

Advantages and Disadvantages

1 writing about advantages

▼ **advantage** *n* [C] a good feature that something has, which makes it better, more useful etc than other things:

- *The **great advantage of** digital cameras **is that** there is no film to process.*
- *The **advantage of** using a specialist firm **is that** the people who work there have years of experience.*
- *One of the **big advantages of** this type of engine **is that** it is smaller and lighter than a conventional petrol engine.*
- *The university **has the advantage of** being one of the oldest and best respected in the country.*
- *The movement of the sea is predictable. This **gives** wave power **a distinct advantage over** (=an obvious advantage compared to) wind power.*
- *Despite a few problems with the design, the car's **advantages** clearly **outweigh its disadvantages**. (=the problems are not enough to stop it being a good car)*

▼ **benefit** *n* [C] a feature of something that has a good effect on people's lives:

- *Regular exercise has many **benefits**, including reducing the risk of heart disease.*
- *Modern technology has **brought great benefits to** mankind.*
- *There has been a great deal of research into the **potential benefits of** using genetically modified crops.*

▼ **merit** *n* [C] a good feature that something has, which you consider when you are deciding whether it is the best choice:

- *The committee will consider **the merits of** the proposals.*
- *In her book, she discusses **the relative merits of** the two political systems. (=she compares the features that they have)*
- *The **merits and demerits of** (=the good and bad features of) alternative funding systems were widely discussed in the newspapers.*
- *The chairman **saw no great merit in** this suggestion. (=he did not think that it was a good idea)*

▼ **good point** *n* [C] a good feature that something has:

- *One of the **good points about** the car is that it is easy to drive.*
- *Each system has its **good and bad points**.*

▼ **plus point** *n* [C] a good feature that something has:

- *The small but powerful battery is another of the camera's many **plus points**.*
- *The estate agent's leaflet said a **major plus point** was the recently modernized kitchen.*

▼ **the good/great/best thing about** used when mentioning a good feature of something:

- *The great thing about living in a city **is that** you can go shopping at almost any hour of the day or night.*
- *Her wicked sense of humour was **the best thing about** her.*
- *The good thing about cycling **is that** you don't have to worry about getting stuck in a traffic jam.*

STUDY NOTE: Grammar

► **the good/great/best thing about** is rather informal. Don't use it in formal essays.

▼ **the beauty of sth is that** used when you want to emphasize that something has a very good or useful feature:

- *The beauty of the design **is that** it is so simple.*

2 writing about disadvantages

▼ **disadvantage** *n* [C] a bad feature that something has, which makes it less good, less useful etc than other things:

- *The **main disadvantage of** this book is its price.*
- *These vaccines have two **serious disadvantages**. Firstly, they are not 100% effective, and secondly, they are expensive to make.*
- *A **major disadvantage of** using large quantities of chemicals is that they quickly get absorbed into soil.*

▼ **drawback** *n* [C] a disadvantage which makes you think that something is not so good, even though it has other advantages:

- *The **major drawback of** this method is that it can be very time-consuming.*
- *Aluminium is very light and also very strong. Its **main drawback** is that it cools down very rapidly.*
- *Summer in the Scottish islands can be beautiful. **The only drawback is** the weather, which can be very changeable.*

▼ **downside** *n* [singular] the disadvantage of a situation that in most other ways seems good or enjoyable:

- *The **downside of** running your own business is that you are responsible if anything goes wrong.*
- *Everyone wants to be rich and famous, but it does **have its downside**.*
- *Most comfort eaters enjoy what they eat, but **the downside is that** they soon start to put on weight.*

▼ **bad point** *n* [C] a bad feature that something has:

- *There are good points and **bad points about** single sex schools.*
- *For all its **bad points**, and there are many, it is still the best software system of its kind available.*