

<u>Idiom</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
A <u>Abbreviated piece of nothing</u>	This slang expression refers to someone who is considered to be insignificant or worthless. Bob doesn't think much of his new colleague. He calls him an 'abbreviated piece of nothing' !
<u>(to the) best of one's ability</u>	When someone does something to the best of their ability , they do it as well as they possibly can. "I felt nervous all through the interview, but I replied to the best of my ability."
<u>(of) no fixed abode</u>	A person of no fixed abode has nowhere permanent to live. A 30-year-old man, of no fixed abode, was charged with the burglary.
<u>about-turn / about-face</u>	This term refers to a complete change of opinion or policy. "The ambassador's recent declarations indicate an about-turn in foreign policy."
<u>Above and beyond the call of duty</u>	If a person does something which is above and beyond the call of duty , they show a greater degree of courage or effort than is usually required or expected in their job. "The fire-fighter received a medal for his action which went above and beyond the call of duty"
<u>More by accident than (by) design</u>	Something which happens more by accident than (by) design is done without deliberate intention. "I became an interpreter more by accident than design; nobody else could speak the language of the refugees."
<u>Accidentally on purpose</u>	If you do something intentionally, but pretend it was an accident, you do it 'accidentally on purpose' . "I accidentally-on-purpose erased his email address so I couldn't contact him again."
<u>An accomplished fact (also: 'fait accompli')</u>	Something that has been done or completed, before those affected by it can intervene or change it, is called an accomplished fact .
<u>Ace a test</u>	If you obtain a very high score or an excellent result, you ace a test or exam . "Maria's parents said she could go to the party if she aced her English test."
<u>Have an ace up your sleeve.</u>	If you have an ace up your sleeve , it means that you have something in reserve with which you can gain an advantage.
<u>Hold all the aces</u>	A person who holds all the aces is in a very strong position because they have more advantages than anyone else. "Given the high unemployment figures in some countries, employers hold all the aces."
<u>Achilles' heel</u>	This expression refers to a vulnerable area or weak spot in an otherwise strong situation that could cause one's downfall or failure. "He's extremely intelligent, but his inability to speak in public is his Achilles' heel ."



<u>Acid test</u>	To refer to something as the acid test means that it will prove how effective or useful something is. "The training course was very interesting but the acid test will come when I start my new job."
<u>Act of God</u>	This term refers to a natural event or accident, for which no person is responsible (such as an earthquake, lightning and similar acts of nature). "The insurance company refused to pay for the damage because it was caused by an act of God."
<u>Get your act together!</u>	If you tell someone to get their act together , you mean that they need to organize their affairs more effectively in order to be more successful.
<u>Add fuel to the flames</u>	If you add fuel to the flames , you say something that makes a difficult situation worse. "He forgot their wedding anniversary, and his apologies only added fuel to the flames."
<u>Much ado about nothing.</u>	If people make " much ado about nothing ", they make a lot of fuss about something which is not important.
<u>Afraid of one's own shadow</u>	A person who is afraid of their own shadow is very nervous or easily frightened. "I've never seen anyone so easily scared - she's afraid of her own shadow."
<u>After the fact</u>	If something is done after the fact , it is too late, after something has actually happened, particularly a crime or an accident. "He said he realized he had put people in danger, but that was of no help after the fact."
<u>Against the clock</u>	If you do something against the clock , you are rushed and have very little time to do it. "They are working against the clock to have the presentation ready for Monday."
<u>Set (the) alarm bells ringing/ alarm bells start to ring</u>	If something sets the alarm bells ringing , it makes you begin to worry because it shows that there may be a problem. "Alarm bells started to ring when my old neighbour didn't open his shutters all day and didn't answer the phone."
<u>All brawn and no brain</u>	Someone who is physically very strong but not very intelligent is said to be all brawn and no brain . "He's an impressive player to watch, but he's all brawn and no brain."
<u>All clear</u>	If you are allowed to do something after a check-up to make sure that everything is all right, you get the all clear . "Dad says he's going to play golf as soon as he gets the all clear from his doctor."
<u>All ears</u>	To say that you are all ears means that you are listening very attentively. "Of course I want to know - I'm all ears!"
<u>All hell broke loose</u>	To say that all hell broke loose means that there was a sudden angry, noisy reaction to something. "All hell broke loose when it was announced that the plant was going to close down."
<u>All in your head</u>	If something is all in your head , it is not real. It is in your imagination. "Don't be silly. Nobody is trying to harm you. It's all in your head!"



<u>Of all people</u>	To use the term ' of all people ' emphasizes that the person you mention, more than anyone else, is the one you would expect to do something. "As an artist, you, of all people, should support the new art gallery."
<u>(You can't be) all things to all people</u>	If you are all things to all people you please or satisfy everyone. She's exhausted trying to be a good wife, a good mother and a good teacher, but she can't be all things to all people.
<u>All (other) things being equal</u>	This expression refers to a probable situation if in all other ways the conditions remain unchanged or equal. " All (other) things being equal , a reduction in the cost of transport should enable us to lower our prices."
<u>All the rage</u>	When something is all the rage , it has become very popular or trendy. "Twittering text messages is all the rage these days, both among individuals and companies."
<u>All sizzle and no steak</u>	Someone or something that turns out to be disappointing, after a promotional campaign or marketing operation which led us to expect something better, is called all sizzle and no steak . "Because of all the electoral promises he made, which so far he has failed to keep, many people call the new president "all sizzle and no steak".
<u>All thumbs/all fingers and thumbs</u>	If you are all fingers and thumbs , you are awkward and clumsy and do things incorrectly. "Would you mind wrapping this for me? I'm all fingers and thumbs!"
<u>All told</u>	All told means the final number when everything has been counted. "The number of visitors to the exhibition, all told, was 2543."
<u>Also-ran</u>	This term refers to an unsuccessful competitor whose performance is so much poorer than the winner's that it appears insignificant. "He entered the contest hoping that he wouldn't end up as an ' also-ran '."
<u>Alter ego</u>	The term alter ego , which in Latin means 'other self', refers to a very close and trusted friend who is very like yourself.
<u>Ambulance chaser</u>	This term refers to a lawyer who finds work by persuading people injured in accidents to claim money from the person who caused the accident. "Peterson & Scott are well-known ambulance chasers - that's how they make their money!"
<u>Answer for</u>	If someone has to answer for something, they have to accept responsibility for their actions. "He will have to answer for his dishonesty."
<u>Answer the call of nature/nature's call</u>	When a person answers the call of nature , they go to the toilet. I had to get up in the middle of the night to answer the call of nature
<u>Ants in one's pants</u>	People who have ants in their pants are very restless or excited about something "I wish he'd relax. He's got ants in his pants about something today!"



<u>Any port in a storm</u>	When you have no choice, any port in a storm refers to a solution you accept, which in normal circumstances you would find unacceptable. "The hotel was substandard, but it was a case of any port in a storm; all the others were full."
The <u>apple of your eye</u>.	If somebody is the apple of your eye , this means that you like them very much : "My grandson is the apple of my eye".
To upset the <u>applecart</u>	To upset (or to overturn) the applecart means to spoil a satisfactory plan or situation "I hope Julie doesn't attend the meeting; she could upset the applecart!"
<u>Apple-pie order</u>	If something is in apple-pie order , it is very well organized or in perfect order. "They made sure the house was in apple-pie order before their parents arrived back home."
<u>Apron strings</u>	If one person is tied to another's apron strings , they remain dependent at an age when they should be independent. "All his decisions are influenced by his mother. He's still tied to her apron strings."
<u>Argue the toss</u>	If you argue the toss , you dispute a decision or choice which has already been made. "The final choice was made yesterday, so don't argue the toss now! "
<u>Arm of the law</u>	This expression refers to the extent to which the authority or power of the law extends. "He fled to South America hoping to escape the arm of the law."
Give your right <u>arm</u>	If you say " I'd give my right arm for that ", you mean that you want it a lot and would do almost anything to obtain it. "I'd give my right arm to have a apartment on Central Park."
Cost an <u>arm and a leg</u>	If something costs an arm and a leg , it is very expensive! "The house cost us an arm and a leg, but we have no regrets."
To be up in <u>arms</u>	If you are up in arms about something, you are very angry. "The population was up in arms over the demolition of the old theatre."
Keep someone at <u>arm's length</u>	If you keep someone at arm's length , you do not allow yourself to become too friendly with them. "It's not easy to become friends with Sophie; she tends to keep everyone at arm's length."
<u>Armchair critic</u>	An armchair critic is someone who gives advice based on theory rather than practice. "That guy is such an armchair critic, no experience but plenty of advice! "
<u>Armchair traveller</u>	Someone who reads books or watches TV programmes about other places and countries but doesn't actually travel anywhere is called an armchair traveller . A surprising number of adventure books are bought by armchair travellers.
<u>Asking for trouble</u>	Someone who is asking for trouble is behaving stupidly and is likely to have problems. "Driving fast on these roads is really asking for trouble!"



<u>Asleep at the wheel</u>	If you say that someone is asleep at the wheel you mean that they are not sufficiently attentive, especially at a critical moment when vigilance is required. "When the firemen arrived too late at the scene, the night watchman was accused of being asleep at the wheel."
<u>At all costs</u>	If you are determined to obtain or achieve something at all costs , you want it regardless of the expense, effort or sacrifice involved. "The journalist was determined at all costs to get a report from the war zone."
<u>At stake</u>	Someone who has a lot at stake is in a risky situation, with a lot to be won or lost. "He was nervous about signing the agreement because there was a lot at stake."
<u>At this stage of the game</u>	This expression refers to the current point reached in a process, activity or developing situation. "At this stage of the game I think any further intervention would be unwise. Let's wait and see how things develop."
<u>Of no avail</u>	Something which is of no avail is not at all helpful or useful. "The coffee machine wouldn't work and the instruction leaflet was of no avail."
<u>Avowed intent</u>	When someone makes a public declaration of their objective or goal, this is their avowed intent . "The avowed intent of the new Government is to reduce unemployment."
<u>A rude awakening</u>	If you get a rude awakening , you are forced to accept the unpleasant truth.
<u>Away with the fairies</u>	To say that someone is away with the fairies means that they are in such a dreamy state that they are not totally in touch with reality and give the impression of being slightly mad. "It's no use trying to explain the problem to her - she's away with the fairies!"
<u>Have an axe to grind</u>	If you have an axe to grind , you have personal reasons for becoming involved in something or adopting a particular attitude. "It was decided that the best candidates would be selected by a recruitment agency who had no axe to grind within the company."

	<u>Idiom</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
B	<u>Leave somebody holding the baby</u>	If someone is left holding the baby , they are made responsible for a problem that others don't want to deal with. "When the angry customer started to complain, my colleague disappeared and left me holding the baby."
	<u>Back or bet on the wrong horse</u>	If you back or bet on the wrong horse , for example the loser in a contest, match or election, you support the wrong person. "When I voted for him, I was convinced he would win, but I backed the wrong horse!"
	<u>Get off my back!</u>	If you tell somebody to get off your back , you ask them to stop finding faults or criticizing you.



<u>In the back of beyond</u>	This expression is used to describe an isolated place located far from any town. "It took us hours to find Jack's house. He lives in the back of beyond! "
<u>On the back burner</u>	If you put a project or issue on the back burner , you decide to deal with it at a later date because you do not consider it to be that urgent or important. "When Julie was offered a promotion, she put her MBA plans on the back burner."
<u>Back to the salt mines</u>	Saying that you have to go back to the salt mines is a humorous way of talking about returning to work, usually with some reluctance. "We get two days off at Christmas and then it's back to the salt mines!"
<u>Back to square one</u>	To say that someone is back to square one , means that they have not succeeded in what they were trying to do, and so they have to start again. "When the plans were refused, it was back to square one for the architect."
<u>Backhanded compliment</u>	A remark that appears to express admiration but could also be interpreted as an insult is called a backhanded compliment . "He said my presentation was 'surprisingly clear' - how's that for a backhanded compliment!"
<u>Back-of-the-envelope calculation</u>	This expression refers to quick approximate calculation done informally, as on the back of an envelope. "I don't need the exact amount. Just give me a back-of-the-envelope calculation. "
<u>Back-room boys</u>	This term refers to people who do important work but have no contact with the public. " Back-room boys don't always receive the credit they deserve for their work."
<u>Backseat driver</u>	A backseat driver is a passenger in a car who gives unwanted advice to the driver. "I can't stand backseat drivers like my mother-in-law!"
<u>A bad egg</u>	To refer to someone as a bad egg means that they cannot be trusted. "I don't want my son to be friends with Bobby Smith. Bobby's a bad egg."
<u>A bad hair day</u>	Originating as a humorous comment about one's hair being unmanageable, this term has broadened to mean 'a day when everything seems to go wrong'. "What's wrong with Jenny? Is she having a bad hair day? "
<u>In bad shape</u>	A person who is in bad shape is in poor physical condition. "I really am in bad shape. I need to get some exercise."
<u>Badger someone into doing something</u>	If you badger someone into doing something , you persistently nag or pester them until you obtain what you want. "Sophie badgered her parents into buying her a new computer."
<u>Bag of bones</u>	To say that someone is a bag of bones means that they are extremely thin. "When he came home from the war he was a bag of bones."
<u>(Whole) bag of tricks</u>	If you use your (whole) bag of tricks to do something, you try (all) the clever methods you know in order to succeed. "Let's call on George and his bag of tricks; maybe he can help us solve the problem."



<u>In the bag</u>	If you think something is in the bag , you are almost certain it will be achieved. "An hour before the polling stations closed, victory seemed in the bag for the Conservative candidate."
<u>Bait and switch</u>	This term refers to a deceptive commercial practice of advertising a low-priced item to attract customers, then telling them that the product is out of stock and persuading them to buy a more expensive article. "This store is famous for its bait and switch tactics."
<u>In the balance</u>	If something is in the balance , it means the situation is uncertain and it is not clear what is going to happen. "The future of the company is in the balance while the takeover bid is being examined."
<u>Balancing act</u>	When you try to satisfy two or more people or groups who have different needs, and keep everyone happy, you perform a balancing act . "Many people have to perform a balancing act between work and family."
<u>Ball and chain</u>	This term refers to a burden or problem that ties you down and prevents you from doing what you want. It can also refer to one's spouse. "Our holiday home has become a ball and chain - it's too much work!"
<u>Have a ball</u>	If you have a ball , you enjoy yourself. "The party was great. We had a ball."
<u>On the ball</u>	If you are on the ball , you are aware of what is happening and are able to deal with things quickly and intelligently. "We need someone who's really on the ball to head the fund-raising campaign."
<u>Start the ball rolling</u>	If you start the ball rolling , you start an activity in which other people will join. "Let's start the ball rolling by calling on our first speaker."
<u>The ball is in your court</u>	If the ball is in your court , it is your turn to speak or act next. "We gave the manager a list of complaints, so the ball is in his court now."
<u>That's the way the ball bounces</u>	Things don't always work out as planned, and there's nothing we can do about it - that's life! "He didn't get the prize he expected, but never mind - that's the way the ball bounces ."
<u>Whole new ball game</u>	To refer to something as a whole new ball game means that it is a completely different situation due to a new set of circumstances. "Email and text messaging have made communication a whole new ball game."
<u>That's (a load of) baloney</u>	This term refers to idle talk, or pretentious, untrue or insincere statements that nobody can believe. "That's a load of baloney! I don't believe a word of it."
<u>Jump on the bandwagon</u>	If a person or organization jumps on the bandwagon , they decide to do something when it is already successful or fashionable. "When organic food became popular, certain stores were quick to jump on the bandwagon and promote it."
<u>Bane of one's life</u>	To say that something is the bane of your life means that it is the cause of your problems or your unhappiness. "The heating system is always breaking down. It's the bane of my life!"



<u>Bang your head against a brick wall</u>	If you bang your head against a brick wall , you continue vainly to try and achieve something in spite of several unsuccessful attempts. "I've been banging my head against a brick wall trying to explain the internet to my grandmother."
<u>Bar fly</u>	A bar fly refers to someone who spends a lot of time drinking in bars and pubs. "You'll find Johnny down at the pub - he's a real bar fly!"
<u>Bare one's heart (or soul)</u>	If you bare your heart or soul to someone , you reveal your innermost thoughts and feelings to them. "John couldn't keep things to himself any longer. He decided to bare his soul to his best friend."
<u>Barefaced liar</u>	Someone who lies easily, with a total lack of shame, is called a barefaced liar . "That barefaced liar stole my watch and said he'd found it!"
<u>His bark is worse than his bite</u>	This expression is used to refer to a person who sounds much more severe or angry than they really are. "Don't be afraid of him - his bark is worse than his bite ."
<u>Bark up the wrong tree</u>	A person who barks up the wrong tree is doing the wrong thing, because their beliefs or ideas are incorrect or mistaken.
<u>Basket case</u>	A person who's agitated mental state leaves them helpless or unable to cope with things is called a basket case . "Jenny will turn into a basket case if this stressful situation continues."
<u>Bated breath</u>	If you wait for something with bated breath , you are both anxious and excited about an imminent event. "We waited with bated breath for the winner to be announced."
<u>Baton down the hatches</u>	When you baton down the hatches , you prepare yourself for trouble or a forthcoming difficult period, like a ship preparing for a storm. "Here comes that trouble-making guy. Baton down the hatches!."
<u>Have bats in the belfry</u>	If you say that somebody has bats in the belfry , you are saying that their ideas are completely mad.
<u>The battle lines are drawn</u>	This expression is used to say that opposing groups are ready to defend the reason behind the conflict. "The battle lines have been drawn between those who accept the changes and those who are against the proposed reforms."
<u>Battle of wills</u>	A conflict, argument or struggle where both sides are determined to win is described as a battle of wills . "When they separated, neither party would make concessions - it was a battle of wills."
<u>Be my guest</u>	This expression is used to give someone permission to do something. " If you'd like to use the phone, be my guest. "
<u>Be that as it may</u>	This expression means that what the speaker says may be true but it will not change the situation. "OK. Fewer people may come because of the bad weather, but be that as it may, it's too late to cancel the show."
<u>(Not the) be-all and end-all</u>	To say that something is not the be-all and end-all means that it is not what matters most. "Good school results are not the be-all and end-all of educating a child."



<u>Bear the brunt (of something)</u>	A person who bears the brunt of something is the one who suffers the most when something bad or unpleasant happens. "When things go wrong, his assistant always has to bear the brunt of his anger."
<u>Bear something in mind</u>	If someone asks you to bear something in mind , they are telling you to remember it because it is important. "You must bear in mind that the cost of living is higher in New York."
<u>Like a bear with a sore head</u>	If someone is behaving like a bear with a sore head , they are very irritable and bad-tempered. "When his team lost the match, Brad was like a bear with a sore head."
<u>Beard the lion (or someone) in his den</u>	If you visit someone important in the place where they work, in order to challenge him/her or obtain something, you beard the lion in his den . "If he continues to refuse my calls, I'll have to beard him in his den."
<u>Beat one's brains out</u>	If someone beats their brains out , they try very hard to understand something or solve a problem. "My grandmother beats her brains out every evening trying to do the crossword puzzle in the newspaper."
<u>Don't beat around the bush</u>	This expression is used to tell somebody to say what they have to say, clearly and directly, even if it's unpleasant.
<u>Beat/flog a dead horse</u>	To say that someone is beating a dead horse means that they are wasting time and effort trying to do or achieve something that is not possible. "Mark is beating a dead horse trying to get his money reimbursed. The company has gone bankrupt!"
<u>Beat/knock the living daylights out of someone</u>	If someone beats the daylights out of another, they hit them very hard and repeatedly. "If I catch you stealing again, I'll beat the daylights out of you!"
<u>Beat a (hasty) retreat</u>	Someone who beats a (hasty) retreat runs away or goes back hurriedly to avoid a dangerous or difficult situation. "The thief beat a retreat as soon as he saw the security officer."
<u>Beat someone to the draw</u>	If you beat someone to the draw you react more quickly and manage to do something before they do. "Ross was determined to be the first to arrive and beat the others to the draw."
<u>It beats me!</u>	This expression is used to express surprise at something that you find difficult to understand, " It beats me how he can live in that horrible apartment!"
<u>At someone's beck and call</u>	If a person is at somebody's beck and call , they are always ready to do things for them or obey orders to please them. "Parents should not be at the beck and call of their children."
<u>Have a bee in one's bonnet</u>	A person who has a bee in their bonnet has an idea which constantly occupies their thoughts. "She's got a bee in her bonnet about moving to New York."
<u>The bee's knees</u>	If you say that someone/something is the bee's knees , you think they are exceptionally good. If you say "Julie thinks she's the bee's knees", it means that Julie has a high opinion of herself!
<u>Beef something up</u>	If you beef something up , you improve it by making it stronger or more substantial. "You'd better beef up your arguments if you want to defend your case."



<u>Been in/through the wars</u>	If a person or thing has been in (or through) the wars , they show signs of rough treatment, injury or damage. "He arrived in a car that looked as if it had been in the wars."
<u>Been there, done that</u>	This expression is used to indicate that the speaker is familiar with the situation mentioned. It can also refer to an attitude which reflects a certain boredom at the idea of repeating an experience that has lost its novelty. "His suggestions produced a ' been there, done that ' attitude which undermined his enthusiasm."
<u>Before you know it/ before you know where you are</u>	If something takes place so suddenly that you don't have time to become aware of it, it happens before you know it or before you know where you are . "The doorbell rang, and before we knew it, a surprise birthday party was under way!"
<u>Beggars can't be choosers.</u>	This expression means that you should not reject an offer if it is the only possibility you have. You have no choice. " Beggars can't be choosers !"
<u>Behind closed doors</u>	If something takes place behind closed doors , it is done privately, with no observers or intruders. "The matter was discussed behind closed doors."
<u>Behind the times</u>	A person who is behind the times has old-fashioned ideas and does not keep up with modern life in general. "Jane doesn't have a mobile phone. She's completely behind the times."
<u>Ring a bell.</u>	If something rings a bell , it is vaguely familiar to you, but you can't remember the exact details . "John Bentley? The name rings a bell but I don't remember him."
<u>With bells on</u>	If you go somewhere with bells on , you are delighted and eager to go there. "Of course I'll be there - with bells on!"
<u>Behind bars</u>	Someone who is behind bars is in prison. "If you hang around with that gang, you'll find yourself behind bars in no time."
<u>Behind closed doors</u>	If something takes place behind closed doors , it is done privately, with no observers or intruders. "The matter was discussed behind closed doors."
<u>Behind the times</u>	A person who is behind the times has old-fashioned ideas and does not keep up with modern life in general. "Jane doesn't have a mobile phone. She's completely behind the times."
<u>Below the belt</u>	An action or remark described as below the belt means that it is considered unfair or cruel. "Politicians sometimes use personal information to hit their rivals below the belt."
<u>Tighten your belt</u>	If you need to tighten your belt , you must spend your money carefully. "Another bill? I'll have to tighten my belt this month!"



<u>Bend</u> over backwards	If you bend over backwards , you try very hard to do something, especially to please somebody. "The manager bent over backwards to try to make Jack stay, but Jack wouldn't change his mind."
<u>Bend</u> the truth	If you bend the truth , you say something that is not entirely true. "OK, I bent the truth a bit; I told him it was my natural colour, but I didn't say that my hairdresser helped me to keep it natural!"
The <u>benefit</u> of the doubt	If you give somebody the benefit of the doubt , you choose to believe that that person is innocent, honest or telling the truth, because there is no evidence to the contrary. "Although he found it hard to believe Tom's explanation, the teacher decided to give him the benefit of the doubt."
<u>Bent</u> out of shape	If you get bent out of shape , you become very annoyed or upset about something that is usually not that important or cannot be avoided. "Don't get bent out of shape if you're delayed. We'll wait for you."
<u>Beside</u> yourself (with something)	If you are beside yourself (with an emotion) , you lose your self-control because of the intensity of the emotion you are feeling. "He was beside himself with grief when he lost his son."
One's <u>best</u> bet	The action most likely to succeed is called one's best bet . "Your best bet would be to try calling him at home."
(To the) <u>best</u> of one's ability	When someone does something to the best of their ability , they do it as well as they possibly can. "I felt nervous all through the interview, but I replied to the best of my ability."
The <u>best</u> of both worlds	If a person has the best of both worlds , they have the benefits and advantages of two different things. "We live in the centre of town, but only 5 minutes from the beach. We have the best of both worlds."
<u>Best</u> foot forward	If someone puts their best foot forward , they do something as fast as they can. "It's a long way to the station, but if I put my best foot forward I should catch the next train."
<u>Bet</u> your bottom dollar	If you bet your bottom dollar on something, you are absolutely certain of it. "Jack is very punctual. You can bet your bottom dollar he'll be here at 9 o'clock on the dot."
<u>Bet</u> on the wrong horse	If you back or bet on the wrong horse , for example the loser in a contest, match or election, you support the wrong person. "When I voted for him, I was convinced he would win, but I backed the wrong horse!"
<u>Better</u> late than never	When someone does something late, this remark means that it's better to do it late than not do it at all. "Do you know what time it is? You promised you'd come early to help me - but better late than never I suppose!"
<u>Better</u> safe than sorry	It's better to be too cautious than to be careless and have regrets later. "Let's book tickets in advance - better safe than sorry! "



Think <u>better</u> of something	If you think better of something , you decide not to do something that you intended doing. "I wanted to go shopping, but when I saw the crowded car park, I thought better of it."
<u>Between</u> the devil and the deep blue sea	If you are between the devil and the deep blue sea , you are in a situation where there are two equally unpleasant alternatives. "When the new product didn't take off, the management was caught between the devil and the deep blue sea: develop a new marketing campaign or drop the product."
It's <u>beyond</u> me	The expression " it's beyond me " means: "it's impossible for me to understand" "It's beyond me why Mary wants to marry John."
<u>Beyond</u> any reasonable doubt	This is a legal expression which means that something is certain. "The court established, beyond any reasonable doubt , that the man was innocent."
<u>Beyond</u> recall	Something which is beyond recall is impossible to retrieve, cancel or reverse. "I'm afraid we can't recover the pictures -your camera is beyond recall."
<u>Beyond</u> redemption	If something is beyond redemption , it is in such a poor state that there is no hope of improvement or recovery. "With the latest scandal, his reputation is now beyond redemption."
<u>Beyond</u> one's wildest dreams	If something is beyond your wildest dreams , it is better than you imagined or hoped for. "The research team received a grant from the government that was beyond their wildest dreams."
<u>Bide</u> your time	If you bide your time , you wait for a good opportunity to do something. "He's not hesitating, he's just biding his time. He's waiting for the price to drop."
<u>Big</u> cheese	This expression refers to a person who has a lot of power and influence in an organization. "Tom's father is a big cheese in the oil industry."
<u>Big</u> fish in a small pond	This term is used to refer to an important or highly-ranked person in a small group or organization. "He could get a job with a big company but he enjoys being a big fish in a small pond."
<u>Big</u> picture	To refer to the big picture means the overall situation, or the project as a whole, rather than the details. "While each aspect is important, try not to forget the big picture."
Clean <u>bill</u> of health	If a person has a clean bill of health , they have a report or certificate declaring that their health is satisfactory. "All candidates for the position must produce a clean bill of health."
<u>Binge</u> drinking	This term refers to heavy drinking where large quantities of alcohol are drunk in a short space of time, often among young people in rowdy "Binge drinking is becoming a major problem in some European countries."
For the <u>birds</u>	If you think something is for the birds , you consider it to be uninteresting, useless, or not to be taken seriously. "As far as I'm concerned, his theory is for the birds! "
Kill two <u>birds</u> with one stone.	If you kill two birds with one stone , you succeed in doing two things at the same time.



<u>Birds of a feather.</u>	To say that two people are birds of a feather means that they are very similar in many ways.
<u>In/wearing one's birthday suit</u>	This humorous expression means that you are wearing nothing! "The bathroom door blew open, and there I was in my birthday suit! "
<u>Bite off more than you can chew</u>	If you bite off more than you can chew , you try to do something that is too difficult for you, or more than you can manage. "As soon as I started to translate the report, I realized that I had bitten off more than I could chew."
<u>Bite the hand that feeds you</u>	If you bite the hand that feeds you , you are unfriendly or do harm to someone who is kind to you.
<u>Bite someone's head off</u>	If you bite someone's head off , you criticize them strongly (and perhaps unfairly). "I worked 10 hours a day all week and my boss bit my head off for not doing my share of the work!"
<u>Bite your tongue</u>	If you bite your tongue , you try not to say what you really think or feel. "It was difficult for me not to react; I had to bite my tongue."
<u>Bitten by the bug</u>	If you develop a sudden interest or enthusiasm for something, you are bitten by the bug . "My dad decided to take up golf and was immediately bitten by the bug."
<u>Once bitten, twice shy.</u>	This is said by a person who has had an unpleasant experience which has made them cautious. "I'm never going to get married again. Once bitten, twice shy. "
<u>A bitter pill to swallow</u>	A bitter pill to swallow is something very difficult or unpleasant to accept. "Losing his job after organizing the merger was a bitter pill to swallow."
<u>Black mood</u>	To be in a black mood means to be irritable, angry or even depressed. Also : to be in a bad mood.
<u>Black tie event</u>	This expression refers to a formal event at which men are required to wear a dinner jacket, or tuxedo, and a black bow tie. "I need to know if it's going to be a casual get-together or a black tie event. "
<u>In black and white</u>	To say that something is in black and white means that there is written proof of it. "It's an obligation. It's written in black and white in your contract."
<u>In the black</u>	To say that a person or organization is in the black means that they are financially sound, have a positive balance on their account, and that they owe no money.
<u>Black gold</u>	Black gold refers to the black colour and high value of oil.
<u>Black market</u>	The black market refers to the illegal buying and selling of goods or currencies.
<u>Black out</u>	If you black out , you lose consciousness.
<u>Black sheep</u>	The black sheep of the family is one who is very different from the others, and least respected by the other members of the family,



<u>Blamestorming</u>	A discussion among a group of people, who try to determine who or what is to blame for a particular mistake, failure or wrongdoing, is called ' blamestorming '. "A blamestorming session took place following the unfavourable reviews in the press."
A <u>blank</u> cheque	If you give someone a blank cheque , you authorize them to do what they think is best in a difficult situation. "Tom was given a blank cheque and told to negotiate the best deal possible."
A <u>wet</u> blanket	To refer to someone as a wet blanket means that they spoil other people's fun, or make an event less enjoyable than it could have been "Come on, Mike! Don't be such a wet blanket. You're spoiling the party!"
A <u>blessing</u> in disguise	This expression is used to refer to something which is unpleasant at first but later turns out to have advantages. "Missing the plane was a blessing in disguise - that's how he met his wife. She was a hostess on the next flight!"
As <u>blind</u> as a bat	(as) blind as a bat Someone whose vision is very poor, or who is unable to see anything, is (as) blind as a bat . "Without his glasses the old man is as blind as a bat."
(up a) <u>blind</u> alley	If you go up a blind alley , you follow an ineffective course of action which leads nowhere or produces no results. "The revelations promised by the suspect led the police up a blind alley."
The <u>blind</u> leading the blind	This expression refers to a person with very little ability trying to help or guide a person with no ability. "Don't ask Sofia to translate it. She hardly speaks a word of English herself. It would be the blind leading the blind ".
<u>Blind</u> you with science	If someone tries to blind you with science , they confuse you with their knowledge by using difficult or technical words. "If you ask Tim for a simple explanation, he tries to blind you with science."
In the <u>blink</u> of an eye	If something happens in the blink of an eye , it happens nearly instantaneously, with hardly enough time to notice it. "The pickpocket disappeared in the blink of an eye."
On the <u>blink</u>	If a machine is on the blink , it is not working properly and needs servicing or repair. "What a nuisance! The photocopier is on the blink again."
<u>Blockbuster</u>	Something that is outstanding, impressive or particularly successful, such as a film or a book, is called a blockbuster . "The TV series was a blockbuster."
Make your <u>blood</u> boil	If something makes your blood boil , it makes you really angry. "His condescending attitude made my blood boil!"
Make your <u>blood</u> run cold	If something makes your blood run cold , it shocks or scares you a lot. "The look in the prisoner's eyes made my blood run cold."



<u>Blood, sweat and tears</u>	A project or action which involves blood, sweat and tears requires a lot of effort and hard work. "His success wasn't due to luck; it was blood, sweat and tears all the way."
<u>Blot one's copy book</u>	Someone who blots their copy-book does something to spoil their good record or reputation. "He blotted his copy-book when he was arrested for speeding."
<u>Blow away the cobwebs</u>	If something blows away the cobwebs , it makes you feel more lively and refreshes your ideas. "Let's get out of the house. A walk on the beach will blow away the cobwebs!"
<u>Blow a fuse</u>	If you blow a fuse , you suddenly lose your temper and become very angry. "Charlie blew a fuse yesterday when he discovered that his ipod had been stolen."
<u>Blow a gasket</u>	When a furious person blows a gasket , they explode with anger. "When the shop was burgled for the third time, the owner blew a gasket."
<u>Blow hot and cold</u>	If you blow hot and cold about something, you constantly change your opinion about it. "The boss keeps blowing hot and cold about the marketing campaign - one day he finds it excellent, the next day he wants to make changes."
<u>Blow out of proportion</u>	If you exaggerate the importance of something, you blow it out of proportion . "The importance of the event was blown out of proportion by the media."
<u>Blow the whistle</u>	If you report an illegal or socially-harmful activity to the authorities, and give information about those responsible for it, you blow the whistle or you are a whistle-blower . "He refused to blow the whistle on his boss for fear of losing his job."
<u>Blow up in someone's face</u>	When working on a plan or project, if it suddenly goes wrong or fails, it blows up in your face . "The trip was difficult to organize, but it blew up in his face when the airline company went on strike."
<u>Blow your top</u>	If you blow your top , you suddenly become very angry. "When my mother saw the state of the apartment after the party, she blew her top!"
<u>Blue around the gills</u> (also green or pale around the gills)	If a person looks blue around the gills , they look unwell or sick. "You should sit down. You look a bit blue around the gills."
<u>Blue chip company</u>	This term refers to a company with a solid reputation for the quality of its products and the stability of its growth and earnings. "It's usually safe to invest in a blue-chip company."
<u>Blue in the face</u>	If you do something until you're blue in the face , you try unsuccessfully to do something for a very long time. "I explained the situation until I was blue in the face but she wouldn't change her mind."
<u>Feel blue</u>	To feel blue means to have feelings of deep sadness or depression.



