

# IDIOMS COMPLETE COLLECTION

English (Precis & Composition)



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## Idioms

**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:

It's better to actually do something than just talk about it.

Add Fuel To The Fire:

Whenever something is done to make a bad situation even worse than it is.

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.

Cross Your Fingers:

To hope that something happens the way you want it to.

Cry Over Spilt Milk:

When you complain about a loss from the past.

Cry Wolf:

Intentionally raise a false alarm.

Cup Of Joe:

A cup of coffee.

Curiosity Killed The Cat:

Being Inquisitive can lead you into a dangerous situation.

Cut to the Chase:

Leave out all the unnecessary details and just get to the point.

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 your 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

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.

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 someone's family.

**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👁️0 am to 8👁️0 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



**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.

Ivy League:

Since 1954 the Ivy League has been the following universities: Columbia, Brown, Cornell, Dartmouth, Yale, Pennsylvania, Princeton, and Harvard.

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 argument.

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

**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 themselves 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.

**Q**

**Queer the pitch:**

Destroy or ruin a plan.

**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:**

Seperated 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

Saved By The Bell:

Saved at the last possible moment.

Scapegoat:

Someone else who takes the blame.

Scot-free:

To escape and not have to pay.

Sick As A Dog:

To be very sick (with the flu or a cold).

Sitting Shotgun:

Riding in the front passenger seat of a car.

**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 someone 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.

T

The Ball Is In Your Court:

It is your decision this time.

The Best Of Both Worlds:

There are two choices and you have them both.

The Bigger They Are The Harder They Fall:

While the bigger and stronger opponent might be alot more difficult to beat, when you do they suffer a much bigger loss.

The Last Straw:

When one small burden after another creates an unbearable situation, the last straw is the last small burden that one can take.

The Whole Nine Yards:

Everything. All of it.

Third times a charm:

After no success the first two times, the third try is a lucky one.

Tie the knot:

To get married.

Til the cows come home:

A long time.

To Make A Long Story Short:

Something someone would say during a long and boring story in order to keep his/her audience from losing attention. Usually the story isn't shortened.

To Steal Someone's Thunder:

To take the credit for something someone else did.

Tongue And Cheek:

humor, not to be taken serious.

Turn A Blind Eye:

Refuse to acknowledge something you know is real or legit.

Twenty three skidoo:

To be turned away.

U

Under the weather:

Feeling ill or sick.

Up a blind alley:

Going down a course of action that leads to a bad outcome.

Use Your Loaf:

Use your head. Think smart.

V

Van Gogh's ear for music:

Tone deaf.

Variety Is The Spice Of Life:

The more experiences you try the more exciting life can be.

W

Wag the Dog:

A diversion away from something of greater importance.

Water Under The Bridge:

Anything from the past that isn't significant or important anymore.

Wear Your Heart On Your Sleeve:

To openly and freely express your emotions.

When It Rains, It Pours:

Since it rarely rains, when it does it will be a huge storm.

When Pigs Fly :

Something that will never ever happen.

Wild and Woolly:

Uncultured and without laws.

Wine and Dine:

When somebody is treated to an expensive meal.

Without A Doubt:

For certain.

X

X marks the spot:

A phrase that is said when someone finds something he/she has been looking for.

Y

You Are What You Eat:

In order to stay healthy you must eat healthy foods.

You Can't Judge A Book By Its Cover:

Decisions shouldn't be made primarily on appearance.

You Can't Take it With You:

Enjoy what you have and not what you don't have, since when you die you cannot take things (such as money) with you.

Your Guess Is As Good As Mine:

I have no idea.

Z

Zero Tolerance:

No crime or law breaking big or small will be overlooked.

## **100 Important Idioms**

### **IDIOMS MEANINGS**

1. To add insult to injury; To intensify a person
2. To be born with a silver spoon in one's mouth; To be born in a rich family
3. A bolt from the blue; An unexpected disaster
4. To blow one's own trumpet; To boast
5. A bone of contention ; Cause of quarrel
6. To burn one's fingers ; To suffer
7. To beat black & blue ; To beat mercilessly
8. To cast an aspersion ; To bring discredit
9. To cry over spilt milk ; To feel sorry for what has happened



10. To cut a sorry figure ; To make a poor impression
11. To die in harness ; To die while doing one's duty
12. To end in smoke ; To fail
13. To go to the dogs ; To be ruined
14. To hang in the balance ; To remain undecided
15. To hit the nail on the head; To do the right thing at the right time
16. To hold water ; To sound logical
17. To live no stone unturned ; To try one's level best
18. To live from hand to mouth ; To live with great difficulty
19. To make up one's mind ; To decide
20. To see eye to eye with ; Agree
21. To play ducks and drakes ; Waste
22. To put the cart before the hors ; To do a thing in a wrong way
23. To have too many irons in the fire ; To have too many things in hand
24. To read b/w the lines ; To try to understand the hidden meaning
25. To turn over a new leaf ; To change for the better
26. To take the bull by horns; To face difficulties boldly
27. To win laurels ; To distinguish oneself
28. At daggers drawn ; At enmity or fighting
29. Blake and white ; Written
30. By leaps and bounds ; Very fast
31. In cold blood ; deliberately
32. Laid up with ; Confined to bed
33. Ins and outs ; Full details
34. A black sheep ; Scoundrel; a bad person
35. A cock and bull story ; An absurd tale
36. A gala day ; A day of festivity; a holiday with rejoicing
37. A hard nut to crack ; A difficult person or problem to deal with

