns to work and feels excited. One evening, she tells Banta, "I want to become involved in raising money for

charity at school.” Banta supports her. “Good idea. Maybe we can make a contribution together.”

As time passes, Banta and Puneet talk about the future. “One day, if we have a child of our own,” Puneet says, “we will teach them about both Sikh and Hindu values.” Banta smiles. “Yes, and they will learn to respect everyone.”

Sometimes Banta thinks about how his life became different after marriage. He did not go mad with worry about the differences. Instead, he and Puneet made new friends from both communities. Their life is not always easy, but they grow stronger together.

Banta looks at Puneet and feels grateful. Their love helps them face changes. As they grow older, they know they will continue to support each other – no matter what colour the sky turns.

8

Everyday verbs 2

Get is a very common verb in English, but it is not always appropriate for talking about changes. Note also alternatives to *get* which can improve your style.

A *Go, not get*

Go is used for changes in people's personality, appearance and physical abilities:
People **go mad/bald/grey/blind/deaf**.

Go is often used for sudden, usually negative, changes:
He was very embarrassed and his face **went red**.
Suddenly the sky **went** very **dark** and it started to rain.

Go can also be used for slower colour changes:
The pages of the book had **gone yellow** over the years.

B *Turn, not get*

Turn often collocates with colours:
The sky **turned gold** as the sun set.

When the tomatoes **turn red**, the farmers pick them and sell them.
The news gave his mother such a shock that her hair **turned white** overnight.

C *Get and become*

Get and *become* can often be used with the same collocations, but *become* is more formal and is therefore more appropriate in essays:

She gave up smoking when she **became pregnant**.
I would like to **become involved** in raising money for charity.

The same is true for collocations with adjectives such as *angry, bored, excited, depressed, upset, impatient, violent*:
He **became depressed** after his wife's death.

Become, not get, is used with the following: *extinct, (un)popular, homeless, famous*.
Our local baker's has **become famous** for its apple tarts.

D *Alternatives to get and become*

She **fell ill** and was taken to hospital.
Everyone **fell silent** when they heard the shocking news.
As my father **grew older**, he spent less time working.
The noise **grew louder** and soon we realised it was a plane approaching.

E *Overusing and misusing get*

Here are some sentences from students' essays where *get* is wrongly used.

sentences with <i>get</i>	more appropriate alternatives
I was able to get new friends.	I was able to make new friends .
A year ago he got a heart attack.	A year ago he had/suffered a heart attack .
If I get a child of my own one day ...	If I have a child of my own one day ...
I was getting crazy.	I was going crazy .
In June, I got a baby, James.	In June, I had a baby , James.

Exercises

8.1 Answer these questions using collocations from A and B.

- 1 What can happen to men as they get older? (Clue: Think of their hair.)
- 2 What can happen if you are embarrassed? (Clue: Think of your face.)
- 3 What can happen if you get bad news? (Clue: Think of your face or hair.)
- 4 What can happen to the pages of a newspaper after a long time?
- 5 What happens to strawberries as they ripen?
- 6 The poet John Milton lost his eyesight at the end of his life. What is another way of saying that?
- 7 The composer Beethoven lost his hearing at the end of his life. What is another way of saying that?
- 8 At the end of Shakespeare's play, Hamlet loses his mind. What is another way of saying that?
- 9 If it is about to rain, what might happen to the sky?

8.2 Look at C, D and E opposite. Correct these sentences.

- 1 Dinosaurs got extinct thousands of years ago.
- 2 When I get married, I'd like to get lots of children.
- 3 Jasmine fell depressed after failing her final exams.
- 4 Niklas has always dreamt of getting famous.
- 5 Would you be interested in growing involved in this project?
- 6 More people have got homeless this year than in any previous year.
- 7 My sister got a baby last week.
- 8 My grandfather got a heart attack last winter.

8.3 Replace each use of *get* with a verb from the box.

fall	become	grow	have	make
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As you get older, you'll begin to understand your parents better. Getting angry with them all the time doesn't help. You may not want to go to summer camp when none of your friends will be there, but your parents know you will soon get new friends there. You would all have gone on a family holiday together if your grandmother hadn't got ill, but surely you can understand why they don't want to leave her. You'll feel much more sympathetic to your parents' feelings when you get a child of your own!



8.4 Complete the collocations in these sentences.

- 1 I think I'd go if I had to put up with such a terrible boss!
- 2 It was a wonderful sunset. The sky gold and we sat on the terrace enjoying it.
- 3 Once upon a time the walls were probably cream but they have brown now and badly need repainting.
- 4 When I start grey, I'm definitely going to dye my hair.
- 5 As the head teacher walked into the hall, the children all silent.
- 6 The noise on the street louder and I looked out of the window to see what was happening.
- 7 My grandmother is a little afraid of ill while she is abroad.
- 8 I was so embarrassed that I bright red.

Answers

Unit 8

- 8.1**
- 1 They can go bald. / They can go grey.
 - 2 You can go red.
 - 3 Your face / You can go white. If the news is a great shock your hair might go/turn white.
 - 4 They can go yellow.
 - 5 They turn red.
 - 6 John Milton went blind.
 - 7 Beethoven went deaf.
 - 8 Hamlet went mad.
 - 9 It might turn grey. / It might go dark.
- 8.2**
- 1 Dinosaurs **became** extinct ...
 - 2 ... I'd like to **have** lots of children.
 - 3 Jasmine **became** depressed ...
 - 4 ... dreamt of **becoming** famous.
 - 5 Would you be interested in **becoming** involved ...
 - 6 More people have **become** homeless ...
 - 7 My sister **had** a baby ...
 - 8 My grandfather **had/suffered** a heart attack ...
- 8.3** As you **grow** older, you'll begin to understand your parents better. **Becoming** angry with them all the time doesn't help. You may not want to go to summer camp when none of your friends will be there, but your parents know you will soon **make** new friends there. You would all have gone on a family holiday together if your grandmother hadn't **fallen** ill, but surely you can understand why they don't want to leave her. You'll feel much more sympathetic to your parents' feelings when you **have** a child of your own!
- 8.4**
- | | |
|-----------------|---------------|
| 1 mad | 5 fell |
| 2 turned | 6 grew |
| 3 gone | 7 falling |
| 4 going / to go | 8 went/turned |