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Learn words that have opposite meanings – Part one

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In our last blog, we explained five words that have opposite meanings. In this blog, we will figure out the remaining words which are difficult to understand but are commonly used.



7 must know words that have opposite meanings

1. Refrain

Refrain means to stop yourself from doing something. In addition to this, to refrain also means a phrase or verse recurring at intervals in a song or poem, especially at the end of each stanza; chorus.

Examples:

I refrained from calling him.

The chorus, or the repeated part of a song, is called the refrain.

2. Dust

To dust means to either remove dust or add it. You might dust some chocolate syrup on a cake while baking, or dust the shelves to clean them.

Examples:

My grandmother loves to keep her house very clean and hence she dusts windows, tables, and sofas thrice a day.

I dusted some sugar in the batter to add a sweetness.

3. Hold up

Hold up has three meanings. To hold up means to prevent something, whereas the other one means to support it. When you help someone in their dark time, you are holding them up i.e. supporting them. When you stop someone from moving down a line, you are also holding them up

(supporting the line from moving).

Examples:

Despite the heavy cloudburst and winds, the old temple held up through all the odds.
What's the hold up? Can we please go for the next rickshaw?

The third meaning might not be opposite but it means to literally hold something up.

Example:

Raju held up his answer paper to help his friends with the answers.

4. Go off

Go off means closed, not working which is the opposite of "on." Whereas the other one means an alarm or a bomb that "goes off".

Examples:

It was dark when the lights went off.

I didn't hear my alarm when it went off this morning, so I didn't come to school.

5. Back up

I have your back up means I'll help you. The other meaning is to literally back up means to go/ move away from something.

Examples:

When Deepali broke out, I explained to her that I will back you up.

I backed up slowly to get away from the scary dog.

Hope, you got an idea about the words that have opposite meanings that can be used in discussion. You can also improve your communication skills by utilizing vocabulary blogs in our category. You can even join an online Spoken English course to develop your communication skills .

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-By Shailja Varma

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