38. A turn coat ; One who changes one's opinion or party
39. A fool's paradise ; In a state of happiness founded on vain hopes
40. Beat a retreat ; To retire before the enemy
41. To be on the horns of a dilemma; To have a choice b/w two equal evils
42. To beat about the bush ; Approach a subject in a round about method
43. Bury the hatchet ; To make peace
44. By fits and starts ; Irregularly
45. Capital punishment ; Death sentence
46. By hook or by crook ; By fair or foul means
47. Eat humble pie ; To face humiliation
48. Hit below the belt ; To act unfairly
49. In apple pie order ; In perfect order
50. Leave one in lurch ; To desert in difficulty
51. To make a clean breast of ; To confess fully one's faults
52. To nip the evil in the bud ; To destroy an evil in early stage
53. Pick holes in another's coat ; To find fault with another
54. Scot free ; To go unpunished
55. Smell a rat ; To have a reason to suspect
56. Through thick and thin ; Through every difficulty
57. True to one's salt ; Faithful to one's master
58. To turn the corner ; To begin to improve
59. With a grain of salt ; To accept a statement with doubt as to its complete true
60. Worship the rising sun ; To respect one rising in power
61. A Herculean task ; An extremely difficult or dangerous task
62. A fish out of water ; In a wrong place
63. A leap in the dark ; An act of which we can't force consequences
64. A thorn in one's side ; A constant source of annoyance
65. To be at one's beck and call ; Under one's absolute control

66. Bread and Butter ; Means of subsistence
67. Burn one's fingers ; To get into trouble
68. Burn the candle at both ends; Use up too much energy
69. To cut the Gordian knot ; To solve the difficulty
70. Cut and dried ; Ready-made
71. Feather one's own nest ; To make money by unfair means
72. To fish in troubled water ; To do something under very unpromising circumstance
73. To give oneself airs ; Affected manners
74. To give the devil his due ; To allow even a bad man the credit due
75. To hang by thread ; To be in a critical condition
76. A henpecked husband ; A man habitually snubbed by his wife
77. Hush money ; Money given as a bribe to hush or make one keep silent
78. Kick up a row ; Make a great noise
79. To let the cat out of the bag; To reveal a secret
80. Null and void ; Not valid; of no effect
81. On the spur of the moment; At once
82. Pay one back in one's own coin ; To treat in the same way as one has been treated
83. Put in cold storage; To forget or neglect something
84. Pull wires ; To manage the show by secret Influence
85. Read b/w the lines ; To hit at the real meaning
86. Sit on the fence ; To avoid taking sides; to remain neutral
87. A square deal ; Justice
88. Sword of Damocles ; Treating danger
89. To take up the gauntlet ; To accept the challenge
90. To eat one's heart out ; To suffer silently, bitterly
91. B/t the devil and the deep sea ; B/w two dangers equally harmful

- 92. A sweet tooth ; A liking for sweetmeat
- 93. A dark horse ; An unknown person
- 94. A bottleneck ; Anything that cause delays
- 95. To put one's foot down ; To show determination
- 96. A wet blanket ; A grumbling, depressing person
- 97. To throw up the sponge ; To acknowledge defeat
- 98. A feather in one's cap ; Something to be proud of
- 99. A red letter day ; An auspicious day
- 100. Bag and baggage ; With all one's belongings

### **IDIOMS**

#### **Animal Idioms**

<b>Idiom</b>	<b>Meaning</b>	<b>Example Sentence</b>
<b>ants in one's pants</b>	unable to sit still or remain calm out of nervousness or excitement	Lisa had <b>ants in her pants</b> the day before her interview.
<b>(the) birds and the bees</b>	sex education	I learned about <b>the birds and the bees</b> when my baby brother was born.
<b>cat nap</b>	a short sleep	I'm going to have a <b>cat nap</b> while you're cooking dinner.
<b>cat's got one's</b>	said about someone who doesn't speak	It looks like the <b>cat's got your tongue</b> , Lucy. Are you always this

<b>tongue</b>	(usually due to shyness)	quiet?
<b>chicken out</b>	to decide not to do something out of fear (usually just before)	I was going to take a ride on Geoff's motorcyle, but I <b>chickened out</b> when he gave me a helmet to wear.
<b>clam up</b>	become quiet suddenly	Arthur <b>clammed up</b> when I asked him about his family.
<b>copy cat</b>	a person who does the same thing as someone else	My sister is such a <b>copy cat</b> . First she bought the same car as me, and now she's applying to my school.
<b>dog days</b>	very hot days	I sleep in the basement during the <b>dog days</b> of August.
<b>dropping like flies</b>	dying/giving up quickly	My roses are <b>dropping like flies</b> in this early frost.
<b>eager beaver</b>	a person who is excited about doing certain work	Ever since he got his new drill set my husband has been an <b>eager beaver</b> around the house.
<b>fishy</b>	odd, suspicious	I knew something <b>fishy</b> was going on when I saw all of my friends' cars in my mom's driveway.
<b>have a cow</b>	get extremely upset	My teacher <b>had a cow</b> when she

