

# IDIOMS



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## IDIOMS

### **a chip on your shoulder**

**Being upset for something that happened in the past.**



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### **a dime a dozen**

**Anything that is common and easy to get.**



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### **a doubting thomas**

**A skeptic who needs physical or personal evidence in order to believe something.**



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### **a drop in the bucket**

**A very small part of something big or whole.**



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### **a fool and his money are easily parted**

**It's easy for a foolish person to lose his/her money.**



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### **a house divided against itself cannot stand**

**Everyone involved must unify and function together or it will not work out.**



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### **a leopard can't change his spots**

**You cannot change who you are.**



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**a penny saved is a penny earned**

**By not spending money, you are saving money (little by little).**



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**a picture paints a thousand words**

**A visual presentation is far more descriptive than words.**



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**a piece of cake**

**A task that can be accomplished very easily.**



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**a slap on the wrist**

**A very mild punishment.**



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**a taste of your own medicine**

**When you are mistreated the same way you mistreat others.**



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**a toss-up**

**A result that is still unclear and can go either way.**



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**actions speak louder than words**

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



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**add fuel to the fire**

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



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**against the clock**

**Rushed and short on time.**



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**all bark and no bite**

**When someone is threatening and/or aggressive but not willing to engage in a fight.**



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**all greek to me**

**Meaningless and incomprehensible like someone who cannot read, speak, or understand any of the Greek language would be.**



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**all in the same boat**

**When everyone is facing the same challenges.**



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**an arm and a leg**

**Very expensive. A large amount of money.**



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**an axe to grind**

**To have a dispute with someone.**



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**apple of my eye**

**Someone who is cherished above all others.**



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**as high as a kite**

**Anything that is high up in the sky.**



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**at the drop of a hat**

**Willing to do something immediately.**



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**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.**



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**back to square one**

**Having to start all over again.**



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**back to the drawing board**

**When an attempt fails and it's time to start all over.**



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**baker's dozen**

**Thirteen.**



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**barking up the wrong tree**

**A mistake made in something you are trying to achieve.**



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**beat a dead horse**

**To force an issue that has already ended.**



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**beating around the bush**

**Avoiding the main topic. Not speaking directly about the issue.**



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**bend over backwards**

**Do whatever it takes to help. Willing to do anything.**



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**between a rock and a hard place**

**Stuck between two very bad options.**



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**bite off more than you can chew**

**To take on a task that is way to big.**



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**bite your tongue**

**To avoid talking.**



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**blood is thicker than water**

**The family bond is closer than anything else.**



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**blue moon**

**A rare event or occurrence.**



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**break a leg**

**A superstitious way to say 'good luck' without saying 'good luck', but rather the opposite.**



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**buy a lemon**

**To purchase a vehicle that constantly gives problems or stops running after you drive it away.**



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**can't cut the mustard**

Someone who isn't adequate enough to compete or participate.



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**cast iron stomach**

Someone who has no problems, complications or ill effects with eating anything or drinking anything.



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**charley horse**

Stiffness in the leg / A leg cramp.



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**chew someone out**

Verbally scold someone.



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Angry today about something that occurred in the past.



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**chow down**

To eat.



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**close but no cigar**

To be very near and almost accomplish a goal, but fall short.



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**cock and bull story**

An unbelievable tale.



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**cock and bull story**

**An unbelievable tale.**



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**cock and bull story**

**An unbelievable tale.**



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**come hell or high water**

**Any difficult situation or obstacle.**



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**crack someone up**

**To make someone laugh.**



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**cross your fingers**

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



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**cry over spilt milk**

**When you complain about a loss from the past.**



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**cry wolf**

**Intentionally raise a false alarm.**



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**cup of joe**

**A cup of coffee.**



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**curiosity killed the cat**

**Being Inquisitive can lead you into a dangerous situation.**



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**cut to the chase**

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



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**dark horse**

**One who was previously unknown and is now prominent.**



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**dead ringer**

**100% identical. A duplicate.**



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**devil's advocate**

**Someone who takes a position for the sake of argument without believing in that particular side of the argument.**



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**dog days of summer**

**The hottest days of the summer season.**



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**don't count your chickens before they hatch**

**Don't rely on it until your sure of it.**



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**don't look a gift horse in the mouth**