A bolt from the <u>blue</u>	To refer to something as a a bolt from the blue means that it happened completely unexpectedly. "The chairman's resignation came as a bolt from the blue!"
<u>Blue-eyed boy</u>	A blue-eyed boy is somebody's favourite. "He's the director's blue-eyed boy!"
Out of the <u>blue</u>	If something happens out of the blue , it happens unexpectedly.
Above <u>board</u>	If a situation or business is described as above board , it is open, honest and legal. "There are no secret negotiations. Our dealings have always been above board."
<u>Bodice-ripper</u>	A novel, usually on a historical theme, with a plot that involves romantic passion between a vulnerable heroine and a rich, powerful male character, is called a bodice-ripper . "The novel is a bodice-ripper set in the French revolution."
The mind <u>boggles</u>	The expression " the mind boggles " is used as a reaction to something you find amazing or difficult to understand.
<u>Bold as brass</u>	Someone who is bold as brass behaves without shame or embarrassment. "Bold as brass, he refused the gift and handed it back to his mother-in-law."
<u>Bone of contention</u>	A bone of contention is a matter or subject about which there is a lot of disagreement. "The salaries have been agreed on, but opening on Sundays remains a bone of contention."
Have a <u>bone</u> to pick with someone	To say that you have a a bone to pick with somebody means that you are annoyed with them and want to talk to them about it.
Make no <u>bones</u> about something	If you make no bones about something , you do not hesitate to express your thoughts or feelings about it, even if it is embarrassing.
In somebody's good/bad <u>books</u>	If you are in somebody's good or bad books , you have their approval or disapproval. "I'm in my wife's bad books at the moment because I forgot our wedding anniversary!"
Lick someone's <u>boots</u>	To say that one person licks another person's boots means that they are trying to please that person, often in order to obtain something.
Get too big for your <u>boots</u> (or britches)	To say that a person is getting too big for their boots means that you think they are behaving as if they were more important than they really are. "Tom's really getting too big for his boots since he got a promotion - he hardly says hello any more!"
<u>Born</u> with a silver spoon in one's mouth	A person who is born with a silver spoon in their mouth is born into a very rich family. "She never has to worry about money; she was born with a silver spoon in her mouth."
I wasn't <u>born</u> yesterday	This expression is used to indicate that you are not as foolish or as easily deceived as some people seem to think. "Stop inventing silly excuses. I wasn't born yesterday you know!"



<p>On the <u>bottle</u></p>	<p>A person who drinks alcoholic drinks often and regularly is on the bottle. "Joe went on the bottle when he lost his job."</p>
<p><u>Bottom</u> fell out</p>	<p>When something causes a plan, project or venture to collapse or fail, the bottom falls out of it. "When heavy rain was announced, the bottom fell out of their plans for a beach party."</p>
<p><u>Bow</u> and scrape</p>	<p>To say that someone is bowing and scraping means that they are being excessively polite or servile. "The President was greeted with much bowing and scraping."</p>
<p><u>Brain</u> drain</p>	<p>The departure of highly qualified people (scientists, engineers, etc.) for other countries, where they have better opportunities and usually better pay, is called the brain drain.</p>
<p><u>Brain</u> like a sieve</p>	<p>Someone who has a brain like a sieve has a very bad memory and forgets things easily. "Oh, I forgot to buy bread - I've got a brain like a sieve these days!"</p>
<p>Have something on the <u>brain</u></p>	<p>If you have something on the brain, you think or talk about it constantly. "Stop talking about golf. You've got golf on the brain!"</p>
<p><u>Brains</u> behind something</p>	<p>Someone who is the brains behind a project or action is the person thought to have planned and organized everything. "The police have arrested a man believed to be the brains behind the bank robbery."</p>
<p>Get down to <u>brass</u> tacks</p>	<p>People who get down to brass tacks start to discuss and deal with the practical details of something "It was decided to get down to brass tacks and discuss the cost of the project."</p>
<p>All <u>brawn</u> and no brain</p>	<p>Someone who is physically very strong but not very intelligent is said to be all brawn and no brain. "He's an impressive player to watch, but he's all brawn and no brain."</p>
<p>Take the <u>bread</u> out of somebody's mouth</p>	<p>If you take the bread out of somebody's mouth, you take away their means of earning a living. "The decision to ban street vendors took the bread out of the mouths of many people."</p>
<p>On the <u>breadline</u></p>	<p>People who live on the breadline have a very low income or barely enough money to survive. "Due to the recent crisis, there are more people on the breadline than ever before."</p>
<p><u>Break</u> your back</p>	<p>If you work extremely hard, or put a lot of effort into achieving something, you break your back to do it. "If you want the job done well, you should accept to pay more. He's not going to break his back for such a low price!"</p>
<p><u>Break</u> the back of the beast</p>	<p>If someone breaks the back of the beast, they succeed in overcoming a major difficulty. "After hours of effort, the technicians finally broke the back of the beast and turned the electricity back on again."</p>
<p><u>Break</u> fresh ground</p>	<p>If you break fresh ground, you innovate by introducing or developing a new method or system. "Scientists have broken fresh ground in their exploration of outer space."</p>



<u>Break a leg!</u>	This is a humorous way of wishing somebody good luck, especially among stage performers. "So tonight's the opening night? Break a leg! "
<u>Break the mould</u>	If you change what people expect from a situation, especially by doing something original, you break the mould . "After generations of doctors in the family, he broke the mould by becoming a fashion designer."
<u>Break every rule in the book.</u>	If you behave in a completely unacceptable way, you break every rule in the book . "Our competitors obtained the contract by breaking every rule in the book."
<u>Break out in a cold sweat</u>	If you break out in a cold sweat , you start to perspire a lot, usually from anxiety. "I get nervous at the dentist's and usually break out in a cold sweat."
<u>Breaking and entering</u>	This term refers to the fact of entering a building or home illegally by breaking open a window, door etc. "The two men were found guilty of breaking and entering ."
<u>Breathe down someone's neck</u>	If somebody is breathing down your neck , they are watching you too closely and making you feel uncomfortable. "The atmosphere at work isn't great; the boss keeps breathing down our necks all the time."
<u>A breeze</u>	To say that something was a breeze means that it was very easy or that everything went smoothly. "The interview was a breeze - barely 10 minutes and I got the job!"
<u>Bricks and mortar/ bricks and clicks</u>	An established trading company (office/shop) is referred to as a ' brick-and-mortar ' business. 'Click companies' refer to Internet-based operations. Companies which do both are called 'bricks and clicks'. "Click businesses are usually more flexible than brick-and-mortar operations."
<u>Bright-eyed and bushy-tailed</u>	A person who is bright-eyed and bushy-tailed is very enthusiastic and full of energy. "Gary was fantastic! He arrived bright-eyed and bush-tailed at 7 am and worked with us all day."
<u>Bring the house down</u>	If you bring the house down , you give a very successful performance. "If he sings like that on Saturday, he'll bring the house down."
<u>Bring nothing to the table</u>	If you participate in negotiations and bring nothing to the table , you have nothing of interest to offer the other side. "We'll never reach an agreement if we don't all bring something to the table."
<u>Bring someone to heel</u>	If you force someone to behave in a disciplined manner, you bring them to heel . "He had always behaved badly, but the new headmaster managed to bring him to heel."
<u>Bring up the rear</u>	Someone who brings up the rear is the last person in a group of people who are walking or running. "The pupils walked calmly down the corridor, with the teacher bringing



	up the rear."
In <u>broad</u> daylight	If something happens in broad daylight , it takes place in the clear light of day when everyone can see what's going on. "His car was stolen in front of the bank in broad daylight and apparently there was not one witness!"
It's as <u>broad</u> as it's long	This expression means that it makes no real difference which alternative is chosen. "Take the high-speed train or fly and take a taxi? It's as broad as it's long. "
<u>Broad</u> strokes	If something is described or defined with/in broad strokes , it is outlined in a very general way, without any details. "In a few broad strokes he summed up the situation."
<u>Brown</u> as a berry	To say that someone is brown as a berry means that they are very tanned.
<u>Browned-off</u>	To be browned off means to be bored, fed up or disheartened. "Tom is browned off with his job."
Have a <u>brush</u> with	When you have a brush with something, such as the law, you encounter or experience it briefly. "He had a brush with the law for speeding several years ago but has had a clean record ever since."
The <u>bubble</u> has burst	To say that the bubble has burst means that the success of an idea, a product or a situation has suddenly stopped. "The video game was a phenomenal success but the bubble has burst."
Pass the <u>buck</u>	If you say that someone is passing the buck , you are accusing them of not taking responsibility for a problem and expecting someone else to handle it.
Kick the <u>bucket</u>.	To kick the bucket is a light-hearted way of talking about death. "He will inherit when his grandfather kicks the bucket."
<u>Buckle</u> down	If you buckle down , you apply yourself with determination to hard work and give it your full attention. "If you want to pass your exams, you'll have buckle down and do some serious work."
To nip something in the <u>bud</u>	If you nip a problem or a bad situation in the bud , you stop it at an early stage, before it becomes worse. "He wanted to be a clown, but his parents soon nipped that idea in the bud."
<u>Build</u> bridges	If a person builds bridges between opposing groups, they help them to cooperate and understand each other better.
Take the <u>bull</u> by the horns	To take the bull by the horns means that a person decides to act decisively in order to deal with a difficult situation or problem. "After a number of children were hurt in the school playground, Sally took the bull by the horns and called the headmaster."
<u>Bulldoze</u> somebody (into doing something)	A person who is bulldozed into doing something is forced to do it, especially by being bullied or intimidated. "The immigrants were bulldozed into accepting the work"



<u>Bundle of nerves</u>	If you describe somebody as a bundle of nerves , you mean that they are very nervous, tense or worried. "My son is doing his driving test today. Needless to say he's a bundle of nerves!"
<u>Burden of proof</u>	The burden of proof is the necessity imposed by law to prove that what one says is true. "The burden of proof lies with the claimant."
<u>Burn your bridges</u>	If you burn your bridges , you do something that will be impossible to rectify in the future. "If you refuse the offer, be careful not to burn your bridges by insulting them. They make make a better proposal later."
<u>Burn the candle at both ends</u>	If you burn the candle at both ends , you exhaust yourself by doing too much, especially going to bed late and getting up early. "Scott looks exhausted - I'll bet he's been burning the candle at both ends lately."
<u>Burn your fingers</u>	If you burn your fingers (or get your fingers burnt), you suffer financially as a result of foolish behaviour. "Jack got his fingers burnt playing on the stock market."
<u>On the back burner</u>	on the back burner If you put a project or issue on the back burner , you decide to deal with it at a later date because you do not consider it to be that urgent or important. "When Julie was offered a promotion, she put her MBA plans on the back burner."
<u>Burning question</u>	What everyone is asking and what we all want to know about is called the burning question . "Who leaked the information? That's the burning question."
<u>Don't beat around the bush</u>	This expression is used to tell somebody to say what they have to say, clearly and directly, even if it's unpleasant. "Don't beat around the bush. Just tell me what he said!"
<u>Business as usual</u>	After an unpleasant or unexpected event, this expression means that everything is continuing in a normal way in spite of the difficulties. "It was business as usual at the supermarket the day after the hold-up."
<u>Business before pleasure</u>	This expression means that it is considered preferable to finish one's work before going to relax and enjoy oneself. "I'd love to have lunch with you but I've got a report to finish - business before pleasure I'm afraid!"
<u>Business is business</u>	This is a way of saying that in financial and commercial matters, friendship or personal feelings should not be allowed to have any influence. "I'll hire your brother only if he is the best candidate. I'm sorry but business is business! "
<u>Busman's holiday</u>	A busman's holiday is when you spend your spare time or your holidays doing the same sort of activity as you do in your job. "My husband's a chef, so for him time off with the family is often a busman's holiday!"
<u>Butter someone up</u>	When butter someone up , you flatter them or you are very nice to them, especially if you want to obtain something. "He was so keen to get the job that he spent his time buttering up the boss."



Butter wouldn't melt in your mouth	If you say that somebody looks as if butter wouldn't melt in their mouth, you are saying that they look completely innocent, but that they are capable of doing unpleasant things.
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<u>Idiom</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
C In <u>cahoots</u> with someone	If one person is in cahoots with another, they are working in close partnership, usually conspiring to do something dishonest. "There was a rumour that the Mayor was in cahoots with a chain of supermarkets."
A piece of <u>cake</u>	To refer to something as a piece of cake means that you consider it to be very easy. "The English test was a piece of cake!"
<u>Slice/share of the cake</u> (or <i>pie</i>)	When people feel entitled to a share of the benefits or profits, they want a (larger) slice of the cake . "Since profits are higher this year, the workers feel they deserve a bigger slice of the cake."
Have your <u>cake</u> and eat it	To say that someone wants to have their cake and eat it means that they want the advantages of two alternative situations when only one is possible . "Jack enjoys his comfort but is always complaining about the cost of things. He can't have his cake and eat it!"
<u>Sell like hot cakes</u>	Things that sell like hot cakes sell quickly or in large quantities.
The <u>cake/the game</u> is not worth the candle	To say that the cake (or the game) is not worth the candle means that the advantages to be gained from doing something are not worth the effort involved. "He recorded an album but sold very few copies; the cake wasn't worth the candle!"
<u>Calculated risk</u>	A calculated risk is a risk taken with full knowledge of the dangers involved. "The company took a calculated risk when they hired Sean straight out of college."
<u>Call someone's bluff</u>	If you call someone's bluff , you challenge them to do what they threaten to do (while believing that they will not dare to do it). "After the neighbour's threats to demolish the fence, when Jack decided to call his bluff, there were no more complaints."
<u>Call it quits</u>	When people temporarily stop doing something or put an end to an activity, they call it quits . "OK. We're all exhausted, so let's call it quits for today."
<u>Call a spade a spade</u>	A person who calls a spade a spade speaks openly and truthfully about something, especially difficult matters. "What I like about the new manager is that he calls a spade a spade - it makes things so much easier for everyone."



<u>Call the tune</u>	The person who calls the tune is the one who makes all the important decisions and is in control of the situation. "He shows a lot of authority but in fact it's his wife who calls the tune."
<u>Can of worms</u>	To describe a situation as a can of worms means that it is complicated, unpleasant and difficult to deal with. "The discovery of the transfer of funds turned out to be a real can of worms."
<u>Burn the candle at both ends</u>	To say that some is burning the candle at both ends means that they are trying to do too much and that they go to bed very late and get up very early.
<u>Paddle one's own canoe</u>	If you paddle your own canoe , you do what you want to do without help or interference from anyone. "He decided to paddle his own canoe and set up his own company."
<u>Can't for the life of me</u>	This expression can be used to say that it is impossible for you to do something, no matter how hard you try. "I can't for the life of me remember the title of the book."
<u>Can't hold a candle (to someone or something)</u>	If a person (or thing) cannot hold a candle to another, they are much less competent or do not perform as well as the other. "John is very intelligent but he can't hold a candle to his brother Michael when it comes to sports."
<u>Can't make an omelette without breaking eggs</u>	This expression means that it is impossible to make important changes without causing some unpleasant effects. "Some people will lose their jobs after the merger, but you can't make an omelette without breaking eggs."
<u>Can't see the wood for the trees</u>	If someone can't see the wood for the trees , they are so concentrated on the details that they can't see the situation as a whole. "The new manager found the situation so complicated that he couldn't see the wood for the trees."
<u>Can't stand the pace</u>	If you can't stand the pace , you are not able to do things well when there is a lot of pressure. "She once worked for a famous fashion designer but she couldn't stand the pace."
<u>Cap in hand</u>	If you do something cap in hand , you ask for something in a very respectful manner. "They went to the teacher, cap in hand, and asked for more time to complete their project."
<u>Put on your thinking cap</u>	If you tell someone to put their thinking cap on , you ask them to find an idea or solve a problem by thinking about it. "Now here's this week's quiz - it's time to put your thinking caps on!"
<u>If the cap fits, wear it!</u>	You say " if the cap fits wear it " to let someone know that the critical remark they have just heard applies to them. "Are you referring to me?" "If the cap fits wear it!" (US : If the shoe fits ...)
<u>Play your cards right</u>	This means that you do all that is necessary in order to succeed. "If we play our cards right , we'll get the contract."
<u>Put/lay one's cards on the table</u>	If you put your cards on the table , you speak honestly and openly about your feelings and intentions. "Let's clear the air and put our cards on the table."



<p><u>Carrot and stick</u></p>	<p>If you use a carrot-and-stick approach, you use the promise of reward and the threat of punishment to make somebody work harder. "Some parents use a carrot-and-stick approach to obtain good results from their children."</p>
<p><u>Carry the can (for someone else)</u></p>	<p>If you carry the can for another person, you accept blame or take responsibility for something that goes wrong, even if it is not your fault or only partly. "The author didn't turn up for the interview and his agent had to carry the can."</p>
<p><u>Carry the torch</u></p>	<p>If you carry the torch, you have strong feelings for someone with whom you do not or cannot have a relationship.. "He's been carrying the torch for Julie since their college days, before she married Ted."</p>
<p><u>Carry weight</u></p>	<p>If a person or organization carries weight, they are influential or important. "I'm glad she's on our side - her opinion carries a lot of weight."</p>
<p><u>Put the cart before the horse</u></p>	<p>A person who puts the cart before the horse is doing things in the wrong order. "Building a school before knowing the age of the population is putting the cart before the horse."</p>
<p><u>Carve out a niche</u></p>	<p>A person or company who carves out a niche focuses on a particular segment of the market, to which they supply a product or service, and develop their expertise in that area. "In today's competitive market it's better to carve out a niche and try to become the best in that area."</p>
<p><u>Case in point</u></p>	<p>This term refers to an example which serves to illustrate, support or prove a point which is currently under discussion. "The latest incident is a case in point for the parents' association."</p>
<p><u>A cash cow</u></p>	<p>A product or service which is a regular source of income for a company is called a cash cow. "His latest invention turned out to be a real cash cow."</p>
<p><u>Cash in your chips</u></p>	<p>If you cash in your chips, you sell something, especially shares, either because you need the money or because you think the value is going to fall. "Andy cashed in his chips as soon as business started to slow down."</p>
<p><u>Cast a wide net</u></p>	<p>When trying to find something, if you cast a wide net, you cover an extensive area or use a wide range of sources. "The hospital will have to cast a wide net in their search for compatible donors."</p>
<p><u>Cast iron stomach</u></p>	<p>If you can eat all sorts of food and drink what you like, without any indigestion, discomfort or bad effects, it can be said that you have a cast iron stomach. "I don't know how you can eat that spicy food. You must have a cast iron stomach!"</p>
<p><u>A cat in gloves catches no mice</u></p>	<p>This expression means that if you are too careful and polite, you may not obtain what you want. "Negotiate carefully, but remember: a cat in gloves catches no mice!"</p>



A <u>cat</u> can look at a king.	This expression means that nobody is so important that an ordinary person cannot look at them or be curious about them.
A fat <u>cat</u>	To refer to a rich and powerful person as a fat cat means that you disapprove of the way they use their money or power.
A <u>cat</u> nap	If you have a short sleep during the day, you have a cat nap . "My dad often has a cat nap on a Sunday afternoon."
Let the <u>cat</u> out of the bag.	If you let the cat out of the bag , you reveal a secret, often not intentionally.
<u>Cat's whiskers</u> (also: the cat's pyjamas)	This expression refers to someone who considers themselves to be better than others in a particular area - beauty, competence, intelligence, sport, etc., "Ever since she got a promotion, she thinks she's the cat's whiskers! "
<u>Cat-and-dog</u> life	This term refers to a life in which partners are constantly or frequently quarrelling. "They lead a cat-and-dog life . I don't know why they stay together."
<u>Play cat and mouse</u>	To play cat and mouse with someone means to treat them alternately cruelly and kindly, so that they do not know what to expect.
<u>Catch-as-catch-can</u>	This expression means that you try to get something in any way possible "It's difficult to get much sleep with the new baby - it's catch-as-catch-can these days!"
<u>Catch 22</u>	A catch 22 situation refers to a frustrating situation where you cannot do one thing without doing a second, and you cannot do the second before doing the first. "I can't get a job without a work permit, and I can't get a work permit without a job. It's a catch 22 situation!"
<u>Catch</u> somebody's eye	If someone catches your eye , you find them attractive. "The pretty girl near the door caught his eye."
<u>Catch</u> somebody red-handed	If a person is caught red-handed , they are caught while they are doing something wrong or illegal. "The police arrived as the burglar was leaving the house. He was caught red-handed."
<u>Caught</u> in the crossfire	If you are caught in the crossfire , you suffer the effects of an argument between two people or groups. "When the two taxi drivers started to argue, their passengers were caught in the crossfire."
Wouldn't be <u>caught/seen</u> dead	If someone says that they wouldn't be caught or seen dead in a particular place or doing something, they mean that they would be too ashamed or embarrassed. "My seven-year-old son thinks he's a big boy; he wouldn't be caught dead holding my hand!"
<u>Caught</u> unawares	If someone is caught unawares , they are surprised and unprepared for what happens. "The security guard moved so silently that the thief was caught unawares"



<u>Cause a stir</u>	If something causes a stir , it creates an atmosphere of excitement or great interest. "The arrival of the actress caused quite a stir in the village."
<u>Throw caution to the wind</u>	If someone throws caution to the wind , they stop caring about the possible dangers and start taking risks. "The weather was so good, he threw caution to the wind and went sailing alone."
<u>Caveat emptor</u>	This Latin expression, which means 'let the buyer beware', is a warning to customers that goods are for sale "as is". The buyer is purchasing the articles at his/her own risk and is responsible for examining them beforehand. " Caveat emptor is a principle to be remembered when buying second-hand goods."
<u>Like chalk and cheese</u> (as different as chalk and cheese)	Two people who are like chalk and cheese are completely different from each other.
<u>Champ at the bit</u>	Someone who is champing at the bit is ready and eager to start an activity, and is showing impatience at being delayed. "The press conference was delayed for such a long time that the journalists were champing at the bit."
<u>Champagne taste on a beer budget</u>	Someone who likes expensive things that they cannot afford has champagne taste on a beer budget . Eva borrows money to buy expensive designer clothes- champagne taste on a beer budget!
<u>Chance one's arm</u>	If you chance your arm , you decide to do something even though there is little hope of success. "Tony knew there was little hope of getting into Harvard but he decided to chance his arm anyway."
<u>Chance/take a chance on something</u>	If you take a chance on something , you take action in the hope of success even though you know that the result may be negative. "I may not be able to get through the traffic but I'll take a chance on it."
<u>Chance in a million</u>	A chance in a million is a very small chance, or no chance at all, that something will happen.
<u>Change the face of something</u>	When an innovation, discovery or event changes the face of something , it alters it completely or in a major way. "Social networks have changed the face of modern communication."
<u>Change of heart</u>	If someone has a change of heart , they change their attitude or feelings, especially towards greater friendliness or cooperation. "He was against charity, but he had a change of heart when he saw the plight of the homeless."
<u>Chapter and verse</u>	This term refers to word-for-word details or very specific facts, especially the exact place where the information can be found. "The phrase is attributed to Oscar Wilde, although I can't give you chapter and verse ."
<u>Chase rainbows</u>	Someone who is chasing rainbows is trying to get something they will never obtain. "She's trying to get into Harvard but I think she's chasing rainbows."
<u>Chase your (own) tail</u>	Someone who is chasing their (own) tail is spending a lot of time and energy doing many things but achieving very little. "He's been chasing his tail all week collecting data but the report is still not ready."



<u>Cheap shot</u>	A cruel, unfair or unwarranted comment or verbal attack is called a cheap shot . "Referring to Tom as an 'unqualified speaker' was really a cheap shot."
<u>Cheek by jowl</u>	When people are cheek by jowl , they are crammed uncomfortably close together "The refugees are living cheek by jowl in a temporary camp."
<u>Cheesed off</u>	If someone is cheesed off with something, they are annoyed, bored or frustrated. "Julie is absolutely cheesed off with her job."
<u>Cherry pick</u>	When you cherry pick , you choose something with great care and select only the best. "Top university graduates are often cherry picked by large companies."
<u>Get a second bite/ two bites at the cherry</u>	This expression means that you get a second opportunity to do or try something. "He was eliminated in the semi-finals but he'll get a second bite at the cherry next year."
<u>Old chestnut</u>	A story, a joke or an idea that has been repeated so often that it has lost its novelty is referred to as an old chestnut . "The story about his boat capsizing has become an old chestnut!"
<u>Chew the fat</u>	If you chew the fat with somebody, you chat in an informal way about unimportant things. "It's amazing the amount of time my grandparents can spend chewing the fat with their neighbours."
<u>Chicken feed</u>	An amount of money considered small or unimportant is called chicken feed . "I got a job during the holidays but the pay was chicken feed."
<u>Chicken out of something</u>	If you chicken out of something, you decide not to do something because you are afraid. "He decided to join a karate class, but chickened out of it at the last minute!"
<u>Chickens come home to roost</u>	If you say that chickens have some home to roost , you mean that bad or embarrassing things said or done in the past by someone are now causing problems for that person. "As tenants the couple were noisy and disorderly. Now they can't find a place to rent. The chickens have come home to roost! "
<u>Too many chiefs, not enough Indians.</u>	This expression refers to a situation where there are too many people giving instructions and not enough people doing the work. "The business wasn't successful. There were too many chiefs and not enough Indians. "
<u>Child's play</u>	If something is referred to as child's play , it is considered to be very simple or easy to do. "Using this new computer is child's play compared to the old one."
<u>Chill out</u>	When people chill out , often after a period of heavy work or nervous tension, they do something that helps them to calm down and relax for a while. "After a week of exams, the students needed to go and chill out."
<u>Chill wind of something</u>	If you face or feel the chill wind of something , you are beginning to encounter the problems or trouble it causes. "Many building companies are facing the chill wind of the recession."



<u>Chime in</u>	If you chime in , you interrupt or join a conversation, especially to repeat or agree with something. "As I explained to the bus driver what had happened , the other passengers chimed in and gave their version. "
<u>Chinese whispers</u>	This term refers to a process by which a message or piece of information (especially gossip, rumours or scandalous news) is passed on from one person to another, and changes along the way, so that the final version is often very different from the original.
A <u>chink</u> in someone's armour	If someone has a chink in their armour , they have a weakness that can be taken advantage of. "The candidate's opponents are busy looking for chinks in his armour."
Have a <u>chinwag</u>	If you have a chinwag with someone, you have an opportunity to chat with each other. "How about having lunch together on Friday? "OK, good idea, we can have a good old chinwag!"
A <u>chip</u> off the old block	If you refer to a person as a chip off the old block , you mean that they resemble one of their parents in appearance, character or behaviour. "James is a chip off the old block - he reacts exactly the same way as his father."
A <u>chip</u> on your shoulder	If someone has a chip on their shoulder , they feel resentful because they feel they are being treated unfairly, especially because of their background, their sex or their colour.
Have had one's <u>chips</u>	To say that someone has had their chips means that they have completely failed in what they set out to achieve. "After the second set, it looked as though Agassi had had his chips."
When the <u>chips</u> are down	This expression refers to people's behaviour in a difficult or dangerous situation when action must be taken. "It's when the chips are down that Jack is at his best."
Useful as a <u>chocolate</u> teapot	Something which is of no practical use at all is about as useful as a chocolate teapot . "When there are no roads, a car is about as useful as a chocolate teapot."
<u>Chop</u> and change	If you chop and change , you constantly change your opinion, plans or methods and often cause confusion. "Don't chop and change all the time - just make up your mind!"
<u>Christmas</u> comes but once a year	This expression means that Christmas is a time of celebration that only happens once a year, and that we should mark the occasion by being kind and generous to others, especially the less fortunate.
Off someone's <u>Christmas</u> card list	This expression means that you are no longer on friendly terms with someone. "I've been off her Christmas card list since our dog messed up her garden!"
You can't fight the <u>city</u> hall	This expression means that it is useless to try to win a battle against a politician, establishment or bureaucracy in general. "Tom decided it was a waste of energy trying to obtain a tax refund - you can't fight the city hall! "



<u>Clap/lay/set eyes on someone</u>	If you clap eyes on someone or something, you look at or see them. "I've heard of him but I've never clapped eyes on him."
<u>Class act</u>	To say that someone, for example an athlete or an entertainer, is a class act means that they are very good at what they do. "Her career is just beginning but she's already a class act."
<u>Claw one's way back</u>	In a situation which has deteriorated, if you claw your way back , you gradually regain your former position through determination, energy and hard work. "After a serious accident, the Olympic gold medallist clawed his way back to the top, to the admiration of all."
<u>Clean slate</u>	A clean slate is a record of your work or actions that does not show past mistakes and allows you to make a fresh start. "He was able to rebuild his life with a clean slate."
<u>Clean as a whistle</u>	Something as clean as a whistle is extremely clean. For a person, this expression can mean that their criminal record is clean. "Bob spent the afternoon washing and shining his car until it was as clean as a whistle."
<u>Clear the air</u>	If you decide to clear the air , you try to remove the causes of fear, worry or suspicion by talking about them openly. "The atmosphere had become so unpleasant that he decided it was time to clear the air."
<u>Clear the way</u>	If you clear the way , you allow something to happen by removing what was preventing it. "Opening universities to women cleared the way for them to have a career and participate actively in today's society."
<u>Clinch a deal</u>	In a business relationship, if you clinch a deal , you reach agreement on a proposal or offer. "Tom's final argument enabled us to clinch the deal."
<u>Clip someone's wings</u>	If you clip someone's wings , you do something to restrict their freedom. "Taking away his credit card is a sure way to clip his wings!"
<u>Like clockwork</u>	To say that someone or something goes, runs or behaves like clockwork means that everything happens exactly as expected. "Meals are always served on time. In their home everything runs like clockwork."
<u>Close but no cigar</u>	This expression refers to an effort to do something which was a good attempt but not quite good enough to succeed. "The ball touched the goal post - close but no cigar! "
<u>Close call</u>	If something happens, or is avoided or missed, with very little margin, it is called a close call . "She won the election with 0.5% of the votes - it was a close call!"
<u>Close to home</u>	If a remark or comment is close to home , it is so true, or it affects you so directly, that you feel uncomfortable. "Alan looks embarrassed. Bob's comment must have been close to home!"
<u>A close shave</u>	This expression is used to describe a situation where an accident or a disaster nearly happened "I almost hit the child who ran out in front of my car. It was a close shave ."



<u>Cloud cuckoo land</u>	This expression refers to an imaginary unrealistic place where everything is perfect and impossible things can happen. "Anyone who thinks these measures are going to solve the crisis are living in cloud-cuckoo-land! "
Be on <u>cloud nine</u>	A person who is on cloud nine is very happy because something wonderful has happened. "When the boss announced my promotion, I was on cloud nine!"
<u>Cloud on the horizon</u>	A problem or difficulty that is predictable, or seems likely to arise in the future, is called a cloud on the horizon . "They are happily married and for the moment there appear to be no clouds on the horizon."
Not have a <u>clue</u>	If you don't have a clue about something, you don't know anything about it. "My wife's grandmother's maiden name? I don't have a clue!"
The <u>coast is clear</u>	To say that the coast is clear means that there is no danger in sight, or that nobody can see you. "OK. The dog has gone inside. The coast is clear."
<u>Cold calls</u>	If you make cold calls , you telephone potential customers from a list of people you do not know. "In my first job I had to make cold calls using the telephone directory."
<u>Cold turkey</u>	This term means to immediately and completely stop an addictive substance, a regular activity or a behavioural pattern, instead of ending it gradually. "When Dave decided to stop smoking, he did it cold turkey on January 1st."
<u>Collect dust</u>	If something is collecting dust , it hasn't been touched or used for a long period of time. "My dad doesn't play golf any more. His clubs are just collecting dust now."
<u>Collect one's thoughts</u>	If you collect your thoughts , you try to think calmly and clearly in order to prepare yourself mentally for something. "Anne stopped to collect her thoughts before calling back the customer."
Off <u>colour</u>	If you are off colour , you are looking or feeling ill. "You should get some rest. You look a bit off colour."
<u>Come apart at the seams</u>	To say that someone is coming apart at the seams means that they are extremely upset or under severe mental stress. "Bob has had so many problems lately, he's coming apart at the seams."
<u>Come clean</u>	To come clean about something means to tell the truth.
<u>Come to grief</u>	If someone or something comes to grief , they have an accident, are destroyed or end in failure. "Their plans for a golf course came to grief when it was decided to build a motorway."
<u>Come in handy</u>	To say that something may come in handy means that it may be useful some time or other. "Don't throw away those old shelves; they may come in handy ."



<u>Come into one's own</u>	When you come into your own , you receive the credit or recognition you deserve. "It's when there's an important presentation that Sarah really comes into her own."
<u>Come out in the wash</u>	This expression is used to tell someone not to worry about a mistake or problem because it won't have any serious effect and everything will work out all right. "Yes, he was furious when it happened - but don't worry - it'll all come out in the wash."
<u>Come out of the woodwork</u>	When things, or people, come out of the woodwork , they appear or emerge unexpectedly, as if from nowhere, and usually in large numbers. "As soon as we added the swimming pool, our children had "friends" coming out of the woodwork."
<u>Come rain or shine</u>	If a person does something come rain or shine , they do it regularly, whatever the circumstances. "He goes to the gym club every day, come rain or shine."
<u>Come to a bad end</u>	If someone comes to a bad end , their actions lead to disastrous consequences which are sometimes deserved or predictable. "If that boy doesn't change his ways, he'll come to a bad end!"
<u>Come to blows</u>	If two or more people come to blows , they start to fight. "The debate was so intense, the participants almost came to blows."
<u>Come to the crunch</u>	To talk about what to do if or when a situation comes to the crunch , means when it becomes difficult or critical and a decision has to be made. "If it comes to the crunch, I'll sell my car."
<u>Come to a head</u>	If a problem or difficult situation comes to a head , it reaches a point where action has to be taken. "The problem came to a head yesterday when rioting broke out in the streets."
<u>Come to your senses</u>	If you come to your senses , you start to think clearly and behave sensibly. "She finally came to her senses and realized that public transport was faster than driving."
<u>Come to grips with something</u>	If you come to grips with a problem or situation, you start to understand or deal with it properly "After the initial shock, the patient began to come to grips with his illness."
<u>Come up roses</u>	If things come up roses , the end result is successful or positive, even if there were difficult times. "After several disappointments, everything seems to be coming up roses for the tennis player this year."
<u>Come/turn up trumps</u>	To say that someone has come up trumps means that they have achieved unexpectedly good results. "Against all expectations, our team came up trumps in the cup final."
<u>Come with the territory</u>	To say that something comes with the territory means that it has to be accepted as part of a job or responsibility, even if it is unpleasant. "A successful actor has to expect intensive media coverage - it comes with the territory!"



