

"Flowers" — Miley Cyrus

Extended analysis · vocabulary, idioms & pronunciation · Level B1 · American accent

How to use this PDF: play the song on the website, then study these notes. Every example sentence here is our own — for the real thing, listen to the track.

1 · Extended vocabulary

bouquet	<i>noun</i>	A bunch of flowers arranged as a gift. <i>He arrived with a huge bouquet of roses for her graduation.</i>
self-esteem	<i>noun</i>	How much you value and respect yourself. <i>Learning a new skill did wonders for her self-esteem.</i>
breakup	<i>noun</i>	The end of a romantic relationship. <i>After the breakup he moved to a new city to start fresh.</i>
to move on	<i>phrasal verb</i>	To accept that something has ended and continue with your life. <i>It took her a year, but she finally moved on.</i>
to treat yourself	<i>expression</i>	To buy or do something special for yourself as a reward. <i>Exams are over — treat yourself to a nice dinner.</i>
independence	<i>noun</i>	The state of not depending on other people. <i>Living abroad taught him real independence.</i>
empowerment	<i>noun</i>	The feeling of gaining confidence and control over your own life. <i>The workshop was all about financial empowerment for young adults.</i>
ashes	<i>noun</i>	What remains after something burns; often used about things that were destroyed. <i>They rebuilt the company from the ashes of the old one.</i>
regret	<i>noun / verb</i>	Sadness about something you did or did not do. <i>My only regret is not travelling more when I was younger.</i>
to forgive	<i>verb</i>	To stop feeling angry with someone who hurt you. <i>She forgave him, but she never forgot.</i>
nostalgia	<i>noun</i>	A bittersweet longing for the past. <i>Hearing that old ringtone filled me with nostalgia.</i>
anthem	<i>noun</i>	A song that becomes the symbol of a feeling, group or movement. <i>That track became the unofficial anthem of the summer.</i>

2 · Idioms & expressions

● to buy yourself flowers

To give yourself the care and attention you would expect from a partner.

Example: Nobody remembered her birthday, so she bought herself flowers and booked a spa day.

● to take yourself dancing

The pattern take + reflexive pronoun + activity: to do an enjoyable activity alone, by choice.

Example: He takes himself to the cinema every Friday and loves it.

● **to stand on your own two feet**

To be independent and support yourself without help.

Example: At some point every adult has to stand on their own two feet.

● **to watch something burn**

To see something you built be destroyed, often feeling powerless.

Example: Investors watched their savings burn in the crash.

● **an old flame**

A person you loved in the past.

Example: She bumped into an old flame at the reunion and it was very awkward.

● **to burn bridges**

To damage a relationship so badly that it cannot be repaired.

Example: Don't burn bridges when you quit — you may need that reference.

● **to start over**

To begin again from zero.

Example: The fire destroyed the workshop, so they had to start over.

3 - Pronunciation & connected speech

◆ **The American flap T**

Between vowels, American speakers turn /t/ into a quick, soft D-like tap. Words like 'started', 'better' or 'water' sound like 'starded', 'bedder', 'wader'. Train your ear to recognise it — it is everywhere in American pop.

◆ **The weak 'to'**

In natural speech 'to' almost always weakens to a soft 'tuh'. Pronouncing every 'to' with a full vowel is a classic learner giveaway; let the small words shrink.

◆ **wanna / didn't wanna**

'Want to' fuses into 'wanna' in casual American English. You will hear it constantly in songs; in formal writing, always keep 'want to'.

◆ **Consonant-to-vowel linking**

American singers glue a final consonant to the next vowel: 'built a' becomes 'buil-ta'. Linking is why native speech feels faster than it really is.

4 - Keep going

Cards, synced video and games for this song live at

youenglishtoolbox.com/learn-english-with-music/learn-english-with-flowers-miley-cyrus/. Lyrics are not reproduced in this document — enjoy them inside the official video.