

A-D Idioms & Phrases

A

A Bird In The Hand Is Worth Two In The Bush	Having something that is certain is much better than taking a risk for more, because chances are you might lose everything.
A Blessing In Disguise	Something good that isn't recognized at first.
A Chip On Your Shoulder	Being upset for something that happened in the past.
A Dime A Dozen	Anything that is common and easy to get.
A Doubting Thomas	A skeptic who needs physical or personal evidence in order to believe something.
A Drop in the Bucket	A very small part of something big or whole.
A Fool And His Money Are Easily Parted	It's easy for a foolish person to lose his/her money.
A House Divided Against Itself Cannot Stand	Everyone involved must unify and function together or it will not work out.
A Leopard Can't Change His Spots	You cannot change who you are.
A Penny Saved Is A Penny Earned	By not spending money, you are saving money (little by little).
A Picture Paints a Thousand Words	A visual presentation is far more descriptive than words.
A Piece of Cake	A task that can be accomplished very easily.
A Slap on the Wrist	A very mild punishment.
A Taste Of Your Own Medicine	When you are mistreated the same way you mistreat others.
A Toss-Up	A result that is still unclear and can go either way.
Actions Speak Louder Than Words:	Add Fuel To The Fire:
Against The Clock:	Rushed and short on time.
All Bark And No Bite:	When someone is threatening and/or aggressive but not willing to engage in a fight.
All Greek to me:	Meaningless and incomprehensible like someone who cannot read, speak, or understand any of the Greek language would be.
All In The Same Boat:	When everyone is facing the same challenges.
An Arm And A Leg:	Very expensive. A large amount of money.
An Axe To Grind:	To have a dispute with someone.
Apple of My Eye:	Someone who is cherished above all others.
As High As A Kite:	Anything that is high up in the sky.
At The Drop Of A Hat:	Willing to do something immediately.

B

Back Seat Driver:	People who criticize from the sidelines, much like someone giving unwanted advice from the back seat of a vehicle to the driver.
Back To Square One:	Having to start all over again.
Back To The Drawing Board:	When an attempt fails and it's time to start all over.
Baker's Dozen:	Thirteen.
Barking Up The Wrong Tree:	A mistake made in something you are trying to achieve.
Beat A Dead Horse:	To force an issue that has already ended.
Beating Around The Bush:	Avoiding the main topic. Not speaking directly about the issue.
Bend Over Backwards:	Do whatever it takes to help. Willing to do anything.
Between A Rock And A Hard Place:	Stuck between two very bad options.
Bite Off More Than You Can Chew:	To take on a task that is way to big.
Bite Your Tongue:	To avoid talking.
Blood Is Thicker Than Water:	The family bond is closer than anything else.
Blue Moon:	A rare event or occurrence.
Break A Leg:	A superstitious way to say 'good luck' without saying 'good luck', but rather the opposite
Buy A Lemon	To purchase a vehicle that constantly gives problems or stops running after you drive it away.

C

Can't Cut The Mustard	Someone who isn't adequate enough to compete or participate.
Cast Iron Stomach	Someone who has no problems, complications or ill effects with eating anything or drinking anything.
Charley Horse	Stiffness in the leg / A leg cramp.