<u>Come what may</u>	To say that you will do something come what may means that you will do it whatever the consequences may be. "Come what may, I'm going to tell my mother-in-law what I think of her attitude!"
<u>Common ground</u>	This expression refers to an area of shared beliefs, interests or mutual understanding between people or groups who often have disagreements. "Any common ground among the Mediterranean countries will contribute to future unity."
<u>Common knowledge</u>	When information is well-known to everyone (particularly in a community or group), it is called common knowledge . "You didn't know the intern was Jack's son? I thought it was common knowledge."
<u>Comeuppance/ get one's comeuppance</u>	When someone gets their comeuppance , they receive the treatment they deserve (usually punishment or retribution) for their behaviour or actions. "The pupils who are bullying the newcomers will soon get their comeuppance."
<u>Cook the books</u>	A person who cooks the books is one who changes the facts or figures in their financial accounts, often in order to steal money. "The actor discovered after a while that his agent was cooking the books."
<u>Cook somebody's goose</u>	To cook somebody's goose means to spoil that person's chance of success. "When the burglar saw the police car arriving, he realized his goose was cooked."
<u>That's the way the cookie crumbles!</u>	To say ' that's the way the cookie crumbles ' means that is the way things are and nothing can be done about it' - that's life!
<u>Cool as a cucumber</u>	A person who is as cool as a cucumber is a person who is not anxious, but relaxed and non-emotional.
<u>Cool one's heels</u>	If you are left to cool your heels , someone keeps you waiting. "After rushing to be on time for my appointment, I was left to cool my heels in the waiting room for an hour."
<u>Copper-bottomed</u>	To describe something such as a plan, a contract or a financial arrangement as ' copper-bottomed ' means that it is completely safe or reliable. "He has signed a copper-bottomed agreement with a distributor."
<u>Cork something up</u>	If you cork something up (feelings, emotions), you fail to show or express them. "It would be better for her if she showed her grief and didn't cork up her feelings."
<<> <u>Corner a market</u>	If a company dominates an area of business, and leaves no room for competition, it is said to have cornered the market . "By importing large quantities and selling at low prices, they have cornered the market."
<u>The corridors of power</u>	This term refers to the higher levels of government or administration where important decisions are made. "The matter is the subject of much discussion in the corridors of power at the present time. "



<u>Cost an arm and a leg</u>	If something costs an arm and a leg , it is very expensive! "The house cost us an arm and a leg, but we have no regrets."
<u>Cost the earth</u>	If something costs the earth , it is very expensive indeed. "She wears designer clothes that must cost the earth!"
<u>At all costs</u>	If you are determined to obtain or achieve something at all costs , you want it regardless of the expense, effort or sacrifice involved. "The journalist was determined at all costs to get a report from the war zone."
<u>A couch potato</u>	If you refer to someone as a couch potato , you criticize them for spending a lot of time sitting and watching television. "Don't be such a couch potato. There are better ways of spending your time than in front of the TV."
<u>Cough up (something)</u>	If you have to cough up something, such as money or information, you give it reluctantly or unwillingly. "He refused to say who attacked him until his father made him cough up the names."
<u>count your blessings</u>	If you count your blessings , you focus your thoughts on all the good things in your life rather than on the negative ones. "Whenever anyone in the family starts to complain, my mother always advises us to count our blessings."
<u>Take your courage in both hands</u>	If you take your courage in both hands , you make yourself do something very brave. "When I saw the child in the burning house, I took my courage in both hands and ran inside."
<u>On course (for something)</u>	If someone is on course for something, they are likely to achieve it. "Our team is on course for a victory in the national championship."
<u>Cover your tracks</u>	If you cover your tracks , you conceal or destroy evidence of what you have done or where you have been. "Charlie was sorry he hadn't covered his tracks better when his wife discovered he had been unfaithful."
<u>Cover/hide a multitude of sins</u>	If something covers or hides a multitude of sins , it prevents people from seeing the less pleasant reality. "Loose-fitting clothes can cover a multitude of sins!"
<u>Till the cows come home</u>	To say that a person could do something till the cows come home means that they could do it for a long time. "You can ask till the cows come home, but I'm not buying you a scooter!"
<u>Crack the whip</u>	If you crack the whip , you use your authority to make someone obey you or work more efficiently, usually by threatening them. "Every so often I've got to crack the whip to make sure we meet the deadline."
<u>Crack down on something</u>	If the authorities decide to crack down on something , they enforce the law by taking severe measures to restrict undesirable or criminal actions. "To reduce road accidents, it was decided to crack down on speeding."
<u>Crash course</u>	If you do a crash course , you do an intensive training course in order to obtain quick results. "Before going to Tokyo, he did a crash course to learn Japanese."



<u>Cramp</u> someone's style	If you cramp someone's style , you limit them by preventing them from behaving or expressing themselves freely. "The dress code imposed at school cramped her style."
<u>Crank</u> into gear (also: <u>get</u> into gear)	When a person or activity cranks into gear , they start to work or become effective. "Immediately after the announcement, a group of protesters cranked into gear."
The <u>cream</u> of the crop	This expression is used to refer to the best people or things in a particular group. "As usual, the cream of the crop of this year's graduates were offered the best jobs."
<u>Cream</u> rises to the top	This expression means that someone or something exceptionally good will eventually attract attention, or stand out from the rest, just as cream rises to the top in coffee or tea . "I knew you'd succeed. As the saying goes, "cream rises to the top!"
<u>Creative</u> accounting	This term refers to the presentation of a company's results in a way that, although generally legal, glosses over the problems and makes the results appear better than they are. "It was suggested that some creative accounting might help to attract investors."
<u>Creature</u> comforts	This expression refers to modern conveniences (such as hot water or central heating) that make life comfortable and pleasant. "I need my creature comforts . I don't know how I'd survive without air-conditioning in this climate!"
On the <u>crest</u> of a wave	If you are on the crest of a wave , you are very successful in what you are doing. "Our company is going from success to success. We're on the crest of a wave right now."
<u>Crocodile</u> tears	To shed crocodile tears means to shed false tears or show insincere grief. "Caroline pretended to be sad but we all knew her tears were crocodile tears."
<u>Crooked</u> as a dog's hind leg	To say that someone is as crooked as a dog's hind leg means that they are very dishonest indeed. "He can't be trusted - he's as crooked as a dog's hind leg."
<u>Cross</u> to bear	A person who has a cross to bear has a serious problem or heavy responsibility that they must accept because they cannot change it. "Alzheimer's is a cross to bear for the whole family."
<u>Cross</u> that bridge when we come to it	This is another way of saying " we will deal with that problem when it occurs and not worry about it before". "What will happen if we can't repay the loan?" "We'll cross that bridge when we come to it."
<u>Cross</u> the line	If you cross the line you go beyond the authorized limits and do something which is not acceptable. "He has an unpleasant habit of telling jokes that really cross the line."
<u>Cross</u> your mind	If an idea or thought crosses your mind , you suddenly think of it. "It has just crossed my mind that the shops are closed today."



<u>Cross</u> somebody's path	If you meet someone, usually unexpectedly or by chance, you cross their path . "Mrs. Bridgewater was my English teacher but I haven't crossed her path since I left school."
At <u>cross</u> purposes	If two people are at cross purposes , there is a misunderstanding as to what each one is talking about "Look, we seem to be at cross purposes : you're talking about 'sailing' boats, but I'm talking about 'selling' boats."
<u>Cross</u> the Rubicon	If you cross the Rubicon , you make a irreversible decision or commit to a course of action that cannot be changed. "After careful consideration, he decided to stop teaching and open an art gallery, knowing he was crossing the Rubicon."
As the <u>crow</u> flies	This expression refers to distance measured in a straight line. "It's two miles from here to the station as the crow flies , but of course it's much further by road."
<u>Crux</u> of the matter	The main point or the most vital element of a discussion or argument is called the crux of the matter . "The crux of the matter is that he's too old to live alone in that big house."
<u>Cry</u> wolf	To cry wolf is to call for help when you are not really in danger. As a result, nobody believes you when you really need help. "There's Mary screaming again! Does she really have a problem or is she just crying wolf again?"
A far <u>cry</u> from something	If one thing is a far cry from something else, it means that they are very different from each other.
A <u>crying</u> need	When there is a great lack of something which is urgently needed, there is a crying need for it. "Hospitals claim that there is a crying need for nurses."
A <u>crying</u> shame	If something is a crying shame , it is very sad or unfortunate. "It's a crying shame that some families cannot afford lunch for their children."
For <u>crying</u> out loud	This expression is used to show irritation, exasperation or anger. " For crying out loud! Turn that television off!"
It's no use <u>crying</u> over spilt milk	This expression means that it is useless to complain or have regrets about something that is done and cannot be changed. "Sometimes I regret not accepting the offer, but it's no use crying over spilt milk ."
On <u>cue</u>	If something happens on cue , it happens at exactly the appropriate or expected moment. "My grandmother was blowing out the candles on her birthday cake when, right on cue, the flowers arrived."
Off the <u>cuff</u>	If you speak off the cuff , you say something without any previous thought or preparation. "He handles off-the-cuff interviews very well."
A <u>cut</u> above	Someone or something which is a cut above the others is better or of higher quality. "The articles in this magazine are a cut above the others."
<u>Cut</u> both ways	Something that cuts both ways has both a positive and a negative effect at the same time. "Banning cars in the town centre can cut both ways : less traffic congestion but fewer customers in the shops."



<u>Cut the cackle</u>	If you tell a group of people to cut the cackle , you ask them to stop talking aimlessly and start dealing with more important or serious matters. "OK. It's time to cut the cackle and get down to business."
<u>Cut a dash</u>	If a person cuts a dash , they make a striking impression by their appearance and attractive clothes. "Wearing a fashionable new suit, my grandfather cut a dash on his wedding day."
<u>Cut and dried</u>	To refer to a situation, a problem or a solution as cut and dried means that it is considered clear and straightforward with no likely complications. "When the new manager arrived, he didn't find the situation as cut and dried as he had expected."
<u>Cut from the same cloth</u>	If two people are cut from the same cloth , they are very similar in character or behaviour. "Although the brothers look alike, they are not cut from the same cloth. They each have their own personality."
<u>Cut corners</u>	Cutting corners means not following the correct procedure in order to save time, effort or money (often with unsatisfactory results)
<u>Cut the ground from under somebody's feet</u>	When someone cuts the ground from under another's feet , they do something which weakens their position or spoils their plans. "When we launched the new product, we cut the ground from under our competitors' feet."
<u>Cut no ice (with somebody)</u>	If something cuts no ice , it has no effect or makes no impression on someone. "Her explanation cut no ice with the teacher who said he would tolerate no more unjustified absences."
<u>Cut loose</u>	If someone cuts loose or is cut loose, they stop being influenced or controlled by another person or group. "He's thirty years old and still hasn't cut loose from his family."
<u>Cut one's losses</u>	If you end or withdraw from something that is already failing, in order to reduce the loss of money, time or effort invested in it, you cut your losses . "The project is heading for failure. Let's cut our losses before it's too late."
<u>Cut one's own throat</u>	If you cut your own throat , you do something that will be the cause of your own failure or ruin your chances in the future. "Tony has already missed a lot of classes. He's cutting his own throat."
<u>Cut it/things fine</u>	If you cut it/things fine , you leave barely enough time to do something. "You're counting just an hour between the airport and the train station - that's cutting things a bit fine isn't it?"
<u>Cut it out!</u>	If you say cut it out to someone, you are telling them to stop doing something. "I've had enough of your insinuations, so just cut it out!"



Not <u>cut out</u> for something	If you are not cut out for something , you are not the sort of person to succeed or be happy in a particular activity. "I started studying medicine but I quickly realized I wasn't cut out for it."
<u>Cut</u> someone some slack	If you relax a rule, treat a person less severely or allow someone to do something which is normally not permitted, you cut them some slack . "Our parents are very strict; I wish they'd cut us some slack now and then."
<u>Cut</u> to the quick	If you cut someone to the quick , you hurt their feelings or offend them deeply. "Alan was cut to the quick when Jack expressed doubts about his sincerity."
<u>Cutting</u> edge	This expression refers to the newest, most advanced stage in the the development of something. "The company is at the cutting edge of aeronautics."

<u>Idiom</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
D <u>Dab</u> hand at something	If you're a dab hand at something, you're very good at doing it. "Why don't you call Suzy? She's a dab hand at organizing barbecues."
<u>Dance</u> attendance (on somebody)	If you dance attendance on someone, you are constantly available for that person and attend to their wishes. "She's rich and famous and expects everyone to dance attendance on her."
<u>Dance</u> to someone's tune	If you dance to someone's tune , you do whatever that person tells you to do. "He is the company's major shareholder so the management has to dance to his tune."
In the <u>dark</u>	If someone is kept or left in the dark about something, they are not informed about it . "The personnel were kept in the dark about the merger until the last minute."
<u>Darken</u> someone's door	If you darken someone's door , you come as an unwanted or unwelcome visitor. "Just get out of here, and never darken my door again!"
Call it a <u>day</u>.	A person who decides to " call it a day " decides to stop doing finish doing something, generally because they are tired.
A <u>day</u> late and a dollar short	If something is a day late and a dollar short , it comes too late and is not good enough. "They offered me an internship when I'd already found a job - a day late and a dollar short!"
<u>Daylight</u> robbery (also: highway robbery)	The term ' daylight robbery ' is used when the price of something is thought to be much too high. "\$10 for an orange juice? That's daylight robbery!"
<u>Dead</u> as a dodo	To say that something is (as) dead as a dodo means that it is without doubt dead or obsolete, or has gone out of fashion. (The dodo is a bird that is now extinct.) "The floppy disk is an invention that is now (as) dead as a dodo."



<u>Dead as a doornail</u>	This expression is used to stress that a person or thing is unquestionably dead. "They've started fighting again, so the peace agreement is now dead as a doornail."
<u>Dead cert</u>	Something that is certain to happen or to be achieved is a dead cert . "After such praise, his appointment as captain of the team is a dead cert."
<u>Dead duck</u>	This expression refers to a project or scheme which has been abandoned or is certain to fail. "The new cinema is going to be a dead duck because it's too far away from the town centre."
<u>Dead in the water</u>	A plan or project that is dead in the water is at a standstill or has ceased to function and is unlikely to be reactivated in the future. "Because of the crisis, the planned housing development is now dead in the water."
<u>Dead loss</u>	Someone or something described as a dead loss is absolutely useless or a complete failure. "When it comes to gardening, my brother is a dead loss."
<u>Dead set against something</u>	If you are dead set against something , you are strongly opposed to it. "My father wanted a dog, but my mother was dead set against the idea."
<u>Dead wood</u>	The term dead wood refers to people or things which are no longer considered useful or necessary. "The new manager wants to reduce costs by cutting out the dead wood."
<u>Dead to the world</u>	A person who is dead to the world is fast asleep. "Don't worry. You won't disturb him. He's dead to the world!"
<u>Wouldn't be caught/seen dead</u>	If someone says that they wouldn't be caught or seen dead in a particular place or doing something, they mean that they would be too ashamed or embarrassed. "My seven-year-old son thinks he's a big boy; he wouldn't be caught dead holding my hand!"
<u>Deaf ear</u>	If you turn a deaf ear to something, you refuse to listen. "Sandy turned a deaf ear to the guide's advice and got lost in the mountains."
<u>A raw deal</u>	If you say that someone has got a raw deal , you think they have been treated unfairly or badly.
<u>Deck out</u>	If you deck out someone or something, you dress or decorate them in a special way. "Paul decked out his car for the wedding."
<u>Off the deep end</u>	A person who goes off the deep end becomes suddenly very angry or emotional.
<u>Deep pockets</u>	A person or organization who has deep pockets has a lot of money. "Andy's business is not doing well at the moment. He says he needs a friend with deep pockets."
<u>Deliver the goods</u>	If a person delivers the goods , they do what is expected of them or what they have promised to do. "Let's hope that new whiz-kid the boss hired can deliver the goods!"
<u>Out of your depth</u>	If you are out of your depth , it means you are in a situation which is too difficult for you, or which you know little about.



<u>Devil's advocate</u>	During a discussion or debate, if you play devil's advocate , you pretend to be against an idea or plan in order to determine the validity of the arguments in favour of it. "She decided to play devil's advocate just to see how strongly people felt about the project."
The <u>devil</u> is in the details	This expression refers to a task or a job which appears simple but is in fact more difficult to accomplish. "Framing a picture looks easy but the devil is in the details! "
The <u>devil</u> makes work for idle hands	This expression means that people who do not have enough to do are often tempted to do something wrong. "It's not good for kids to have nothing to do at the week-end - the devil makes work for idle hands! "
The <u>devil</u> take the hindmost	This expression means that you should think of yourself and not worry about other people. "When the boat capsized it was a case of ' the devil take the hindmost ', but luckily they all survived."
Speak of the <u>devil</u>!	This is said to refer to a person who appears just when his/her name is mentioned. " Speak of the devil! We were just talking about your invitation!"
<u>Dial</u> it back	If you dial it back , you reduce the intensity of something or tone it down. "When Lucas started getting all excited his mother said : "Hey Lucas, dial it back a bit!"
The <u>dice</u> are loaded	If everything seems to work to your disadvantage and you are not likely to succeed, you can say that the dice are loaded against you . "I applied for the job, but being a woman, and over forty, the dice were loaded against me."
<u>Dice</u> with death	If you put your life at risk by doing something very dangerous, you dice with death . "Going mountain-climbing alone is dicing with death."
The <u>die</u> is cast	To say that the die is cast means that an irrevocable decision has been made which will determine the future. "I've handed in my resignation so now the die is cast!"
<u>Die</u> with one's boots on	A person who dies with their boots on dies while still leading an active life. "He says he'll never retire. He'd rather die with his boots on!"
A <u>different</u> kettle of fish	To describe a person, thing or situation as a different kettle of fish means that it is completely different from what was previously mentioned. "You may have good business relations, but living in the country is a different kettle of fish."
<u>Different</u> strokes for different folks	Each individual has their own tastes and requirements. What suits one person will not suit another. "Alison really enjoys gardening, whereas Julie finds it a chore. Different strokes for different folks!"
<u>Dig</u> in your heels	If you dig in your heels , you refuse to do something, especially if someone is trying to convince you to do so. "My grandfather dug in his heels and refused to move to an apartment."
<u>Dig</u> one's own grave	A person who digs their own grave does something which causes their own downfall. "If you drop out of college now, with such high unemployment, you'll be digging your own grave!"



<u>Dim view</u>	If you take a dim view of something, you dislike or disapprove of it. "My previous boss took a dim view of wearing casual wear to work."
(In) <u>dire straits</u>	If a person or organization is in dire straits , they are in a very difficult situation. "The loss of major contracts has put the company in dire straits."
Wash your <u>dirty linen</u> in public.	To wash one's dirty linen in public means to talk about unpleasant personal matters in the presence of others.
Do someone's <u>dirty work</u>	To do someone's dirty work means to do the unpleasant or difficult work that the other person does not want to do.
<u>Disappear</u> into thin air	If someone or something disappears into thin air , they vanish in a mysterious way. "After being accused of embezzlement, the director disappeared into thin air."
<u>Disaster</u> written all over it	If something, such as a plan or idea, has disaster written all over it , it is thought to be heading for complete failure or will cause a lot of trouble. "Mary's idea of a holiday with her in-laws has disaster written all over it!"
<u>Do a double take</u>	Someone who does a double take looks again in surprise at something unexpected. "He did a double take when he saw his wife in a restaurant with another man."
<u>Do a disappearing act</u>	If someone does a disappearing act , they simply vanish, especially if they have done something wrong or dishonest. "Just before the police arrived, the suspect did a disappearing act."
(not) <u>do justice</u> (to someone or something)	If you do not show the true value of someone or something, you do not do justice to them/it. "The photograph doesn't do her justice; she's really much prettier than that."
<u>Do more harm than good</u>	If the effect of an action is more damaging than helpful, it does more harm than good . "Giving him money did more harm than good - he spent it on alcohol."
<u>Do nothing by halves</u>	When a person does everything they are engaged in completely and thoroughly, they are said to do nothing by halves . "When she cooks, it's a four-course meal - she does nothing by halves!"
<u>Do someone a good turn</u>	If you do someone a good turn , you act in a helpful way. "Mike is a great guy - always ready to do a good turn."
<u>Do someone's dirty work</u>	To do someone's dirty work means to do the unpleasant or difficult work that the other person does not want to do.
<u>Do the spadework</u>	Someone who does the spadework does the preparatory work or the preliminary research for something. "Although I did all the spadework, my name was never mentioned."
<u>Do the trick</u>	If something does the trick , it does exactly what is needed or achieves the desired effect. "Another coat of paint should do the trick."
Just what the <u>doctor</u> ordered	If something is just what the doctor ordered , it is extremely pleasant and will help you feel better. "A week-end in the sun - just what the doctor ordered!"



<u>Dodge a bullet</u>	If you dodge a bullet , you narrowly avoid a very serious problem or a disaster. "I dodged a bullet when I missed the plane. It crashed just after take-off."
<u>Dog's life</u>	People use this expression when complaining about a situation or job which they find unpleasant or unsatisfactory. "It's a dog's life working in the after-sales department."
<u>Dog eat dog</u>	This expression refers to intense competition and rivalry in pursuit of one's own interests, with no concern for morality. "The business world is tough today. There's a general dog-eat-dog attitude."
<u>A dog in the manger</u>	A person referred to as a dog in the manger is someone who stops others enjoying something he/she cannot use or doesn't want. "Bob's a real dog in the manger; he's not free to play golf but he won't lend his golf clubs to anyone."
<u>Every dog has its day</u>	This expression means that everyone can be successful at something at some time in their life. "I didn't win this time, but I'll be lucky one day." Every dog has its day! "
<u>Give a dog a bad name</u>	People who lose their reputation have difficulty regaining it because others continue to blame or suspect them. "Tom was suspected as usual. Give a dog a bad name! "
<u>Go to the dogs</u>	To say that a company, organization or country is going to the dogs means that it is becoming less successful or efficient than before. "Some think the company will go to the dogs if it is nationalized."
<u>Let sleeping dogs lie</u>	If you tell somebody to let sleeping dogs lie , you are asking them not to interfere with a situation because they could cause problems. "Look - they've settled their differences. It's time to let sleeping dogs lie."
<u>My dogs are barking</u>	When a person says that their dogs are barking they mean that their feet are hurting. "I've been shopping all day. My dogs are barking."
<u>Why keep a dog and bark yourself?</u>	This expression means that if someone can do a task for you, there's no reason to do it yourself. "The shuttle stops in front of our house but my father continues to drive to the airport. Why keep a dog and bark yourself! "
<u>Dog and pony show</u>	A dog and pony show is a marketing event or presentation which has plenty of style but not much content.
<u>In the doghouse</u>	If you are in the doghouse , somebody is angry with you because you have done something wrong. "Mark is in the doghouse because he damaged his father's car."
<u>In the doldrums</u>	To say that a person, a business or the economy in general is in the doldrums means that the situation is gloomy and that nothing new is happening. "Despite the recent measures, the economy remains in the doldrums."
<u>On the dole</u>	A person who receives financial assistance from the government when they are unemployed is on the dole . "Their father is on the dole so the family is living on a tight budget."
<u>A done deal</u>	This expression is used to refer to an agreement or decision which has been reached on a certain matter. "We're still considering several proposals, so it's not a done deal yet."



<u>Done and dusted</u>	When a project, task or activity is done and dusted , it is completely finished or ready. "I've nearly finished preparing the presentation. When it's all done and dusted I'll be able to relax."
The <u>done thing</u>	The correct way to behave in a particular social situation is called the done thing . "Wearing jeans to play golf is not the done thing."
<u>Donkey work</u>	This expression is used to describe the unpleasant, boring parts of a job. "I do the donkey work - my boss gets the credit!"
<u>Doom and gloom</u>	A general atmosphere of pessimism, and a feeling that the situation is not going to improve, is referred to as doom and gloom . "Fortunately it's not doom and gloom for all businesses, in spite of the economic situation."
Beyond a shadow of a <u>doubt</u>	This expression is used to express absolute certainty about something. "There wasn't a shadow of a doubt in our minds about Susan's sincerity."
<u>Doubting Thomas</u>	A ' doubting Thomas ' is as person who will not believe something without proof, or without seeing it for themselves. "Believe me - it's a one-way street now. Don't be such a doubting Thomas!"
<u>Down in the dumps</u>	Someone who is down in the dumps is depressed or feeling gloomy. "Alex has been down in the dumps since he failed his exam."
<u>Down the drain</u>	To say that money, time or effort has gone down the drain , means that it has been wasted or lost. "His years of research went down the drain when the company went bankrupt."
<u>Down to earth</u>	Someone who is down to earth is not a dreamer but a realistic and practical person who has sensible reactions and expectations. "Don't ask Suzy for help. She's fun, but not very down to earth."
<u>Down at heel</u>	A person who is down-at-heel is someone whose appearance is untidy or neglected because of lack of money. "The down-at-heel student I first met became a successful writer."
<u>Down in the mouth</u>	When someone is down in the mouth , they look unhappy, discouraged or depressed. "You look a bit down in the mouth. What's the matter?"
<u>Down payment</u>	When someone makes a down payment , they pay a part of the total amount agreed when signing a purchase deal or contract. "Emma and Paul are excited. They put a down payment on their first house yesterday."
<u>Down to the wire</u>	If something such as a project or a match goes down to the wire , the situation can change up until the last possible moment. "There's nothing as exciting as watching a game that goes down to the wire."
All <u>downhill</u>/downhill all the way	If something is all downhill or downhill all the way , it is very easy compared to the difficulties encountered beforehand. "The hardest part for the burglars was turning off the alarm system. After that it was all downhill."



<u>Go downhill</u>	When something goes downhill it deteriorates or gets worse little by little. "The restaurant has been going downhill since the arrival of the new owner."
<u>Drag one's feet</u>	If you drag your feet , you delay a decision or participate without any real enthusiasm. "The government is dragging its feet on measures to reduce pollution."
<u>Drastic times call for drastic measures</u>	When faced with a difficult situation, it is sometimes necessary to take actions which in normal circumstances would appear extreme. "After Johnny's third accident, his father confiscated his car. Drastic times call for drastic measures! "
<u>Draw a blank</u>	If you look for or try to remember something, and draw a blank , you fail to find what you are looking for.
<u>Draw the line</u>	If you decide to draw the line , you decide when an activity or situation becomes unacceptable. "When a person's private life is concerned, the media should know where to draw the line."
<u>Draw a line in the sand</u>	If you draw a line in the sand , you establish a limit beyond which a certain situation or activity will not be accepted. "That's it! We're going to draw a line in the sand and make this our final proposal."
<u>Dream ticket</u>	If you refer to two people as a dream ticket , you think they would work well together and be successful. "Clinton and Obama teaming up for the general election would be a dream ticket for many Democrats."
<u>Dressed to kill</u>	When someone, especially a woman, is dressed to kill , they are wearing very fashionable or glamorous clothes intended to attract attention. "She arrived at the reception dressed to kill."
<u>Dressed up to the nines</u>	To describe someone as dressed up to the nines means that they are wearing very smart or glamorous clothes. "Caroline must be going to a party - she's dressed up to the nines!"
<u>In dribs and drabs</u>	If something comes in dribs and drabs , it arrives little by little, in small amounts or numbers. "Instead of the crowd that was expected, people arrived in dribs and drabs."
<u>Drink like a fish</u>	A person who drinks like a fish is a heavy drinker or one who drinks a lot. 'I'm nervous if Joe drives when we go out because he drinks like a fish!'"
<u>Drive a hard bargain</u>	A person who drives a hard bargain always makes sure they gain advantage in a business deal. "Be prepared for tough negotiations with Stuart - he drives a hard bargain."
<u>Drive up the wall</u>	If somebody or something drives you up the wall , they do something that greatly annoys or irritates you. "I can't concentrate with all the noise - it's driving me up the wall!"



<u>Drop a bombshell</u>	If someone makes an unexpected or shocking announcement, they drop a bombshell . "Her new husband dropped a bombshell when he announced that he was already the father of three children!"
<u>Drop like flies</u>	If people drop like flies , they fall ill or die in large numbers. "There's an epidemic of flu at the moment. Senior citizens are dropping like flies."
<u>At the drop of a hat</u>	If you do something at the drop of a hat , you do it immediately and without hesitation "I've got great friends. They're ready to help out at the drop of a hat."
<u>Drop names (name-dropping)</u>	When you drop names , you mention the names of famous people you know or have met in order to impress others. "There goes Jack dropping names again. People will soon get tired of listening to him!"
<u>A drop in the ocean</u>	To refer to an amount as a drop in the ocean means that it is very small compared to the amount needed or expected. "The revenue from the proposed tax reform is a drop in the ocean compared to the deficit."
<u>Drop somebody a line</u>	If you drop someone a line , you write a letter to them. "I always drop her a line to wish her a <i>Merry Christmas!</i> "
<u>Drop someone (or something) like a hot potato</u>	If you drop someone or something like a hot potato , you leave them or immediately stop associating with them. "As soon as the article was published, she dropped him like a hot potato."
<u>Dry (or dummy) run</u>	If you organize a rehearsal, a trial exercise or a practice session of something, in realistic conditions, to see how well it will work before it is launched, you do a dry run . "Let's do a dry run of the ceremony to make sure everything goes smoothly."
<u>Drum something into someone's head</u>	If you teach something to someone through constant repetition, you drum it into their head . "When we were kids at school, multiplication tables were drummed into our heads. "
<u>A sitting duck</u>	A sitting duck is an easy target, a person who is easy to deceive. "The young girl was a sitting duck for the photographer."
<u>Dull as ditchwater (also : dull as dishwater)</u>	To refer to something as being as dull as ditchwater means that it is very boring. "The film was a dull at ditchwater. I nearly fell asleep."
<u>Dumbing down</u>	If something, such as a television programme or a film production, is dumbed down , it is deliberately made less intelligent or less demanding, in order to attract a larger audience. "Some TV channels are dumbing down their programmes in an attempt to increase their audience ratings."
<u>Hit the dust</u>	The expression hit the dust is a humorous way of referring to death.
<u>The dust has settled</u>	To say that the dust has settled means that the situation has become calmer after a series of unpleasant or chaotic events. "After her difficult divorce, she waited until the dust had settled before making any plans."



<u>Go Dutch</u>	To go Dutch with somebody means to share the cost of something such as a meal or a concert.
<u>Above and beyond the call of duty</u>	If a person does something which is above and beyond the call of duty , they show a greater degree of courage or effort than is usually required or expected in their job. "The fire-fighter received a medal for his action which went above and beyond the call of duty."
<u>Duty bound</u>	If you are duty bound to do something, you are required to do it as part of your obligations. Teachers are duty bound to report a pupil's absence from school.
<u>Dwell on something</u>	If someone dwells on something, they think or talk about it all the time. "My mother-in-law has health problems, but I wish she wouldn't always dwell on the subject."
<u>Dyed-in-the-wool</u>	This expression is used to describe a person who has fixed, uncompromising, deep-felt beliefs to which they are committed. "Bob and Jane are dyed-in-the-wool ecologists who use only biodegradable products."
<u>To be dying for something</u>	If you are dying for something , you have a strong desire for it. "I'm dying for a cup of tea!"

	<u>Idiom</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
F	<u>Face like a bulldog chewing a wasp</u>	To say that someone has a face like a bulldog chewing a wasp means that you find them very unattractive because they have a screwed-up ugly expression on their face. "Not only was he rude but he had a face like a bulldog chewing a wasp!"
	<u>Face like thunder</u>	If someone has a face like thunder , they look very angry. "When Dad is really angry, he has a face like thunder!"
	<u>Face like a wet weekend</u>	If someone has a face like a wet weekend , they are wearing a sad expression and look miserable. "What's wrong with Pete? He's got a face like a wet weekend."
	<u>Face only a mother could love</u>	This is a humoristic way of saying that someone is ugly or not attractive. "The poor guy has a face only a mother could love."
	<u>Face that would stop a clock</u>	Someone who has a face that would stop a clock has a shockingly unattractive face. "You'll recognize him - he's tall and thin, with a face that would stop a clock!"
	<u>Face the music</u>	If you have to face the music , you have to accept the unpleasant consequences of your actions. "He was caught stealing. Now he has to face the music!"



<u>Face value</u>	If you take something at its face value , you assume that it is genuinely what it appears to be. "The car seems to be in good condition, but don't take it at its face value; get a mechanic to check it out."
<u>Have a poker face.</u>	If you have a poker face , you show no emotion at all. "In spite of the repeated details of the events, the criminal kept a poker face."
<u>Keep a straight face</u>	If you keep a straight face , you look serious although you really want to laugh.
<u>Fair and square</u>	If something is obtained or won fair and square , it is done in an honest and open manner, the rules are respected and there is no cheating or lying. "Peter won the competition fair and square - there was no doubt about the result."
<u>Fair hearing</u>	When accused of wrongdoing, if someone gets a fair hearing , they get an opportunity to present evidence or give their side of the story, usually in court. "I can guarantee that you will get a fair hearing."
<u>Fair-weather friend</u>	Someone who acts as a friend when times are good, and is not there when you are in trouble, is called a fair-weather friend . "I thought I could count on Bill, but I've discovered he's just a fair-weather friend."
<u>Fait accompli</u>	This French term refers to something that has been done and cannot be changed. "He used his savings to buy a motorbike and then presented his parents with a fait accompli ."
<u>Fall at the first hurdle</u>	If you fall at the first hurdle , you fail to overcome the first difficulty encountered. "Scott fell at the first hurdle. He didn't study enough and failed his first exam."
<u>Fall between two stools</u>	If something falls between two stools , it is neither totally one thing nor another, and is therefore unsatisfactory. "The book didn't sell because it fell between two stools; it appealed neither to historians nor to the general public."
<u>Fall by the wayside</u>	If something falls by the wayside , people fail to finish it or stop trying to do it. "Local residents protested so strongly that plans for a new motorway fell by the wayside."
<u>Fall from grace</u>	To say that someone has fallen from grace means that they have done something wrong, immoral or unacceptable, and as a result have lost their good reputation. "The Finance Minister fell from grace as a result of a sex scandal."
<u>Fall into one's lap</u>	If something good falls into your lap , it happens to you without any effort on your part. "She's not making much effort to find work. Does she think a job will fall into her lap?"