	(often over something minor)	realized nobody had done the homework.
<b>hold your horses</b>	wait and be patient	<b>Hold your horses!</b> I'll be done in the washroom in a minute.
<b>holy cow!</b>	Wow, I'm surprised!	<b>Holy cow!</b> I can't believe you ate everything on your plate.
<b>horse around</b>	play roughly	If you're going to <b>horse around</b> , please go outside.
<b>get the lion's share</b>	get the greatest percentage	My aunt <b>got the lion's share</b> of the inheritance.
<b>in the dog house</b>	in trouble with another person	I don't think Marsha is coming out tonight. She's still <b>in the dog house</b> for forgetting Aaron's birthday.
<b>kill two birds with one stone</b>	get two things done at once	If you pick the groceries up when you drop George off for his shift, you will <b>kill two birds with one stone</b> .
<b>kitty corner</b>	diagonal direction	The gas station is <b>kitty corner</b> to the library.
<b>let the cat out of the bag</b>	reveal a secret	Who <b>let the cat out of the bag</b> about the surprise party?

<b>(a) little bird told me</b>	I heard something (usually secretive or unknown) from someone (not named)	<b>A little bird told me</b> that you are thinking of quitting your job.
<b>make a beeline</b>	go straight for something	My grandma <b>made a beeline</b> for the smoking room as soon as she got off the airplane.
<b>monkey see, monkey do</b>	silly/unintelligent people tend to copy each other's actions	Our one-year-old is saying bad words now. I told my husband, " <b>Monkey see, monkey do!</b> "
<b>nest egg</b>	money saved for the future	We have a <b>nest egg</b> that we might have to use if Jim goes on sick leave.
<b>pig out</b>	eat a lot of something	I <b>pigged out</b> on pancakes so I don't have room for lunch.
<b>raining cats and dogs</b>	raining heavily	I forgot my umbrella, and it was <b>raining cats and dogs</b> .
<b>rat race</b>	fierce, competitive struggle for power, position etc	I'm ready to leave this <b>rat race</b> and retire in Mexico.
<b>smell a rat</b>	begin to suspect trickery etc	I asked my brothers not to tell my parents that I went out, but I could <b>smell a rat</b> as soon as I

		opened the door.
<b>straight from the horse's mouth</b>	directly from the original source	I know Jenny is pregnant, because I heard it <b>straight from the horse's mouth</b> .
<b>take the bull by the horns</b>	face a challenge or danger boldly	If you really think you deserve a promotion, you'll have to <b>take the bull by the horns</b> .
<b>until the cows come home</b>	for a very long time	I could eat pizza and ice-cream <b>until the cows come home</b> .

## Body Idioms

Idiom	Meaning	Example Sentence
<b>all ears</b>	fully listening	Give me a minute to finish my work and then I'll be <b>all ears</b> to hear about your project.
<b>break a leg</b>	good-luck	Today's the big game, eh? <b>Break a leg!</b>



<b>cold feet</b>	nervous just before a big event	My sister didn't get <b>cold feet</b> until she put her wedding gown on.
<b>cost an arm and a leg</b>	be very expensive	These cakes are delicious, but they <b>cost an arm and a leg</b> .
<b>cry your heart out</b>	cry very hard	I <b>cried my heart out</b> when my best friend moved away.
<b>face the music</b>	meet, stand up to unpleasant consequences, for example criticism or punishment	I stayed out all night. When I eventually got home I had to <b>face the music</b> from my wife.
<b>(my) flesh and blood</b>	relative	I have to hire Mia. She's my own <b>flesh and blood</b> .
<b>get something off one's chest</b>	tell someone your problems	Thanks for listening to me complain about my boss. I just needed to <b>get this off my chest</b> .
<b>give a hand, lend a hand</b>	help (someone) do something	I can <b>give you a hand</b> when you move if you like.
<b>have one's head in the clouds</b>	be unaware or unrealistic about something	Amy <b>has her head in the clouds</b> if she thinks she's going to pass her exams without studying.

<b>head over heels</b>	deeply in love	My brother is <b>head over heels</b> for his new girlfriend.
<b>head start</b>	an earlier start	The kids gave Anthony a <b>head start</b> in the bicycle race because he was the youngest.
<b>in over one's head</b>	taking on a task that you can't handle	I was <b>in over my head</b> when I agreed to babysit the triplets and the dogs.
<b>keep an eye on</b>	take care of, watch in order to protect	I'll <b>keep an eye on</b> the dinner while you're on the phone.
<b>keep one's chin up</b>	try to be cheerful	<b>Keep your chin up.</b> I'm sure you'll make some friends soon.
<b>learn by heart, know by heart</b>	memorize	I learned my multiplication tables <b>by heart</b> in the fourth grade.
<b>let one's hair down</b>	relax, have fun	Go to the cottage and <b>let your hair down</b> this weekend.
<b>(my) lips are sealed</b>	promise to keep a secret	Don't worry, I won't tell your mother how much you spent. <b>My lips are sealed.</b>

<b>makes my blood boil</b>	makes me very angry	It <b>makes my blood boil</b> when people don't tie up their dogs.
<b>neck of the woods</b>	nearby location or region	I heard that they might be opening a post office in our <b>neck of the woods</b> soon.
<b>(an) old hand</b>	an experienced person	My uncle's <b>an old hand</b> at car repair. He'll know what the problem is.
<b>over my dead body</b>	not unless I'm dead and can't stop you	My daughter wants a tatoos. I told her she'd get one <b>over my dead body</b> .
<b>pat on the back</b>	recognition or a thank-you	The party organizers deserve a <b>pat on the back</b> for a job well done.
<b>play something by ear</b>	do something without a plan	We don't know if the weather will be good enough for camping. We'll have to <b>play it by ear</b> .
<b>pull one's leg</b>	joke or tease someone	I was just <b>pulling your leg</b> . I'm not really a police officer.
<b>rule of thumb</b>	basic rule (not always followed)	The <b>rule of thumb</b> is that the students wear black pants and white shirts.