Chew someone out	Verbally scold someone.
Chip on his Shoulder	Angry today about something that occurred in the past.
Chow Down	To eat.
Close but no Cigar	To be very near and almost accomplish a goal, but fall short.
Cock and Bull Story	An unbelievable tale.
Come Hell Or High Water	Any difficult situation or obstacle.
Crack Someone Up	To make someone laugh.
D	
Dark Horse	One who was previously unknown and is now prominent.
Dead Ringer	100% identical. A duplicate.
Devil's Advocate	Someone who takes a position for the sake of argument without believing in that particular side of the argument. It can also mean one who presents a counter argument for a position they do believe in, to another debater.
Dog Days of Summer	The hottest days of the summer season.
Don't count your chickens before they hatch	Don't rely on it until you're sure of it.
Don't Look A Gift Horse In The Mouth	When someone gives you a gift, don't be ungrateful.
Don't Put All Your Eggs In One Basket	Do not put all your resources in one possibility.
Doozy	Something outstanding.
Down To The Wire	Something that ends at the last minute or last few seconds.
Drastic Times Call For Drastic Measures	When you are extremely desperate you need to take extremely desperate actions.
Drink like a fish	To drink very heavily.
Drive someone up the wall	To irritate and/or annoy very much.
Dropping Like Flies	A large number of people either falling ill or dying.
Dry Run	Rehearsal.
E-H Idioms & Phrases	
E	
Eighty Six	A certain item is no longer available. Or this idiom can also mean, to throw away.
Elvis has left the building	The show has come to an end. It's all over.
Ethnic Cleansing	Killing of a certain ethnic or religious group on a massive scale.
Every Cloud Has A Silver Lining	Be optimistic, even difficult times will lead to better days.
Everything But The Kitchen Sink	Almost everything and anything has been included.
Excuse my French	Please forgive me for cussing.
Cock and Bull Story	An unbelievable tale.
F	
Feeding Frenzy	An aggressive attack on someone by a group.
Field Day	An enjoyable day or circumstance.
Finding Your Feet	To become more comfortable in whatever you are doing.
Finger lickin' good	A very tasty food or meal.
Fixed In Your Ways	Not willing or wanting to change from your normal way of doing something.
Flash In The Pan	Something that shows potential or looks promising in the beginning but fails to deliver anything in the end.
Flea Market	A swap meet. A place where people gather to buy and sell inexpensive goods.
Flesh and Blood	This idiom can mean living material of which people are made of, or it can refer to anything in the end.
Flip The Bird	To raise your middle finger at someone.
Foam at the Mouth	To be enraged and show it.
Fools' Gold	Iron pyrites, a worthless rock that resembles real gold.
French Kiss	An open mouth kiss where tongues touch.
From Rags To Riches	To go from being very poor to being very wealthy.
Fuddy-duddy	An old-fashioned and foolish type of person.

Full Monty	This idiom can mean either, “the whole thing” or “completely nude”.
Funny Farm	A mental institutional facility.
G	
Get Down to Brass Tacks	To become serious about something.
Get Over It	To move beyond something that is bothering you.
Get Up On The Wrong Side Of The Bed	Someone who is having a horrible day.
Get Your Walking Papers	Get fired from a job.
Give Him The Slip	To get away from. To escape.
Go Down Like A Lead Balloon	To be received badly by an audience.
Go For Broke	To gamble everything you have.
Go Out On A Limb	Put yourself in a tough position in order to support someone/something.
Go The Extra Mile	Going above and beyond whatever is required for the task at hand.
Good Samaritan	Someone who helps others when they are in need, with no discussion for compensation, and no thought of a reward.
Graveyard Shift	Working hours from about 12:00 am to 8:00 am. The time of the day when most other people are sleeping.
Great Minds Think Alike	Intelligent people think like each other.
Green Room	The waiting room, especially for those who are about to go on a tv or radio show.
Gut Feeling	A personal intuition you get, especially when feel something may not be right.
H	
Haste Makes Waste	Quickly doing things results in a poor ending.
Hat Trick	When one player scores three goals in the same hockey game. This idiom can also mean three scores in any other sport, such as 3 homeruns, 3 touchdowns, 3 soccer goals, etc.
Have an Axe to Grind	To have a dispute with someone.
He Lost His Head	Angry and overcome by emotions.
Head Over Heels	Very excited and/or joyful, especially when in love.
Hell in a Handbasket	Deteriorating and headed for complete disaster.
High Five	Slapping palms above each others heads as celebration gesture.
High on the Hog	Living in Luxury.
Hit The Books	To study, especially for a test or exam.
Hit The Hay	Go to bed or go to sleep.
Hit The Nail on the Head	Do something exactly right or say something exactly right.
Hit The Sack	Go to bed or go to sleep.
Hocus Pocus	In general, a term used in magic or trickery.
Hold Your Horses	Be patient.
I-L Idioms & Phrases	
I	
Icing On The Cake	When you already have it good and get something on top of what you already have.
Idle Hands Are The Devil’s Tools	You are more likely to get in trouble if you have nothing to do.
If It’s Not One Thing, It’s Another	When one thing goes wrong, then another, and another...
In Like Flynn	To be easily successful, especially when sexual or romantic.
In The Bag	To have something secured.
In The Buff	Nude.
In The Heat Of The Moment	Overwhelmed by what is happening in the moment.
In Your Face	An aggressive and bold confrontation.
It Takes Two To Tango	A two person conflict where both people are at fault.
It’s A Small World	You frequently see the same people in different places.
Its Anyone’s Call	A competition where the outcome is difficult to judge or predict.

