

Daily Vocabulary Digest

August 2, 2026

Focus: Semantic Nuance & Collocations

Today's selection emphasizes subtle meaning distinctions and natural word partnerships.

Core Words

Ephemeral

(*adj.*) Lasting for a very short time.

Collocation: ephemeral beauty / an ephemeral trend.

Contrast: Unlike *eternal*, this highlights transience.

Obdurate

(*adj.*) Stubbornly refusing to change one's opinion or course of action.

Collocation: obdurate resistance / an obdurate refusal.

Nuance: Stronger than *stubborn*; implies hardness of heart.

Quotidian

(*adj.*) Ordinary or everyday, especially when mundane.

Collocation: quotidian routine / quotidian chores.

Register: Often literary; contrasts with *extraordinary*.

Sycophant

(*n.*) A person who acts obsequiously toward someone important to gain advantage.

Collocation: a sycophantic follower / political sycophants.

Tone: Strongly pejorative.

Phrasal Verbs & Idioms

- **Circle the drain:** To be in a worsening state leading inevitably to failure.
e.g., The project was circling the drain after budget cuts.
- **Read between the lines:** To perceive or detect an obscure or unexpressed meaning.
e.g., Reading between the lines, I sensed her real concern.
- **Burn the midnight oil:** To work late into the night.
e.g., She burned the midnight oil to finish the report.

Word Families

- **Persist** (*v.*) → Persistence (*n.*) → Persistent (*adj.*) → Persistently (*adv.*)
- **Analyze** (*v.*) → Analysis (*n.*) → Analytical (*adj.*) → Analyst (*n.*)

Quick Quiz

1. Which word describes something fleeting? (_____)

2. Name a synonym for "stubborn" with a negative connotation. (_____) 3. What idiom means "to work late"? (_____)

Review these words actively: write sentences, identify them in reading, and test recall tomorrow.