<b>see eye to eye</b>	agree	The couple don't <b>see eye to eye</b> on how to train their pets.
<b>(by the) skin of one's teeth</b>	just barely	I passed my exam <b>by the skin of my teeth</b> .
<b>stick your neck out</b>	help someone a lot, with possible bad consequences for oneself	I <b>stuck my neck out</b> for Bessie when she was thrown out of her house.
<b>sweet tooth</b>	a love of sugar or sweet things	I need three spoonfuls of sugar in my tea. I have a <b>sweet tooth</b> .
<b>thick in the head</b>	not very intelligent	I'm a bit <b>thick in the head</b> when it comes to reading a map.
<b>wash one's hands of something</b>	stop dealing with an issue or problem	I'm <b>washing my hands of</b> Mary's addiction. She is going to have to get some professional help.

## Color Idioms

Idiom	Meaning	Example Sentence
<b>beet red</b>	dark red (usually to describe face)	My sister's face turned <b>beet red</b> when I caught her singing in front of a mirror.
<b>black and blue</b>	bruised and beaten	We found the poor guy <b>black and blue</b> near the train tracks.
<b>black and white</b>	straight forward, very clear	The rules we gave the kids were <b>black and white</b> . No answering the phone or the door.
<b>black out</b>	faint	I always <b>black out</b> at the sight of blood.
<b>black sheep</b>	the odd or bad member of the group	My oldest brother was the <b>black sheep</b> in our family. He dropped out of school at fifteen.
<b>born with a silver spoon in one's mouth</b>	born into a rich family	Keiko hasn't worked a day in her life. She was <b>born with a silver spoon in her mouth</b> .
<b>catch red handed</b>	catch someone in the act of doing something wrong or illegal	The kids were <b>caught red handed</b> stealing chocolate bars.
<b>golden opportunity</b>	the perfect chance	The models' conference was a <b>golden opportunity</b> for me to

		sell my beauty products.
<b>grass is always greener on the other side</b>	you always want what you don't have	I always wanted to go to university, but now I wish I had time to get a job. <b>Grass is always greener on the other side.</b>
<b>grey area, gray area</b>	something without a clear rule or answer	Writing personal email in the office is a <b>grey area</b> that needs to be discussed at the next meeting.
<b>the green light</b>	permission	The builders were given the <b>green light</b> to begin the tower.
<b>green with envy</b>	very jealous	I am <b>green with envy</b> over Julio's new wardrobe.
<b>(have a) green thumb</b>	be skillful in the garden	You can tell by her flower garden that Sheila has a <b>green thumb</b> .
<b>have the blues</b>	be sad or depressed	I always <b>have the blues</b> during the winter time.
<b>in the dark</b>	unaware	Antoine left his wife <b>in the dark</b> about their honeymoon destination until they got to the airport.
<b>in the red</b>	in debt	When we were <b>in the red</b> we almost had to sell the house.
<b>once in a blue</b>	very rarely	We only go out for dinner <b>once in</b>

<b>moon</b>		<b>a blue moon.</b>
<b>out of the blue</b>	unexpectedly	I got a phone call from a long lost cousin <b>out of the blue</b> last week.
<b>red tape</b>	official or bureaucratic tasks	There is still some <b>red tape</b> to deal with in terms of the inheritance.
<b>red eye</b>	an airplane flight that takes off after midnight	I caught the <b>red eye</b> so that I would see the sunrise over the mountains.
<b>roll out the red carpet</b>	treat someone like royalty	When relatives come to town my grandmother <b>rolls out the red carpet.</b>
<b>rose coloured glasses</b>	unrealistic view	Paula imagines Hollywood with <b>rose coloured glasses.</b>
<b>see red</b>	be very angry	I <b>saw red</b> when that guy grabbed my sister's purse.
<b>tickled pink</b>	very pleased and appreciative	My mom was <b>tickled pink</b> when my father brought roses home for her.
<b>true colours</b>	real self	Suzanne doesn't show her <b>true colours</b> when we have guests over.
<b>white lie</b>	an innocent lie to	We told Grandma that her cake

	protect another person's feelings	was delicious, which was actually a <b>white lie</b> .
<b>with flying colours</b>	with distinction	I passed my road test with <b>flying colours</b> .