J	
Jaywalk	Crossing the street (from the middle) without using the crosswalk.
Joshing Me	Tricking me.
K	
Keep An Eye On Him	You should carefully watch him.
Keep body and soul together	To earn a sufficient amount of money in order to keep yourself alive .
Keep your chin up	To remain joyful in a tough situation.
Kick The Bucket	Die.
Kitty-corner	Diagonally across. Sometimes called Catty-Corner as well.
Knee Jerk Reaction	A quick and automatic response.
Knock On Wood	Knuckle tapping on wood in order to avoid some bad luck.
Know the Ropes	To understand the details.
L	
Last but not least	An introduction phrase to let the audience know that the last person mentioned is no less important than those introduced before him/her.
Lend Me Your Ear	To politely ask for someone's full attention.
Let Bygones Be Bygones	To forget about a disagreement or arguement.
Let Sleeping Dogs Lie	To avoid restarting a conflict.
Let The Cat Out Of The Bag	To share a secret that wasn't suppose to be shared.
Level playing field	A fair competition where no side has an advantage.
Like a chicken with its head cut off	To act in a frenzied manner.
Liquor someone up	To get someone drunk.
Long in the Tooth	Old people (or horses).
Loose Cannon	Someone who is unpredictable and can cause damage if not kept in check.
M-P Idioms & Phrases	
M	
Make No Bones About	To state a fact so there are no doubts or objections.
Method To My Madness	Strange or crazy actions that appear meaningless but in the end are done for a good reason.
Mumbo Jumbo	Nonsense or meaningless speech.
Mum's the word	To keep quiet. To say nothing.
N	
Nest Egg	Savings set aside for future use.
Never Bite The Hand That Feeds You	Don't hurt anyone that helps you.
New kid on the block	Someone new to the group or area.
New York Minute	A minute that seems to go by quickly, especially in a fast paced environment.
No Dice	To not agree. To not accept a proposition.
No Room to Swing a Cat	An unusually small or confined space.
Not Playing With a Full Deck	Someone who lacks intelligence.
O	
Off On The Wrong Foot	Getting a bad start on a relationship or task.
Off The Hook	No longer have to deal with a tough situation.
Off the Record	Something said in confidence that the one speaking doesn't want attributed to him/her.
On Pins And Needles	Anxious or nervous, especially in anticipation of something.
On The Fence	Undecided.
On The Same Page	When multiple people all agree on the same thing.
Out Of The Blue	Something that suddenly and unexpectedly occurs.
Out On A Limb	When someone puts themself in a risky situation.
Out On The Town	To enjoy yourself by going out.
Over My Dead Body	When you absolutely will not allow something to happen.

Over the Top	Very excessive.
P	
Pass The Buck	Avoid responsibility by giving it to someone else.
Pedal to the metal	To go full speed, especially while driving a vehicle.
Peeping Tom	Someone who observes people in the nude or sexually active people, mainly for his own gratification.
Pick up your ears	To listen very carefully.
Pig In A Poke	A deal that is made without first examining it.
Pig Out	To eat alot and eat it quickly.
Pipe Down	To shut-up or be quiet.
Practice Makes Perfect	By constantly practicing, you will become better.
Pull the plug	To stop something. To bring something to an end.
Pulling Your Leg	Tricking someone as a joke.
Put a sock in it	To tell noisy person or a group to be quiet.
R-T Idioms & Phrases	
R	
Raincheck	An offer or deal that is declined right now but willing to accept later.
Raining Cats and Dogs	A very loud and noisy rain storm.
Ring Fencing	Separated usual judgement to guarantee protection, especially project funds.
Rise and Shine	Time to get out of bed and get ready for work/school.
Rome Was Not Built In One Day	If you want something to be completely properly, then its going to take time.
Rule Of Thumb	A rough estimate.
Run out of steam	To be completely out of energy.
S	
Sixth Sense	A paranormal sense that allows you to communicate with the dead.
Skid Row	The rundown area of a city where the homeless and drug users live.
Smell A Rat	To detect somone in the group is betraying the others.
Smell Something Fishy	Detecting that something isn't right and there might be a reason for it.
Son of a Gun	A scamp.
Southpaw	Someone who is left-handed.
Spitting Image	The exact likeness or kind.
Start From Scratch	To do it all over again from the beginning.