<p><u>Fall into place</u></p>	<p>When different elements fall into place, they fit well together or become organized so that progress can be achieved in a satisfactory manner. "The preparatory work was difficult but gradually everything fell into place and the project was finished on time."</p>
<p><u>Fall on deaf ears</u></p>	<p>If something such as a suggestion or a request falls on deaf ears, it is ignored. "I told him not to take risks but my advice fell on deaf ears."</p>
<p><u>Fall on one's sword</u></p>	<p>If you fall on your sword, you take responsibility for, or accept the consequences of an unsuccessful or wrong action. "The organizer of the referendum resigned when the poor results were announced. It was said that he 'fell on his sword'."</p>
<p><u>Fall off the back of a lorry</u></p>	<p>If you buy goods that have fallen off the back of a lorry, they are stolen goods. "Judging by the price of that camera, it must have fallen off the back of a lorry!"</p>
<p><u>Fall over backwards</u></p>	<p>If you fall over backwards to accomplish something, you do everything you possibly can to please and impress. "Sally's mother fell over backwards to make her wedding reception a memorable event."</p>
<p><u>Fall short of</u></p>	<p>If something proves inadequate or insufficient, or does not reach the required standard, it falls short of what is expected. "Sales of the new product fell short of the company's expectations."</p>
<p><u>False move</u></p>	<p>In a dangerous or risky situation, if you make a false move, you do something which may have unpleasant consequences. "He is under close surveillance. If he makes one false move he'll be arrested."</p>
<p><u>False pretences</u></p>	<p>If you obtain something under false pretences, you deceive others by lying about your identity, qualifications, financial or social position, in order to obtain what you want. "She obtained the interview under false pretences."</p>
<p><u>Far be it from me (to do something)</u></p>	<p>This expression means that the speaker does not feel in a position to say or do something. (Usually said before giving advice or expressing an opinion). "Far be it from me to chose your friends, but I think you should avoid that man."</p>
<p><u>Farm something out</u></p>	<p>If something such as work is farmed out, it is sent out to be done by others. "We farmed out the packaging to another company."</p>
<p><u>Fast and furious</u></p>	<p>If an activity is fast and furious, it is done quickly and with a lot of energy. "Eager to win the race, the competitors came fast and furious around the bend."</p>
<p><u>Fast talker</u></p>	<p>A person who speaks quickly and easily but cannot always be trusted is called a fast talker. "The salesman was a fast talker and persuaded the old lady to buy a new washing machine."</p>



<p><u>Fast track something</u></p>	<p>If you decide to fast track something, such as a task or project, you give it high priority so that the objective is reached as quickly as possible. "In view of the number of homeless, it was decided to fast track the construction of low-cost housing."</p>
<p><u>Fat cat</u></p>	<p>To refer to a rich and powerful person as a fat cat means that you disapprove of the way they use their money or power. "The place was full of fat cats on their big yachts."</p>
<p><u>Fat chance</u></p>	<p>The expression fat chance is used to indicate that something is not very likely to happen. "The boss is thinking of me for the job? Fat chance!"</p>
<p><u>The fat hits the fire/ the fat's in the fire</u></p>	<p>When trouble breaks out or a situation deteriorates as a result of something said or done, it is said that the fat hits the fire. "The situation was already tense, but the fat hit the fire when Larry was accused of cheating."</p>
<p><u>To a fault</u></p>	<p>To say that somebody has a good quality to a fault means that they have a lot, or even too much, of that quality. "My aunt is generous to a fault, ready to help anyone to claims to be in need."</p>
<p><u>Feast one's eyes on something</u></p>	<p>If you feast your eyes on something, you are delighted and gratified by what you see. "As he drove along the coast, he feasted his eyes on the beautiful scenery."</p>
<p><u>A feather in one's cap</u></p>	<p>To describe someone's achievement as "a feather in their cap" means that it is something they can be proud of. "The overwhelming victory of the team was a "feather in the cap" for the new manager."</p>
<p><u>Feather your nest</u></p>	<p>To say of someone that they are feathering their nest is to say that they are taking advantage of their position in order to obtain money so as to have a comfortable life.</p>
<p><u>Feed the kitty</u></p>	<p>If you feed the kitty, you contribute to a collection of money called a "kitty" in order to help a good cause. "Come on - every little helps. You can afford to feed the kitty for a good cause!"</p>
<p><u>Feel on top of the world</u></p>	<p>If you feel on top of the world, you feel wonderful or ecstatic about something. "I've been feeling on top of the world since I got the results - I'm qualified!"</p>
<p><u>Feel the pinch</u></p>	<p>When someone feels the pinch, they begin to suffer from a lack of money. "With the drop in tourism, hotels and restaurants are beginning to feel the pinch."</p>
<p><u>Back on your feet</u></p>	<p>If you are back on your feet, after an illness or an accident, you are physically healthy again.</p>
<p><u>Drag one's feet</u></p>	<p>If you say that a person is dragging their feet, you think they are unnecessarily delaying a decision which is important to you.</p>
<p><u>Find your feet</u></p>	<p>To say that someone in a new situation is finding their feet means that they are learning what to do and gaining self-confidence.</p>



<u>Feet of clay</u>	If someone who is admired is found to have a hidden weakness, fault or defect of character, they are said to have feet of clay . "No one is perfect. Many successful people have feet of clay."
<u>Get cold feet</u>	If you get cold feet about something, you begin to hesitate about doing it; you are no longer sure whether you want to do it or not.
<u>Have itchy feet</u>	A person who has itchy feet is someone who wants to move somewhere new or do something different.
<u>Keep one's feet on the ground</u>	A person who keeps their feet on the ground continues to act in a sensible and practical way, even if they become successful.
<u>Think on one's feet</u>	A person who thinks on their feet is capable of making good decisions without previous thinking or planning. "Good lawyers need to be able to think on their feet when pleading a case."
<u>Rushed off your feet.</u>	If your are rushed off your feet , your are extremely busy. "I'd love to have lunch with you but we're rushed off our feet at the moment at the office."
<u>On the fence</u>	When faced with a choice, a person who is on the fence has not yet reached a decision. "The candidates have such similar ideas that many electors are still on the fence."
<u>Fender bender</u>	This expression refers to a minor car accident in which there is little damage and no injuries. "It's hard to believe that a small fender bender can cause a major traffic jam!"
<u>Fever pitch</u>	If a situation or feeling reaches fever pitch , it becomes very intense and exciting. "Reaction to the affair has reached fever pitch all over the country."
<u>Few and far between</u>	Items, places or events which are few and far between are rarely found or do not happen very often. "Restaurants in this part of the country are few and far between."
<u>Fiddling while Rome burns</u>	If you say that somebody is fiddling while Rome burns , you mean that they are doing unimportant things while there are serious problems to be dealt with "His visit to the trade fair was 'fiddling while Rome burns' according to the strikers."
<u>Field day</u>	A field day refers to a day, period or time of great excitement and activity. "Journalists will have a field day with the latest political scandal"
<u>Fifth wheel</u>	This expression refers to a person who finds themselves in a situation where their presence is unnecessary and as a result they feel useless. "Everyone seemed to have a specific role except me. I felt like a fifth wheel."



<p>You can't <u>fight</u> the city hall</p>	<p>This expression means that it is useless to try to win a battle against a politician, establishment or bureaucracy in general. "Tom decided it was a waste of energy trying to obtain a tax refund - you can't fight the city hall!"</p>
<p><u>Fight</u> a losing battle</p>	<p>If someone is fighting a losing battle, they are trying to do something even when there is little chance of succeeding. "The headmaster is fighting a losing battle trying to ban mobile phones at school."</p>
<p><u>Fight</u> an uphill battle</p>	<p>A person faced with an uphill battle has to struggle against very unfavourable circumstances. "After the terrible accident, his recovery was an uphill battle all the way."</p>
<p><u>Fight/argue</u> like cat and dog</p>	<p>Two people who fight or argue like cat and dog frequently have violent arguments, even though they are fond of each other. "They fight like cat and dog but they're still together after 30 years."</p>
<p><u>Fight</u> tooth and nail</p>	<p>If you fight tooth and nail for something, you fight with all your energy. "The Transport Minister fought tooth and nail to have to have the proposed road safety law accepted."</p>
<p><u>Fight</u> shy of something</p>	<p>If you fight shy of something, such as a task, a problem or a duty, you want to avoid doing it or you are unwilling to confront it. "He had money problems for years but fought shy of asking his children for help."</p>
<p>A <u>figment</u> of one's imagination</p>	<p>To refer to something as a figment of one's imagination means that an appearance, event or incident is not considered to be real but is only imaginary. "Other people saw the car, so it's not a figment of Tom's imagination!"</p>
<p><u>Fine-tooth</u> comb</p>	<p>To go over something with a fine-tooth comb means to examine it closely and thoroughly so as not to miss any details. "The police are examining the scene of the accident with a fine-tooth comb."</p>
<p><u>Fine</u> tuning</p>	<p>Small changes to something to improve it or make it work better are called fine tuning. "We are still fine tuning our new website and appreciate your patience."</p>
<p>A <u>finger</u> in every pie</p>	<p>If someone has a finger in every pie, they are involved in many activities "For information about the town development project, you should talk to John Brown. He has a finger in every pie."</p>
<p><u>Fire</u> away</p>	<p>If you tell someone to fire away, you encourage them to begin to talk or ask questions. "If you've got any questions, just fire away!"</p>
<p><u>Firing</u> line</p>	<p>Someone who is in the firing line is in a position to be criticized because of their responsibilities or the position they hold. "The managing director of the bank is in the firing line since the fraud was discovered."</p>



<u>First and foremost</u>	This expression is used to state what you consider to be more important than anything else. " First and foremost I want to thank our hosts for their wonderful reception."
<u>First water</u>	Something that is of the first water is of the finest or most exceptional quality (like being compared to a diamond). "The violinist gave a performance that was of the first water."
<u>First-hand/firsthand/at first hand</u>	If you experience something yourself directly, without any intermediary, you experience it (at) first hand . "Getting to see the performance (at) first hand is much better than watching it on television."
<u>Fish in troubled waters</u>	If you fish in troubled waters , you try to gain advantages for yourself from a disturbed state of affairs. "Between the declaration of independence and the first elections, some people were accused of fishing in troubled waters."
<u>Fish out of water</u>	If you feel like a fish out of water , you feel uncomfortable because of an unfamiliar situation or unfamiliar surroundings. "As a non-golfer, I felt like a fish out of water at the clubhouse."
<u>Big fish in a small pond</u>	This term is used to refer to an important or highly-ranked person in a small group or organization. "He could get a job with a big company but he enjoys being a big fish in a small pond ."
<u>Have other fish to fry</u>	If you have other fish to fry , you have more important things to do. "I don't think he'll attend the office party; he's got other fish to fry."
<u>Neither fish nor fowl</u>	This is said to describe people or things that are difficult to classify, that are neither one thing nor another. "Interns are neither fish nor fowl . They are neither students nor fully qualified practitioners."
<u>Fishing expedition</u>	If someone is on a fishing expedition , they are trying to obtain information in any way possible. "The lunch invitation was clearly a fishing expedition to obtain information about his private life."
<u>Fishing for compliments</u>	When someone is obviously waiting for you to say something nice, they are fishing for compliments . "I know why she invited us to visit her hew house - she's just fishing for compliments."
<u>Fit as a fiddle</u>	A person who is as fit as a fiddle is in an excellent state of health or physical condition. "My grandfather is still fit as a fiddle at the age of 90."
<u>Fit like a glove</u>	If something fits you like a glove , it fits you perfectly. "I was lucky! The first skirt I tried on fitted me like a glove!"
<u>Fit the bill</u>	If someone or something fits the bill , they are exactly right for for a particular situation. "They wanted a quiet place for the week-end and the country inn just fitted the bill."



<u>Fit for purpose</u>	Something that is suitable for a particular function and is fully operational is said to be fit for purpose . "The mayor promised that the new leisure centre would be fit for purpose."
<u>In fits and starts</u>	If you do something in fits and starts , you do it in an irregular manner, often stopping and starting again. "You'll never make progress in English if you work in fits and starts."
<u>Fit to be tied</u>	Someone who is fit to be tied is extremely irritated, upset or angry. "Harry was fit to be tied when his dog dug up the flowers he had planted."
<u>Five-finger discount</u>	If somebody gets a five-finger discount , they take something without paying. In other words, they steal. "How could he afford that watch?" "Who knows - perhaps with a five-finger discount!"
<u>Five o'clock shadow</u>	This expression refers to a patch of stubble on the face of a man who hasn't shaved for at least a day. "He looked tired and had a five o'clock shadow."
<u>Fixed in your ways</u>	People who are fixed in their ways do not want to change their normal way of doing things. "My grandparents are very fixed in their ways."
<u>Flag of convenience</u>	If a ship, boat or yacht sails under a flag of convenience , it is registered in a foreign country in order to avoid regulations and taxes and reduce operating costs.
<u>Get/take flak</u>	If you get or take flak , you receive severe criticism for something you have done. "He got a lot of flak for the way he handled the situation."
<u>Flea in one's ear</u>	After an attempt at something, if you are sent away with a flea in your ear , you are angrily reprimanded or humiliated. "When he tried to put the blame on Pete, he was sent away with a flea in his ear."
<u>There are no flies on him!</u>	To say that there are no flies on someone means that they understand quickly and cannot be tricked or deceived easily. "It's better to tell him all the facts. There are no flies on him."
<u>Flight of fancy</u>	To refer to an idea or plan as a flight of fancy means that it is very imaginative but not at all practical or sensible. "He often comes up with good ideas but his latest proposal is just a flight of fancy!"
<u>Fling oneself into something</u>	If you fling yourself into an activity, you do it with a lot of energy and enthusiasm. "Ever since she flung herself into the anti-pollution campaign, she rarely has a free moment!"
<u>Flog a dead horse</u>	To say that someone is flogging a dead horse means that they are wasting time and effort trying to do or achieve something that is not possible. "Mark is flogging a dead horse trying to get his money reimbursed. The company has gone bankrupt!"



<u>Fly-by-night</u>	A ' fly-by-night ' person, business or venture is considered untrustworthy because they operate briefly and disappear overnight. "I bought it in one of those fly-by-night stores and now I can't exchange it. The place has closed down."
<u>On the fly</u>	If you do something on the fly , you do it quickly, without thinking much about it, while doing something else. "I'm so busy I usually have lunch on the fly."
<u>Fly by the seat of your pants</u>	If you fly by the seat of your pants , you do something without knowledge or experience, using only your instinct and hoping that you will succeed. "Without any formal training, he decided to fly by the seat of his pants and try his luck in New York."
<u>Fly in the face of</u>	If an action or statement flies in the face of something, it is completely opposite to what is usual or expected. "His style of teaching flies in the face of the school's established methods."
<u>Fly in the ointment</u>	The expression a fly in the ointment refers to a small problem or something that prevents a situation from being completely satisfactory. "Tony's poor English was a fly in the ointment when he applied for the job."
<u>Fly on the wall</u>	This expression is used to describe a person who watches a situation without being noticed. "I'd like to be a fly on the wall when the management discusses my project."
<u>Fly off the handle</u>	A person who flies off the handle becomes suddenly very angry. "Dad flew off the handle when I told him I had damaged his new car."
<u>It will never fly</u>	To say that something will never fly means that it will not be successful. "He's got incredible ideas, but none that will ever fly!"
<u>With flying colours</u>	To achieve something with flying colours means to do it very successfully. "My daughter passed the entrance exam with flying colours. I'm so proud of her!"
<u>Flying start</u>	If something gets off to the flying start , it is immediately successful. "Sales of the book got off to a flying start and exceeded our expectations."
<u>Foam at the mouth</u>	Someone who foams at the mouth is extremely angry about something. "The director was foaming at the mouth when he saw a picture of his children in the newspaper."
<u>Follow one's nose</u>	If you follow your nose, you go straight ahead. (Also: follow your instinct in life). "The station is at the end of the road - just follow your nose."
<u>Follow in someone's footsteps</u>	If you follow in someone's footsteps (for example a parent), you lead a similar life or do the same job. "Lily followed in her mother's footsteps and became a teacher."
<u>Follow suit</u>	If you follow suit , you do the same as somebody else has just done. The first robber held up his hands. The other two followed suit.



<p><u>Food for thought</u></p>	<p>If something gives you food for thought, it makes you think seriously about something. "The documentary on poverty in the world really gave me food for thought."</p>
<p><u>Fool's errand</u></p>	<p>If you go on a fool's errand, you try to do something which is useless, unnecessary or has no chance of success. "I realized it was a fool's errand to look for a bank in such an isolated region."</p>
<p><u>Fool's paradise</u></p>	<p>If someone is living in a fool's paradise, they are in a state of contentment that will not last because their happiness is based on illusion or false hope. "Lisa is living in a fool's paradise if she thinks her boss is going to marry her."</p>
<p><u>A foot in the door</u></p>	<p>If you say that someone has a foot in the door, you mean that they have a small but successful start in something and will possibly do well in the future. "With today's unemployment, it's difficult to get a foot in the door in any profession."</p>
<p><u>My foot!</u></p>	<p>This expression is used to show that you do not believe something that has just been said. "He said he had a summer home? My foot! I doubt if he owns a tent!"</p>
<p><u>One foot in the grave</u></p>	<p>A person who is either very old or very ill and close to death is said to have one foot in the grave. "It's no use talking to the owner. The poor man has got one foot in the grave."</p>
<p><u>Put one's foot down</u></p>	<p>To put one's foot down means to exert authority to prevent something from happening.</p>
<p><u>Put one's foot in one's mouth</u></p>	<p>If you put your foot in your mouth, you do or say something that offends, upsets or embarrasses someone else. "She really put her foot in her mouth when she mentioned the housewarming party - Andy hadn't been invited!"</p>
<p><u>Get a foothold</u></p>	<p>If you get a foothold somewhere, you secure a position for yourself in a business, profession or organisation. "The contract got the firm a foothold in the local administration."</p>
<p><u>Footloose and fancy-free</u></p>	<p>A person who is footloose and fancy-free has few responsibilities or commitments of any kind and feels free to do as they please. "John will never get married. He says he prefers to be footloose and fancy-free."</p>
<p><u>For the birds</u></p>	<p>If you think something is for the birds, you consider it to be uninteresting, useless, or not to be taken seriously. "As far as I'm concerned, his theory is for the birds!"</p>
<p><u>Force of habit</u></p>	<p>When something is done out of force of habit, it has become automatic through frequent repetition. "Why do I always park here? It's force of habit I suppose."</p>
<p><u>Force someone's hand</u></p>	<p>If you force someone's hand, you make them do something unwillingly or sooner than planned. "The interviewer forced his hand and made him reveal his relocation plans."</p>



<p><u>Forewarned</u> is forearmed</p>	<p>This expression means that if you know something is going to happen, you can be prepared for it. "The Chairman is going to attend the meeting tomorrow. Your presentation had better be good. Forewarned is forearmed!"</p>
<p><u>Forty winks</u></p>	<p>If you have forty winks, you have a short sleep or rest, generally during the day. "Dad likes to have forty winks after a game of golf."</p>
<p><u>Foul</u> one's own nest</p>	<p>If you act in a way that harms your own interests, your position or your reputation, you foul your own nest. "He fouled his own nest by wrongly accusing his boss."</p>
<p><u>Fraught</u> with danger</p>	<p>An activity or situation that is fraught with danger is full of risks or serious difficulties. "His journey across the mountains was fraught with danger."</p>
<p><u>Free</u> as a bird</p>	<p>If someone is free as a bird, they are completely free to do as they please. "My dad's very happy - he's free as a bird since he retired."</p>
<p>A <u>free-for-all</u></p>	<p>This term refers to an uncontrolled situation such as a discussion, argument or fight where everyone present can do or say what they like. "It started as a serious debate but turned into a free-for-all."</p>
<p>A <u>free</u> hand</p>	<p>If you have a free hand, you have permission to make your own decisions, especially in a job. "My boss has given me a free hand in the choice of agent."</p>
<p>There's no such thing as a <u>free</u> lunch</p>	<p>This expression means that nothing is free. If somebody helps you, they always expect some form of payment. "If you accept his offer, he'll be forever asking you for a favour. There's no such thing as a free lunch!"</p>
<p>A <u>free</u> ride</p>	<p>Someone who gets a free ride benefits from a collective activity without participating in it. "Only those who share the work can share the benefits - nobody gets a free ride!"</p>
<p>Of your own <u>free</u> will</p>	<p>If you do something of your own free will, you do it voluntarily, without any pressure from others. "He decided to tell the truth, and he did it of his own free will."</p>
<p><u>Freeze</u> somebody out</p>	<p>If you deliberately isolate someone, or prevent them from participating in a social or business activity by treating them unfairly or harshly, you freeze them out. "Pablo was treated unfairly. He was frozen out of the project by the rest of the team."</p>
<p><u>French</u> leave</p>	<p>If you leave an official or social event without notifying the person who invited you, you take French leave. "Is Bill coming back for the closing speech or has he taken French leave?"</p>
<p>(As) <u>fresh</u> as a daisy</p>	<p>Someone who is as fresh as a daisy is lively and attractive, in a clean and fresh way. "I met Molly the other day. She looked as fresh as a daisy!"</p>



<u>Freudian slip</u>	This refers to a mistake made by a speaker which is considered to reveal their true thoughts or feelings. "So you got the job - I'm so <i>sad</i> - sorry, I mean <i>glad</i> !"
<u>Friends in high places</u>	If you know important or influential people in business or government, you have friends in high places . "He wouldn't have succeeded without help from friends in high places."
<u>Have a frog in one's throat</u>	A person who has a frog in their throat is unable to speak clearly because their throat is sore, or because they want to cough.
<u>From the word go</u>	The expression ' from the word go ' means from the very beginning of an activity. "Right from the word go he was rejected by the rest of the group."
<u>Front runner</u>	In a contest, race or election, the front runner is the person who seems most likely to succeed or win. "Who are the front runners in the coming elections?"
<u>Out of the frying pan and into the fire.</u>	This expression means to go from one difficult situation to another, usually even worse. "The flight was delayed because of snow. When the plane eventually took off, it had to turn back because of engine trouble - out of the frying pan into the fire! "
<u>Full of beans</u>	A person who is full of beans is lively, active and healthy. "He may be getting old but he's still full of beans!"
<u>Full of hot air</u>	A person who full of hot air is full of nonsense and talks a lot without saying anything worthwhile. "Don't listen to Tony. He's full of hot air!"
<u>Full of the joys of spring</u>	If you are full of the joys of spring , you are happy, enthusiastic and full of energy. "Barbara is full of the joys of spring at the moment! Has she got a new boyfriend?"
<u>Full of piss and vinegar</u>	People who are full of piss and vinegar are very lively, boisterous or full of youthful vitality. "I had to look after a group of kids full of piss and vinegar."
<u>In full swing</u>	When something, such as an event, gets into full swing , it is at its busiest or liveliest time. "When we got back to the office, the Christmas party was in full swing."
<u>Full as a tick</u>	If someone is as full as a tick , they have eaten or drunk too much. "The little boy ate biscuits and drank lemonade until he was as full as a tick."
<u>Funny business</u>	An activity which is conducted in a deceitful, dishonest or unethical manner is called funny business . "I've got suspicions about that association. I think they're up to some funny business."
<u>Fur coat and no knickers</u>	A person who tries to appear distinguished but has no real class is referred to as " fur coat and no knickers ". "Don't let her impress you. She's what we call 'fur coat and no knickers'!"



	<u>Idiom</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
G	The gift of the <u>gab</u>	To say that somebody has the gift of the gab means that they are able to speak confidently and clearly. "As a politician, not only is he competent, but he has the gift of the gab!"
	The <u>game</u>/the cake is not worth the candle	To say that the game (or the cake) is not worth the candle means that the advantages to be gained from doing something are not worth the effort involved. "He recorded an album but sold very few copies; the cake wasn't worth the candle!"
	Take/have a <u>gander</u>	If you take or have a gander at something, which is generally new or unusual, you have a look at it or go to check it out. "Let's take a gander at the new shopping centre. Sally says it's fantastic!"
	<u>Gatecrash</u>	If someone gatecrashes , they attend a private social event without being invited. "We need volunteers to to keep an eye out for gatecrashers tonight."
	<u>Gather dust</u>	An idea, plan or project which gathers dust is in fact stagnating or has not attracted attention for some time. "Just before the elections, the outgoing mayor produced plans for a new bridge which had been gathering dust for several years."
	All his <u>geese</u> are swans	This expression refers to someone who constantly exaggerates the importance of somebody or something. "Don't let him impress you. He always exaggerates; all his geese are swans! "
	<u>Gentleman's agreement</u>	When an agreement is neither written nor signed, because the two parties trust each other completely, it is called a gentleman's agreement . "It was a gentleman's agreement. I can't change my mind now!"
	<u>Get one's act together</u>	If you get your act together , you organize your affairs better than you have done previously and manage to deal with things more efficiently. "Jack's plan won't work unless he gets his act together."
	<u>Get (or give) the all clear</u>	If you are allowed to do something after a check-up to make sure that everything is all right, you get the all clear . "Dad says he's going to play golf as soon as he gets the all clear from his doctor."
	<u>Get the axe/be given the axe</u>	If someone gets the axe , they lose their job. "When a company is restructured, senior staff are often the first to get the axe."
	<u>Get away with murder</u>	To say that someone gets away with murder means that you think they can do something unacceptable without being punished or criticized. "She has no control over her kids. They get away with murder!"



<u>Get cracking</u>	When you get cracking , you start doing something immediately. "I'd better get cracking or I'll never get my homework done."
<u>Get down to brass tacks</u>	When people get down to brass tacks , they start to discuss the essential aspects of a problem or situation. "The situation was so serious that after a few polite exchanges, they immediately got down to brass tacks."
<u>Get your ducks in a row</u>	This expression means that you are trying to get things well organized. "We need to get our ducks in a row if we want our project to succeed."
<u>Get one's feet wet/ dip one's toes in the water</u>	If you get your feet wet , or dip your toes in the water , you start to do something new or unfamiliar or explore new territory for the first time. "It will be a totally new experience for me but I can't wait to get my feet wet!"
<u>Get your fingers burnt</u>	If you get your fingers burnt , you suffer as a result of an unsuccessful action and are nervous about trying again. "He got his fingers so badly burnt in the last elections that he decided to withdraw from politics."
<u>Get into gear</u> (also: <i>crank into gear</i>)	When a person or activity gets (or cranks) into gear , they start to work or become effective. "Immediately after the announcement, a group of protesters got (or <i>cranked</i> into gear."
<u>Get a grip on yourself</u>	If you get a grip on yourself , you make an effort to control your feelings so as to be able to deal with a situation.. "After the initial shock, Lisa got a grip on herself and called an ambulance."
<u>Get your hands dirty</u>	If you get your hands dirty in your job, you become involved in all aspects of it, including work that is physical, unpleasant or less interesting. "His willingness to get his hands dirty won the respect and approval of the whole team."
<u>Get/give the low down</u>	If you get or give the low-down , you get or give complete information or facts about something. "I'll call you after the meeting and give you the low-down."
<u>Get on in years</u>	Someone who is getting on in years is growing old. "My grandmother is getting on in years. She's no longer able to prepare Christmas dinner without help."
<u>Get a rise out of somebody</u>	If you make someone react angrily by jokingly saying something that you know will irritate them, you get a rise out of them . "He gets a rise out of his daughter by asking about her latest diet."
<u>Get it down to a fine art.</u>	When you learn to do something perfectly, you get it down to a fine art . "Entertaining her husband's business associates is not a problem; she's got that down to a fine art!"
<u>Get a second bite/ two bites at the cherry</u>	This expression means that you get a second opportunity to do or try something. "He was eliminated in the semi-finals but he'll get a second bite at the cherry next year."



<u>Get the message</u>	If you get the message , you understand what someone is trying to tell you, even if it is expressed in actions or gestures rather than words. "When Tony pointed at his watch, I got the message - it was time to leave for the airport."
<u>Get the sack</u>	If someone gets the sack , they lose their job, usually because they have done something wrong. "Charlie got the sack when his boss caught him stealing."
<u>Get something down to a fine art</u>	When, through practice or experience, you learn how to do something perfectly, you get it down to a fine art . "She's got the use of social networking down to a fine art."
<u>Get something off the ground</u>	If you get something off the ground , you put it into operation after having organized it. "After a lot of hard work, we finally got the campaign off the ground."
<u>Get off the hook</u>	If you do something wrong and manage to get off the hook , you avoid punishment or blame. "Barry was questioned by the police but his lawyer managed to get him off the hook."
<u>Get on your high horse</u>	If you get on your high horse , you start behaving in a haughty manner, as though you should be treated with more respect. "He got on his high horse when he was asked to show his membership card."
<u>Get one's just deserts</u>	When someone gets their just deserts , they are rewarded or punished according to what they deserve. "Liz got her just deserts when she was excluded from the committee; she is totally unreliable."
<u>Get the better of someone</u>	If someone or something gets the better of you , they defeat you "She went on a diet but it didn't last long - her love of chocolate got the better of her!"
<u>Get to the bottom of something</u>	If you get to the bottom of a problem or mystery, you solve it by finding out the true cause of it. "We have a problem of goods disappearing during transport. Hopefully the investigation will get to the bottom of it."
<u>Get a move on</u>	If someone tells you to get a move on , they are asking you to hurry up. "You'd better get a move on or you'll miss the bus!"
<u>Get out of hand</u>	If a person or a situation gets out of hand , they cannot be controlled any longer. "During the student demonstration, things got out of hand and several shop windows were broken."
<u>Get the show on the road</u>	If you manage to put a plan or idea into action, you get the show on the road . "OK! We've got all we need, so let's get the show on the road!"
<u>Get your skates on</u>	If you tell someone to get their skates on , you want them to hurry up. "You'd better get your skates on or you'll be late! "
<u>Get someone's drift</u>	To tell someone that you get their drift means that you understand in a general way what they are trying to say. "I didn't understand every word but I got the drift."



<p><u>Get/have someone by the short hairs</u> (also: by the short and curlies)</p>	<p>If you get or have someone by the short hairs, you put them in a difficult situation from which they cannot escape, so you have complete control over them. "They are in no position to refuse; we've got them by the short hairs!"</p>
<p><u>Get something off the ground</u></p>	<p>If you get something off the ground, you put it into operation after having organized it. "After a lot of hard work, we finally got the campaign off the ground."</p>
<p><u>Get something out of your system</u></p>	<p>This expression means that you get rid of a strong emotion or desire by expressing it openly or trying to fulfil it. "Tell your parents how you feel - it's better to get it out of your system!"</p>
<p><u>Get wise to something</u></p>	<p>If you get wise to something, you learn something that you were unaware of before. "He finally got wise to the fact that children were stealing apples from his garden."</p>
<p><u>Get worked up (about something)</u></p>	<p>If you get worked up about something, you become upset, annoyed or excited, often unnecessarily. "It's his first day at school tomorrow and he's all worked up about it!"</p>
<p><u>Give as good as you get</u></p>	<p>This expression means that you are prepared to treat people as badly as they treat you, and fight for your beliefs.</p>
<p><u>Give it a rest!</u></p>	<p>If someone tells you to give it a rest, they are asking you to stop doing something such as complaining or talking continuously. "All you talk about is politics - give it a rest...please! "</p>
<p><u>Give the game away</u></p>	<p>If you give the game away, you reveal a secret or a plan, often unintentionally. "He hoped nobody in the hotel would recognize him, but an employee gave the game away."</p>
<p><u>Give someone a hard time</u></p>	<p>If you give someone a hard time, you annoy them or make things difficult for them. "Susan says the pupils in her new school are giving her a hard time."</p>
<p><u>Give the once-over</u></p>	<p>If you give someone or something a quick visual examination, to see what they are like or to check if everything is all right, you give them the once-over. "She gave the living-room a quick once-over before opening the door to the visitors."</p>
<p><u>Give someone a piece of your mind</u></p>	<p>If you tell someone exactly what you think, in a very angry manner, you give them a piece of your mind. "Jack was so irritated by his neighbours' behaviour that he decided to give them a piece of his mind."</p>
<p><u>Give the (rough) of one's tongue</u></p>	<p>If you give the (rough) edge of your tongue, you scold someone severely or speak to them very aggressively or rudely. "My boss was so angry that I really got the rough edge of his tongue."</p>
<p><u>Give someone a run for their money</u></p>	<p>If you give someone a run for their money, you present strong competition in circumstances where the other person expects to win easily. "We didn't win the match but we gave the other team a run for their money."</p>



<u>Give someone the run-around</u>	If someone gives you the run-around , they deliberately give you confusing information or evasive answers. "I'm trying to contact the manager, but every time I call the firm I'm given the run-around."
<u>Give the shirt off one's back</u>	This expression is used to describe a kind-hearted and generous person who would give you anything he/she owns in order to help you. "Mike would give the the shirt off his back to help a friend in difficulty."
<u>Give somebody the slip</u>	If you give somebody the slip , you manage to hide or get away from someone who is following you. "The police were on his trail, but he managed to give them the slip."
<u>Give up the ghost</u>	If someone or something gives up the ghost , they die or stop working. "My mother's old TV set has finally given up the ghost; I'm off to buy her a new one!"
<u>Give or take (a quantity)</u>	This term is used when expressing an amount or estimate that is not exactly right. It means 'plus or minus', 'more or less', 'approximately'. "The town is about 100 miles from here, give or take a few miles."
<u>Gizmo</u>	The term gizmo refers to a gadget or any small technological item which is unusual or novel, and for which the proper term is unknown or forgotten.
<u>Glass ceiling</u>	This term refers to a discriminatory barrier perceived by women and minorities that prevents them from rising to positions of power or responsibility "Claire knew she would never break through the glass ceiling and rise to a senior management position."
<u>(The) gloves are off!</u>	This expression is used when there are signs that a fight is about to start. "The two candidates are out of their seats. The gloves are off!"
<u>Glowing terms</u>	If you speak about something in glowing terms , you talk about it in a very positive way. "Mary talks about her home town in glowing terms; it must be a wonderful place."
<u>Gnomes of Zurich</u>	This is a disparaging term for Swiss bankers who control a lot of money, are said to be uninterested in the provenance of funds and protect their clients' anonymity. "The gnomes of Zurich refuse to cooperate with the investigating officials."
<u>Go against the grain</u>	If something goes against the grain , it is difficult to accept because it is very different from what is considered normal or natural. "Having to import apples in an apple-growing region really goes against the grain!"
<u>Go against the tide (or stream)</u>	If you go against the tide , you refuse to conform to current trends, or the opinions or behaviour of other people. "Bill can be difficult to work with; he constantly goes against the tide."



<u>Go all out</u>	If you go all out to achieve or obtain something, you make a great effort, using all possible strength and resources. "The candidate went all out to obtain the nomination."
<u>Go along for the ride</u>	If you join a group of people you find interesting, without wanting to take an active part in their action, you go along for the ride . "Not all the protesters were active in the movement- some just went along for the ride."
<u>Go bananas</u>	If someone becomes very emotional and starts behaving in a crazy way, they go bananas . "If you announce that you're going to drop out of school, your parents will go bananas!"
<u>Go ballistic</u>	When someone goes ballistic , they become very angry. "My dad went ballistic when he saw the state of the garden after the barbecue."
<u>Go belly up</u>	If a business or project goes belly up , it is unsuccessful or goes bankrupt. "The restaurant went belly up before the end of the first year."
<u>Go down in history</u>	This expression refers to an event that is so important or unusual that it will be recorded in history. "The recent discovery will go down in history."
<u>Go down well</u>	If something, such an idea or a proposal, goes down well , it is well accepted. "The new timetable went down well with the employees."
<u>Go downhill</u>	When something goes downhill it deteriorates or gets worse little by little. "The restaurant has been going downhill since the arrival of the new owner."
<u>Go the extra mile</u>	If you go the extra mile , you do more than what is expected of you. "You can count on Tom; he's always willing to go the extra mile."
<u>Go to extremes</u>	People who go to extremes behave in a way which lacks moderation. "My parents tend to go to extremes. They live on a tight budget and then they go on expensive holidays."
<u>Go for a song</u>	If something goes for a song , it is sold at an unexpectedly low price. "I was able to buy the car simply because it going for a song."
<u>Go great guns</u>	If someone or something is going great guns , they are doing very well. "Fred's night club is going great guns. It's becoming hard to get in!"
<u>Go hand in hand</u>	If two or more things go hand in hand , they are associated or often happen at the same time. "In big cities poverty and violence often go hand in hand."
<u>Go haywire</u>	If something goes haywire , it becomes disorganized or goes out of control. "The photocopier has gone completely haywire. It's only printing half of each page!"
<u>Go hell for leather</u>	If you go hell for leather , you go somewhere or do something very fast. "I saw Tom going hell for leather towards the station."