### Clothing Idioms

Idiom	Meaning	Example Sentence
<b>at the drop of a hat</b>	without needing any advance notice	My Grandma will babysit for anyone <b>at the drop of a hat</b> .
<b>(have a) bee in one's bonnet</b>	something that is annoying someone	Milan has had a <b>bee in his bonnet</b> all day, but he won't tell me what's wrong.
<b>below the belt</b>	beyond what is fair or socially acceptable	His comment about Manfred's handicap was <b>below the belt</b> .
<b>bursting at the seams</b>	not fitting anymore	I ate too much. I'm <b>bursting at the seams</b> in these jeans.
<b>caught with one's pants down</b>	unprepared	My students <b>caught me with my pants down</b> on Monday. I forgot about the field trip.
<b>(have a) card up one's sleeve</b>	have a secret or reserve plan	I think Josh has a <b>card up his sleeve</b> cause he wants me to wear a dress to the fast-food restaurant.



<b>buckle down</b>	work extra hard	It's almost exam time, so I need to <b>buckle down</b> this weekend.
<b>burn a hole in one's pocket</b>	money that one is tempted to spend	Let's go to the mall after school. There's a hundred dollar bill <b>burning a hole in my pocket</b> .
<b>dress to kill, dress to the nines</b>	dress in nice or sexy clothes	My cousin was <b>dressed to kill</b> on her birthday.
<b>fit like a glove</b>	fit perfectly (tight to one's body)	Anita's prom dress <b>fits me like a glove</b> .
<b>fine-tooth comb</b>	in great detail, extremely carefully	The police looked for fingerprints with a <b>fine-tooth comb</b> .
<b>fly by the seat of one's pants</b>	do by instinct, not by plan	I had never taught art to kids before. I had to <b>fly by the seat of my pants</b> .
<b>handle with kid gloves</b>	treat delicately	Please <b>handle</b> my grandmother's tea set with <b>kid gloves</b> .
<b>hand-me-down</b>	used clothing	We buy <b>hand-me-down</b> skates because the kids' feet grow so quickly.
<b>hat trick</b>	three goals scored by one person	The fans cheered when the hockey player got a <b>hat trick</b> .
<b>in one's</b>	in the nude	The swimmers in the lake were <b>in</b>

<b>birthday suit</b>		<b>their birthday suits.</b>
<b>keep one's shirt on</b>	try to stay calm	I know you're in a hurry, but please <b>keep your shirt on.</b>
<b>keep something zipped</b>	keep something a secret	We know we're having a boy, but we're <b>keeping it zipped</b> from the grandparents.
<b>off the cuff</b>	said without planning	I didn't have a speech prepared. Everything I said was <b>off the cuff.</b>
<b>pull up one's socks</b>	try harder	Marco will have to <b>pull up his socks</b> if he wants to make the football team.
<b>put a sock in it</b>	stop talking	<b>Put a sock in it!</b> I'm trying to tell a story.
<b>put one's thinking cap on</b>	think hard in order to solve a problem	I can't remember where the Christmas decorations are. I'll have to <b>put my thinking cap on.</b>
<b>put oneself in someone else's shoes</b>	imagine what it would be like to be in someone else's situation	<b>Put yourself in Amber's shoes.</b> She doesn't even have a car to drive.
<b>ride one's coattails</b>	let someone else do all of the work	It was a group project, but everyone <b>rode Andrew's coattails.</b>

<b>roll up one's sleeves</b>	get down to hard work	The celebrities <b>rolled up their sleeves</b> and washed cars for charity.
<b>take one's hat off to someone</b>	recognize or honour someone for something	I <b>take my hat off to Jim</b> . The doctors said he'd never walk, and he just ran a marathon.
<b>wear one's heart on one's sleeve</b>	display emotions openly	My Dad's not afraid to cry. He always <b>wears his heart on his sleeve</b> .
<b>wear the trousers</b>	be in charge, make the rules	By the looks of things, the kids <b>wear the trousers</b> in this household.

### Food Idioms

Idiom	Meaning	Example Sentence
<b>apple of one's eye</b>	a person that is adored by someone	Baby Jessica is the <b>apple of her father's eye</b> .
<b>(have a) bun in the oven</b>	be pregnant	I don't think Jan will come to the bar because she has a <b>bun in the oven</b> .
<b>bad egg</b>	a person who is often in trouble	I don't want my little brother hanging around with the <b>bad eggs</b> on the street.

<b>big cheese</b>	very important person (VIP)	I thought I was just going to interview the secretary, but they let me talk to the <b>big cheese</b> himself.
<b>bread and butter</b>	necessities, the main thing	Just explain the <b>bread and butter</b> of your report. You don't have to go into details.
<b>bring home the bacon</b>	earn the income	My husband has had to <b>bring home the bacon</b> ever since I broke my leg.
<b>butter someone up</b>	be extra nice to someone (usually for selfish reasons)	We'll have to <b>butter</b> Angie <b>up</b> before we tell her the news about the broken vase.
<b>(have one's) cake and eat it too</b>	want more than your fair share or need	Rick wants to <b>have his cake and eat it too</b> . He wants to be single but he doesn't want me to date anyone else.
<b>carrot top</b>	person with red or orange hair	Simon is the first <b>carrot top</b> I've ever gone out with.
<b>cheesy</b>	silly	I love reading <b>cheesy</b> romance novels because I don't have to think.
<b>cool as a cucumber</b>	very relaxed	I thought I was afraid of flying, but I was <b>cool as a cucumber</b> all the way to England.

