

Describing clothes and appearance words
describing people/ clothes vocabulary/ British and American English/ collocations/
English for Japanese learners

Choose one of the words from the next two pages below but don't tell anyone which one you chose. Explain the meaning and use of that thing without saying any of the words in the name (or any form of those words) until your partner guesses which one you are talking about. When they guess correctly, discuss if that was the best way of explaining that word, then take turns doing the same.

- (Foreign/ Young) people sometimes think this is... but in fact/ actually...
- I think most people know what a... is, but anyway it...
- In my country, we say this when (we are talking about)...
- It has something in common with...
- It is sometimes confused with...
- It's (a bit/ something/ quite a lot/ really) like (the British/ American/ Chinese/ Korean...) but...
- It's made from...
- It's similar to...
- It's the closest (local/ Japanese/...) equivalent to...
- It's worn (on top of/ with/ by/ to/ for)...
- The direct translation/ word-for-word translation/ literal translation is...
- The normal translation/ usual translation for this is.../ Translated word for word, it would be...
- This also exists in China/ Korea/ most Asian countries/... (but...)
- This is a kind of...
- This is in English dictionaries, but not everyone knows it. It means...
- This is often explained as...
- This means (something like)...
- This only exists in my country (and a couple of other countries) and is...

Clothes vocabulary for Japanese learners of English

Japanese clothes to explain

- “chonmage”
- “cool biz”
- “fundoshi”
- “furisode”
- “geta”
- “Gothic Lolita”
- “gyaru style”
- “hakama”
- “happi coat”
- “jimbei”
- “monpe”
- “netsuke”
- “obi”
- “recruit suit”
- “sailor suit”
- “tabi socks”
- “visual kei”
- “warm biz”
- “yukata”
- “zori”

Useful clothes and appearance vocabulary for Japanese learners of English

- accessories
- backpack
- bathrobe/ dressing gown
- blazer
- bow
- bowtie
- bra
- braces/ suspenders
- business shirt/ dress shirt
- clippers
- comb over
- crew cut
- custom made/ tailor made
- denim jacket
- DJ
- dress
- eye liner
- flip flops/ thongs
- football kit
- glasses/ spectacles/ specs
- greying hair/ hair flecked with grey
- hair dye
- handbag/ purse

- headscarf
- high heels
- jewellery/ jewelry
- jumper/ sweater/ pullover
- key ring
- leggings
- long-sleeved T-shirt
- one-size-fits-all
- overalls
- pajamas/ pyjamas
- panty hose/ tights
- parasol
- perm
- pierced ears
- platinum engagement ring
- plimsolls
- purse
- sandals
- satchel
- Saville Row
- scarf/ winter scarf/ wooly scarf
- shorts
- short-sleeved
- skirt suit
- sleeveless
- slip-on shoes
- stockings
- sunglasses
- sweatshirt
- tie
- top
- tracksuit
- trainers/ sneakers/ sports shoes
- trousers/ pants
- tux
- unisex
- Velcro
- vest/ undershirt
- waistcoat/ vest
- wallet
- zip/ zipper

Ask about any words above you couldn't understand or couldn't explain.

Clothes and accessories collocations

Without looking above for now, brainstorm at least one collocation for each of the words below words (= words that go together with those words)

+ glasses
+ heels
+ liner
+ scarf
+ shirt
cuff +
denim +
engagement +
key +
make +
one-size +
panty +
platinum +
tailor +
track +

If you need to or your teacher says that you should, look on the next page for words that could collocate with the words above. Note that many other answers are possible.

-----fold, cover or cut-----

Use the expressions below to help with the collocations activity above:

business/ dress
custom-made/ tailor-made
eye
fits-all
high
hose
jacket
links
made
made
ring
ring
ring
suit
sun
up
winter

Clothes and appearance synonyms

Without looking above for now, try to think of other expressions which mean the same as:

- braces
- custom-made
- DJ
- dress shirt
- specs
- hair flecked with grey
- jumper
- tights
- thongs
- trainers
- trousers
- tux
- undershirt
- waistcoat
- wooly scarf
- zip

Use the words under the fold to help with the task above.

-----fold, cover or cut-----

- -actle
- -edo
- -ing
- -per
- business
- dinner
- flip
- glass
- hose
- jacket
- pants
- sports
- suspender
- sweat
- tailor
- vest
- vest
- winter

Clothes and appearance words the same or different

Decide if each line below has exactly the same meaning or not. If there are more than two, they are all the same or all different. Even a small difference means that they are different.

accessories/ jewellery	backpack/ satchel
bathrobe/ dressing gown	blazer/ jacket
bomber jacket/ jumper	bow/ ribbon
bowtie/ tie	braces/ suspenders
business shirt/ dress shirt	cap/ hat
cardigan/ sweater	crew cut/ skinhead
custom made/ tailor made	denim/ jeans
dressing gown/ gown	fastener/ zip
flip flops/ sandals	flip flops/ thongs
glass/ glasses	glasses/ spectacles/ specs
glasses/ sunglasses	
greying hair/ hair flecked with grey	
handbag/ shoulder bag	
headscarf/ winter scarf	
high heel/ high heels	
jumper/ jacket	
jumper/ sweater/ pullover	
leggings/ trousers/ tights	
long-sleeved T-shirt/ T-shirt	
long-sleeved T-shirt/ sweatshirt/ tracksuit	
one-size-fits-all/ unisex	
pants/ slacks/ trousers	
pants/ underpants	
panty hose/ tights	
parasol/ umbrella	
plimsolls/ trainers	
purse/ handbag	
purse/ wallet	
scarf/ winter scarf/ woolly scarf	
shirt/ top/ T-shirt	
short-sleeved/ sleeveless	
shorts/ short-sleeved	
sneaker/ sports shoes/ trainers	
stockings/ tights	
tracksuit/ trainers	
trainers/ sneakers/ sports shoes	
undershirt/ vest	
Velcro/ zip	
vest/ waistcoat	
winter scarf/ woolly scarf	
zip/ zipper	

Clothes and appearance vocabulary with different meanings

All the words below have more than one meaning, e.g. in British English and American English. Discuss the different meanings together.

jacket
pants
purse
scarf
thong(s)
vest

Use the words under the fold to help with the task above.

-----fold, cover or cut-----

- flip flops
- G-string
- handbag
- head
- purse
- trousers
- underpants
- undershirt
- waistcoat
- winter
- wooly

Typical Japanese mistakes with clothes and appearance vocabulary

Without looking above for now, correct the expressions below

- beach sandal X
- braja X
- engage ring X
- free size X
- glass X
- hair colour X
- jeans jacket X
- muffler X
- no make X
- no sleeve X
- order-made X
- pajama X
- platina ring X
- romance grey X
- stocking X
- sunglass X
- wearing high heel X
- Y shirt X