**When someone gives you a gift, don't be ungrateful.**



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**don't put all your eggs in one basket**

**Do not put all your resources in one possibility.**



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**doozy**

**Something outstanding.**



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**down to the wire**

**Something that ends at the last minute or last few seconds.**



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**drastic times call for drastic measures**

**When you are extremely desperate you need to take extremely desperate actions.**



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**drink like a fish**

**To drink very heavily.**



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**drive someone up the wall**

**To irritate and/or annoy very much.**



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**dropping like flies**

**A large number of people either falling ill or dying.**



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**dry run**

**Rehearsal.**



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**eighty six**

**A certain item is no longer available.  
Or this idiom can also mean, to throw  
away.**



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**elvis has left the building**

**The show has come to an end. It's all  
over.**



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**ethnic cleansing**

**Killing of a certain ethnic or religious  
group on a massive scale.**



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**every cloud has a silver  
lining**

**Be optimistic, even difficult times will  
lead to better days.**



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**everything but the kitchen  
sink**

**Almost everything and anything has  
been included.**



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**excuse my french**

**Please forgive me for cussing.**



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**feeding frenzy**

**An aggressive attack on someone by a  
group.**



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**field day**

**An enjoyable day or circumstance.**



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**finding your feet**

To become more comfortable in whatever you are doing.



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**long in the tooth**

Old people (or horses).



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**loose cannon**

Someone who is unpredictable and can cause damage if not kept in check.



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**make no bones about**

To state a fact so there are no doubts or objections.



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**method to my madness**

Strange or crazy actions that appear meaningless but in the end are done for a good reason.



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**mumbo jumbo**

Nonsense or meaningless speech.



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**mum's the word**

To keep quiet. To say nothing.



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**nest egg**

Savings set aside for future use.



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**never bite the hand that feeds you**

**Don't hurt anyone that helps you.**



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**new kid on the block**

**Someone new to the group or area.**



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**new york minute**

**A minute that seems to go by quickly, especially in a fast paced environment.**



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**no dice**

**To not agree. To not accept a proposition.**



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**no room to swing a cat**

**An unusually small or confined space.**



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**not playing with a full deck**

**Someone who lacks intelligence.**



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**off on the wrong foot**

**Getting a bad start on a relationship or task.**



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**off the hook**

**No longer have to deal with a tough situation.**



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**off the record**

Something said in confidence that the one speaking doesn't want attributed to him/her.



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**on pins and needles**

Anxious or nervous, especially in anticipation of something.



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**on the fence**

Undecided.



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**on the same page**

When multiple people all agree on the same thing.



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**out of the blue**

Something that suddenly and unexpectedly occurs.



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**out on a limb**

When someone puts themselves in a risky situation.



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**out on the town**

To enjoy yourself by going out.



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**over my dead body**

When you absolutely will not allow something to happen.



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**over the top**

Very excessive.



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**pass the buck**

Avoid responsibility by giving it to someone else.



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**pedal to the metal**

To go full speed, especially while driving a vehicle.



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**peeping tom**

Someone who observes people in the nude or sexually active people, mainly for his own gratification.



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**pick up your ears**

To listen very carefully.



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**pig in a poke**

A deal that is made without first examining it.



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**pig out**

To eat a lot and eat it quickly.



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**pipe down**

To shut-up or be quiet.



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**practice makes perfect**

**By constantly practicing, you will become better.**



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**pull the plug**

**To stop something. To bring something to an end.**



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**pulling your leg**

**Tricking someone as a joke.**



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**put a sock in it**

**To tell noisy person or a group to be quiet.**



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**queer the pitch**

**Destroy or ruin a plan.**



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**rain-check**

**An offer or deal that is declined right now but willing to accept later.**



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**raining cats and dogs**

**A very loud and noisy rain storm.**



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**ring fencing**

**Separated usual judgement to guarantee protection, especially project funds.**



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**rise and shine**

**Time to get out of bed and get ready for work/school.**



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**rome was not built in one day**

**If you want something to be completely properly, then its going to take time.**



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**rule of thumb**

**A rough estimate.**



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**run out of steam**

**To be completely out of energy.**



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**saved by the bell**

**Saved at the last possible moment.**



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**scapegoat**

**Someone else who takes the blame.**



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**scot-free**

**To escape and not have to pay.**



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**sick as a dog**

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



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**sitting shotgun**

**Riding in the front passenger seat of a car.**



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**sixth sense**

**A paranormal sense that allows you to communicate with the dead.**



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**skid row**

**The rundown area of a city where the homeless and drug users live.**



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**smell a rat**

**To detect someone in the group is betraying the others.**



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**smell something fishy**

**Detecting that something isn't right and there might be a reason for it.**



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**son of a gun**

**A scamp.**



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**southpaw**

**Someone who is left-handed.**



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**spitting image**

**The exact likeness or kind.**



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**start from scratch**

To do it all over again from the beginning.