<b>cream of the crop</b>	the best	We hired the <b>cream of the crop</b> to entertain us at the Christmas party.
<b>(don't) cry over spilled milk</b>	get upset over something that has happened and cannot be changed	The mirror is broken and we can't fix it. There's no need to <b>cry over spilled milk</b> .
<b>cup of joe</b>	cup of coffee	Let's stop for a <b>cup of joe</b> before we head to work.
<b>(not my) cup of tea</b>	something you enjoy (usually used negatively)	Opera isn't exactly my <b>cup of tea</b> .
<b>egg someone on</b>	urge someone to do something	The gang tried to <b>egg us on</b> but we didn't want to fight.
<b>freeze one's buns off</b>	be very cold	I <b>froze my buns off</b> at the ice rink.
<b>full of beans</b>	have a lot of (silly) energy	The kids were <b>full of beans</b> after the circus.
<b>gravy train</b>	extremely good pay for minimal work	The unionized grocers have been enjoying the <b>gravy train</b> for twenty years.
<b>(have something) handed to</b>	receive without working for something	The professor's daughter had her college diploma <b>handed to her on a silver platter</b> .

<b>someone on a silver platter</b>		
<b>hard nut to crack</b>	difficult to understand (often a person)	Angelo is a <b>hard nut to crack</b> when something is bothering him like this.
<b>hot potato</b>	a controversial or difficult subject	Choosing a location for our new store is a <b>hot potato</b> right now.
<b>in a nutshell</b>	simply	<b>In a nutshell</b> , I'm having a bad day.
<b>nuts about something, someone</b>	like a lot	I'm <b>nuts about</b> classical music these days.
<b>out to lunch</b>	crazy or mad	Harry has been <b>out to lunch</b> ever since he lost his job.
<b>one smart cookie</b>	a very intelligent person	Your daughter is <b>one smart cookie</b> . She reads much higher than her grade level.
<b>peach fuzz</b>	small amount of hair growth	Except for a bit of <b>peach fuzz</b> , the baby came out bald.
<b>piece of cake</b>	very easy	The exam was a <b>piece of cake</b> .
<b>put all of ones eggs in one basket</b>	rely on one single thing	Even though I'm majoring in Art, I'm taking a maths course because my Dad says I shouldn't <b>put all of my eggs in one basket</b> .

<b>souped up</b>	made more powerful or stylish	The car was <b>souped up</b> with shiny rims and a loud stereo.
<b>sell like hot cakes</b>	bought by many people	The new Harry Potter books <b>sold like hot cakes</b> .
<b>spice things up</b>	make something more exciting	I wanted to <b>spice things up</b> in the office, so I bought some red and gold paint.
<b>spill the beans</b>	reveal the truth	On Monday, I'm going to <b>spill the beans</b> about my travel plans.
<b>take something with a pinch (grain) of salt</b>	don't consider something 100% accurate	Take Mandy's advice with <b>a pinch of salt</b> . She doesn't always do her research.
<b>use your noodle</b>	use your brain	You're going to have to really <b>use your noodle</b> on this crossword puzzle. It's an extra difficult one.

### Geography and Weather Idioms

Idiom	Meaning	Example Sentence
<b>(on) cloud nine</b>	extremely happy	Andrea was <b>on cloud nine</b> when she bought her new car.
<b>dig deep</b>	look hard for information	I had to <b>dig deep</b> to find my old report cards.

<b>dirt cheap</b>	very inexpensive	The clothes at the thrift shop are <b>dirt cheap</b> .
<b>down to earth</b>	natural or real (personality)	Lucile is really <b>down to earth</b> for a woman with so much money.
<b>fair-weather friend</b>	a person who is only a friend in good times	I can't talk to Nancy about my boyfriend problems. She's only a <b>fair-weather friend</b> .
<b>a field day</b>	a very enjoyable time	The kids had a <b>field day</b> at the water slide park.
<b>go downhill</b>	get progressively worse	My grades started <b>going downhill</b> when I got a part-time job.
<b>go with the flow</b>	continue in the same way as others	Nobody trained me at work. I just <b>went with the flow</b> .
<b>hit the hay</b>	go to sleep	I'm exhausted. I think I'll <b>hit the hay</b> early tonight.
<b>hit the road</b>	leave	It's getting late. We had better <b>hit the road</b> .
<b>keep one's head above water</b>	have just enough money to live	It's hard to <b>keep my head above water</b> with all of these medical bills.
<b>know which</b>	know how things will	Who <b>knows which way the</b>



<b>way the wind blows</b>	turn out	<b>wind will blow?</b> I just hope Jesse gets one of the jobs he's applied for.
<b>make a mountain out of a molehill</b>	make a small problem seem big	The car only got a tiny dent. You're <b>making a mountain out of a molehill.</b>
<b>out of the woods</b>	clear of danger	The doctor said my heart is doing better, but I'm not <b>out of the woods yet.</b>
<b>over the hill</b>	past middle age	I knew I was <b>over the hill</b> when I started needing glasses to read.
<b>rain on someone else's parade</b>	ruin somebody else's happiness	Whenever I had a dance recital, my older brother always <b>rained on my parade.</b>
<b>stick-in-the-mud</b>	a loner or person who won't join in	They didn't bother inviting Charles to the party because he's always a <b>stick-in-the-mud.</b>
<b>(as) quick as lightning</b>	very fast	Wow! Your shower was as <b>quick as lightning.</b>
<b>the tip of the iceberg</b>	a small part of a large problem	The lost tickets were just the <b>tip of the iceberg.</b>
<b>take a</b>	accept at a later date	I'd love to go out for dinner, but

<b>raincheck</b>		can I take a <b>raincheck</b> ?
<b>under the weather</b>	ill	I was feeling <b>under the weather</b> so I went back to bed.
<b>up the creek</b>	in trouble	If my Dad finds out I had a party I'll be <b>up the creek</b> .
<b>win by a landslide</b>	win by a lot of points	The skier in the green coat <b>won by a landslide</b> .
<b>(get) wind of something</b>	overhear something about someone or something (often gossip)	My Dad has a new girlfriend. I <b>got wind of it</b> over dinner tonight.