<u>Go into overdrive</u>	If someone or something goes into overdrive , they begin to work very hard or start to perform intensely. "At the start of every new collection, my imagination goes into overdrive."
<u>Go off the deep end</u>	If a person goes off the deep end , they become so angry or upset that they cannot control their emotions "Mary will go off the deep end if her kids leave the kitchen in a mess again. "
<u>Go off on a tangent</u>	If somebody goes off on a tangent , they change the subject completely in the middle of a speech or conversation. "Sometimes, when he's teaching, he goes off on a tangent and starts talking about his dog!"
<u>Go off the rails,</u>	If someone goes off the rails , they go out of control and begin to behave in a manner that is unacceptable to society. "Given the unstable environment, it's a miracle that none of their children ever went off the rails."
<u>Go (off/over) with a bang</u>	If something, such as an event or a performance, goes (off or over) with a bang , it is very successful. "The party she organized went off with a bang - everyone enjoyed it."
<u>Go out of business</u>	If a shop, firm or enterprise goes out of business , it closes down or goes bankrupt. "If the new road bypasses the town, a lot of shops will go out of business."
<u>Go out the window</u>	If a quality, principle or opportunity goes out the window , it disappears, is lost or abandoned. "When the plant closed down, all hopes of finding a job went out the window."
<u>Go out of your way</u>	If you go out of your way , you take particular care or make a special effort when doing something. "Aunt Betty went out of her way to make us feel comfortable."
<u>Go pear-shaped</u>	If plan or project goes pear-shaped , it either goes wrong or it produces an undesirable result. "Jane organized a treasure hunt in the park for the kids but it all went pear-shaped and everyone was disappointed.."
<u>Go/put through the mill</u>	If you go (or are put) through the mill , you experience a very difficult period, or are exposed to rough treatment. "When I was an intern, I was put through the mill. Nothing went unnoticed."
<u>Go the extra mile</u>	If you go the extra mile , you do more than what is expected of you. "You can count on Tom; he's always willing to go the extra mile."
<u>Go the whole hog</u>	When you go the whole hog , you do something thoroughly or completely. "They put up a few decorations for Christmas, then they decided to go the whole hog and buy a tree and all the trimmings."
<u>Go through the motions</u>	If someone goes through the motions , they do something because they have to, but without enthusiasm. "After his wife died, he tried to continue life as before, but he just went through the motions."



<u>Go to great lengths</u>	When trying to achieve something, if you go to great lengths , you do everything that is possible in order to succeed. "The two parties went to great lengths to reach an agreement."
<u>Go to (great) pains</u>	A person who goes to great pains to do something makes a great effort to do it well. "He went to great pains to explain the situation as clearly as possible."
<u>Go to pieces</u>	If you go to pieces , for example after a terrible shock, you are so upset or distressed that you cannot lead your life normally. "Jack nearly went to pieces when his son died in a plane crash."
<u>Go up in smoke</u>	If a plan or project goes up in smoke , it is spoiled or ends before producing a result. "When Amy and Tom separated, my mother's dream of a romantic wedding went up in smoke."
<u>Go spare</u>	If you go spare you lose your temper completely. "Lea's dad would go spare if he found out how much she had spent in London!"
<u>Go with the flow</u>	If you go with the flow , you follow the general tendency and go along with whatever happens. "When my colleagues organize an office party, I just go with the flow when it comes to the details. "
<u>Going concern</u>	This expression refers to a business or activity that is dynamic and successful. "They opened a coffee shop that is a going concern today."
<u>When the going gets tough ...</u>	This expression means that when faced with a difficult or dangerous situation, strong people take action in order to solve the problem. "Tom has a positive attitude. He often says " when the going gets tough, the tough get going ".
<u>Going places</u>	To say that someone is going places means that they show talent and ability that will no doubt lead to a successful future. "Even at college it was obvious that Paul was going places."
<u>Golden handcuffs</u>	The term golden handcuffs refers to a large sum of money or a generous financial arrangement granted to an executive as an incentive to stay in their job, or to ensure long-term cooperation after their departure.
<u>Golden handshake</u>	A golden handshake is a generous sum of money given to a person when they leave a company or retire (sometimes given to encourage early retirement).
<u>Golden opportunity</u>	A golden opportunity is a favourable time or excellent occasion which should not be missed.
<u>Golden parachute</u>	A golden parachute is a clause in an executive's employment contract stating that the executive will receive certain large benefits if their employment is terminated.
<u>Golden rule</u>	The most important rule or principle to be remembered when doing something is called the golden rule . "When travelling abroad, the golden rule is to respect the local customs."



<u>Gone with the wind</u>	If something has gone with the wind , it has disappeared forever. "I lost everything during the crisis. My savings are gone with the wind!"
<u>Good as gold</u>	A child who is as good as gold is obedient and well-behaved. "Your children are always as good as gold when I look after them."
<u>Good riddance!</u>	This expression is used to express relief at becoming free of an unpleasant or unwanted person or thing. "Our horrible neighbour has moved house, and all I can say is ' good riddance! '"
<u>A good turn</u>	If you do someone a good turn , you act in a helpful way. "Mike is a great guy - always ready to do a good turn."
<u>Good walls make good neighbours</u>	This expression means that respecting one another's privacy helps create a good relationship between neighbours. "We try not to disturb the people next door. Good walls make good neighbours!"
<u>Have goose pimples</u>	If you have goose pimples , you are so cold or so afraid that your skin is temporarily raised into little lumps. "I was so scared that I had goose pimples all through the film!"
<u>A wild goose chase</u>	If you say that you were sent on a wild goose chase , you mean that you wasted a lot of time looking for something that there was little chance of finding. "They tried to find out who sent the anonymous complaint, but it turned out to be a wild goose chase."
<u>Play gooseberry</u>	If you play gooseberry , you join or accompany two people who have a romantic relationship and want to be alone. "They invited me to join them but I didn't want to play gooseberry."
<u>Got it made</u>	Someone who has got it made is so happy and successful in life that they have no more worries. "With a happy family life, new house and super job, Sam's got it made!"
<u>Grab a bite to eat</u>	If you grab a bite to eat , you get something to eat quickly. "We should have time to grab a bite to eat before the show."
<u>Sour grapes</u>	To say that someone's attitude is sour grapes means that they are making complaints or accusations because they are jealous.
<u>Grasp at straws</u>	If you are in a desperate situation and you grasp at straws , you try any method, even if it has little chance of success, in an attempt to find a solution. "In his search for a cure, he turned to a faith healer, knowing that he was clutching at straws."
<u>Grass roots</u>	The term grass roots refers to the ordinary people who form the main body of an organization.
<u>Not let the grass grow under your feet</u>	If someone does not let the grass grow under their feet , they do not delay in getting something done. "As soon as he received the permit, he started to build. He never lets the grass grow under his feet!"



<u>Gravy train</u>	If someone is on the gravy train , they have found an easy way to make money, one that requires little effort and is without risk. "Since the village has become fashionable he charges for every photograph taken of his house - he's on the gravy train!"
<u>Grease somebody's palm</u>	If you accuse someone of greasing somebody's palm , you are accusing them of giving money to someone in order to gain an unfair advantage, or to obtain something they want. "In some countries, it is common practice to grease government officials' palms."
<u>Grease the skids</u>	When you grease the skids , you facilitate something or smooth the way for its success. "Lunch was organized for the delegates before the meeting in order to grease the skids for the negotiations."
<u>Green fingers</u>	To have green fingers means to be good at gardening.
<u>Green light</u>	If you give or get the green light , you give or get a signal or permission to do something. "We're ready to launch the campaign as soon as we get the green light."
<u>Green with envy</u>	Someone who is green with envy is a person who is very envious.
<u>Grey area</u>	To refer to something as a grey area means that it is not clear or easy to define, and is therefore difficult to deal with. "The law concerning email is still a grey area in some countries."
<u>Grey existence</u>	To have a grey existence is to lead a dull, monotonous life.
<u>Grey matter</u> (U.S.: gray)	Grey matter refers to the brain, or the grey colour of brain tissue.
<u>Grin and bear it</u>	When faced with a difficult or unpleasant situation, if you say that someone will have to grin and bear it , you mean that they will have to accept it without complaining. "The only seat available is on a low-cost flight. You'll just have to grin and bear it!"
<u>Grin from ear to ear</u>	If somebody is grinning from ear to ear , they look very satisfied and happy. "When we saw Paul grinning from ear to ear, we knew he had passed the exam."
<u>Keep your nose to the grindstone</u>	A person who keeps their nose to the grindstone is someone who concentrates on working hard at his job.
<u>Grit your teeth</u>	When you are determined to do something in spite of the difficulties involved, you grit your teeth . "To reach safety I had to wade through the mud, so I just had to grit my teeth."
<u>Groan inwardly</u>	If you groan inwardly , you feel like expressing despair, disapproval or distress, but you remain silent. "On his return, when Pete saw the pile of files on his desk, he groaned inwardly."



<u>Prepare the ground</u>	To prepare the ground means that you try to make it easier for a future event or action to happen.
<u>Nurse/bear/hold a grudge</u>	If you nurse a grudge against someone or something, you have a feeling of resentment or ill-will towards them. "Ever since I got a promotion, he's been nursing a grudge against me."
<u>Guinea pig</u>	People who are used as guinea pigs are people on whom new methods, treatment or ideas are tested.
<u>Gut feeling</u>	If you have a gut feeling about something, you have a strong intuition which you cannot explain, but you are sure that you are right. "As I read the story, I had a gut feeling that the postman was lying ... and I was right!"
<u>Gutter press</u>	This term refers to newspapers that print a lot of sensational stories about people's private lives. "Of course the gutter press was quick to print a sensational version of the incident! "

	<u>Idiom</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
H	<u>Old habits die hard</u>	This expression means that people are often reluctant to change the way they do something, especially if they have been doing it for a long time. "My grandfather refuses to use a mobile phone; old habits die hard! "
	<u>Hair of the dog that bit you</u>	This expression means that you use as a remedy a small amount of what made you ill, for example a drink of alcohol when recovering from drinking too much. "Here, have a drop of this. It's a little hair of the dog that bit you! "
	<u>Bad hair day</u>	Originating as a humorous comment about one's hair being unmanageable, this term has broadened to mean 'a day when everything seems to go wrong'. "What's wrong with Jenny? Is she having a bad hair day? "
	<u>By a hair's breadth</u>	If you avoid or miss something by a hair's breadth , you only just manage to escape from a danger. "A slate fell off the roof and missed the child by a hair's breadth."
	<u>Get in someone's hair</u>	If you are getting in somebody's hair , you are annoying them so much that they can't get on with what they're doing. "I'd finish the report more quickly if my colleague wasn't getting in my hair all the time!"
	<u>Let one's hair down.</u>	If you suggest that someone should let their hair down , you are telling them to relax and enjoy themselves. "Come on! We're not in the office now. You can let your hair down!"
	<u>Not a hair out of place</u>	To say that someone does not have a hair out of place means that their appearance is perfect. "Angela is always impeccably dressed - never a hair out of place!"
	<u>Split hairs</u>	If you split hairs , you pay too much attention to differences that are very small or not important. "If we start splitting hairs, we'll never reach an agreement!"



Tear one's <u>hair</u> out	If someone is tearing their hair out , they are extremely agitated or distressed about something. "I've been tearing my hair out all morning trying to find the error!"
<u>Hairy</u> at the heel	A person who is hairy at the heel is thought to be untrustworthy or even dangerous. "Rumour has it that the owner of the club is a bit hairy at the heel."
<u>Half</u> the battle	This expression refers to a significant part of the effort or work needed to achieve something. "We've already obtained a loan for the project - that's half the battle ."
<u>Hale</u> and hearty	Someone, especially an old person, who is hale and hearty is in excellent health "My grandmother is still hale and hearty at the age of ninety."
<u>Half</u> the battle	This expression refers to a significant part of the effort or work needed to achieve something. "We've already obtained a loan for the project - that's half the battle ."
<u>Half</u> an eye	If you have or keep half an eye on something, you watch something without giving it your full attention. "She kept half an eye on the tv screen while she was preparing dinner."
<u>Hammer</u> (something) home	If you hammer home a point or an argument, you repeat it often to make sure that it is fully understood. "The policeman hammered home the dangers of drinking and driving."
<u>Hammer</u> and tongs	If people are going at it hammer and tongs , they are arguing fiercely, with a lot of energy and noise. "Our neighbours are going at it hammer and tongs again. They're constantly arguing!"
On <u>hand</u>	If something such as supplies or people are on hand , they are present or readily available. "Extra pillows and blankets are on hand if needed."
<u>Hand</u> in hand	If two or more things go hand in hand , they are associated or often happen at the same time. "In big cities poverty and violence often go hand in hand."
<u>Hand</u> in glove	Two or more people who are in collusion, or work in close association, are said to be hand in glove . "After the match, it was discovered that he was hand in glove with the referee."
<u>Hand</u> it to someone	If you hand it to someone , you admit, perhaps unwillingly, that they deserve credit or praise for their achievements. "You've got to hand it to Julie. She may be a snob, but her presentations are always excellent."
<u>Hand</u> something to somebody on a platter/plate	If someone gets something easily, without having to make an effort to obtain it, it is handed to them on a platter . "He was appointed sales director in his father's company. The job was handed to him on a platter."
One <u>hand</u> washes the other... (... and together they wash the face.)	This expression means that when people cooperate and work well together, there is a better chance of achieving results.
The upper <u>hand</u>	If a person or organization gets or gains the upper hand , they take control over something.



All <u>hands</u> on deck	When there is a need for all hands on deck , everyone must help, especially when there's a lot of work to be done in a short amount of time. "As the opening day approached, it was all hands on deck to have everything ready in time."
In safe (good) <u>hands</u>	If something is in safe (or good) hands , it is being looked after by a reliable person or organization, and is therefore at no risk. "I'll look after Jamie while you go shopping. Don't worry - he'll be in safe hands."
Have your <u>hands</u> full.	If you have your hands full , you are very busy or you have a lot to do.
Have one's <u>hands</u> tied	If a person has their hands tied , something, such as an agreement or a rule, is preventing them from doing what they would like to do. "Mark deserves to earn more, but the manager's hands are tied by the recent salary agreement."
A show of <u>hands</u>	A show of hands is a method of voting in which people give their opinion by raising a hand. "How many people agree? Could we have a show of hands please?"
Wash your <u>hands</u> off something.	If you wash your hands off a problem or situation, you refuse to deal with it any longer.
As much use as a <u>handbrake</u> on a canoe	This expression refers to something which is completely useless or serves no purpose. "With no electricity, a refrigerator would be as much use as a handbrake on a canoe. "
<u>Handle</u> someone with kid gloves	If you handle someone with kid gloves , you treat them very carefully or tactfully, either because they are very important or because they are easily upset. "He is so determined to obtain her agreement that he is handling her with kid gloves."
Get the <u>hang</u> of something	When you get the hang of an activity, you now know how to do it correctly. "The apprentice found the task difficult at first but he soon got the hang of it."
<u>Hang</u> in there	This expression is used to encourage someone to persevere and not give up in spite of the difficult circumstances. "I know the atmosphere is very tense, but just hang in there and eventually things will calm down."
<u>Hang</u> on for dear life	If you hang on for dear life , you grip something firmly so as not to fall. "Andy took his mother on the back of his motorbike where she hung on for dear life!"
<u>Hang</u> on by one's fingernails	When you hang on by your fingernails , you succeed in continuing to do something in a very difficult situation. "The restaurant is losing more and more customers; the owner is just hanging on by his fingernails."
<u>Hang</u> (someone) out to dry	When you abandon someone who is in difficulty, without giving any assistance or support, you hang them out to dry . "You'll get no help from Jack. He'll hang you out to dry if your plan fails."
<u>Hang</u> up one's boots	When a sports player hangs up their boots , they stop playing and retire. This expression is often used to refer to retirement in general. "Dad says he's going to hang up his boots at the end of the year."



<u>Happy camper</u>	To refer to someone as a ' happy camper ' means that they are generally content or satisfied with what is happening in their lives and have no cause for complaint. "With his new job and his new car, Andy is one happy camper!"
<u>Happy as a flea in a doghouse</u>	If someone is (as) happy as a flea in a doghouse , they are very happy and contented. "Since she moved to a smaller apartment, my mother is (as) happy as a flea in a doghouse."
(As) <u>happy as Larry</u>	If you are (as) happy as Larry , you are very happy indeed. "My dad's as happy as Larry at the week-end when we all arrive home."
<u>Happy-go-lucky</u>	If you are a happy-go-lucky person, you are cheerful and carefree all the time. "He's a happy-go-lucky sort of guy - always in good humour."
<u>Hard of hearing</u>	If you are hard of hearing , you can't hear very well. "You'll have to speak louder to Mr. Jones. He's a bit hard of hearing."
<u>Hard as nails</u>	A person who is hard (or 'tough') as nails is unsentimental and shows no sympathy. "Don't expect any sympathy from him. He's as hard as nails."
To be <u>hard up</u>	If you are hard up , you have very little money. "We were so hard up we had to sleep in the car."
<u>Hard and fast</u>	Something which is hard and fast cannot be changed. "Unfortunately there are no hard and fast rules related to English spelling"
Give someone a <u>hard time</u>	If you give someone a hard time , you annoy them or make things difficult for them. "Susan says the pupils in her new school are giving her a hard time."
<u>Hard to come by</u>	Something that is hard to come by is rare or difficult to find. "Experienced carpenters are hard to come by these days."
<u>Hard to swallow</u>	When something is difficult to accept or believe, it is hard to swallow . She invented an excuse that the teacher found hard to swallow.
<u>Harp on (about) something</u>	If you harp on (about) something , you tire others by talking continuously and tediously about it. "My parents are always harping on about my school results."
Throw (or toss) one's <u>hat in the ring</u>	If you throw or toss your hat in the ring , you announce that you are going to enter a competition or take up a challenge. "He finally threw his hat in the ring and announced that he was going to stand for election."
<u>Haul someone over the coals</u>	If you haul someone over the coals , you reprimand them harshly because they have done something wrong or incorrectly. "He was hauled over the coals for the poor quality of his presentation."
<u>Have a hangover</u>	To have a hangover means to suffer from the unpleasant after-effects of drinking too much alcohol.
<u>Have your head in the clouds</u>	If you have your head in the clouds , you are so absorbed by your thoughts that you are not paying attention to what is happening around you. "He's doesn't listen to the teacher - he's got his head in the clouds all the time!"



<u>Have one's head screwed on</u>	Someone who has their head screwed on is a sensible and realistic person. "Don't worry about him.. He's adventurous but he's got his head screwed on."
<u>Have one's heart in one's mouth</u>	A person who has their heart in their mouth feels extremely anxious or nervous faced with a dangerous or unpleasant situation. "Emma had her heart in her mouth when she saw her 2 year-old son standing in front of the open window."
<u>Have one's heart in the right place</u>	A person who has their heart in the right place has kind feelings and good intentions, even if the results are not too good. "The old lady's cake wasn't wonderful but she's got her heart in the right place."
<u>Have one's heart set on something</u>	Someone who has their heart set on something wants it very much. "From an early age Tiger had his heart set on becoming a professional golfer."
<u>Have kittens</u>	To say you're going to have kittens is a dramatic way of expressing worry, anxiety or fear. "His mother nearly had kittens when Alex announced that he wanted to be a trapeze artist."
<u>Have your back to the wall</u>	If you have your back to the wall , you are in serious difficulty. "With his back to the wall, the supplier had to accept the deal."
<u>Have you gone out of your mind?</u>	If you ask someone if they've gone out of their mind , you think they are crazy, foolish or insane. "You're going to ask for a 100% increase in salary? Have you gone out of your mind?"
<u>Have the makings of something</u>	A person who has the makings of something has qualities and potential that could be developed. "The teacher says Sarah has the makings of an excellent journalist."
<u>Have the nerve (to do something)</u>	If you do something rude, impudent or inappropriate, without any embarrassment or shyness, it is said that you have the nerve to do it . "She had the nerve to attend the ceremony wearing jeans!"
<u>Have something on the brain</u>	If you have something on the brain , you think or talk about it constantly. "Stop talking about golf. You've got golf on the brain!"
<u>Have a stab at something</u>	If you have a stab at something , you try something that you never had a chance to do before. "I had a stab at surfing once but I decided not to renew the experience!"
<u>Have a whale of a time</u>	When people have a whale of a time , they enjoy themselves very much. "We had a whale of a time at the party last night."
<u>Run with the hare and hunt with the hounds</u>	This expression refers to someone who wants to stay on friendly terms with both sides in a quarrel. "Bob always wants to keep everyone happy, but I'm afraid he can't run with the hare and hunt with the hounds this time - the issue is too important."
<u>Keep something under one's hat</u>	To keep something under one's hat means to keep a secret. "My boss has promised me a promotion, but it's not official yet, so keep it under your hat."



<p>Take one's <u>hat</u> off to somebody</p>	<p>You say this to express admiration for something someone has done. "I take my hat off to the chef. The meal was wonderful."</p>
<p>Bury the <u>hatchet</u></p>	<p>The expression "bury the hatchet" is used when people who have had a disagreement decide to forget their quarrel and become friends again. "I don't get on well with my mother-in-law, but to keep my wife happy, I decided to bury the hatchet."</p>
<p>Make <u>hay</u> while the sun shines</p>	<p>This expression is used as an encouragement to take advantage of a good situation which may not last. Successful sportsmen are advised to make hay while the sun shines.</p>
<p>Bang your <u>head</u> against a brick wall</p>	<p>If you bang your head against a brick wall, you continue vainly to try and achieve something in spite of several unsuccessful attempts. "I've been banging my head against a brick wall trying to explain the internet to my grandmother."</p>
<p>Be <u>head</u> and shoulders above</p>	<p>To say that a person or thing is head and shoulders above the others means that they are much better than the rest of their kind. "The award-winner was head and shoulders above the others."</p>
<p>Bury one's <u>head</u> in the sand</p>	<p>If you bury your head in the sand, you refuse to face the unpleasant reality by pretending that it doesn't exist. "It's no good burying your head in the sand. We've got a problem on our hands."</p>
<p>Old <u>head</u> on young shoulders</p>	<p>This expression is used to refer to a child or young person who thinks and expresses themselves like an older more-experienced person. "When she heard Emily warning her little brother to stay out of trouble, her mum thought : "That's an old head on young shoulders".</p>
<p>In over your <u>head</u></p>	<p>If you are in over your head, you are involved in something that is too difficult for you to handle. "I accepted to organize the festival, but I quickly realized that I was in over my head."</p>
<p>Keep one's <u>head</u> above water</p>	<p>To keep one's head above water means to try to survive by staying out of debt, for example a small business.</p>
<p>Off the top of your <u>head</u></p>	<p>To say something off the top of your head means that you are giving an immediate reaction and not a carefully considered opinion, and so it might not be correct.</p>
<p><u>Head</u> over heels in love</p>	<p>When a person falls passionately in love with another, they are said to be head over heels in love. "Tony's only interest at the moment is Maria. He's head over heels in love with her!"</p>
<p>A swelled/swollen <u>head</u></p>	<p>Someone who has a swelled/swollen head has become proud or conceited, usually because of recent success. "Larry's promotion has given him a swelled head!"</p>
<p>Want someone's <u>head</u> on a platter</p>	<p>If someone makes you so angry that you want them to be punished, you want their head on a platter. "He was so angry when he read the article about his family that he wanted the journalist's head on a platter."</p>
<p>Like a <u>headless</u> chicken</p>	<p>If a person rushes about like a headless chicken, they act in a disorderly way, without thinking or analyzing the situation carefully. "As soon as the store opened, my mother started running around like a headless chicken, eager to find bargains."</p>



Look the picture of <u>health</u>	To look the picture of health means to look completely or extremely healthy.
<u>Hear a pin drop</u>	To say that you could hear a pin drop means that it is so silent you could hear the slightest noise. "People were listening so intently, you could hear a pin drop."
<u>Heard it through the grapevine</u>	If you hear of something through the grapevine , you learn about it informally, for example through friends, colleagues or acquaintances. "How did you hear that? Oh, through the grapevine as usual!"
<u>Heart of the matter</u>	The most important part or aspect of a situation is called the heart of the matter . "We need to get to the heart of the matter - what was the cause of the accident?"
Change of <u>heart</u>	If someone has a change of heart , they change their attitude or feelings, especially towards greater friendliness or cooperation. "He was against charity, but he had a change of heart when he saw the plight of the homeless."
<u>Heart in one's mouth</u>	A person who has their heart in their mouth feels extremely anxious or nervous faced with a dangerous or unpleasant situation. "Emma had her heart in her mouth when she saw her 2 year-old son standing in front of the open window."
<u>Heart misses a beat</u>	If your heart misses a beat , you have a sudden feeling of fear or excitement. "When the lights suddenly went out, her heart missed a beat."
<u>Heart on your sleeve</u>	If you wear your heart on your sleeve , you allow others to see your emotions or feelings. "You could see she was hurt - she wears her heart on her sleeve."
<u>Heart set on something</u>	Someone who has their heart set on something wants it very much. "From an early age Tiger had his heart set on becoming a professional golfer."
<u>Heart sinks</u>	If your heart sinks , you feel very unhappy and despondent "My heart sank when I saw the amount of work waiting for me."
<u>Heart of stone</u>	Someone who has a heart of stone is a cold person who shows others no understanding, sympathy or pity. "She's not the person to go to if you've got problems - she's got a heart of stone!"
The <u>heat</u> is on	To say that the heat is on means that you are under a lot of pressure to get something done, usually within a time limit. "The project must be ready for next Friday, so the heat is on."
Turn on/up (or pile on) the <u>heat</u>	If you turn on/up the heat on a person or organization, you put pressure on them in order to obtain what you want. "If the goods are not delivered this week, we'll have to turn on the heat."
(The) <u>heavens</u> open	When the heavens open , it suddenly starts to rain heavily. "As soon as the race started, the heavens opened and the runners were soaked."
With a <u>heavy</u> hand	Dealing with or treating people with a heavy hand means acting with discipline and severity, with little or no sensitivity. "He ran the juvenile delinquent centre with a heavy hand."



<u>Hedge your bets</u>	If you hedge your bets , you choose two or more courses of action in order to reduce the risk of loss or error. "The company hedged its bets by developing a second line of products."
<u>Heebie-jeebies</u>	A state of apprehension, nervousness or anxiety is called the heebie-jeebies . "Having to go down to the car park at night gives me the heebie-jeebies."
All <u>hell</u> broke loose	To say that all hell broke loose means that there was a sudden angry, noisy reaction to something. "All hell broke loose when it was announced that the plant was going to close down."
Come <u>hell</u> or high water	To say that you will do something come hell or high water means that you will do it in spite of difficulties involved. "Come hell or high water, I've got to be on time for the interview."
(go to) <u>Hell</u> in a handcart	If someone or something is going to hell in a handcart , it is in a bad state and continues to deteriorate. "This used to be a nice place to live but now the area is going to hell in a handcart."
<u>Hell-bent</u> on something	If you are hell-bent on doing something, you are recklessly determined to do it, even if it's dangerous or stupid. "Although he is still weak, he's hell-bent on playing the match."
<u>Help</u> a lame dog over stile	If you help a lame dog over stile , you help someone who is in difficulty or trouble. "You can trust him - he always helps a lame dog over a stile."
<u>Hem</u> and haw	When someone hems and haws , they are very evasive and avoid giving a clear answer. "Bobby hemmed and hawed when his parents asked him where he had spent the night."
<u>Herd</u> mentality	People with the herd mentality tend to do what everyone else does, no matter how ridiculous or stupid. "One example of herd mentality is when people rush to get on the first bus when there are several empty ones waiting."
<u>Herding</u> cats	This expression refers to the difficulty of coordinating a situation which involves people who all want to act independently. "Organizing an outing for a group of people from different countries is like herding cats! "
<u>Here</u> today, gone tomorrow	This expression is used to refer to something which appears and disappears very quickly, or does not last very long. "The shops in this area change very often - here today, gone tomorrow!"
Neither <u>here</u> nor there.	Something which is neither here nor there is considered to have no effect on the situation. "OK he lives close to you - but that's neither here nor there. We're talking about his results!"
<u>Hide</u> one's light under a bushel	If you hide your light under a bushel , you are modest or do not reveal a talent, quality or skill you possess. "So you play the saxophone in a club on Saturday nights - you really hide your light under a bushel, don't you!"
<u>Hide</u> a multitude of sins	If something covers or hides a multitude of sins , it prevents people from seeing the less pleasant reality. "Loose-fitting clothes can cover a multitude of sins!"



<u>Hidden agenda</u>	If a person or organization has a hidden agenda , they have hidden interests or ulterior motives. "I can guarantee that we have no hidden agenda. Our intentions have always been clear."
<u>High and dry</u>	If you are left high and dry , you find yourself in a difficult situation without help or resources "When her husband walked out on her, Amanda was left high and dry with two kids to raise."
<u>High horse</u> >	If you get on your high horse , you start behaving in a haughty manner, as though you should be treated with more respect. "He got on his high horse when he was asked to show his membership card."
<u>High and mighty</u>	Someone who is high and mighty behaves in a haughty manner, as if they were superior to others. "Don't you get all high and mighty!" said my grandmother to my cousin. "Everyone helps with the housework in this house."
<u>Live high off the hog</u>	Someone who lives high off the hog has a lot of money and a very comfortable lifestyle. "Now he's wealthy and living high off the hog."
<u>Highways and byways</u>	If you travel the highways and byways , you take large and small roads to visit every part of a country. "He travelled the highways and byways looking for traces of his ancestors."
<u>(Up) to the hilt</u>	Something which is done to the hilt is done completely, fully or to the maximum degree. "He was involved in the conspiracy to the hilt."
<u>Himalayan blunder</u>	If you stupidly make a very serious mistake or error, you commit a Himalayan blunder . "Apparently he lost his job because of a Himalayan blunder."
<u>Hit and run (accident)</u>	When the driver of a vehicle hits another vehicle without stopping to provide help, identification or insurance, and fails to report the accident to the police, the collision is called a hit-and-run accident . "A hit-and-run accident deserves serious punishment. "
<u>Hit (or strike) pay dirt</u>	If you hit or strike pay dirt , you are lucky and suddenly find yourself in a successful money-making situation. "Charlie finally hit pay dirt with his latest invention."
<u>Hit the airwaves</u>	When someone hits the airwaves , they go on radio and/or TV to be interviewed or to promote something. "The hospital was embarrassed when the patient hit the airways with his side of the story."
<u>Hit the ground running</u>	If someone hits the ground running , they are ready to start work immediately on a new activity. "He intends to hit the ground running when he starts his new job."
<u>Hit the hay</u>	When you hit the hay , you go to bed. "The boys were so exhausted that they hit the hay as soon as they reached the campsite."



<u>Hit the nail on the head</u>	When you hit the nail on the head , you are absolutely right about something or have guessed the exact nature of a problem or situation. "You hit the nail on the head when you said Mark had money problems. He's lost his job!"
<u>Hit the road</u>	When you hit the road , you begin a journey. "It's getting late and we've got a long way to go. Let's hit the road."
<u>Hit the sack</u>	To hit the sack (also hit the hay) means to go to bed. "OK guys. I'm going to hit the sack."
<u>Hit the spot</u>	If something hits the spot , it is exactly what is needed or wanted. "On such a hot day a long cool drink would really hit the spot!"
<u>Hitch one's wagon to a star</u>	Someone who hitches their wagon to a star has great ambitions and is very determined to reach their goal. "At an early age she decided to hitch her wagon to a star and become rich and famous."
<u>Hive of activity</u>	hive of activity (also: a beehive) A place where there are lots of things happening, and everyone is very busy, is called a hive of activity . "When I went to offer my help, the kitchen was already a hive of activity."
<u>Go the whole hog</u>	When you go the whole hog , you do something thoroughly or completely. "They put up a few decorations for Christmas, then they decided to go the whole hog and buy a tree and all the trimmings."
<u>Hold your breath</u>	If someone is holding their breath , they are waiting excitedly or anxiously for something to happen. "I went for second interview today - now I'm holding my breath!"
<u>Hold the field</u>	If something holds the field , it has not been replaced and remains valid or is still in use. "The founder's management principles still hold the field today."
<u>Hold the fort</u>	When you hold the fort , you look after a place or a business in the absence of the person who is normally in charge. "Julie, could you hold the fort while I go to the post office?"
<u>Hold your horses</u>	If you tell someone to hold their horses , you think they are doing something too fast and should slow down and not rush into further action. "Hold your horses! Don't rush into this without giving it careful thought."
<u>Hold one's own</u>	If you can hold your own , you are well able to defend yourself when under attack. "We should ask Jane to represent us; she can hold her own in any argument."
<u>Hold the reins</u>	The person who holds the reins is someone who is in complete control of a company, firm or organization. "He's been holding the reins for over 20 years and intends to continue for as long as possible."
<u>Hold your tongue</u>	If you hold your tongue , you stay silent and say nothing. "The party was supposed to be a surprise but unfortunately the little boy couldn't hold his tongue."



<u>Hold water</u>	If an explanation or argument does not hold water , it does not stand up to critical examination and can be shown to be unfounded. "The reasons given for the government's new measures just do not hold water."
<u>Holier-than-thou</u>	This expression is used to describe the attitude of people who consider themselves to be more virtuous or morally superior to others. "I can't stand the holier-than-thou attitude of some candidates."
<u>Hollow victory</u>	A victory obtained in unsatisfactory conditions, which as a result seems worthless or without significance for the winner, is called a hollow victory . "Won in the absence of the major ski champions, his gold medal was a hollow victory."
<u>On the home stretch</u>	To say that you're on the home stretch means that you are approaching the end of something such as a task, a race or a journey. "Don't give up - we're on the the home stretch now."
<u>Home truths</u>	If you tell somebody some home truths , you tell them some unpleasant facts about themselves which are often difficult to accept. "David needs to be told a few home truths, whether he likes it or not!"
<u>The honeymoon is over</u>	To say that the honeymoon is over means that the initial period of friendship and cooperation between people, groups or organizations has ended. "He was elected only six months ago but the honeymoon is already over."
<u>Honour among thieves</u>	This expression means that even criminals have a sense of loyalty and they respect a certain code of behaviour. "The bank robber refused to reveal the names of his accomplices which shows that there is honour among thieves ."
<u>By hook or by crook</u>	If you say that you will do something by hook or by crook , you mean that you will succeed in doing it in whatever way is necessary, whether it is honest or not. "I'll get my revenge, by hook or by crook!"
<u>Get off the hook</u>	If you do something wrong and manage to get off the hook , you avoid punishment or blame. "Barry was questioned by the police but his lawyer managed to get him off the hook."
<u>Hook, line and sinker</u>	If you fall for a story or an explanation hook, line and sinker , you completely believe it. "I didn't think he'd believe my story, but he fell for it hook, line and sinker."
<u>Couldn't give a hoot!</u>	To say that you don't or couldn't give a hoot , means that you don't care at all about something. "She wears eccentric clothes but she's couldn't give a hoot about what others think."
<u>A hop, skip and a jump</u>	To say that a thing or place is only a hop, skip and a jump away from another means that they are very close to each other. "The school's just a hop, skip and a jump from our new house."
<u>Hope against hope</u>	If you hope against hope , you continue to hope even when the situation looks bad "The whole building was destroyed by fire. John's parents are hoping against hope that he escaped in time."



