

100 Everyday English Idioms

Idiom	Meaning	Example sentence
Hit the nail on the head	say exactly the right thing	<i>John hit the nail on the head with that comment.</i>
Know something inside out	know something very well	<i>She knows the system inside out.</i>
Miss the point	not understand something correctly	<i>I think you missed the point of the story.</i>
Make sense	be logical or reasonable	<i>This plan makes sense to me.</i>
Be over the moon	be extremely happy	<i>She was over the moon when she passed the exam.</i>
Down in the dumps	feeling sad or depressed	<i>He's been down in the dumps since the breakup.</i>
Blow off steam	release stress or anger	<i>I go for a jog to blow off steam.</i>
On edge	nervous or anxious	<i>I've been on edge all day before the interview.</i>
Lose your temper	get angry suddenly	<i>Will you please try not to lose your temper in the meeting?</i>
Cheer someone up	make someone feel happier	<i>A good laugh will cheer you up.</i>
Get straight to the point	talk about the main idea	<i>Let's get straight to the point: we need results.</i>
Keep it to yourself	don't tell anyone	<i>It's a secret—keep it to yourself.</i>
Speak your mind	say what you really think	<i>He always speaks his mind, even at work.</i>
Beat around the bush	avoid saying something directly	<i>Stop beating around the bush and tell me the truth.</i>
Get along with	have a good relationship	<i>I get along well with my neighbours.</i>
Break the ice	start a conversation	<i>A funny story can help break the ice.</i>
Hit it off	get on very well from the beginning	<i>We hit it off right away.</i>
Have a falling out	argue and stop being friendly	<i>They had a falling out over money.</i>
Be on the same wavelength	think alike	<i>We're on the same wavelength about politics.</i>
Call it a day	stop working for the day	<i>It's late—let's call it a day.</i>
From time to time	occasionally	<i>I check my social media from time to time.</i>
Around the clock	all day and night	<i>Doctors worked around the clock.</i>
In no time	very quickly	<i>She finished the essay in no time.</i>
Once in a blue moon	very rarely	<i>He visits, but only once in a blue moon.</i>
Give it a shot	try something	<i>I've never tried sushi, but I'll give it a shot.</i>
Go the extra mile	make more effort than expected	<i>She always goes the extra mile for her students.</i>

Pull your weight	do your fair share	<i>You need to pull your weight on this project.</i>
Bite the bullet	do something unpleasant	<i>I hate going to the dentist, but I'll bite the bullet.</i>
Put your heart into	do something with passion	<i>He put his heart into the performance.</i>
Learn the ropes	learn how to do a job	<i>It took me a week to learn the ropes.</i>
On the ball	quick to understand or react	<i>The new assistant is really on the ball.</i>
Get the hang of	learn how to do something	<i>I finally got the hang of driving.</i>
In hot water	in trouble	<i>He's in hot water for missing the meeting.</i>
Burn the midnight oil	work late into the night	<i>She's burning the midnight oil for her exams.</i>
Cost an arm and a leg	be very expensive	<i>That phone costs an arm and a leg!</i>
Money doesn't grow on trees	money is limited	<i>Don't waste it—money doesn't grow on trees.</i>
Live from hand to mouth	have just enough money to live	<i>They lived from hand to mouth after the job loss.</i>
A rip-off	something too expensive for its value	<i>£10 for coffee? What a rip-off!</i>
Be loaded	have lots of money	<i>Her brother's loaded—he drives a Porsche.</i>
Pick up the tab	pay the bill	<i>Don't worry, I'll pick up the tab tonight.</i>
Under the weather	feeling unwell	<i>I'm staying in today—I'm feeling under the weather.</i>
A storm in a teacup	a big fuss over something small	<i>Their argument was nothing but a storm in a teacup.</i>
Come rain or shine	no matter what happens	<i>He jogs every day, come rain or shine.</i>
Steal someone's thunder	take the attention	<i>He stole her thunder by announcing his news first.</i>
Break the ice	make people feel relaxed	<i>A group game helped break the ice.</i>
On the fence	undecided	<i>I'm still on the fence about the holiday.</i>
Take it or leave it	accept it as it is	<i>£100 is my final offer—take it or leave it.</i>
At a crossroads	facing an important decision	<i>She's at a crossroads in her career.</i>
Think twice	consider carefully	<i>Think twice before you post online.</i>
In the nick of time	just in time	<i>He arrived in the nick of time for the train.</i>
A stroke of luck	a bit of unexpected good luck	<i>Finding that old photo was a stroke of luck.</i>