### Sports Idioms

Idiom	Meaning	Example Sentence
<i>sport of origin</i>		
<b>across the board</b> <i>cards</i>	equal for everyone	Ten percent raises were given <b>across the board</b> .
<b>at this stage in the game</b> <i>any sport</i>	at this time	Nobody knows who is going to win the election <b>at this stage in the game</b> .
the <b>ball is in your court</b>	it's your decision or responsibility to do	"Do you think I should accept the job offer?"

<i>tennis</i>	something now	"Don't ask me. The <b>ball is in your court</b> now".
<b>bark up the wrong tree</b> <i>hunting</i>	you've got the wrong person or idea	I think you're <b>barking up the wrong tree</b> by blaming Matt for the missing money.
<b>blind-sided</b> <i>any sport</i>	to not see something coming	George <b>blind-sided</b> Eric with his fist at the bar.
<b>blow the competition away</b> <i>any sport</i>	win easily	If you wear that dress to the beauty pageant you are going to <b>blow the competition away</b> .
<b>call the shots</b> <i>billiards</i>	make the decisions	While our boss is on vacation, Bob will <b>call the shots</b> .
<b>chip in</b> <i>gambling</i>	help by donating money or time	The staff members <b>chipped in</b> 5 dollars each to buy Jody a birthday gift.
<b>down to the wire</b> <i>horse racing</i>	right at the end	It's coming <b>down to the wire</b> to get these done on time.
<b>front runner</b> <i>track</i>	one of the people who is expected to win	Angela is a <b>front runner</b> for the new supervisor position.
<b>get a head start</b>	start before all others	They gave the walkers <b>a head</b>

<i>horse racing</i>		<b>start</b> in the run for cancer.
<b>get into the full swing</b> <i>tennis</i>	be comfortable doing something after some time	It will probably take a month of working at my new job before I <b>get into the full swing</b> of things.
<b>get off the hook</b> <i>fishing</i>	escape, have responsibility removed	The child <b>got off the hook</b> for stealing because the security camera was broken.
<b>give something or someone a fair shake</b> <i>gambling</i>	try for a while before giving up	You should <b>give Nadine a fair shake</b> before you decide she isn't good enough for the job.
<b>get a second wind</b> <i>sailing</i>	have a burst of energy after tiring	I was exhausted after 3 kilometres of running, but I <b>got a second wind</b> after I passed the beach.
<b>give it your best shot</b> <i>hunting</i>	try your hardest	<b>Give it your best shot</b> and you may just make it to the finals.
<b>give one a run for one's money</b> <i>horseracing</i>	try one's hardest to defeat another person	I know the other team is expected to win, but let's <b>give them a run for their money</b> tonight.
<b>go overboard</b> <i>sailing</i>	do or say more than you need to	You can't believe everything Janice says about Rick. She tends

		to <b>go overboard</b> when she's complaining about him.
<b>go to bat for someone</b> <i>baseball</i>	defend someone	Andy is asking for a salary increase, and I'm going to <b>go to bat for him</b> if the boss says no.
<b>have the upper hand</b> <i>cards</i>	have a better chance of winning or succeeding	The Blues <b>have the upper hand</b> in the tournament, because none of their players is injured.
<b>hit below the belt</b> <i>martial arts</i>	do or say something that is very unfair or cruel	Amanda was <b>hitting below the belt</b> when she called Adrian an unfit father.
<b>hit a snag</b> <i>boating</i>	come up against a problem	The renovations were going along great until we <b>hit a snag</b> with the carpet installation.
<b>hold all the aces</b> <i>cards</i>	expected to win or succeed	The children <b>hold all the aces</b> when it comes to the father-son baseball tournament.
the <b>home stretch</b> <i>baseball</i>	almost the end	I think Alice's pregnancy is in <b>the home stretch</b> .
<b>hot shot (big shot)</b> <i>hunting</i>	a person who thinks they are the best	Even though Luke only placed 20th in the ski race, he thinks he's a <b>hot shot</b> .