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**the ball is in your court**

It is your decision this time.



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**the best of both worlds**

There are two choices and you have them both.



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**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.



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**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.



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**the whole nine yards**

Everything. All of it.



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**third times a charm**

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



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**tie the knot**

To get married.



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**til the cows come home**

**A long time.**



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IDIOMS

**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.**



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IDIOMS

**to steal someone's thunder**

**To take the credit for something someone else did.**



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IDIOMS

**tongue and cheek**

**humor, not to be taken serious.**



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IDIOMS

**turn a blind eye**

**Refuse to acknowledge something you know is real or legit.**



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IDIOMS

**twenty three skidoo**

**To be turned away.**



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IDIOMS

**under the weather**

**Feeling ill or sick.**



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IDIOMS

**up a blind alley**

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



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IDIOMS

**use your loaf**

**Use your head. Think smart.**



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IDIOMS

**van gogh's ear for music**

**Tone deaf.**



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IDIOMS

**variety is the spice of life**

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



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IDIOMS

**wag the dog**

**A diversion away from something of greater importance.**



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IDIOMS

**water under the bridge**

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



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IDIOMS

**wear your heart on your sleeve**

**To openly and freely express your emotions.**



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IDIOMS

**when it rains, it pours**

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



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IDIOMS

**when pigs fly**

**Something that will never ever happen.**



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IDIOMS

**wild and dine**

**When somebody is treated to an expensive meal.**



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IDIOMS

**wild and woolly**

**Uncultured and without laws.**



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IDIOMS

**without a doubt**

**For certain.**



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IDIOMS

**x marks the spot**

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



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IDIOMS

**you are what you eat**

**In order to stay healthy you must eat healthy foods.**



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IDIOMS

**you can't judge a book by its cover**

**Decisions shouldn't be made primarily on appearance.**



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IDIOMS

**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.**



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IDIOMS

**your guess is as good as mine**

**I have no idea.**



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IDIOMS

**zero tolerance**

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



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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.



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IDIOMS

**finger lickin' good**

A very tasty food or meal.



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IDIOMS

**fixed in your ways**

Not willing or wanting to change from your normal way of doing something.



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IDIOMS

**flash in the pan**

Something that shows potential or looks promising in the beginning but fails to deliver anything in the end.



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IDIOMS

**flea market**

A swap meet. A place where people gather to buy and sell inexpensive goods.



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IDIOMS

**flesh and blood**

This idiom can mean living material of which people are made of, or it can refer to someone's family.



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IDIOMS

**flip the bird**

To raise your middle finger at someone.



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IDIOMS

**foam at the mouth**

To be enraged and show it.



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IDIOMS

**fools' gold**

Iron pyrites, a worthless rock that resembles real gold.



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IDIOMS

**french kiss**

An open mouth kiss where tongues touch.



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IDIOMS

**from rags to riches**

To go from being very poor to being very wealthy.



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IDIOMS

**fuddy-duddy**

An old-fashioned and foolish type of person.



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IDIOMS

**full monty**

This idiom can mean either, "the whole thing" or "completely nude".



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IDIOMS

**funny farm**

A mental institutional facility.



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IDIOMS

**get down to brass tacks**

To become serious about something.



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IDIOMS

**get over it**

To move beyond something that is bothering you.



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IDIOMS

**get up on the wrong side of the bed**

Someone who is having a horrible day.



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IDIOMS

**get your walking papers**

Get fired from a job.



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IDIOMS

**give him the slip**

To get away from. To escape.



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IDIOMS

**go down like a lead balloon**

To be received badly by an audience.



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IDIOMS

**go for broke**

To gamble everything you have.



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IDIOMS

**go out on a limb**

Put yourself in a tough position in order to support someone/something.