Hit the jackpot	be very lucky or successful	<i>She hit the jackpot with her new job.</i>
By chance	without planning	<i>We met by chance at the market.</i>
Push your luck	take too many risks	<i>You got lucky once—don't push your luck!</i>
Mess things up	make a mistake	<i>I really messed things up in the interview.</i>
Back to square one	start over again	<i>The design failed—we're back to square one.</i>
In a pickle	in a difficult situation	<i>I'm in a bit of a pickle—I lost my keys!</i>
Drop the ball	make a mistake	<i>He dropped the ball by forgetting the deadline.</i>
Let the cat out of the bag	reveal a secret	<i>You let the cat out of the bag about the party!</i>
A people person	someone who likes being with others	<i>She's a people person—everyone loves her.</i>
A couch potato	lazy person who watches too much TV	<i>Stop being a couch potato—go outside!</i>
A go-getter	ambitious and motivated person	<i>He's a real go-getter at work.</i>
A pain in the neck	someone annoying	<i>That printer is a pain in the neck!</i>
Full of beans	very energetic	<i>The kids are full of beans today.</i>
Call the shots	be in control	<i>She calls the shots at home.</i>
Go out of your way	make extra effort	<i>He went out of his way to help me.</i>
Go with the flow	adapt without resistance	<i>On holiday, I just go with the flow.</i>
In the long run	eventually, over time	<i>It's better for your health in the long run.</i>
Out of the blue	unexpectedly	<i>She called out of the blue after five years.</i>
Break the news	tell someone important news	<i>He broke the news gently.</i>
Put in a good word	recommend someone	<i>I'll put in a good word for you at the interview.</i>
Hit the books	study hard	<i>Time to hit the books before the test.</i>
Spill the beans	tell a secret	<i>Come on—spill the beans!</i>
Talk the talk	speak confidently (but not always act)	<i>He talks the talk but doesn't do the work.</i>
Get a move on	hurry up	<i>We need to get a move on or we'll miss the train.</i>
Hit the road	leave or begin a journey	<i>Let's hit the road before traffic builds.</i>
Off the beaten track	in a quiet, unknown place	<i>They live off the beaten track.</i>
On the go	busy and active	<i>I've been on the go all day.</i>
Miss the boat	miss an opportunity	<i>He missed the boat by not applying earlier.</i>
Think on your feet	respond quickly	<i>You need to think on your feet in this job.</i>

Cross your mind	occur to you	<i>It never crossed my mind to ask.</i>
Pull the wool over someone's eyes	fool someone	<i>He tried to pull the wool over my eyes.</i>
Ring a bell	sound familiar	<i>That name rings a bell.</i>
Have second thoughts	doubt a decision	<i>I'm having second thoughts about quitting.</i>
Change your mind	decide differently	<i>She changed her mind at the last moment.</i>
Turn over a new leaf	start again in a better way	<i>He's turning over a new leaf this year.</i>
Out with the old, in with the new	replace old with new	<i>We're redecorating—out with the old, in with the new!</i>
Get the ball rolling	start something	<i>Let's get the ball rolling on this project.</i>
A breath of fresh air	something new and refreshing	<i>Her ideas are a breath of fresh air.</i>
Bury the hatchet	make peace	<i>They finally buried the hatchet after years.</i>
Blow things out of proportion	exaggerate a problem	<i>He blew the comment out of proportion.</i>
Add fuel to the fire	make a situation worse	<i>Yelling just adds fuel to the fire.</i>
Get on someone's nerves	annoy someone	<i>His humming gets on my nerves.</i>
Sweep it under the carpet	hide a problem	<i>Don't just sweep it under the carpet.</i>
The best of both worlds	enjoy two advantages	<i>Working from home gives me the best of both worlds.</i>
Easier said than done	not as easy as it sounds	<i>Quitting sugar is easier said than done.</i>
Practice makes perfect	keep trying and you'll improve	<i>Don't worry—practice makes perfect.</i>
Actions speak louder than words	what you do is more important than what you say	<i>He said sorry, but actions speak louder than words.</i>
Better late than never	it's good you did it, even if late	<i>You finally cleaned the garage—better late than never!</i>