<u>Horns of a dilemma</u>	If you are on the horns of a dilemma , you are faced with a choice between two equally unpleasant options. "I'm on the horns of a dilemma; I have to choose between a boring job with a good salary or a more interesting job with a lower salary."
<u>Horse of a different colour</u>	To describe a person or a problem as a horse of a different colour means either that the person does things differently from others or that the nature of the problem is a entirely different. "I expected to negotiate with the sales manager but the chairman turned up - now he's a horse of a different colour!"
<u>Horse sense</u>	Someone who has horse sense is a practical thinker who has the ability to make sensible decisions. "Don't worry. Charlie has good horse sense. He'll do the right thing."
<u>A dark horse</u>	If you refer to a person as a dark horse , you mean that they are secretive, or that little is known about them.
<u>I could eat a horse.</u>	To say that you could eat a horse means that you are very hungry. "Let's get something to eat. I'm starving. I could eat a horse!"
<u>Beat (or flog) a dead horse</u>	To say that someone is beating a dead horse , you mean that they are wasting time and effort trying to do or achieve something that is not possible.. "Mark is beating a dead horse trying to get his money reimbursed. The company has gone bankrupt!"
<u>Horses for courses</u>	This expression means that as horses race better on a course that suits them, it is important to match people with suitable jobs or tasks. A person suited to one activity may not be suited to another. "His experience in sales doesn't necessarily make him ideal for the job. Horses for courses, as the saying goes."
<u>Straight from the horse's mouth</u>	If you learn something straight from the horse's mouth , you hear about it directly from a person closely connected with the source of the information. "How do you know Jack has resigned?" "I got it straight from the horse's mouth - he told me himself!"
<u>Hot off the press</u>	If a news article, for example, is hot off the press , it has just been published and contains the most recent information on the subject. "I just got it hot off the press; another bank has gone bankrupt!"
<u>Hot on the trail</u>	If you are hot on the trail of someone or something, you are very close to finding them. "The police are hot on the trail of the bank robber."
<u>Hot under the collar</u>	If you get hot under the collar , you feel annoyed, indignant or embarrassed. "If anyone criticizes his proposals, Joe immediately gets hot under the collar."
<u>Hot potato</u>	To refer to a subject as a hot potato means that it is a very sensitive and controversial matter which is difficult to deal with. "The new Prime Minister hasn't been confronted with any hot potatoes yet."
<u>Get on like a house on fire</u>	Two people who get on like a house on fire have similar interests and quickly become good friends.



<u>On the house</u>	Something which is " on the house " is offered free of charge, usually in a bar or restaurant. "The new owner offered us a drink on the house."
<u>Household name/word</u>	When the name of someone or something becomes very familiar because it is so often used, it is called a household name or word . "The product was so successful that its name became a household word in no time."
<u>Hue and cry</u>	If there is a hue and cry about something, there is loud opposition to it. "There will no doubt be a great hue and cry when the reorganization is announced."
<u>Hunky dory</u>	Using the expression ' hunky dory ' is an informal way of saying that everything is satisfactory and there are no problems. "Need any help?" "Everything's hunky dory, thanks."
<u>Hustle and bustle</u>	This expression is used to refer to busy energetic activity in an atmosphere of general excitement. "I prefer to live in the country. I hate the hustle and bustle of city life."

	<u>Idiom</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
I	<u>Break the ice</u>	A person who breaks the ice is someone who does or says something to make people relax in an uncomfortable situation.
	<u>Icing on the cake</u>	If something is referred to as icing on the cake , it is an extra benefit that makes a good situation even better. "Good news! I get the job ... and the icing on the cake is that I get a company car too."
	<u>Idiot box</u>	Some people consider television to lack educational value and refer to it as the idiot box . "He spends all his free time in front of the idiot box."
	<u>If it ain't broke don't fix it!</u>	This expression means that if a system or method works well, you shouldn't change it. "We're not changing our alarm system. As the saying goes, if it ain't broke, don't fix it! "
	<u>If you can't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen!</u>	This expression means that if you feel that there is too much pressure, you can leave. <i>Amid the growing tension the organizer declared:</i> "If you can't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen!"
	<u>Ignorance is bliss</u>	This expression means that if you don't know about a problem or unpleasant fact, you won't worry about it. "I didn't know our neighbour was an escaped prisoner until the police arrived - ignorance is bliss! "
	<u>Ill-gotten gains</u>	Money, profit or benefits that are made in a dishonest or illegal manner are called ill-gotten gains . "He won money by cheating and is now enjoying his ill-gotten gains."



<u>In</u> industrial-strength	This is a humorous way of referring to something which is very strong, powerful or concentrated. "I've got an industrial-strength headache this morning!"
<u>In</u> fomania	If you are constantly checking and responding to email and text messages, you may be the victim of a new addiction called infomania . "The abuse of technology has led to a state of infomania; employees are addicted to checking email and text messages during meetings."
<u>In</u> cahoots with someone	If one person is in cahoots with another, they are working in close partnership, usually conspiring to do something dishonest. "There was a rumour that the Mayor was in cahoots with a chain of supermarkets."
<u>In</u> a class of one's own	If someone is in a class of their own , they are unequalled and considered better than anyone else of their kind. "As a singer, Maria Callas was in a class of her own."
<u>In</u> dire straits	If a person or organization is in dire straits , they are in a very difficult situation. "The loss of major contracts has put the company in dire straits."
<u>In</u> keeping with	If something is in keeping with for example a style or tradition, it is suitable or appropriate in a particular situation. "We exchange presents at Christmas in keeping with tradition."
<u>In</u> the heat of the moment	If you say or do something in the heat of the moment , you say or do it without pausing to think, at a time when you are experiencing unusually strong emotions such as anger, excitement, etc. "I was so angry that in the heat of the moment I said things that I regretted later."
<u>In</u> inverted commas	When describing something, if you use a word which you say is " in inverted commas ", you indicate that the word is not quite true or appropriate. "We were served a "meal", in inverted commas, but we were too hungry to complain."
<u>In</u> the long run	This term refers to something that will have effect over or after a long period of time. "I've decided to study Chinese, which is going to be difficult, but it'll be worth it in the long run because it'll help me get a better job."
<u>In</u> the lurch	If you leave someone in the lurch , you leave them in a difficult or embarrassing situation. "When Paul missed the last bus, he was left in the lurch."
<u>In</u> the middle of nowhere	If a place is in the middle of nowhere , it is in a remote area, far from towns, villages or houses. "The campsite was in the middle of nowhere so I couldn't send you a postcard."
<u>In</u> mint condition	Something that is in mint condition is in such perfect condition that it looks new or as good as new. "The car is 10 years old but according to Tom it's in mint condition."
<u>In</u> retrospect	This expression is used to refer to a past situation or event, particularly if your present opinion is different from the one you had at the time. " In retrospect , we were not aware of the effects on the environment."

<u>In safe hands</u>	If something is in safe (or good) hands , it is being looked after by a reliable person or organization, and is therefore at no risk. "I'll look after Jamie while you go shopping. Don't worry - he'll be in safe hands."
<u>In trouble with the law</u>	If someone is in trouble with the law , they are being questioned by the police in connection with something illegal or criminal. "The suspect has often been in trouble with the law."
<u>In vino veritas</u>	This expression, which in Latin means " <i>in wine there is truth</i> ", is a way of saying that wine makes people less inhibited and leads them to speak more freely and reveal their true feelings. "After a few drinks he told the whole story - in vino veritas! "
<u>Ins and Outs :</u>	The ins and outs of a situation means all the details or facts. "I know he was involved in a car accident, but I don't know the ins and outs of his injuries".
<u>Add insult to injury</u>	To add insult to injury means to make a bad situation worse by upsetting or harming someone you have already harmed in some other way. "Not only did he steal money from his best friend, he added insult to injury by asking to borrow his car."
<u>To all intents and purposes</u>	If something is said to be true to all intents and purposes , it is true in every practical sense. "There are still a few tourists, but to all intents an purposes the season is over."
<u>In the interim</u>	Something that happens in the interim takes place during a period of time between two events. "I won't have the apartment until next month. In the interim I'm staying at a local hotel."
<u>Iron fist/hand in a velvet glove</u>	This expression is used to describe someone who, behind an appearance of gentleness, is inflexible and determined. "To impose the necessary reforms, the leader used persuasion followed by force - an iron fist in a velvet glove."
<u>Irons in the fire</u>	If you have a few, or many, irons in the fire , you are involved in a number of projects at the same time. "The travel agency is not his only venture - he's got more than one iron in the fire."
<u>It takes two to tango</u>	You say this when you think that a difficult situation or argument cannot be the fault of one person alone "OK, we've heard Jack's side of the story - but it takes two to tango! "
<u>It's anyone's call</u>	This expression is used when the result of a game, contest or election is difficult to predict. "Who do you think will win?" " It's anyone's call. "
<u>It's a small world!</u>	This expression is used by someone who is surprised to meet familiar people, events or situations in unexpected places. "Wow! It's a small world. I never expected to meet a neighbour on a transatlantic flight!"
<u>It's no use crying over spilt milk</u>	This expression means that it is useless to complain or have regrets about something that is done and cannot be changed. "Sometimes I regret not accepting the offer, but it's no use crying over spilt milk. "
<u>Itchy feet</u>	A person who has itchy feet is someone who wants to move somewhere new or do something different. "Charlie changes jobs very often - he's got itchy feet!"



<u>Itching (or itchy) palm</u>	Someone who has an itching palm is greedy for money, for example tips or commission (as if putting money in the palm of their hand would ease the itch). "He's said to have an itching palm - he does nothing without payment!"
<u>Be an item</u>	To say that two people are an item means that they are involved in a romantic relationship. "So Sally and Harry are an item, are they?"
J <u>Jack of all trades</u>	A " jack of all trades " is a person who can do many different things but is not very good at any one of them. "I'm looking for a skilled worker, not a jack-of-all-trades."
<u>One's jaw drops</u>	If someone's jaw drops , they show total amazement. "When the prize was announced, the winner's jaw dropped."
<u>Je ne sais quoi</u>	This expression (from French "I don't know what") is used to refer to a good quality that is difficult to describe. "The place has a certain je ne sais quoi that really attracts me."
<u>Get/have the jitters</u>	If you get or have the jitters , especially before an important event, you become very nervous or anxious and begin to shake. "Some people get the jitters when they have to make a speech."
<u>Jog someone's memory</u>	When you help somebody to remember something they have forgotten, you jog their memory . "You don't remember who was with us that day? Here's a photograph to jog your memory."
<u>Join the club!</u>	By saying to somebody " Join the club ", you express sympathy for an unpleasant experience that you have had too. "Oh no! My wallet has been stolen!" "Join the club!"
<u>Don't judge by appearances</u> (also: <i>go by appearances</i>)	This expression means that you should not form an opinion based on outward appearances only. You should also look at what is inside. "She looks self-confident but don't judge by appearances ."
<u>You can't judge a book by its cover</u>	This expression means that you should not form an opinion about something from its appearance only. "In spite of his fortune, he leads a very simple life - you can't judge a book by its cover! "
<u>Juggle frogs</u>	A person who is juggling frogs is trying to deal with many different tasks at the same time and finding the situation difficult. "I've got so many things to do at the moment, I feel like I'm juggling frogs."
<u>Juggling act</u>	If you do a juggling act , you try to do different things in a way that is satisfactory for all concerned "For many women, managing a career and looking after a family can be quite a juggling act."
<u>Jump to conclusions</u>	A person who jumps to conclusions reaches a decision or makes a judgement too fast, before taking the time to check out all the facts. "We haven't got the full story yet so let's not jump to conclusions."
<u>Jump the gun</u>	If you jump the gun , you do something too soon or take premature action based on incomplete information. "He ordered a new car before the job was confirmed - now that's jumping the gun!"



<u>Jump</u> the lights	If you continue driving when the traffic lights turn red, you jump the lights . "It's very dangerous to jump the lights. No wonder he was stopped by the police."
<u>Jump</u> for joy	When people jump for joy , they express their happiness through excited movements and gestures. "The player jumped for joy when he scored the winning goal."
<u>Jump</u> down someone's throat	If you jump down someone's throat , you suddenly start shouting at them in a very angry manner. "When I said the instructions were not very clear, she jumped down my throat."
<u>Jump</u> in (or be thrown in) at the deep end	When you jump in (or are thrown in) at the deep end , you do something without any help or preparation, in an area where you have little or no experience. "He got a job as a salesman, for which he had no training, so he just had to jump in at the deep end."
<u>Jump</u> out of one's skin.	If you jump out of your skin , you are extremely surprised or shocked. "Jane nearly jumped out of her skin when the horse put its head through the window!"
The <u>jury</u> is still out	To say that the jury is still out means that something is under consideration but no decision has been reached yet "The jury is still out on the location of the new station."
<u>Just</u> around the corner	If something is just around the corner, it will happen very soon. "With spring just around the corner, the new collection should begin to sell."
Get one's <u>just</u> deserts	When someone gets their just deserts , they are rewarded or punished according to what they deserve. "Liz got her just deserts when she was excluded from the committee; she is totally unreliable."
<u>Just</u> off the boat	A person who is just off the boat is naive and lacks experience. "He's efficient although he look as if he's just off the boat."
<u>Just</u> what the doctor ordered	If something is just what the doctor ordered , it is extremely pleasant and will help you feel better. "A week-end in the sun - just what the doctor ordered!"
<u>Just</u> the ticket	If something is just the ticket , it is exactly right, or just what you need. "I'm not hungry enough for a meal. A bowl of soup would be just the ticket!"

	<u>Idiom</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
K	As <u>keen</u> as mustard	If someone is as keen as mustard , they are very eager, enthusiastic or motivated. "We should ask Emily to join the team. She's as keen as mustard."



<u>Keep your back covered</u>	If you do something in case a problem arises later for which you might be blamed, you keep your back covered . "You'd better make a copy of that letter to keep your back covered."
<u>Keep body and soul together</u>	If someone is able to keep body and soul together , they manage to survive. "He was unemployed and homeless, but he somehow managed to keep body and soul together."
<u>Keep a civil tongue</u>	People who keep a civil tongue express themselves in polite terms. "Don't speak so rudely! You must learn to keep a civil tongue in all circumstances."
<u>Keep your finger on the pulse</u>	If you keep your finger on the pulse , you are constantly aware of the most recent events or developments. "A successful investor keeps his finger on the pulse of international business."
<u>Keep your fingers crossed</u>	If you keep your fingers crossed , you hope that something will be successful. "I'm doing my driving test tomorrow. Keep your fingers crossed for me."
<u>Keep a level head</u>	If you keep a level head , you remain calm and sensible no matter how difficult or distressful the situation may be. "All through the hijacking the pilot kept a level head."
<u>Keep the lid on something</u>	If you keep the lid on something , you hide it or control it to prevent people from finding out about it. "The company tried to keep a lid on the negotiations but word got out to the Press."
<u>Keep a low profile</u>	A person who keeps a low profile tries not to attract public attention. "The inventor is a discreet man who keeps a low profile."
<u>Keep your nose to the grindstone</u>	A person who keeps their nose to the grindstone is someone who concentrates on working hard at his job.
<u>Keep your options open</u>	When you keep your options open , you postpone making a decision so that you can choose among several possible courses of action. "The offer sounds good, but keep your options open until you're sure it's the best choice."
<u>Keep something in proportion</u>	If you react to a situation in a sensible way, without exaggerating the importance or seriousness of the facts, you keep things in proportion . "Yes, we've got a problem, but let's try to keep things in proportion."
<u>Keep a stiff upper lip</u>	If a person keeps a stiff upper lip , they contain their emotion and do not let other people see their feelings. "When she heard the bad news, she kept a stiff upper lip."
<u>Keep something under wraps</u>	If something is kept under wraps , it is held secret and not revealed to anyone. "The plan was kept under wraps until the contract was officially signed."
<u>Keep someone posted</u>	If a person asks you to keep them posted , they want you to keep them informed about a situation "Our agent promised to keep us posted on developments in the negotiations."
<u>Keep tabs on something</u>	If you keep tabs on something, you keep it under careful observation. "With the rising cost of petrol, we'd better keep tabs on our travel expenses."



<u>Keep up appearances</u>	A person who keeps up appearances maintains an outward show of prosperity or well-being in order to hide their difficulties from others. "He continued to keep up appearances even when business was bad."
<u>Keep up with the Joneses</u>	To say that somebody is trying to keep up with the Joneses means that they are trying to have the same possessions or social achievements as someone else. "First the Browns moved their children to an expensive school. Now the Smiths have done the same. It's silly how some people feel they have to keep up with the Joneses!"
<u>Keep the wolf from the door</u>	In order to keep the wolf from the door , you need to have enough money to buy food and other essentials. "My grandparents earned barely enough to keep the wolf from the door."
<u>Kick up a fuss</u>	A person who kicks up a fuss creates a disturbance, especially by complaining or protesting about something. "The service was so slow in the restaurant that several customers began to kick up a fuss."
<u>Kick yourself</u>	If you feel like kicking yourself , you are angry with yourself for something you have done or not done. "I could have kicked myself for forgetting Julie's birthday."
<u>Get a kick out of something</u>	If you get a kick out of something , you get a feeling of enjoyment or excitement from something. "Tania is a bit strange - she gets a kick out of listening to other people's phone messages."
<u>Kickback</u>	This term refers to money paid illegally for favourable treatment. "The property developers were accused of giving kickbacks to the local authorities."
<u>Kill two birds with one stone</u>	If you kill two birds with one stone , you succeed in doing two things at the same time. "By studying on the train on the way home every week-end, Claire kills two birds with one stone."
<u>Kill with kindness</u>	When you are excessive in your efforts to be helpful or generous, you can harm someone, or kill them with kindness . "The children are overweight, but their grandmother continues to give them chocolates and cookies - she'll kill them with kindness!"
<u>Kiss /say goodbye to something</u>	If you accept as certain that you will not get something that you want very much, you kiss or say goodbye to it. "There will be no bonus this year, so I can kiss goodbye to the new car I wanted."
<u>On its knees</u>	When something such as a country or organization is on its knees or brought to its knees , it is in a very weak situation. "The civil war brought the country to its knees."
<u>Knee-high to a grasshopper</u>	This term refers to a very young and small child "Look how tall you are! Last time I saw you, you were knee-high to a grasshopper!"
<u>Get your knickers in a twist.</u>	If you get your knickers in a twist , you are angry, nervous or upset faced with a difficult situation "Don't get your knickers in a twist! Everything is under control."



<u>Cut the atmosphere with a knife</u>	To say that you could cut the atmosphere with a knife means that the atmosphere is extremely tense or unfriendly.
<u>Under the knife</u>	If a person goes under the knife , they have surgery.
<u>Knock (some) sense into somebody</u>	When you knock sense into somebody , you use strong words or methods in order to get that person to stop behaving stupidly. "When Jason announced that he was going to drop out of college, his father managed to knock some sense into him."
<u>Knock your socks off</u>	If something amazes you, or impresses you greatly, it knocks your socks off . "The magnitude of the project will knock the socks off everyone in the office."
<u>Knock somebody down with a feather</u>	To say " you could have knocked me down with a feather " emphasizes the fact that you were extremely surprised. "When I heard the name of the winner, you could have knocked me down with a feather!"
<u>Know the score</u> <u>Know which side your bread is buttered</u>	When you know the score , you are well-informed about a situation and know what to expect "If Julie damages the car, her dad won't lend it to her again. She knows the score." If you know which side your bread is buttered , you know where your interests lie, or what will be to your advantage. "Jack never argues with his father-in-law. He knows which side his bread is buttered."
<u>Know which way the wind blows</u>	This expression means that it is advisable to know how a situation is developing in order to be prepared for the changes that are likely to happen. "Before we decide on anything, we need to know which way the wind is blowing ."
<u>Knuckle down to something</u>	If someone knuckles down to something , they start to work on it seriously. "If you want to succeed, you'll have to knuckle down to some serious work."
<u>Kowtow to somebody</u>	If you are very respectful and submissive, giving way to the wishes of a person or organization in authority in order to please them, you kowtow to them . "Mark refused to kowtow to the committee and decided to work as a consultant."

	<u>Idiom</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
L	<u>Labour of love</u>	A task that you do for your own pleasure and satisfaction and not for reward or profit is called a labour of love . "Preparing Christmas dinner for the family is what my mother calls a "labour of love".



<u>Lame duck</u>	A person or organization that is in difficulty and unable to manage without help is called a lame duck . "Some banks have become lame ducks recently."
<u>Lame excuse</u>	A lame excuse is an explanation which is weak and unconvincing. "If you're scared to do it, just say so. Don't invent some lame excuse."
<u>Land of the living</u>	This is a humorous way of saying that someone is still alive. "Hi there! It's good to see you're still in the land of the living! "
<u>Land on your feet</u>	If you land on your feet , you make a quick recovery after a difficulty such as a business failure, an illness, a loss, etc. "Don't worry about Bob. He always lands on his feet!"
<u>Lash out</u>	If you lash out at somebody, you attack them, usually verbally. "On the ninth hole, Pete suddenly lashed out at Scott and accused him of cheating."
<u>Last but not least</u>	When introducing a number of people, this expression is used to assure the audience that the last person mentioned is no less important than those previously named. "And now, last but not least , here is the final candidate."
<u>Last thing on one's mind</u>	If you say that something is the last thing on your mind , you mean that it is not an important matter at all, especially when you have more serious problems to consider. "I'm so busy that food is the last thing on my mind."
<u>Last resort</u>	If you say that you would do something as a last resort , it is the last thing you would do if you were desperate and all other courses of action had failed. "I still haven't found a hotel for tonight; I can always sleep in the car as a last resort!"
That's the <u>last</u> straw!	The expression means that this is the latest unpleasant event, and that you cannot tolerate the situation any longer.
<u>Last word</u>	Something described as the last word is the most recent or most fashionable in its category. "Steve's new computer is the last word in technology."
<u>Laugh all the way to the bank</u>	A person who makes a lot of money easily, especially through someone else's stupidity, is said to laugh all the way to the bank . "If we don't succeed in renewing the contract, our competitors will be laughing all the way to the bank"
<u>Laugh something off</u>	When you laugh about something that has upset or hurt you, in order to make it seem less important, or to try to show that you do not care, you laugh it off . "She overheard her colleague's critical remark, but she laughed it off."
<u>Laugh up your sleeve</u>	If you laugh up your sleeve , you are secretly amused at another person's problems or difficulties. "Tom felt that his explanation was confusing and that his colleague was laughing up his sleeve."
<u>Laughing stock</u>	This expression refers to a person or group that everyone laughs at because they do something stupid or ridiculous. "If you wear that to school you'll be the laughing stock of the class!"
A <u>law</u> unto themselves	If someone is a law unto themselves , they do things their own way and ignore what is generally considered as acceptable. "They're against discipline and allow their children complete freedom - they're a law unto themselves."



<u>Lay down the law</u>	Someone who lays down the law tells people very forcefully and firmly what to do. "The volunteers helped in a disorganized way. They needed someone to lay down the law."
<u>Lead somebody up the garden path</u>	If someone leads you up the garden path , they deceive you by making you believe something which is not true. "I still haven't got a promotion. I think my boss is leading me up the garden path! "
<u>Lead to a dead end</u>	If a plan or a project leads to a dead end , it develops no further because it has no future. "In spite of the scientists' efforts, the research lead to a dead end."
<u>Leaps and bounds</u>	If you do something in/by leaps and bounds , you make rapid or spectacular progress or growth. "The number of subscribers to the review has grown in leaps and bounds."
<u>Learn the hard way</u>	If you learn the hard way , you learn through your own experience, good and bad, rather than from the advice or guidance of others. "His refusal to accept any help meant that he had to learn the hard way."
<u>Learning curve</u>	This expression refers to the length of time needed to learn something new. "The new system has a long learning curve so we'll have to give the staff time to get used to it."
<u>Leave the door open</u>	If you leave the door open , you behave in such a way as to allow the possibility of further action. "Both parties left the door open for further negotiations."
<u>Leave no stone unturned</u>	If you try everything possible in order to achieve something or to find something, you leave no stone unturned . "The management left no stone unturned in their efforts to find a solution to the crisis."
<u>Leave well alone</u>	If you leave well alone , you decide not to interfere with or change something that is acceptable or adequate. "It would be hard to get a better deal. Let's just leave well alone."
<u>Led by the nose</u>	Someone who is led by the nose is dominated or controlled by a person or group who makes them do exactly what they want. "Jack has always been led by the nose by his mother."
<u>The left hand doesn't know what the right hand is doing</u>	This expression means that communication within a group or organization is so bad that people don't know what the others are doing.
<u>Left hanging in the air (or in mid-air)</u>	If a problem or issue is left hanging in the air , no decision has been taken so it remains without a solution. "No solution was proposed during the meeting so the question was left hanging in the air."
<u>Left to your own devices</u>	If you leave someone to their own devices , you let them look after themselves, without any help. "When left to their own devices, many children watch TV and eat junk food."
<u>Pull somebody's leg</u>	If you pull somebody's leg , you tease them by telling them something that is not true. "Of course I'm not going to buy a sports car. I was just pulling your leg!"



Not have a <u>leg</u> to stand on	To say that someone doesn't have a leg to stand on means that they can't prove what they say. "Three people testified against him. He didn't have a leg to stand on."
On your last <u>legs</u>	If you are on your last legs , you are in a very weak condition or about to die.
<u>Lend</u> oneself (to something)	If you lend yourself to something, you approve of it or become associated with it. "No decent father would lend himself to violent behaviour."
<u>Less</u> is more	This expression, used particularly in architecture and design, conveys the idea that things that are simple in style and smaller in size are better. "Simplicity is fashionable today. Less is more. "
<u>Lesser</u> of two evils	If you choose the lesser of two evils , you opt for the less unpleasant of two poor options. "I didn't want to go. Choosing the train instead of driving was the lesser of two evils; at least I could relax on the way."
<u>Let</u> bygones be bygones	If you let bygones be bygones , you decide to forget about past disagreements. "When Charlie's son was born, he decided to let bygones be bygones and contacted his parents."
<u>Let</u> me bounce this off you.	You say this when you present an idea or plan to someone in order to test their reaction or obtain feedback. "I think I've found a way of making money." Let me bounce this off you. "
<u>Let</u> the cat out of the bag	If you let the cat out of the bag , you reveal a secret, often not intentionally.
<u>Let</u> sleeping dogs lie	If you tell somebody to let sleeping dogs lie , you are asking them not to interfere with a situation because they could cause problems. "Look - they've settled their differences. It's time to let sleeping dogs lie."
<u>Let</u> something ride	When you decide to do nothing about a particular situation and allow it to remain as it is, you let it ride . "Bill didn't like the way his wife spoke to the operator, but he let it ride so as to avoid another quarrel."
To the <u>letter</u>	If you follow instructions or directions to the letter , you do exactly as is told or written. "Although she followed the instructions to the letter, she couldn't get the DVD player to work."
Barefaced <u>liar</u>	Someone who lies easily, with a total lack of shame, is called a barefaced liar . "That barefaced liar stole my watch and said he'd found it!"
<u>Licence</u> to print money	This expression refers to an officially authorized activity which enables people to make a lot of money without much effort. "The contract to supply computers to schools was a licence to print money. "
A <u>lick</u> and a promise	If you give something a lick and a promise , you make a quick and careless attempt to clean something, with the intention of doing it more thoroughly later. "She gave the kitchen a lick and a promise before she ran to catch the bus"



<u>Lick into shape</u>	If you make an effort to put someone or something into satisfactory condition or appearance, you lick them into shape . "I've got to lick this place into shape before my in-laws come to visit us."
<u>Lick one's wounds</u>	When a person licks their wounds , they try to recover their confidence or spirits after a defeat, failure or disappointment. "Poor Harry is licking his wounds after being dropped off the team."
<u>Keep the lid on something</u>	If you keep the lid on something , you hide it or control it to prevent people from finding out about it. "The company tried to keep a lid on the negotiations but word got out to the Press."
<u>Lie in</u>	If you lie in, you stay in bed after the normal time for getting up. "Great! Tomorrow I'm not on duty so I can lie in."
<u>Lie through your teeth</u>	If you lie through your teeth , you lie openly and brazenly, knowing that what you are saying is completely false. "I saw him breaking the window. If he denies it, he's lying through his teeth."
<u>Tell a white lie</u>	To tell a white lie means to say something which is not true in order to protect someone or to avoid hurting their feelings.
<u>(Risk) life and limb</u>	If you risk life and limb , you are in danger of death or serious injury. "The roads are icy today; you'll risk life and limb if you go by car."
<u>Life and soul of the party</u>	The life and soul of the party is the most lively and amusing person present at an event. "I'm so glad we invited Caroline. She was the life and soul of the party!"
<u>Life is just a bowl of cherries!</u>	This expression means that life is pleasant and uncomplicated. "Now that he's retired, my grandfather often says "life is just a bowl of cherries" ."
<u>Life of Riley</u>	If you live the life of Riley , you have a comfortable and enjoyable life, without having to work too hard. "He married a millionaire, and since then he's been living the life of Riley."
<u>Light at the end of the tunnel</u>	If you see light at the end of the tunnel , you see signs of hope for the future after a long period of difficulty. "Sales dropped heavily last year but we're beginning to see light at the end of the tunnel."
<u>Light bulb moment</u>	A light bulb moment is when you have a sudden moment of inspiration, comprehension or realization. "Harry had a light-bulb moment when he finally realized what was blocking the mechanism."
<u>Light work</u>	If a person makes light work of something , they do it very easily or with little effort. "After the party, the boys made light work of the cleaning up. The house was spotless when they left."
<u>Light years ahead</u>	If someone or something is light years ahead , they are far ahead in terms of development or progress. "We've got to invest more in research - our competitors are light years ahead!"



<u>Lights</u> are on, but no one is home	A humorous way of referring to a person who is lacking intellect and/or sanity, or to someone who is simply preoccupied and not paying attention. "Forget about Andy today - the lights are on but no one is home! "
<u>Like</u> the back of one's hand	If you know something like the back of your hand , you are very familiar with it and know it in detail. "Of course I won't get lost. I know London like the back of my hand!"
<u>Like</u> a bat out of hell	If something moves like a bat out of hell , it moves very quickly. "He grabbed the envelope and ran like a bat out of hell."
<u>Like</u> a bear with a sore head	If someone is behaving like a bear with a sore head , they are very irritable and bad-tempered. "When his team lost the match, Brad was like a bear with a sore head."
<u>Like</u> bringing a knife to a gunfight	To say that an action was like bringing a knife to a gunfight means that there was a total lack of preparation. "Asking an inexperienced lawyer to defend such a difficult case was like bringing a knife to a gunfight."
(Sound) <u>like</u> a broken record.	Someone who says the same thing again and again is said to sound like a broken record . "Dad! Stop telling me to be careful when I drive. You sound like a broken record!"
<u>Like</u> a cat on hot bricks	A person who is like a cat on hot bricks is very nervous or restless. "The week before the results were published, she was like a cat on hot bricks."
<u>Like</u> the cat that ate the canary	If, after an achievement or success, a person appears very self-satisfied or pleased with themselves, you can say that they look like the cat that ate the canary . "When the boss complimented him on his work, Steve looked like the cat that ate the canary."
<u>Like</u> a scalded cat	If someone or something moves like a scalded cat , they move very fast, usually because they are frightened or shocked. "As soon as he saw the policeman, he ran off like a scalded cat."
<u>Like</u> something the cat dragged in	If you compare a person or thing to something the cat dragged in , you think they look dirty, untidy or generally unappealing. "My teenage son often looks like something the cat dragged in."
<u>Like</u> cat and dog	Two people who fight or argue like cat and dog frequently have violent arguments, even though they are fond of each other. "They fight like cat and dog but they're still together after 30 years."
<u>Like</u> death warmed up	If you look like death warmed up , you look very ill or tired. "My boss told me to go home. He said I looked like death warmed up."
<u>Like</u> a deer/rabbit caught in the headlights	When you are so surprised that you are momentarily confused and unable to react quickly, you are like a deer (or a rabbit) caught in the headlights . "Surprised by the journalist's question, he was like a deer caught in the headlights."



<u>Like a dog with two tails</u>	If somebody is like a dog with two tails , they are extremely happy. "When Paul won the first prize, he was like a dog with two tails."
<u>Like greased lightning</u>	If something moves like greased lightning , it moves extremely fast. "As soon the owner appeared, the boy ran like greased lightning."
<u>Like a headless chicken</u>	If a person rushes about like a headless chicken , they act in a disorderly way, without thinking or analyzing the situation carefully. "As soon as the store opened, my mother started running around like a headless chicken, eager to find bargains."
<u>Like it or lump it!</u>	If you tell someone to like it or lump it , you mean that they will have to accept something even if they don't like it, because the situation is not going to change. "We're spending a week this summer with your grandparents - like it or lump it!"
<u>Like a moth to a flame</u>	To say that a person is attracted to someone or something like a moth to a flame means that the attraction is so strong they cannot resist. "He's drawn to the casino like a moth to a flame."
<u>Like nailing jelly to the wall</u>	To say that something is like nailing jelly to the wall , you mean that it is extremely difficult to do, if not impossible. "Keeping track of his movements is like nailing jelly to the wall."
<u>Like pulling teeth</u>	Something that is like pulling teeth is extremely difficult to obtain, especially if trying to extract information from someone. "Getting him to talk about his job was like pulling teeth!"
<u>Like a red flag to a bull</u>	To say that a statement or action is like a red flag to a bull means that it is sure to make someone very angry or upset. "Don't mention Tom's promotion to Mike. It would be like a red flag to a bull!"
<u>Like a shot</u>	If you do something like a shot , you do it very quickly, without any hesitation. "If I won a lot of money on the lotto, I'd leave my job like a shot!"
<u>Like something the cat dragged in</u>	If you compare a person or thing to something the cat dragged in , you think they look dirty, untidy or generally unappealing. "My teenage son often looks like something the cat dragged in."
<u>Like taking candy from a baby</u>	To say that something is like taking candy from a baby means that it is very easy to do. "Don't worry - you'll manage. It'll be like taking candy from a baby!"
<u>Like taking sand to the beach</u>	Doing something that is unnecessary or of no use at all is said to be like taking sand to the beach . "Bringing a cake to Judy's party is like taking sand to the beach; she always uses a caterer."
<u>Like talking to a brick wall</u>	To say that a conversation with someone is like talking to a brick wall means that communication is impossible because there is no reaction or response. "I tried to discuss the problem with him but it was like talking to a brick wall."