<b>jump the gun</b> <i>track</i>	start too early	I guess I <b>jumped the gun</b> by buying Pam and Steve a wedding gift. They called off the engagement.
<b>keep one's head above water</b> <i>swimming</i>	try not to fall behind in work or other duties	We are so busy during the tourist season I can barely <b>keep my head above water</b> .
<b>learn the ropes</b> <i>sailing</i>	understand new things	The first week on the job you will just be <b>learning the ropes</b> .
<b>let her rip</b> <i>boating</i>	go ahead now	Okay, here are the keys to your new car. <b>Let her rip!</b>
<b>level playing field</b> <i>any field sport</i>	everyone has an equal chance	The spelling bee is a <b>level playing field</b> because all of the kids are in grade nine.
<b>long shot</b> <i>hunting</i>	a very difficult thing to accomplish	Jim thinks we can afford the house, but I think it's a <b>long shot</b> .
<b>make the cut</b> <i>any sport</i>	be chosen to be part of a team or group	I didn't get a second interview, so I'm pretty sure I won't <b>make the cut</b> .
<b>neck and neck</b> <i>horse racing</i>	to be in a close tie with someone	George and Stan are <b>neck and neck</b> in the hockey pool. Either of them could win the money.
<b>no sweat</b>	no problem	I told Lily it was <b>no sweat</b> for us

<i>any sport</i>		to babysit next weekend.
<b>not playing with a full deck of cards</b> <i>cards</i>	not having full brain capacity	I think Jerry was still drunk at work on Sunday because he <b>wasn't playing with a full deck of cards</b> .
<b>not up to par</b> <i>golf</i>	not good enough for a job or position	I'm afraid your resume <b>isn't up to par</b> for the engineering position.
to be <b>off base</b> <i>baseball</i>	not making a fair or true remark	You were way <b>off base</b> when you said Bill needed to lose weight.
<b>on target</b> <i>darts</i>	doing the right thing to succeed	We are <b>on target</b> to meet our budget this month.
<b>on the ball</b> <i>baseball</i>	ready and able	The new receptionist is really <b>on the ball</b> when it comes to answering the phone.
<b>out in left field</b> <i>baseball</i>	nowhere near being true, nowhere near doing something correctly	All of the students laughed when Joe gave an answer that was <b>out in left field</b> .
<b>out of someone's league</b> <i>team sport</i>	not as good as someone	I'd like to date Maria, but I'm afraid I'm <b>out of her league</b> .

<p><b>par for the course</b> <i>golf</i></p>	<p>an expected circumstance</p>	<p>Waiting in line is <b>par for the course</b> at Christmas time.</p>
<p><b>plenty of other fish in the sea</b> <i>fishing</i></p>	<p>there are many other men and women to date</p>	<p>I know you still love Jack, but remember there are <b>plenty of other fish in the sea.</b></p>
<p><b>race against time</b> <i>track</i></p>	<p>there is almost no time left to accomplish something</p>	<p>It's a <b>race against time</b> to find a kidney donor for my cousin.</p>
<p><b>settle a score with someone</b> <i>any sport</i></p>	<p>get even with a person after a previous battle</p>	<p>My brother wants to <b>settle the score</b> with that guy who stole my wallet.</p>
<p><b>shot in the dark</b> <i>hunting</i></p>	<p>a guess</p>	<p>I was lucky to win the quiz. All my answers were <b>shots in the dark.</b></p>
<p><b>skate on thin ice</b> <i>skating</i></p>	<p>do something risky, take a chance</p>	<p>You're <b>skating on thin ice</b> by not sending in your college application before now.</p>
<p><b>start the ball rolling</b> <i>ball sports</i></p>	<p>begin something</p>	<p>Please can everyone be seated so we can <b>start the ball rolling.</b></p>
<p><b>step up to the plate</b> <i>baseball</i></p>	<p>do the honourable thing, take responsibility</p>	<p>It's time you <b>stepped up to the plate</b> and apologized for your mistake.</p>



<p><b>take a rain check</b> <i>baseball</i></p>	<p>accept at a later time</p>	<p>Sorry, I can't go to the movies today, but I'd love to <b>take a rain check</b>.</p>
<p><b>take sides</b> <i>any sport</i></p>	<p>choose a person or group to support</p>	<p>I hate to <b>take sides</b>, but I think Jerry is right about the paint colour.</p>
<p><b>take the bull by the horns</b> <i>bull fighting</i></p>	<p>accept the challenge and try your hardest</p>	<p>Even though this new job will mean relocating, I think you should <b>take the bull by the horns</b> for once.</p>
<p><b>take the wind out of one's sails</b> <i>sailing</i></p>	<p>make someone feel deflated</p>	<p>I think I <b>took the wind out of Angela's sails</b> when I told her she was a terrible singer.</p>
<p><b>throw in the towel</b> <i>boxing</i></p>	<p>give up</p>	<p>If they don't accept our offer this time we are going to <b>throw in the towel</b> and look at houses elsewhere.</p>
<p><b>time out</b> <i>any sport</i></p>	<p>break</p>	<p>Let's take some <b>time out</b> and grab a coffee.</p>
<p><b>three strikes and you're out</b> <i>baseball</i></p>	<p>you only get three chances</p>	<p>The school's no smoking policy is <b>three strikes and you're out</b>.</p>
<p><b>two strikes</b></p>	<p>you only have one</p>	<p>Nancy is going to be fired in no</p>

<p><b>against</b> <i>baseball</i></p>	<p>chance remaining</p>	<p>time. She already has <b>two strikes against</b> her for coming in late.</p>
<p><b>under the table</b> <i>gambling</i></p>	<p>illegally</p>	<p>I don't have a work visa, so they have to pay me <b>under the table.</b></p>
<p><b>win hands down</b> <i>gambling</i></p>	<p>easy victory</p>	<p>The other team was missing half of its players. We <b>won hands down.</b></p>