



INVESTICE DO ROZVOJE VZDĚLÁVÁNÍ

The following vocabulary will help you in describing people

Physical characteristics - Fyzický vzhled

tall	vysoký
slim	štíhlý
fat	tlustý
well-built	urostlý
overweight	obézní
short	malý
medium height	střední výšky
thin	hubený
well-dressed	dobře oblečený
smart	upravený
good-looking	hezký
attractive	atraktivní
beautiful	krásný
pretty	hezký
handsome	pohledný
ugly	ošklivý
old	starý
young	mladý
middle-aged	středního věku
bald	plešatý
bald-headed	holohlavý
beard	vousy
moustache	knírek
long hair	dlouhé vlasy

short hair	krátké vlasy
straight hair	rovné vlasy
curly hair	kudrnaté vlasy
fair-haired	světlovlasý
blond-haired or blonde-haired	blond
brown-haired	hnědovlasý
dark-haired	tmavovlasý
ginger-haired	zrzavý
blonde	blondýn, blondýna
brunette	brunet, tmavovláska
redhead	zrzek, zrzka

Emotional characteristics - Povahové rysy

confident	sebejistý
sensitive	citlivý
calm	klidný
hot-headed	vznětlivý
impulsive	impulzivní
cheerful	veselý
generous	velkorysý
kind	laskavý
mean	zlý, podlý
crazy	bláznivý
sensible	rozumný
serious	vážný
honest	upřímný
good-humoured	dobře naladěný
bad-tempered	zle, špatně naladěný
moody	náladový
dishonest	nepoctivý
hard-working	pracovitý
clever	chytrý
intelligent	inteligentní
arrogant	arogantní
snobbish	nadutý
happy	šťastný

unhappy	nešťastný
stupid	hloupý
lazy	líný
outgoing	společenský
cautious	opatrný
adventurous	dobrodružný
shy	ostýchavý
introverted	introvertní
extroverted	extrovertní
easy-going	bezstarostný
rude	hrubý, nezdořilý
bad-mannered	nevychovaný
impolite	nezdořilý, neslušný
emotional	citově založený, pohnutlivý
polite	zdořilý
funny	zábavný
witty	vtipný
boring	nudný
patient	trpělivý
impatient	netrpělivý
sophisticated	intelektuální, kultivovaný
cheeky	drzý
friendly	přátelský
unfriendly	nepřátelský
conceited	domýšlivý
brave	odvážný
cowardly	zbabělý
absent-minded	roztržitý
talented	talentovaný
modest	skromný

Describing people's appearance

Positive: **beautiful** is generally used to describe women; **handsome** is used to describe men; **good-looking** is used for both; pretty is another positive word to describe a woman (often a girl) meaning "attractive and nice to look at".

Negative: **ugly** is the most negative word to describe someone; **plain** is more polite.

Height and build:

tall and slim; medium height and build; short and fat; medium height and very muscular

Note: Another word for **slim** is **thin**, but **slim** has a more positive meaning, e.g. Tom is lovely and slim, but his brother is terribly thin. **Skinny** also has the same meaning, but is very negative. It is not very polite to say someone is **fat**; **overweight** is more neutral and polite.

Hair

straight – **wavy** – **curly**; **fair** (blond(e), light brown) – **dark** (dark brown, black)

Special features

The man has got very **pale skin** (= white skin). He also has **broad shoulders**, with a small **scar** at the top of his left arm. The other man has **dark skin**. He also has a **beard** and **moustache** and quite a **hairy chest** and a **tattoo**.

Asking questions about a person's appearance

Q: What does she **look like**? **A:** She is quite tall, with short fair hair.

Q: How tall is she? **A:** About 1 metre70.

Exercises:

A Complete these sentences in a suitable way. (More than one answer may be possible.)

- 1 She's got blonde
- 2 He's got very pale
- 3 They've both got curly
- 4 I'd say he's got medium
- 5 Her brother has got very broad
- 6 She doesn't men with hairy
- 7 Last time I saw him he had grown a
- 8 He's got very muscular
- 9 Both men were very good-.....
- 10 All of them have got dark

B Replace the underlined word in each sentence with a word which is either more suitable or more polite.

- 1 He told me he met a handsome girl in the disco last night.
- 2 She is beautiful but her younger sister is really quite ugly.
- 3 I think Peter is getting a bit fat, don't you?
- 4 Most people want to stay slim, but not as skinny as that girl over there.
- 5 I think she's hoping she'll meet a few beautiful men at the tennis club.

C You want to know about the following:

- someone's general appearance
- their height
- their weight

What questions do you need to ask? Complete these questions.

What

How

How much

KEY (ex. A): 1 hair; 2 skin; 3 hair; 4 height/build; 5 shoulders; 6 chests; 7 beard/moustache; 8 arms/legs; 9 looking; 10 hair/skin/eyes

KEY (ex. B): 1 beautiful/pretty; 2 plain; 3 overweight; 4 thin; 5 good-looking/handsome

KEY (ex. C): What does he/she look like? How tall is he/she? How much does he/she weigh?

Describing character

Opposites

Many positive words describing character have clear opposites with a negative meaning.