<p><u>Like there's no tomorrow.</u> (also: as if there were no tomorrow)</p>	<p>If someone does something like there's no tomorrow, they do it fast and eagerly, and regardless of the future, as if this could be their last opportunity to do it. "I don't understand him; he's spending money like there's no tomorrow."</p>
<p><u>Like a thief in the night</u></p>	<p>Someone who acts like a thief in the night does something secretly or in an unexpected manner. "He left the company like a thief in the night, without telling his colleagues or saying goodbye."</p>
<p><u>Like a ton of bricks</u></p>	<p>If somebody comes down on you like a ton of bricks, they criticize you severely because you have done something wrong.</p>
<p><u>Like water off a duck's back</u></p>	<p>To say that something, such as criticism or advice, is like water off a duck's back means that it has no effect at all. "He's warned of the dangers of smoking but it's like water off a duck's back."</p>
<p><u>Likely story</u></p>	<p>This expression is used to say that you do not believe what has just been said. "He said he'd found the money on the street - that's a likely story!"</p>
<p><u>Bottom line</u></p>	<p>If you use the term bottom line in an explanation or discussion, you refer to the most important or fundamental point.</p>
<p><u>Cross the line.</u></p>	<p>To cross the line means to go beyond the authorized limits by doing something unacceptable.</p>
<p><u>Line of least resistance</u></p>	<p>If you opt for the line of least resistance, you choose the easiest way of doing something. "To make sure the children would stay inside, he chose the line of least resistance and rented a film."</p>
<p><u>Read between the lines.</u></p>	<p>To read between the lines means to understand a situation without a clear explanation or full details.</p>
<p><u>Lion's den</u></p>	<p>If you walk into the lion's den, you find yourself in a difficult situation in which you have to face unfriendly or aggressive people.</p>
<p><u>Lion's share</u></p>	<p>The lion's share of something is the largest portion, or the best part. "He left very little money to his children; the lion's share was donated to charity."</p>
<p><u>Lip service</u></p>	<p>If you pay lip service to an idea or cause, you give verbal support or approval but fail to actually do anything. "In spite of promising equal pay for women, the management is suspected of paying lip service to the promotion of women's rights."</p>
<p><u>Keep a stiff upper lip</u></p>	<p>If a person keeps a stiff upper lip, they contain their emotion and do not let other people see their feelings. "When she heard the bad news, she kept a stiff upper lip."</p>
<p><u>Lick/smack one's lips</u></p>	<p>To say that a person is licking or smacking their lips means that they are showing that they are excited about something and are eager for it to happen. "They were smacking their lips at the idea of the money they were going to make."</p>
<p><u>Lips are sealed</u></p>	<p>If you say that your lips are sealed, you promise not to reveal a secret. "I promise I won't tell anyone. My lips are sealed!"</p>



<p><u>Live</u> lipstick on a pig</p>	<p>This expression means that trying to 'dress up' something unappealing or ugly, in a vain attempt to make it look better, is like putting lipstick on a pig. "Flowers will not improve that ugly old bridge; every one agrees that it's lipstick on a pig."</p>
<p><u>Live</u> beyond one's means</p>	<p>If someone lives beyond their means, they spend more money than they earn or can afford. "The cost of living was so much higher in New York that he was soon living beyond his means."</p>
<p><u>Live</u> in clover</p>	<p>Someone who lives in clover has enough money to lead a very comfortable life. "I dream of making an enormous amount of money and living the rest of my life in clover!"</p>
<p><u>Live</u> from hand to mouth</p>	<p>If you live from hand to mouth, you don't have enough money to save. Whatever you earn is spent on food and other essentials. "Most families in that poor area live from hand to mouth."</p>
<p><u>Live</u> high off the hog</p>	<p>Someone who lives high off the hog has a lot of money and a very comfortable lifestyle. "Now he's wealthy and living high off the hog."</p>
<p><u>Live</u> in an ivory tower.</p>	<p>A person who lives in an ivory tower has a lifestyle which preserves them from the problems and difficulties experienced by others. "You're completely out of touch - it's time to come out of your ivory tower and see what's going on!"</p>
<p><u>Live</u> a lie</p>	<p>If you spend your life hiding something important about yourself, or inventing something which is not true, you live a lie. "To hide his humble origins, he told his wife he had no family and spent his life living a lie."</p>
<p><u>Live</u> out of a suitcase</p>	<p>Someone who lives out of a suitcase travels a lot, moving from place to place, and is therefore restricted to the contents of their suitcase. "Sarah's new job involves so much travelling that she lives out of a suitcase most of the time."</p>
<p><u>Live</u> the life of Riley</p>	<p>If you live the life of Riley, you have a comfortable and enjoyable life, without having to work too hard. "He married a millionaire, and since then he's been living the life of Riley."</p>
<p><u>Live</u> to fight another day</p>	<p>This expression means that even though you have had a negative experience, you will have another chance in the future to try again. "He was defeated in the final match but he lived to fight another day."</p>
<p><u>Live</u> to tell the tale</p>	<p>Someone who lives to tell the tale survives a terrible experience. "Only two members of the expedition lived to tell the tale."</p>
<p><u>Live</u> up to one's/its reputation</p>	<p>If someone or something lives up to its reputation, it's as good, or as bad, as people say. "The guesthouse lived up to its reputation; the owners were as friendly and hospitable as we had been told."</p>
<p><u>Live</u> wire</p>	<p>Someone who is highly vivacious, energetic and full of enthusiasm is a live wire. "Things have brightened up since Charlie arrived. He's a real live wire."</p>



<u>Living on borrowed time</u>	This expression refers to a period of time after an illness or accident which could have caused death. "After heart surgery, some patients say they're living on borrowed time."
<u>Lo and behold!</u>	This term is used to express surprise, especially at a sudden or unexpected appearance. "I was watering the flowers, when lo and behold , there was the watch I'd lost!"
A <u>load</u>/weight off somebody's mind	If something takes a load or weight off somebody's mind , it brings great relief because a problem has been solved. "When the company closed down, finding a new job took a load off Tom's mind."
<u>Loan shark</u>	A loan shark is an unauthorised person who lends money at extremely high interest rates to people who are unable to obtain a loan from the bank. "The young immigrant was beaten because he was late paying back money to a loan shark."
<u>Lock horns</u>	If you lock horns with somebody, you argue or fight with them about something. "If there is another incident like that in the building, the occupants will be locking horns!"
<u>Lock, stock and barrel</u>	This expression means 'everything'. "Julie found the apartment empty. David had taken everything - lock, stock and barrel! "
At <u>loggerheads</u>	If you are at loggerheads with a person or organization, you disagree very strongly with them. "Management and trade unions are at loggerheads over the decision to close down the plant."
Not by a <u>long chalk</u>/a long shot	This expression means 'not at all' and is used to emphasise a statement, especially a negative one "The matter hasn't been settled yet, not by a long chalk! "
<u>Long in the tooth</u>	A person who is long in the tooth is a bit too old to do something. "She's a bit long in the tooth for a cabaret dancer isn't she?"
A <u>long row to hoe</u>	This expression refers to a difficult task, assignment or undertaking that will take a long time. "Getting through medical school is going to be a long row to hoe. "
(Have come) a <u>long way</u>	When someone has come a long way , they have made a lot of progress or have become successful. "Tony has come a long way since he opened his first little restaurant."
By the <u>look of things</u>	This expression is used to express an opinion based on what you actually see. "I glanced into the kitchen, and by the look of things dinner will be late."
<u>Look before you leap</u>	This is something you say when advising someone to think carefully about the possible problems before doing something. "Don't decide too quickly. Look before you leap!"
<u>Look daggers at someone</u>	Someone who looks daggers at another looks at them very angrily. "David looked daggers at Paul when he invited his new girlfriend to dance."



<p><u>Look</u> down your nose</p>	<p>If someone looks down their nose at a person or thing, they consider that person or thing as inferior. "Intellectuals often look down their noses at amusement parks and such."</p>
<p><u>Look</u> like something the cat dragged in</p>	<p>If you compare a person or thing to something the cat dragged in, you think they look dirty, untidy or generally unappealing. "My teenage son often looks like something the cat dragged in."</p>
<p><u>Look</u> like the cat that ate the canary</p>	<p>If, after an achievement or success, a person appears very self-satisfied or pleased with themselves, you can say that they look like that cat that ate the canary. "When the boss complimented him on his work, Steve looked like the cat that ate the canary."</p>
<p><u>Look</u> on the bright side</p>	<p>If you look on the bright side, you view a mostly unpleasant situation in a positive and optimistic way and see the favourable aspects. "OK. You know nobody, But there's a bright side - you'll make lots of new friends!"</p>
<p><u>Look</u> the part</p>	<p>If you look the part, your appearance makes you ideally suited for a particular job or role. "It was a mistake to chose a pretty young girl to play the witch. She didn't look the part at all."</p>
<p><u>Look</u> a picture</p>	<p>If someone or something looks a picture, they look very pretty. "The little girl looked a picture in her new dress."</p>
<p><u>Look</u> the picture of health</p>	<p>To look the picture of health means to look completely or extremely healthy. "Nice to see you again Mr. Brown. I must say you look the picture of health."</p>
<p><u>Look</u> a sight</p>	<p>If a person looks a sight, their appearance is awful, unsuitable or very untidy. "She looks a sight in that dress!"</p>
<p><u>Look</u> out for number one</p>	<p>If you take care of yourself first and look after your own interests rather than those of other people, you look out for number one. "Andy's father told him that looking out for number one should be his first priority."</p>
<p><u>Loose</u> cannon</p>	<p>Someone who is referred to as a loose cannon is a member of a group who cannot be completely trusted because of unpredictable and irresponsible behaviour which can cause trouble or danger. "Keep an eye on Jamie. He tends to turn into a loose cannon when he has a few drinks."</p>
<p>Be at a <u>loose</u> end</p>	<p>A person who is at a loose end has some spare time, and feels quite bored by having nothing in particular to do. "When the meeting was cancelled at the last minute, Julie unexpectedly found herself at a loose end."</p>
<p><u>Lose</u> one's marbles</p>	<p>If someone loses their marbles, they become mentally confused, or no longer behave sensibly or rationally. "The old man is acting very strangely. He seems to have lost his marbles."</p>



<u>Lose the plot</u>	If a situation becomes so confusing that you are unable to understand what is happening or what you are supposed to do, you lose the plot . "His instructions were so long and confusing that I just lost the plot!"
<u>Lose your shirt</u>	If you lose your shirt , you lose all your money or possessions, especially as a result of speculation or gambling. "He lost his shirt when the bank went bankrupt."
<u>Lose one's touch</u>	If you lose your touch , you no longer have the ability to do something. "I used to be good at organizing trips but I've lost my touch!"
<u>Lose the thread</u>	If you lose the thread of something such as a conversation or a story, you are unable to follow it. "There were so many interruptions during the film that I completely lost the thread."
<u>Lose track of time</u>	When you give all your attention to something, and become so engrossed in it that you don't realize what time it is, you lose track of time . "When I start surfing on the web, I lose all track of time."
<u>Lose your train of thought</u>	If you forget what you were saying, for example after a disturbance or interruption, you lose your train of thought . "Where was I? I'm afraid I've lost my train of thought!"
<u>At a loss</u>	If a person is at a loss , they don't know what to say or do in a particular situation. "Teachers are at a loss to know how to deal with the increase in violence in schools."
<u>A lost ball in high weeds</u>	Someone who is totally confused, and doesn't know what they are doing or how to do it, is a lost ball in high weeds . "The new intern is a lost ball in high weeds - he has no idea how to begin the task he's been given."
<u>Love me, love my dog</u>	This expression means that if someone loves you, they must love everything about you, including everyone and everything that you love.
<u>No love lost</u>	To say that there is no love lost between two people means that they do not like each other at all. "There is no love lost between the Conservative Party and the Liberal Party."
<u>At a low ebb</u>	A person or organization at a low ebb is not as strong or successful as usual. "The recent political crisis has left the country at a low ebb."
<u>Low-hanging fruit</u>	To refer to something as low-hanging fruit means that it is a target that can be easily reached, or a goal that can be accomplished with a minimum of effort. "Teenagers are low-hanging fruit for fashionable mobile devices."
<u>Luck of the draw</u>	To refer to something that happens as the luck of the draw means that it is the result of pure chance, with no possibility of choice. "The samples distributed varied in size and value; it was the luck of the draw!"



The <u>lull</u> before the storm	This expression refers to a period of unnatural calm before a difficult time or violent activity. "The sales start on January 1st. The quiet period before that is just the lull before the storm."
A <u>lump</u> in your throat	If you have a lump in your throat , you have a tight feeling in your throat because of a strong emotion such as sadness or gratitude. "The speech was so touching that I had a lump in my throat."
In the <u>lurch</u>	If you leave someone in the lurch , you leave them in a difficult or embarrassing situation. "When Paul missed the last bus, he was left in the lurch."

	<u>Idiom</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
M	<u>Mad as a hatter</u>	To say that someone is as mad as a hatter means that they are very strange or insane. "The old lady next door is as mad as a hatter. She says the strangest things!"
	<u>Made of money</u>	A person who is made of money is very rich and can buy whatever they want. "Hey! I can't afford that much! I'm not made of money!"
	<u>Make an ass of yourself</u>	If you behave so stupidly that you appear ridiculous, you make an ass of yourself . "Tom made an ass of himself by singing a love song outside Julie's door!"
	<u>Make a beeline for something</u>	If you make a beeline for something, you hurry directly towards something. "They were so hot and thirsty they made a beeline for the cool drinks section."
	<u>Make a big thing (of something)</u>	If you attach a lot of importance to something, or make it a special occasion, you make a big thing of it . "It's Jack's birthday but he doesn't want to make a big thing of it, so please don't mention it."
	<u>Make the best of things</u>	If you make the best of things , you accept the situation and do what you can in spite of the difficulties or disadvantages. "The apartment was badly located, but the rent was low, so they decided to make the best of things."
	<u>Make your blood boil</u>	If something makes your blood boil , it makes you really angry. "His condescending attitude made my blood boil!"
	<u>Make your blood run cold</u>	If something makes your blood run cold , it shocks or scares you a lot. "The look in the prisoner's eyes made my blood run cold."
	<u>Make cold calls</u>	If you make cold calls , you telephone potential customers from a list of people you do not know. "In my first job I had to make cold calls using the telephone directory."



<u>Make a comeback</u>	When someone makes a comeback , they succeed in returning to their former successful career. "After devoting several years to her children, she made a comeback on Broadway."
<u>Make the cut</u>	If you make the cut , you reach a required standard or succeed in passing from one round of a competition to another. "After intensive training, Sarah made the cut and joined the team."
<u>Make ends meet</u>	If you find it difficult to make ends meet , you find it difficult to pay for your everyday needs because you have very little money. "Anne's salary is so low she finds it hard to make ends meet."
<u>Make a go of (something)</u>	When you make a go of something, you succeed in your enterprise or produce good results. "He opened a restaurant and worked hard to make a go of it."
<u>Make one's flesh (or skin) crawl</u>	Something that makes your flesh crawl fills you with disgust or makes you feel very nervous. "Just talking about snakes makes my flesh crawl. "
<u>Make one's hair stand on end</u>	If you are absolutely terrified of something, it makes your hair stand on end . "Just the thought of getting on a plane makes my hair stand on end."
<u>Make headway</u>	If you make headway , you make progress in what you are trying to achieve. "Investigators have made little headway in their search for the causes of the catastrophe."
<u>Make inroads</u>	If someone or something makes inroads , for example in a new field or area, they advance successfully or make progress. "Foreign cars have made inroads into the European market."
<u>Make a killing</u>	If you say that someone has made a killing you mean that they have had great financial success "He made a killing on the stock market."
<u>Make light of something</u>	If you make light of something , you behave as though it is less serious than it really is. "He won several awards for his work but made light of it when the subject was mentioned."
<u>Make light work of something</u>	If a person makes light work of something, they do it very easily or with little effort. "After the party, the boys made light work of the cleaning up. The house was spotless when they left."
<u>Make mincemeat (of)</u>	If you make mincemeat of someone or something, you completely and utterly defeat or destroy them. "A good lawyer would make mincemeat of your rival's accusations."
<u>Make a mint</u>	If someone makes a mint , they make a large amount of money. They made a mint selling hamburgers outside the football stadium.
<u>Make a monkey (out) of someone</u>	If you humiliate someone by making them appear ridiculous or foolish, you make a monkey of that person. "That's enough teasing. Don't make a monkey out of him!"
<u>Make a mountain out of a molehill</u>	If someone makes a mountain out of a molehill , they make a small, unimportant problem seem much more serious than it is. "Stop making mountains out of molehills! It's not a major problem."



<u>Make your mouth water</u>	Food can make your mouth water when it looks and smells extremely good. "That delicious smell from the kitchen is making my mouth water."
<u>Make no bones about something</u>	If you make no bones about something , you don't hesitate to say something in a frank and open way. "I made no bones about it. I told him his offer was unacceptable."
<u>Make nothing of something</u>	If you make nothing of something, you attach no importance to it. "It took him an hour to walk to the station but he made nothing of it."
<u>Make one's hackles rise</u>	If someone makes your hackles rise , they make you angry. "Her constant criticism really makes my hackles rise!"
<u>Make or break</u>	Circumstances or events that will make or break someone or something will cause either total success or total ruin. "This assignment will make or break his career."
<u>Make a pig of yourself</u>	If you make a pig of yourself , you eat and drink too much. "Watch what you eat - don't make a pig of yourself!"
<u>Make a pig's ear (of something)</u>	If you make a pig's ear of something, you do a task or a chore very badly or make a complete mess of it. "Jack offered to paint the kitchen but he made a pig's ear of it."
<u>Make a point of doing something</u>	If you make a point of doing something , you make an effort to do something that you think is the right thing to do. "The singer made a point of thanking the musicians and the technicians."
<u>Make the right noises</u>	If you make the right noises , you behave as if you support or agree with something by making suitable or conventional remarks. "Jack seems to approve of the idea; he certainly made all the right noises."
<u>Make sense of something</u>	If you make sense of something , you manage to understand something that appears complicated or incomprehensible. "I couldn't make sense of the instructions."
<u>Make short work of something</u>	If you make short work of something, you do or finish something quickly. "The players were so hungry after the match that they made short work of the food provided."
<u>Make it snappy!</u>	If someone tells you to make it snappy , they are asking you very sharply to hurry up or to be quick about something. "Fetch me a bandage and make it snappy!"
<u>Make someone see reason</u>	If you make someone see reason , you persuade them to stop acting foolishly and behave more sensibly. "He wanted to drop out of medical school in his fourth year. His uncle managed to make him see reason."
<u>Make a song and dance</u>	If someone complains in an annoying way or becomes unnecessarily excited about something unimportant, they make a song and dance about it. "OK. You don't like carrots! There's no need to make a song and dance about it!"



<u>Make your way (to)</u>	If you make your way to a destination, you manage to go there without difficulty. "Don't worry. I'll make my way to your home from the station."
<u>Make yourself scarce</u>	If you make yourself scarce , you leave a place in order to avoid an embarrassing situation. "When Mark and Sally started to argue, I decided to make myself scarce."
<u>Make up for lost time</u>	If you make up for lost time , you increase your efforts or work harder to complete something or meet a deadline. "Progress has stopped because of bad weather, but we are determined to make up for lost time."
To be off the <u>mark</u>.	If something is off the mark , it is incorrect or inaccurate.
Find/meet your <u>match</u>	If you find or meet your match , you encounter someone who is equal to you in skills or abilities. "Barry is an excellent tennis player, but he met his match in William."
<u>Means business</u>	If someone means business , they are serious about what they announce. "The boss says that in future any missing material will be reported to the police, and he looks as though he means business."
A taste of one's own <u>medicine</u>	If you give someone a taste of their own medicine , you treat them in the same unpleasant way that they have treated you. "People who always arrive late should be given a taste of their own medicine."
<u>Meet someone half-way</u>	If you meet someone half way , you accept to make a compromise and give them part of what they are trying to obtain. "We can't agree to all your conditions but we could perhaps agree to meet half-way."
<u>Meet your maker</u>	This expression is used to say (often humorously) that someone has died. "Poor old Mr. Potter has gone to meet his maker."
<u>Meet-and-greet</u>	This term refers to a reception (often informal) where a public figure or important person can introduce themselves and talk to the guests. "The new mayor is going to schedule a meet-and-greet reception for the residents."
<u>Megaphone diplomacy</u>	If the media, through press releases, interviews and announcements, is instrumental in facilitating dialogue between two or more countries, this is referred to as megaphone diplomacy .
Trip down <u>memory lane</u>	If you take a trip (stroll or walk) down memory lane , you remember pleasant things that happened in the past. "Every Christmas is a trip down memory for the family when our parents take out the photograph albums."
On the <u>mend</u>	Someone who is on the mend is getting better after an illness. "My grandmother has not been very well this last while but she's on the mend now."
<u>Method in one's madness</u>	This expression means that someone's behaviour is not as irrational as it seems. "He's efficient despite his strange way of working, so there's method in his madness! "



<u>Middle of nowhere</u>	If a place is in the middle of nowhere , it is in a remote area, far from towns, villages or houses. "The campsite was in the middle of nowhere so I couldn't send you a postcard."
<u>Middle of the road (MOR)</u>	This expression refers to anything moderate, unadventurous or inoffensive, that avoids extremes and appeals to the majority of people. "He's a successful middle-of-the-road entertainer. My mother wouldn't miss a show!"
<u>Smack dab in the middle</u>	If something is smack dab in the middle , it's right in the centre. "I couldn't hide the stain on my shirt. It was smack dab in the middle."
<u>Burn the midnight oil</u>	A person who burns the midnight oil stays up very late at night in order to finish a piece of work. "Tony is working hard for his exams. He's been burning the midnight oil all week."
<u>Might is right</u>	This saying expresses the belief that being the most powerful person or country gives you the right to do whatever you want. "There are still many leaders today who believe that might is right. "
<u>Milk of human kindness</u>	Someone who has, or is full of, the milk of human kindness , is naturally kind and compassionate to others. " She's a wonderful person - full of the milk of human kindness."
<u>A chance in a million</u>	A chance in a million is a very small chance, or no chance at all, that something will happen.
<u>Feel/look like a million dollars</u>	If you look/feel like a million dollars , you look/feel extremely good. "With a tan and a new hairstyle, she looked like a million dollars."
<u>Never in a million years</u>	This expression means "absolutely never" "I will never in a million years understand why Anne married Bob."
<u>A millstone around your neck</u>	Something described as a millstone around your neck refers to a problem or responsibility that becomes a burden and a source of worry. "The money he borrowed became a millstone around his neck"
<u>(Not) mince one's words</u>	Someone who does not mince their words expresses their ideas, opinions or thoughts very clearly, even if they offend others by doing so. "Come on John. Tell us what you really think - and don't mince your words."
<u>Mind over matter</u>	The mental power to influence one's body and overcome physical difficulties is said to be a question of mind over matter . "He knew he could not be cured, but he managed to live until the baby was born - a case of mind over matter."
<u>Mind your own business</u>	Telling someone to mind their own business is a way of saying that they are too interested in what other people are doing, or that they are interfering in something that does not concern them. "Don't tell me what to do - just mind your own business!"
<u>A mind of your own</u>	If you have a mind of your own , you are capable of forming an opinion and making decisions without being influenced by others. "That boy doesn't need any advice; he's got a mind of his own."
<u>Cross your mind</u>	If an idea or thought " crosses your mind ", you suddenly think of it. "It has just crossed my mind that the shops are closed today."



<p>The <u>mind</u> boggles.</p>	<p>The expression "the mind boggles" is used as a reaction to something you find amazing or difficult to understand.</p>
<p><u>Mind</u> your P's and Q's</p>	<p>If you tell someone to mind their P's and Q's, you are advising them to be careful about how they behave and what they say. "Politeness is very important to my grandparents, so mind your P's and Q's when we go to visit them."</p>
<p>In one's <u>mind's</u> eye</p>	<p>If you can visualise something, or see an image of it in your mind, you see it in your mind's eye. "I can see the village in my mind's eye but I can't remember the name."</p>
<p>In two <u>minds</u></p>	<p>If you are in two minds about something, you have difficulty deciding what to do. "I'm in two minds about whether or not to accept the offer."</p>
<p>Out of your <u>mind</u></p>	<p>If you ask someone if they've gone out of their mind, you think they are crazy, foolish or insane. "You're going to ask for a 100% increase in salary? Have you gone out of your mind?"</p>
<p>In <u>mint</u> condition</p>	<p>Something that is in mint condition is in such perfect condition that it looks new or as good as new. "The car is 10 years old but according to Tom it's in mint condition."</p>
<p><u>Miss</u> the boat</p>	<p>If you miss the boat, you fail to take advantage of an opportunity because you don't act quickly enough. "I managed to get my order through before the end of the special offer - but I nearly missed the boat!"</p>
<p><u>Miss</u> the point</p>	<p>If you miss the point, you fail to understand the essential part of what has been said. "Sam missed the point. It's not the job that's a problem, it's the amount of work it involves for one person."</p>
<p>Not <u>miss</u> a trick</p>	<p>If a person never misses a trick, they are very aware or alert. "The old lady next door will know if Bill is there or not - she never misses a trick!"</p>
<p><u>Mix</u> business with pleasure</p>	<p>When people mix business with pleasure, they combine work and leisure or social activities. "Seminars or training sessions that include leisure activities are a good way of mixing business and pleasure."</p>
<p><u>Mixed</u> blessing</p>	<p>Something pleasant which also has disadvantages is called a mixed blessing. "He inherited an 18th century mansion, but the maintenance costs make it a mixed blessing."</p>
<p><u>Mixed</u> feelings</p>	<p>When you have mixed feelings about something, you react to it with conflicting emotions; you are happy and unhappy at the same time. "I had mixed feelings about leaving the company. I was excited about my new job but sad to be leaving my colleagues."</p>
<p><u>Moment</u> of truth</p>	<p>A critical or decisive time when you face the reality of a situation, and find out if your efforts have succeeded, is called the moment of truth. "The moment of truth has arrived - I'm going to serve my first soufflé!"</p>



<u>Money burns a hole in your pocket</u>	To say that money burns a hole in somebody's pocket means that they are eager to spend it quickly or extravagantly. "As soon as she's paid she goes shopping. Money burns a hole in her pocket!"
<u>Money to burn</u>	People who have money to burn have so much money that they can spend it on anything they want.
<u>Money doesn't grow on trees!</u>	To say that money doesn't grow on trees means that it is not plentiful or easily obtained. "Be careful how you spend your money David. It doesn't grow on trees you know!"
<u>Money for jam</u>	A very easy way of earning money is called money for jam . "All you've got to do is hand out brochures. It's money for jam!"
<u>Money for old rope</u>	This expression refers to money earned from a task that requires very little effort. "Getting paid for watering the garden is money for old rope! "
<u>Money laundering</u>	When people launder money , they manage to conceal the source of illegally-obtained money so that it is believed to be legitimate. "Certain countries have been accused of facilitating money laundering."
<u>Money spinner</u>	If an activity is a money spinner , it is a very successful way of making money. "Washing cars was quite a money spinner when I was a student."
<u>Money talks</u>	Money talks means that people with a lot of money have power and influence.
<u>Put money where your mouth is</u>	If you put money where your mouth is , you give financial support to activities and causes that you believe are right.
<u>Rake in the money</u>	If you rake in the money , you make money in large quantities. "Bob's business is so successful, he's raking in the money."
<u>Throw money at something</u>	If you throw money at something , you try to solve a problem by spending money on it, without using any other methods. "The refugee problem cannot be solved just by throwing money at it."
<u>Money's worth</u>	If you get your money's worth , you receive good value for the amount of money you spend. "We bought a travel pass to use the public transport system and we really got our money's worth."
<u>Make a monkey (out) of someone</u>	If you humiliate someone by making them appear ridiculous or foolish, you make a monkey of that person. "That's enough teasing. Don't make a monkey out of him!"
<u>Monkey business</u>	An activity which is organized in a deceitful or dishonest way is called monkey business . "The results announced seem suspicious - I think there's some monkey business going on!"
<u>Month of Sundays</u>	This expression is an amusing way of referring to a very long period of time. "I haven't been to the theatre in a month of Sundays ."
<u>Once in a blue moon</u>	Something that happens once in a blue moon is something that happens rarely or hardly ever.
<u>Over the moon</u>	If you are over the moon about something, you are very happy about it. "When she heard the results of the exam, Caroline was over the moon."



Reach for the <u>moon</u>	If you reach for the moon , you are very ambitious and try to achieve something even if it's difficult "Jenny is talented and ambitious; she always tends to reach for the moon."
Do a <u>moonlight flit</u>	If you do a moonlight flit , you leave a place quickly and in secret, usually to avoid paying debts. "Just before the rent was due he did a moonlight flit."
A <u>moot point</u>	A subject which gives rise to argument or debate is called a moot point . "Whether Bach composed it himself or not is a moot point among musicians."
<u>More by accident than (by) design</u>	Something which happens more by accident than (by) design is done without deliberate intention. "I became an interpreter more by accident than design; nobody else could speak the language of the refugees."
<u>More fun than a barrel of monkeys</u>	If something is very amusing or enjoyable, you can say it is more fun than a barrel of monkeys . "The TV quiz was more fun than a barrel of monkeys."
<u>More heat than light</u>	If a discussion or debate generates more heat than light , it causes anger or intense reaction but doesn't clarify anything. "The meeting that was held to discuss the problem generated more heat than light."
<u>More than meets the eye</u>	When something (or someone) is more complicated, difficult or interesting than it appears, it is said that there is more than meets the eye . "He said he simply sold his shares, but I think there's more to it than meets the eye."
<u>More money than sense</u>	If you have more money than sense , you have a lot of money which you waste by spending it in a foolish manner. "He celebrated the birth of the baby by buying a sports car. He's got more money than sense!"
<u>More power to your elbow!</u>	This is said to express praise or encouragement to someone for doing something. "I've left my job and I'm going to work free-lance from now on." "Well, more power to your elbow! "
<u>Mouse potato</u>	This term refers to a person who spends a lot of time in front of the computer. "My son and his friends are all mouse potatoes - constantly glued to the computer!"
All <u>mouth</u> and no trousers	This is said of someone who talks a lot about doing something but never actually does it. "He keeps saying he's going to resign and travel around the world, but he's all mouth and no trousers! "
<u>Butter wouldn't melt in your mouth</u>	If you say that somebody looks as if butter wouldn't melt in their mouth , you are saying that they look completely innocent, but that they are capable of doing unpleasant things.
Say a <u>mouthful</u>	If you make an important, perceptive or lengthy remark, you say a mouthful . "The customer said a mouthful when he gave the main reason for his dissatisfaction."



<u>Move the goalposts</u>	During a course of action, if someone moves the goalposts , they change the rules or conditions. "We've decided on a sales campaign. Let's hope the boss doesn't move the goalposts halfway through! "
<u>Move heaven and earth</u>	To say that you will move heaven and earth means that you are prepared to do everything that is possible in order to obtain or achieve something. "I promise I will move heaven and earth to get a work permit for you."
<u>Move in the same circles</u>	When people move in the same circles , they socialize with others who have a similar background, interests or lifestyle. "I've never met the owner of the castle personally. We don't move in the same circles!"
<u>Move up in the world</u>	A person who moves up in the world becomes more important in society or more successful in their career. "Rachel Jones has moved up in the world since we were kids."
<u>Movers and shakers</u>	The term movers and shakers refers to people in power who take an active part in making things happen. "Movers and shakers are assembling in Brussels for the summit."
<u>Much obliged</u>	Some people use this expression to say that they are very thankful or grateful. "It's raining Mr. Brown. Take my umbrella." " Much obliged. "
<u>Much of a muchness</u>	This expression means 'very similar' or 'almost alike' "It's difficult to choose between the two hotels - they're much of a muchness really."
<u>Muddy the waters</u>	If you muddy the waters , you make something less clear by giving confusing information "I had difficulty understanding, but Alan's explanation just muddied the waters!"
<u>Mug's game</u>	An unprofitable or ill-advised activity that only a fool (mug) would do is called a mug's game . "Spending hours making home-made cakes for a few customers is a mug's game."
<u>Mum's the word</u>	To say " Mum's the word " means that the subject or plan is a secret and must not be revealed. "We're organizing a surprise event on New Year's Eve, so Mum's the word - OK?"
<u>Murder something</u>	If you say that you could murder something , such as food or drink, you mean that you want it very much. "I'm so hot and thirsty I could murder a cold drink."
<u>To be murder</u>	To say that something is murder means that it is very difficult or uncomfortable The journey home through the storm was absolute murder.
<u>Get away with murder</u>	To say that someone gets away with murder means that you think they can do something unacceptable without being punished or criticized. "Some parents let their kids get away with murder!"
<u>Murphy's law</u>	Referring to Murphy's law expresses a sentiment of bad luck and the idea that if anything can go wrong, it will. "We've tried to prepare for every possible incident, but remember Murphy's law ..."



<u>Music to your ears.</u>	To say that something is music to your ears , means that the information you receive makes you feel very happy. "His compliments were music to my ears."
<u>Mutton dressed as lamb</u>	This expression refers to a middle-aged or older woman trying to look younger than her age by dressing in clothes designed for younger people. "The style doesn't suit her at all - it has a ' mutton dressed as lamb ' effect."
<u>My way or the highway!</u>	If you say to someone " it's my way or the highway " you are telling that person that either they accept what you tell them to do or they leave the project. "You don't have much choice when someone says : "It's my way or the highway."

	<u>Idiom</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
N	<u>Nailing jelly to the wall</u>	To say that something is like nailing jelly to the wall , you mean that it is extremely difficult to do, if not impossible. "Keeping track of his movements is like nailing jelly to the wall."
	<u>Your name is mud</u>	To say that a person's name is mud means that they have acquired a bad reputation because of something they have done or said. "His name is mud now after the revelations in the newspaper."
	<u>Name (written) on it</u>	If something has someone's name (written) on it , it is intended for that person or is ideally suited to them. "That dress would be perfect for you - it's got your name on it!"
	<u>A pain in the neck</u>	If you refer to a person as a pain in the neck , you think they are very irritating or annoying.
	<u>Neck and neck</u>	In a contest or competition, when two competitors reach the same level, they are said to be neck and neck , so it is impossible to say who will win. "At the moment the two teams are neck and neck for the World Cup."
	<u>Needs must (when the devil drives)</u>	This expression means that you are sometimes forced by circumstances to do something that you do not want to do. "I'd rather stay with you than attend the conference, but needs must...! "
	<u>A needle in a haystack</u>	To refer to something as a needle in a haystack means that it is very difficult or impossible to find. "Finding a pub in Dublin without knowing its name is like looking for a needle in a haystack!"
	<u>Neither here nor there</u>	Something which is neither here nor there is unimportant or irrelevant. "Why the problem wasn't discovered earlier is neither here nor there. What's important now is to find a solution."
	<u>Nerves of steel</u>	Someone who has nerves of steel is not afraid in a difficult or dangerous situation. "You need to have nerves of steel to drive on those mountain roads."
	<u>Nest egg</u>	If you have a nest egg , you have a reserve of money which you put aside for future needs. "Our parents consider the money from the sale of their house as a nest egg for their old age."
	<u>Never a dull moment!</u>	When there is never a dull moment , something is always changing or happening.



