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**37 English Words for Describing a Person’s Appearance**

[**Vocabulary Builder Course**](https://www.espressoenglish.net/vocabulary-builder-course)

In this lesson you’re going to expand your vocabulary with 37 words to describe a person’s appearance.

Let’s begin with the word **beautiful** – in English, this word is mostly used for women. We use the word **handsome** for men. To describe beautiful women, we also have the words **pretty, lovely, gorgeous,** and **stunning** – “stunning” means extremely beautiful, like a woman who is so beautiful that she attracts a lot of attention!

Another expression to describe a woman like this is to say that **“She turns heads”** – implying that when she walks down the street, people turn their heads to focus their attention on her.

The words **attractive, good-looking, cute,** and **hot** can be used for both, men and women. **Cute** is a more playful word to say a person is attractive; we often use “cute” for children and baby animals. And the word **hot** is a slang word that you should only use during informal conversations among friends.

The opposite of beautiful or handsome is **ugly** – but that’s a strong word, so most people express this idea using the negative form of one of the positive words, for example: **“She’s not very attractive”** or **“He’s not so good-looking.”**

Finally, there is the word **plain** – that describes a person who is ordinary-looking – not especially beautiful/handsome, but not especially ugly either.

**English Words for “Fat”**

Okay, now let’s learn some words to describe body shape and size. You already know the basic words **fat** and **thin** – but there are many other ways to say these.

A person who is fat can also be described as **overweight, heavy, big,** or **large.** The word for a person who is EXTREMELY fat is **obese.**



“I hate my flabby stomach”

We also have the word **chubby** to describe fat children; **husky** or **heavyset** to describe fat men; and **plump** or **curvy** to describe fat women (the word curvy has a more positive connotation, implying that the woman has a nice, full, feminine body).

If you want to say a specific part of the body is fat, you can say it is **flabby** – for example, “I hate my flabby stomach.” (typically used for arms, stomach, thighs, and butt).

**English Words for “Thin”**



“My sister is slender”

The opposite of fat is thin. Some alternative words are **slim, slender, skinny, lean, wiry, petite,** and **lanky**. In general, **thin, slim,**and **slender** are more positive, whereas **skinny**is often used as a criticism or negative point.

The words **lean** and **wiry** mean that the person is thin AND muscular. The word **petite** is only used for women, and means that the woman is short AND thin. Finally, the word **lanky** means tall and thin.

**English Words for “Muscular”**

What about a person with an **athletic** body?

You can describe him or her as **muscular, fit, strong,**  **in good shape,** or **“ripped”** – that’s a slang word meaning that the person has very well-defined and visible muscles – like the guy in this photo.