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IDIOMS

**go the extra mile**

Going above and beyond whatever is required for the task at hand.



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IDIOMS

### good samaritan

Someone who helps others when they are in need, with no discussion for compensation, and no thought of a reward.



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IDIOMS

### graveyard shift

Working hours from about 12:00 am to 8:00 am. The time of the day when most other people are sleeping.



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IDIOMS

### great minds think alike

Intelligent people think like each other.



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IDIOMS

### green room

The waiting room, especially for those who are about to go on a tv or radio show.



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IDIOMS

### gut feeling

A personal intuition you get, especially when feel something may not be right.



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IDIOMS

### haste makes waste

Quickly doing things results in a poor ending.



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IDIOMS

### hat trick

When one player scores three goals in the same hockey game.



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IDIOMS

### have an axe to grind

To have a dispute with someone.



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IDIOMS

**he lost his head**

**Angry and overcome by emotions.**



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IDIOMS

**head over heels**

**Very excited and/or joyful, especially when in love.**



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IDIOMS

**hell in a hand-basket**

**Deteriorating and headed for complete disaster.**



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IDIOMS

**high five**

**Slapping palms above each others heads as celebration gesture.**



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IDIOMS

**high on the hog**

**Living in Luxury.**



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IDIOMS

**hit the books**

**To study, especially for a test or exam.**



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IDIOMS

**hit the hay**

**Go to bed or go to sleep.**



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IDIOMS

**hit the nail on the head**

**Do something exactly right or say something exactly right.**



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IDIOMS

**hit the sack**

**Go to bed or go to sleep.**



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IDIOMS

**hocus pocus**

**In general, a term used in magic or trickery.**



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IDIOMS

**hold your horses**

**Be patient.**



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IDIOMS

**icing on the cake**

**When you already have it good and get something on top of what you already have.**



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IDIOMS

**idle hands are the devil's tools**

**You are more likely to get in trouble if you have nothing to do.**



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IDIOMS

**if it's not one thing, it's another**

**When one thing goes wrong, then another, and another...**



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IDIOMS

**in like flynn**

**To be easily successful, especially when sexual or romantic.**



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IDIOMS

**in the bag**

**To have something secured.**



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IDIOMS

**in the buff**

**Nude.**



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IDIOMS

**in the heat of the moment**

**Overwhelmed by what is happening in the moment.**



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IDIOMS

**in your face**

**An aggressive and bold confrontation.**



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IDIOMS

**it takes two to tango**

**A two person conflict where both people are at fault.**



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IDIOMS

**it's a small world**

**You frequently see the same people in different places.**



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IDIOMS

**its anyone's call**

**A competition where the outcome is difficult to judge or predict.**



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IDIOMS

**ivy league**

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



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IDIOMS

**jaywalk**

**Crossing the street (from the middle) without using the crosswalk.**



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IDIOMS

**joshing me**

**Tricking me.**



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IDIOMS

**keep an eye on him**

**You should carefully watch him.**



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IDIOMS

**keep body and soul together**

**To earn a sufficient amount of money in order to keep yourself alive .**



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IDIOMS

**keep your chin up**

**To remain joyful in a tough situation.**



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IDIOMS

**kick the bucket**

**Die.**



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IDIOMS

**kitty-corner**

**Diagonally across. Sometimes called Catty-Corner as well.**



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IDIOMS

**knee jerk reaction**

**A quick and automatic response.**



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IDIOMS

**knock on wood**

**Knuckle tapping on wood in order to avoid some bad luck.**



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IDIOMS

## know the ropes

To understand the details.



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IDIOMS

## 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.



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IDIOMS

## lend me your ear

To politely ask for someone's full attention.



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IDIOMS

## let bygones be bygones

To forget about a disagreement or argument.



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IDIOMS

## let sleeping dogs lie

To avoid restarting a conflict.



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IDIOMS

## let the cat out of the bag

To share a secret that wasn't suppose to be shared.



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IDIOMS

## level playing field

A fair competition where no side has an advantage.



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IDIOMS

## like a chicken with its head cut off

To act in a frenzied manner.



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IDIOMS

**liquor someone up**

**To get someone drunk.**



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IDIOMS

**a blessing in disguise**

**Something good that isn't recognized  
at first.**



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