Positive

warm and friendly

kind

nice, pleasant

generous (= happy to give/ share)

optimistic (= thinks positively)

cheerful (= happy and smiling)

relax and easy-going

strong

sensitive

honest (= always tells the truth)

Negative

cold and unfriendly

unkind

horrible, unpleasant

mean (= never gives to others)

pessimistic (= thinks negatively)

miserable (= always seems unhappy)

tense (= nervous; worries a lot; not calm)

weak

insensitive (= doesn't think about others' feelings)

dishonest

Jane is very **tense** at the moment because of her exams, but she is usually quite **relaxed** and **easy-going** about most things.

I think the weather influences me a lot: when it's sunny I feel more **cheerful** and **optimistic**; but when it's cold and raining I get very **miserable**.

He seemed a bit **unfriendly** at first, but now I've got to know him I realize he's very **warm** and **kind**.

The shop assistant told me that the dress I tried on looked better on people younger than me. I thought that was very **insensitive** of her, but at least she was being **honest**, I suppose.

Character in action

People often talk about qualities of character that you may need in a work situation. Again, some of these words come in pairs of opposites: one positive and one negative.

Positive

hard-working

punctual (= always on time)

reliable

clever, bright (*informal*)

flexible

ambitious

Negative

lazy (= never does any work)

not very punctual; always late

unreliable (= you cannot trust/ depend on stupid, thick (*informal*))

inflexible (= a very fixed way of thinking; unable to change)

unambitious (= no desire to be successful)

Some pairs of opposites do not have a particularly positive or negative meaning:

He is very **shy** when you first meet him because he finds it difficult to talk to people and make conversation; but when he knows people quite well, he is much more **self-confident**.

People often say the British are very **reserved** (= do not show their feelings), but when you get to know them, they can be very **emotional** like anyone else.

Using nouns

Some important qualities are expressed through nouns.

One of her great qualities is that she **uses** her **initiative**. (= she can think for herself and take the necessary action; she does not need to wait for orders all the time)

That boy has got no **common sense** (= he does stupid things and doesn't think what he is doing). His sister, on the other hand, is very sensible. (= has lots of **common sense**)

D Organize these words into pairs of opposites and put them into columns below.

mean	clever	nice	lazy	relaxed	hard-working
tense	cheerful	generous	unpleasant	stupid	miserable

Positive

Negative

.....

.....

E What prefix forms the opposite of each of these words? (You need three different prefixes.)

kind	flexible	friendly	honest	reliable	sensitive
ambitious	pleasant				

F How would you describe the person in each of these descriptions?

- 1 He never bought me a drink all the time we were together.
- 2 I have to tell her what to do every minute of the working day. She wouldn't even open a window without someone's permission.
- 3 He often promises to do things but half the time he forgets.
- 4 She's always here on time.
- 5 I don't think he's done any work since he's been here.
- 6 She finds it difficult to meet people and talk to strangers.
- 7 He could work in any of the departments, and it doesn't matter to him if he's on his own or part of a team.
- 8 One of the great things about her is that she is so aware of what other people think or feel.
- 9 Bob, on the other hand, is the complete opposite. He is always making people angry or upset because he just doesn't consider their feelings.
- 10 The other thing about Bob is that he really wants to get the supervisor's job and then become boss for the whole department.

G What nouns can be formed from these adjectives? Use a dictionary to help you.

Example: kind – kindness

punctual	optimistic	reliable	lazy
confident	generous	ambitious	stupid
sensitive	strong	flexible	shy

H Choose the best alternative to complete these sentences.

- 1 She's a very person – always smiling and in a good mood.
 cheerful delighted glad please

- 2 He's a very person – I wish he was more easy-going.
 bad-tempered furious mad wild

- 3 Don't tell her off - she's very and she may start to cry.
 responsive sensible sensitive responsible

- 4 People enjoy his company very much because he's very

adorable likeable loveable sympathetic

5 If you've got a problem, go and talk to her – I'm sure she'll be
patient sympathetic tolerant warm-hearted

6 When his wife started seeing more of the tennis coach, he became very
arrogant envious jealous selfish

7 The twins keep pretending to be each other – they're such children!
evil miserable naughty wicked

8 Thank you for my beautiful present. It was very of you to buy it for me.
charitable generous loyal reliable

9 You have to be quiteto stand up in front of an audience.
selfish self-confident self-conscious self-satisfied

10 He's a very little boy – his parents give him everything he asks for.
consented discriminating generous spoilt

KEY (ex. D): *Positive*

clever
nice
relaxed
hard-working
cheerful
generous

Negative

stupid
unpleasant
tense
lazy
miserable
mean

KEY (ex. E): unkind; unfriendly; unreliable; unambitious; unpleasant
inflexible; insensitive
dishonest

KEY (ex. F): 1 mean; 2 has no initiative/ doesn't use her initiative; 3 unreliable; 4 punctual;
5 lazy; 6 shy; 7 flexible; 8 sensitive; 9 insensitive; 10 ambitious

KEY (ex. G): punctuality optimism/ optimist (person) reliability laziness
confidence generosity ambition stupidity
sensitivity strength flexibility shyness

KEY (ex. H): 1 cheerful; 2 bad-tempered; 3 sensitive; 4 likeable; 5 sympathetic (= *showing sympathy to people who have problems*); 6 jealous; 7 naughty; 8 generous; 9 self-confident;
10 spoilt

Sources:

Redman, S. English Vocabulary in Use (pre-intermediate, intermediate), CUP (2001)

Jones, L. New Progress to First Certificate, CUP (2002)