



# Learn English: Collocations and Passive Voice Forms

## Reading Comprehension

Whether it be steamed buns from China, a baguette from France, or pita bread from the Middle East, bread and butter can be depended on to fill any hungry belly, any time of the day. However, the collocation 'bread and butter' has nothing to do with loaves, slices, or buns with a generous spread of creamy butter.

According to some experts on the origins of words, the phrase 'bread and butter' was being used in England during the Middle Ages (the period between 500 AD and 1500 AD). Bread was a staple of the medieval diet and was eaten by everyone, including royalty, soldiers, workers, and even hospital patients. Records show that most people were supposed to receive about two pounds of bread daily.

Because of the importance of bread at this time, laws were being implemented by many governments to set up price controls, which meant that bakers couldn't get away with raising the price of bread too much. These laws ensured that bread was readily available and often the only meal many peasants could afford.

Without bread and butter, they wouldn't have been able to survive. For years, the term 'bread and butter' meant a basic item for life.

This meaning was used until the 1600s when the phrase started being used to describe a person's income or livelihood. The salary you get from doing your job is your 'bread and butter' because you depend on it to keep you alive, just like the peasants who relied on actual bread and butter during the Middle Ages.

The term is still widely used by many people today, and with 811 million people in the world regularly going to bed hungry, many lives could be saved with something as simple as 'bread and butter.'