	"With four teenagers at home, there's never a dull moment!
<u>Never looked back</u>	If you say that you have never looked back , you mean that after an event which changed your life for the better, you continue to be happy with the situation. "Since the day she decided to work from home, she has never looked back."
<u>Never mind</u>	When you say " never mind " to someone, you are telling them not to worry, that it is not important. "When the child broke the cup Susan said : "never mind - it was an old cup."
<u>Never rains but pours</u>	This expression is used to comment on the fact that when something bad happens, other bad things often happen too, and make the situation even worse. "First he forgot his briefcase, then he lost his wallet, and when he reached the car park, his car had been stolen - it never rains but it pours! "
<u>Never say die</u>	This expression is used to encourage someone to persevere in their efforts and not give up or abandon their project. "Keep going. It's too soon to give up. Never say die! "
<u>New to this game</u>	To say that you are new to this game means that you have never been involved in this sort of activity before. "I want to join Facebook but I don't know how to start. I'm afraid I'm new to this game!"
<u>New lease of life</u>	A person who has a new lease of life has a chance to live longer or with greater enjoyment or satisfaction. "Moving closer to his children has given him a new lease of life."
<u>Next to nothing</u>	The term next to nothing means a very small amount or almost nothing. "My boots were a real bargain. I bought them for next to nothing in the sales."
<u>Next best thing</u>	If you can't have exactly what you want, the next best thing is the best alternative possible. "The camera I wanted was far too expensive so I opted for a cheaper one that was the next best thing."
<u>Nice as pie</u>	If a person is nice as pie , they are surprisingly very kind and friendly "After our argument, she was nice as pie!"
<u>In the nick of time</u>	If something happens in the nick of time, it happens at the last minute, when it is nearly too late. "The child was standing in front of the open window. His mother arrived in the nick of time."
<u>Night owl</u>	Someone who is lively and active at night and goes to bed very late is called a night owl . "I work better in the evenings than in the morning. My friends say I'm a night owl."
<u>Nine-day wonder</u>	An event which is a nine-day wonder causes interest, surprise or excitement for a short time, but it doesn't last. "His sudden departure was a nine-day wonder but he was soon forgotten."
<u>Nine times out of ten</u>	When something happens nine times out of ten , it almost always happens.



	"The public transport system is very bad. Trains arrive late nine times out of ten."
On cloud <u>nine</u>	A person who is on cloud nine is very happy because something wonderful has happened. "When the boss announced my promotion, I was on cloud nine!"
Dressed up to the <u>nines</u>	To describe someone as dressed up to the nines means that they are wearing very smart or glamorous clothes. "Caroline must be going to a party - she's dressed up to the nines!"
<u>Nineteen</u> to the dozen	If someone talks nineteen to the dozen , they speak very quickly. "He was talking nineteen to the dozen so I didn't catch the whole story!"
<u>Nitty-gritty</u>	When people get down to the nitty-gritty , they begin to discuss the most important points or the practical details. "I was interested in the project, but we didn't get down to the nitty-gritty until his partner arrived."
<u>No</u> accounting for taste	This expression is used to indicate surprise at another person's likes or dislikes "She fell in love with a guy who's short, fat, bald and poor ... well, there's no accounting for taste! "
<u>No</u>-brainer	A decision or choice that requires little or no thought, because the best option is so obvious, is called a no-brainer . "The choice was between a cash refund or having the amount credited to my account - it was a no-brainer! - I took the cash!"
<u>No</u> dice!	If someone asks you for something and you reply " no dice " you mean that it is impossible or that it can't be done. "Can you lend me your car?" "Sorry, no dice."
<u>No</u> end	This expression is another way of saying 'very much'. "Aunt Bessie was pleased no end to be invited to your wedding."
<u>No</u> fixed abode	A person of no fixed abode has nowhere permanent to live. "A 30-year-old man, of no fixed abode, was charged with the burglary."
A <u>no-go</u> area	A no-go area is an area, particularly in a city, where it is dangerous to go. "Tourists have been advised to avoid parts of the city which have become no-go areas."
<u>No</u> great shakes	To say that something or someone is no great shakes means that they are useless, ineffective or not very good. "He's a good actor but his last film was no great shakes."
<u>No</u> hard feelings	If you have no hard feelings , you feel no resentment or bitterness about something. When Jack was promoted instead of Steve, he said to Steve : "No hard feelings I hope."
<u>No</u> holds barred	This expression, which derives from wrestling, is used to describe something done with no restraints, limits or rules of conduct. "It's a live talk show with no holds barred , which is not to everyone's taste."
<u>No</u> smoke without fire	If it is said by many people that something bad is happening, there must be some truth in it. "Although no proof was ever found, people say there's no smoke without fire. "
There are <u>no</u> two ways about it	To say that there are no two ways about it means that there is only one suitable way of dealing with something. "There's no two ways about it. You can't accept the money, so you



	must give it back."
<u>Nodding terms</u>	If you are on nodding terms with someone, you don't know them very well, just well enough to say 'hello' when you meet them. "We haven't made any friends yet but we're on nodding terms with our neighbours."
<u>Non-sequitur</u>	This latin term refers to a statement which does not seem to be a logical follow-up to the previous statement or argument. "After announcing the merger, the chairman began talking about global warming which seemed a complete non sequitur ."
<u>Nose out of joint</u>	If a person's nose is out of joint , they have been upset, embarrassed or offended by somebody or something. "When he discovered that he wasn't on the invitation list, that really put his nose out of joint."
<u>Keep your nose clean</u>	A person who keeps their nose clean behaves well and avoids trouble.
<u>Keep your nose to the grindstone</u>	A person who keeps their nose to the grindstone is someone who concentrates on working hard at his job.
<u>Look down your nose</u>	To look down your nose at a thing or person, means that you treat that thing or person with contempt, or consider them inferior.
<u>Turn up your nose at something</u>	If you " turn up your nose " at something, you reject it because it is not good enough for you.
<u>Not a hair out of place</u>	To say that someone does not have a hair out of place means that their appearance is perfect. "Angela is always impeccably dressed - never a hair out of place!"
<u>Not all there</u>	Someone who is not all there behaves strangely at times, or seems a bit odd. "Our new neighbour wears a hat and coat even in summer; I don't think he's quite all there!"
<u>Not for all the tea in China</u>	To say that you would not do something for all the tea in China means that you would not do it under any conditions. "I wouldn't live there for all the tea in China."
<u>Not for love or money</u>	If you say that you cannot or will not do something for love or money , you mean that you cannot or will not do it under any circumstances. "I would <i>not</i> try bungee jumping <i>for love or money!</i> "
<u>Not by a long chalk/a long shot</u>	This expression means 'not at all' and is used to emphasise a statement, especially a negative one "The matter hasn't been settled yet, not by a long chalk! "
<u>Not getting anywhere</u>	If you are not getting anywhere , you are making no progress at all. "I've spent the whole day looking for a solution but I'm not getting anywhere."
<u>Not give a hang about something</u>	If you do not give a hang about something, you are totally indifferent to it and do not care at all about it. "I'm not interested in football so I don't give a hang about which team wins."
<u>Not have a stitch on</u>	Someone who does not have a stitch on is wearing no clothes and is therefore completely naked. "When the doorbell rang, he didn't have a stitch on!"
<u>Not in the same league</u>	If something is not in the same league , it is of a much lower standard than something else. "He had a good voice but he wasn't in the same league as Pavarotti "



<u>Not lift a finger</u>	Someone who does not lift a finger makes no effort to help or provide assistance when it is needed. "Many people saw the boy falling off his bike but not one of them lifted a finger."
<u>Not lose sleep over something</u>	When something happens that in your opinion is not a cause for worry, you can say that you will not lose any sleep over it . "We didn't reach an agreement but I'm not going to lose any sleep over it."
<u>Not the only pebble on the beach</u>	To say that someone is not the only pebble on the beach means that they are not the only person worth consideration or interest. "He thinks his refusal to join the team will cause problems, but there are alternatives ... he's not the only pebble on the beach."
<u>A notch above</u>	Something that is a notch above something else is a little better in every way "His rendering of the song was a notch above the others."
<u>Strike (or hit) the right note</u>	If you strike (or hit) the right note , you say or do something suitable or appropriate. "He struck the right note with his future mother-in-law when he gave her a book on gardening - her favourite hobby!"
<u>Nothing doing!</u>	This expression is used to say that there is no way you would accept to do what is proposed. . "Work on Sunday? Nothing doing! "
<u>Nothing succeeds like success!</u>	This expression means that success often leads to further successes. "The success of my first book encouraged me to continue writing. Nothing succeeds like success! "
<u>Nothing to write home about</u>	If you refer to something as nothing to write home about , you mean that it is not of great interest or importance. "Okay, she's written a couple of books, but nothing to write home about."
<u>Nothing ventured, nothing gained</u>	This expression means that you cannot expect to achieve anything if you risk nothing. "He's going to ask his boss for a promotion even though he has little chance of obtaining satisfaction - nothing ventured, nothing gained! "
<u>Now you're talking!</u>	This expression is used to show encouragement or agreement with something that has just been said, for example a good idea. "If we take the underground we'll avoid the traffic." " Now you're talking! "
<u>Nowhere to be found</u>	To say that something is nowhere to be found means that, even after a thorough search, it is impossible to find it. "We looked everywhere for the cat but it was nowhere to be found."
<u>Null and void</u>	Something which is null and void has no legal force or is invalid. "The contract was declared null and void."
<u>Number cruncher</u>	This is a humorous way of referring to someone who is an accountant or who is very good at working with numbers and calculations. "She's a number cruncher who perfectly understands the organization's financial situation. "
<u>Nurse/bear/hold a grudge</u>	If you nurse a grudge against someone or something, you have a feeling of resentment or ill-will towards them. "Ever since I got a promotion, he's been nursing a grudge against me."
<u>Go nuts</u>	To say that a person has gone nuts means that they have become completely foolish, eccentric or mad.



<u>Nuts and bolts</u>	The nuts and bolts of something are the detailed facts and the practical aspects. "We need to discuss the nuts and bolts of the proposal before going any further."
<u>In a nutshell.</u>	You say in a nutshell when you give a brief summary of something. "In a nutshell, we disagreed and I left the company."

<u>Idiom</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
O At odds	If one person is at odds with another, they disagree.
<u>Odds and ends</u>	Odds and ends are small articles, or bits and pieces of all sorts, usually of little value. "I keep all my odds and ends in this drawer."
<u>Off-chance</u>	If you do something on the off chance , you think there might be a slight possibility of success. "I went into the little supermarket on the off chance that I would find a map."
<u>Off colour</u>	If you are off colour , you look or feel ill. "What's the matter with you Tom? You look a bit off colour today."
<u>Off the cuff</u>	If you speak off the cuff , you say something without any previous thought or preparation. "He handles off-the-cuff interviews very well."
<u>Off the peg</u>	Clothes which are bought off the peg are purchased in a standard size in a shop and are not made specially for you. "He can't afford to have his suits made to measure so he buys them off the peg."
<u>Off the record</u>	If you say something off the record , you do not want anyone to repeat it publicly. "My comment was made off the record, and shouldn't have been published"
<u>Off your rocker!</u>	If you tell someone that they are off their rocker , you think they are completely crazy! "You're going to give all your money away! You're off your rocker!"
<u>In the offing</u>	Something which is in the offing is likely to appear or happen soon. " Apparently a new law on minimum wages is in the offing."
<u>Pour oil on troubled waters</u>	If a person pours oil on troubled waters , they do or say something to calm a tense situation. "James is an good negotiator, and always manages to pour oil on troubled waters."
<u>Old dog for a hard road</u>	This expression means that experience is invaluable when one is faced with a difficult task. "The case calls for an experienced lawyer, an old dog for a hard road."



<u>Old wives' tale</u>	A traditional belief or idea which has been proved wrong by science is called an old wives' tale . "The belief that chocolate causes acne is an old wives' tale."
<u>Oldest trick in the book</u>	A well-known and much-used trick, which is still effective today, is called the oldest trick in the book . "He made a noise to attract my attention while his accomplice stole my wallet. It's the oldest trick in the book!"
<u>Olive branch</u>	If a person or organization holds out an olive branch to another, they show that they want to end a disagreement and make peace. "The protesters finally accepted the olive branch extended to them."
<u>(Go off) on a tangent</u>	If somebody goes off on a tangent , they change the subject completely in the middle of a speech or conversation. "Sometimes, when he's teaching, he goes off on a tangent and starts talking about his dog!"
<u>On ice</u>	To say that a plan or project is put on ice means that all further action has been postponed for an indefinite period of time. "Plans for a nuclear power station have been put on ice."
<u>On the cards.</u>	Something which is on the cards is very likely to happen. "A coalition between the two parties is still on the cards." (US : in the cards)
<u>On the fly</u>	If you do something on the fly , you do it quickly, without thinking much about it, while doing something else. "I'm so busy I usually have lunch on the fly."
<u>On the level</u>	If you say that somebody is on the level , you are referring to a truthful and honest person. "Tell me straight : Is he on the level or not?"
<u>On the map</u>	If a place becomes very well known, it is put on the map . "The president's visit really put the restaurant on the map."
<u>On the mend</u>	If someone or something is on the mend , they are improving after an illness or a difficult period. "My mother caught the 'flu but she's on the mend now."
<u>Once in a blue moon</u>	If something happens once in a blue moon , it occurs very rarely. "Bill has very little contact with his brother. They see each other once in a blue moon."
<u>One fell swoop</u>	If something is accomplished at one fell swoop , it is done in a single action, usually rapidly and ruthlessly. "The three houses were demolished at one fell swoop."
<u>One good turn deserves another</u>	This expression means that if someone helps you, it is natural and right to help them in return. "We helped Alex and Sara when they moved into their new house, just as they helped us last year; one good turn deserves another ."
<u>One hand washes the other... (... and together they wash the face.)</u>	This expression means that when people cooperate and work well together, there is a better chance of achieving results.
<u>One step ahead</u>	When you are one step ahead of someone else, you manage to achieve something faster than they do, or you have a slight advantage over them. "The company is successful because they're always one step ahead of their competitors."



<u>One over the eight.</u>	If a person has had one over the eight , they are slightly drunk "Don't listen to him. You can see he's had one over eight!"
<u>One-horse town</u>	A place referred to as a one-horse town is a small, boring town where nothing much ever happens. "I wish my grandparents didn't live in that one-horse town. It's such a boring place!"
<u>One too many</u>	Someone who has had one too many has drunk too much alcohol. "I think Tony's had one too many - he's talking rubbish!"
<u>One's number is up</u>	To say that one's number is up means that a person is either in serious difficulty and something bad is going to happen, or the time has come when they will die. "The police have located the escaped prisoner so it looks as if his number is up!"
<u>One's own undoing</u>	If you do something that is the cause of your own failure, loss or downfall, it is your own undoing . You can blame nobody but yourself. "If he continues to gamble like that, it will be his own undoing."
<u>One-track mind</u>	If you have a one-track mind , you have a tendency to think about only one subject. "That boy has got a one-track mind; all he thinks about is football!"
<u>One-upmanship</u>	This term refers to the art of gaining and keeping the advantage over other people. "He is a successful man, but his one-upmanship has left him with few friends."
<u>Only to be expected</u>	If an event or outcome is only to be expected , it is most likely to happen. "The teacher was angry because you cheated at the exam? - That was only to be expected!"
<u>Open doors to/for something</u>	If something opens doors , it provides opportunities or possibilities for the future. "A degree from a top university generally opens doors to major companies."
<u>Open the floodgates</u>	If someone or something opens the floodgates , they release something that had previously been held under control. "It is feared that easing price controls will open the floodgates to inflation."
<u>Open the kimono</u>	If a person or organization opens the kimono , they reveal something previously hidden. "It's time to open the kimono and explain that we cannot meet the deadline."
<u>Open secret</u>	A fact that is supposed to be a secret but is actually widely known is called an open secret . "It's an open secret that Paul and Julie are living together."
<u>Open/reopen old wounds</u>	If you open or reopen old wounds , you revive memories of an unpleasant event, situation or dispute that took place in the past. "He carefully avoided the subject so as not to open old wounds."



<p>(One's) <u>opposite</u> number</p>	<p>Someone who holds the same position as oneself in another company or organization is called one's opposite number. "I spoke to my opposite number in several local companies and we all agreed to join the anti-pollution campaign."</p>
<p><u>Ostrich</u> strategy/politics</p>	<p>This term refers to the phenomenon of ignoring or evading an obvious problem in the hope that it will resolve itself or disappear. "Adopting an ostrich strategy will only make matters worse - we've got to find a solution!"</p>
<p>There are (plenty of) <u>other</u> fish in the sea</p>	<p>To say this means that there are many other people just as good as the one somebody failed to get. "The candidate we chose refused the job? Never mind - there are other fish in the sea!"</p>
<p><u>Other</u> side of the coin</p>	<p>When you want to mention a different or contradictory aspect of a situation, you refer to the other side of the coin. "The house is lovely and spacious, but the other side of the coin is that it is far from shops and schools."</p>
<p><u>Out</u> of the blue</p>	<p>If something happens out of the blue, it happens very unexpectedly. "I had nearly given up hope when out of the blue I was offered a job."</p>
<p><u>Out</u> of character</p>	<p>If you do something that is out of character, it is unlike your usual behaviour or not what is expected from you. "The way she panicked was out of character for such a normally calm person."</p>
<p><u>Out</u> of circulation</p>	<p>If someone is out of circulation, they are unavailable or not joining in activities with others. "I'm going to do a summer course in New York so I'll be out of circulation for a while."</p>
<p><u>Out</u> of your depth</p>	<p>If you are out of your depth, you are unable to understand a subject or deal with a situation because it is too difficult for you. "The level of the class was too high for me, so very quickly I felt out of my depth."</p>
<p><u>Out</u> of earshot</p>	<p>When someone is out of earshot, they are too far away to hear or to be heard. "They waited until Julie was out of earshot before discussing her surprise birthday party."</p>
<p><u>Out</u> of harm's way</p>	<p>If you put something out of harm's way, you put it in a safe place where it won't get damaged. "I'm going to put this glass bowl out of harm's way so that it doesn't get broken."</p>
<p><u>Out</u> like a light</p>	<p>If a person goes out like a light, they are so tired that they fall asleep very quickly. "As soon as his head touched the pillow, he was out like a light."</p>
<p><u>Out</u> on a limb</p>	<p>If you go out on a limb, you do something risky or unsupported by others, which leaves you in a difficult position. "Jack was really out on a limb with his proposal - nobody supported his idea."</p>
<p><u>Out</u> to lunch</p>	<p>To say that someone is out to lunch means that they seem to be either unaware of what's going on around them, or unable to understand what is happening. "He's hopeless as a leader - considered as 'out-to-lunch' by the group."</p>



<u>Out of the picture</u>	To say the a person or group is out of the picture means that they have been eliminated in a contest or tournament. "We were beaten in the semi-finals, so that's us out of the picture!"
<u>Out of your own pocket</u>	If you pay for something out of your own pocket , you cover the cost with your own money. "Breakfast is included but you must pay for lunch out of your own pocket."
<u>Out of the question</u>	Something which is out of the question is impossible and is therefore not worth discussing. "Buying a new car is out of the question - we can't afford it."
<u>Out of sorts</u>	If someone is out of sorts , they are upset and irritable and not feeling well. "The baby is out of sorts today. Perhaps he's cutting a tooth."
<u>Out of sync</u>	If two movements or actions are out of sync , they are uncoordinated and are not taking place at the same time or at the same speed. "The traffic lights are out of sync and causing a lot of confusion."
<u>Out of touch</u>	If you are out of touch , you no longer communicate with someone, or you are unaware of the developments relating to something. "I've been out of touch with Jenny since we left college."
<u>Out of whack</u>	If something is out of whack , it is not working properly or not in good order. "The dishwasher is making a funny noise. Something must be out of whack."
<u>Out of this world</u>	To refer to something as out of this world means that you think it is extremely good or impressive "The hotel was very comfortable and the food was out of this world!"
<u>Over-egg the pudding</u>	If you try to improve something excessively by adding unnecessary details, you over-egg the pudding . "Keep your report simple. Don't over-egg the pudding."
<u>Over the hill</u>	If a person is over the hill , they have reached an age when they can no longer perform as well as before. "Gran! You say you're over the hill but you're still a super cook!"
<u>Over the moon</u>	If you are over the moon , you are absolutely delighted. "We were over the moon when we heard the good news."
<u>Over my dead body</u>	This expression is used when you absolutely refuse to allow someone to do something. "Mum, can I get my nose pierced?" " Over my dead body! "
<u>Over and done with</u>	If something difficult or unpleasant is over and done with , it has now been successfully accomplished, so you don't have to worry about it any longer. "It wasn't easy, but I had to announce the bad news, so that's over and done with!"
<u>Over the top (OTT)</u>	Something which is over the top is totally excessive or not suitable for the occasion. "Her dramatic speech was way over the top."
<u>Go overboard</u>	To go overboard means to be too excited or enthusiastic about something, or act in an excessive way.
<u>Overplay your hand</u>	If you overplay your hand , you are overconfident and spoil your chances of success by trying to obtain too much. "Sam is hoping for a bonus for his good results, but he may be



	overplaying his hand if he asks for a promotion."
<u>Overstep the mark</u>	If you overstep the mark , you go too far and upset someone by saying something or behaving in a way that is unacceptable. "Jenny is angry with her son Paul. He overstepped the mark when he called his grandfather an 'old fool'."

	<u>Idiom</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
P	<u>Put through their paces</u>	If you put someone or something through their paces , you test their ability to do something by making them perform certain actions. "During the presentation, the machine was put through its paces."
	<u>Pack of lies</u>	A large number of untruthful statements is referred to as a pack of lies . "The story about her unhappy childhood turned out to be a pack of lies."
	<u>Ahead of the pack</u>	If a person or organization is ahead of the pack , they are better or more successful than their rivals. "Our products will have to be more innovative if we are to stay ahead of the pack."
	<u>Pack something in</u>	If you pack something in , you abandon it or give it up. "She found city life so stressful, she decided to pack it in and move to the country."
	<u>Packed like sardines</u>	If a group of people are packed like sardines , they are pressed together tightly and uncomfortably because there is not enough space. "The bus was very crowded - we were packed like sardines!"
	<u>Pad the bill</u>	If someone pads the bill , they add false items to a bill or invoice in order to increase the total amount. "Check the invoice carefully before paying - he tends to pad the bill!"
	<u>Paddle one's own canoe</u>	If you paddle your own canoe , you do what you want to do without help or interference from anyone. "He decided to paddle his own canoe and set up his own company."
	<u>Paid peanuts</u>	If you are paid peanuts , you have a very low salary. "Anne has a very interesting job but she's paid peanuts . Her salary is very low. "
	<u>Paint the town red</u>	If you paint the town red , you go out and enjoy a lively evening in bars, night-clubs, etc. "To celebrate the victory, the team's supporters painted the town red."
	<u>Paint oneself into a corner</u>	If you paint yourself into a corner , you get yourself into a bad situation that it is difficult or impossible to get out of. "Andy painted himself into a corner by signing a contract with a friend who turned out to be incompetent."
	<u>(Hit/press/push) the panic button</u>	When you hit the panic button , you raise the alarm too quickly or react too hastily in a difficult or stressful situation. "Calm down! There's no need to press the panic button yet."



<u>Paper over the cracks</u>	To say that someone is papering over the cracks means that they are concealing a problem rather than dealing with it effectively. "The measures taken to reduce unemployment are just paper over the cracks."
<u>Paper tiger</u>	This term refers to a person, organisation or country that is less powerful or threatening than they appear to be. "He threatens to take strong action but he's just a paper tiger ."
<u>Paper trail</u>	If a person or organisation leaves a paper trail , they leave evidence in writing or in document form that will serve as proof of their actions. "The police found a paper trail which lead to the author of the hoax."
<u>On paper</u>	To say that an idea, plan or scheme seems good on paper means that it looks good in theory or in writing but may not work when put into practice. "His plan looks good on paper, but I'm not convinced it will work."
<u>Par for the course</u>	If something is par for the course , it is typical of what to expect in that particular situation. "I spent the week-end working on the project but nobody showed any appreciation. That's par for the course in this firm."
<u>Part and parcel</u>	If something is part and parcel of an experience, it is a key component or a necessary part that cannot be avoided "I'm an event manager. Travelling is part and parcel of my job."
<u>Parting shot</u>	A parting shot is a final remark, often incisive or disparaging, made just as one is leaving. "He has a way of making parting shots that can be very discouraging."
<u>Partner in crime</u>	A person who helps you to plan something dishonest or unlawful is called your partner in crime . (This expression can be used jokingly as in this example.) "Sam was my partner in crime. He hid my son's new bicycle until his birthday."
<u>The party is over</u>	To say that the party is over means that a period of happiness, freedom, enjoyment etc. has come to an end, and life is going to return to normal. "I had a wonderful time here but the party's over and I must get back to work."
<u>Pass the buck</u>	If you say that someone is passing the buck , you are accusing them of not taking responsibility for a problem and letting others deal with it instead. "Whenever a customer comes to complain, she always finds a way of looking busy. Talk about passing the buck!"
<u>Pass muster</u>	If someone or something passes muster , they are considered to be satisfactory or acceptable. "The interview went well. I hope I'll pass muster."
<u>Passing fancy</u>	If you have a passing fancy for something, you become fond of it for a short time. "My father started collecting stamps a few years ago, but it was just a passing fancy."



<u>Pat</u> answer	A simplified response that is memorized or prepared in advance is called a pat answer . Many journalists at the press conference found his pat answers totally frustrating.
Have something down <u>pat</u>	If you memorize or practice something until you know it perfectly or have it exactly right, you have it down pat . "I rehearsed my presentation until I had it down pat."
(Not a) <u>patch</u> on	If someone or something is not a patch on an other, they are not nearly as good. "His second conference wasn't a patch on the first one."
<u>Pay</u> dividends	Something which pays dividends brings an advantage or benefit at a later date. "Making an effort to improve your English will pay dividends later on."
Throw <u>pearls</u> to the pigs (cast pearls before swine)	This expression means that it is a waste to offer something valuable or useful to someone who does not understand or appreciate it. "She had a beautifully trained voice but the audience didn't listen - talk about throwing pearls to pigs! "
Like two <u>peas</u> in a pod	To say that two people are like two peas in a pod means that they are very similar in appearance. "It wasn't difficult to identify the brothers - they were like two peas in a pod!"
Not the only <u>pebble</u> on the beach	To say that someone is not the only pebble on the beach means that they are not the only person worth consideration or interest. "He thinks his refusal to join the team will cause problems, but there are alternatives ... he's not the only pebble on the beach."
(Put the) <u>pedal</u> to the metal	When you put the pedal to the metal , you accelerate or make something go faster. "If we put the pedal to the metal we could get this finished in time."
A square <u>peg</u> in a round hole	To say that a person is a " square peg in a round hole ", means that they are not suitable for the job they are doing or the situation they are in.
A <u>pen</u> pusher	To refer to someone as a " pen pusher " means you think that person does work which requires little action, just office work, and they lack operating experience.
The <u>pen</u> is mightier than the sword	This expression means that words and communication have greater effect than war and fighting. "The treaty put an end to the hostilities - the pen is mightier than the sword! "
In for a <u>penny</u>, in for a pound	This expression means that once you start doing something, you might just as well do it wholeheartedly and not stop at half-measures. "Joe finally accepted to be on the committee, then he accepted to be the chairman - "in for a penny, in for a pound" he said!"
The <u>penny</u> drops	When a person has difficulty understanding or realizing something, and then the penny drops , they finally understand. "The teasing continued for some time until the penny dropped and he realized it was a joke!"
A <u>penny</u> for your thoughts	This phrase is used to ask someone what they are thinking about. "You look pensive. A penny for your thoughts. "



Turn up like a bad <u>penny</u>	If someone turns up like a bad penny , they appear at a place or event where they are not welcome or not wanted. "I try to avoid Jane, but wherever I go she turns up like a bad penny."
<u>Perish</u> the thought	This expression is used when the speaker really hopes that something will not happen. "If I lost my job, perish the thought , I don't know how we'd survive."
See (or put) things in their right <u>perspective</u>	When people see or put things in their right perspective , they see the relative importance of each element of a situation, without exaggerating any aspect. "If Tom could see things in their right perspective, the situation would be less stressful for him."
<u>Pervert</u> the course of justice	If a person perverts the course of justice , they tell a lie or prevent the police from finding out the truth about something. "The suspect was accused of trying to pervert the course of justice"
<u>Pester</u> power	This expression refers to the power children exert over their parents by continually nagging or pestering them until they accept to buy advertised toys or fashionable products. " Pester power leads busy parents to buy more and more for their children."
<u>Pick</u> someone's brains	If you pick someone's brains , you ask questions about a particular subject in order to obtain advice or information. "Could we have lunch together? I'd like to pick your brains about something."
<u>Pick</u> a fight	Someone who picks a fight deliberately looks for an opportunity to start a quarrel or begin an argument. "Our new neighbour is always ready to pick a fight with someone."
<u>Pick</u> holes	If someone picks holes in something such as a plan, an idea or an argument, they criticize it or try to find fault with it. "Why don't you make a suggestion instead of picking holes in all my ideas!"
<u>Pick</u> up the pieces	After something disastrous has happened, if you pick up the pieces , you do what you can to get the situation back to normal again. "After fire destroyed their house, it took them a long time to pick up the pieces."
<u>Pick</u> up steam	If something such as a project or process picks up steam , it starts to develop or become more active. "The campaign started slowly but it picked up steam after Christmas."
<u>Pick</u> up the tab	If you pick up the tab , you pay the bill or pay the cost of something. "There was a celebration lunch for the group and Bill picked up the tab."
In a <u>pickle</u> -	If you are in a pickle , you are in a difficult situation and need help. "My car won't start and the trains are on strike today - I'm in a real pickle!"
Look the <u>picture</u> of health	To look the picture of health means to look completely or extremely healthy. "Nice to see you again Mr. Brown. I must say you look the picture of health."



<u>Picture</u> is worth a thousand words	This expression means that a picture can give just as much information as a large amount of descriptive text. "Look at the picture of the crash! A picture is worth a thousand words isn't it?"
<u>Pie</u> in the sky	If an idea, wish or promise is " pie in the sky ", it is completely unrealistic or unlikely to be achieved. "The promise of low-cost housing for everyone turned out to be pie in the sky."
Easy as <u>pie</u>	To say that something is easy as pie means that it is very easy to do. "How did the English test go? - No problem - it was easy as pie!"
Eat humble <u>pie</u>	If you eat humble pie , you have to admit that you were wrong and apologize. "After openly criticizing Bill's work, Fred had to eat humble pie when Bill was elected 'salesman of the year'!"
<u>Pie-eyed</u>	Someone who is pie-eyed is completely drunk. "He had never taken an alcoholic drink so after one beer he was pie-eyed."
<u>Piece</u> of the action	When someone wants a piece of the action , they want to participate in what other people are doing and benefit from it. "The songwriter thought the show would be a success so he wanted a piece of the action."
Go to <u>pieces</u>	If you go to pieces , for example after a terrible shock, you are so upset or distressed that you cannot lead a normal life . "Jack nearly went to pieces when his son died in a plane crash."
<u>Pigs</u> get fat, hogs get slaughtered	You should be satisfied when you have enough; if you are <i>too</i> greedy, like a hog, you risk losing everything.
<u>Pigs</u> might fly	To say pigs might fly expresses disbelief, or the idea that miracles might happen but are extremely unlikely. "My grandmother buying a computer? ...Yeah! ...and pigs might fly!"
Make a <u>pig</u> of yourself	If you make a pig of yourself , you eat and drink too much. "Watch what you eat - don't make a pig of yourself!"
(like putting) <u>lipstick</u> on a <u>pig</u>	This expression means that trying to 'dress up' something unappealing or ugly, in a vain attempt to make it look better, is like putting lipstick on a pig . "Flowers will not improve that ugly old bridge; every one agrees that it's lipstick on a pig."
On the <u>pig's</u> back	A person who is on the pig's back is in a state of luck and everything is going well for them. "Before the recession, Ireland was on the pig's back, but the situation has changed greatly."
A bitter <u>pill</u> to swallow	A bitter pill to swallow is something very difficult or unpleasant to accept. "Losing his job after organizing the merger was a bitter pill to swallow."
<u>Pillar</u> to post	If a person, usually someone in difficulty, goes from pillar to post , they move constantly from place to place. "When the factory closed down, Billy moved from pillar to post in search of a new job."
At a <u>pinch</u>	To say that something could be done at a pinch means that it would be possible to do it if absolutely necessary. "The hall can seat 50 people comfortably, and a few more at a pinch."



<u>Pink elephants</u>	This term refers to hallucinations or strange imaginary things seen by people as a result of heavy drinking or the use of narcotics. "No more drinks for me please, otherwise I'll be seeing pink elephants! "
<u>In the pink of health</u>	If you are in the pink of health , you are in excellent physical condition or extremely healthy. "Caroline looked in the pink of health after her holiday."
<u>Tickled pink.</u>	If you say you are tickled pink , you are very pleased about something.
<u>In the pink of health</u>	If you are in the pink of health , you are in excellent physical condition or extremely healthy. "Caroline looked in the pink of health after her holiday."
<u>Have pins and needles</u>	To have pins and needles is to have a tingling sensation in a part of the body, for example an arm or a leg, when it has been in the same position for a long time.
<u>In the pipeline</u>	If something is in the pipeline , it is in progress or being organized at the moment.
<u>The pits</u>	If something is referred to as the pits , it is considered to be absolutely the worst. "That magazine really is the pits!"
<u>Place in the sun</u>	If you find a place in the sun , you reach a position which provides you with wealth and happiness or whatever you have been hoping to obtain in life. "She finally found a place in the sun with the triumph of her most recent book."
<u>Plain sailing</u>	An activity or task that is plain sailing is without difficulty or free from trouble. "Once the plans were accepted, it was plain sailing all the way."
<u>Plan B</u>	Plan B is an alternative solution to be adopted if one's original plan does not succeed. "The idea is to get a caterer to provide the food if it's not too expensive. If it's too costly, Plan B is to organize a buffet with the help of my friends."
<u>Plastic smile</u>	A person with a plastic smile is wearing a forced smile which makes them appear happier than they really are. "A receptionist greeted customers with a plastic smile."
<u>Play with fire</u>	People who take unnecessary risks or behave in a dangerous way are playing with fire. "Driving alone on isolated roads is playing with fire."
<u>Play footsie</u>	If you play footsie with someone, you touch their feet lightly, especially under the table, to show your interest. "Pete says they were playing footsie at the office Christmas lunch."
<u>Play to the gallery</u>	A person who plays to the gallery tries to gain popularity by behaving in a way that will appeal to the majority. "It's no secret that he got elected by playing to the gallery."
<u>Play games (with someone)</u>	If you are not completely honest, or behave in a way that is insincere, evasive or intentionally misleading, you are playing games with someone. "Look, stop playing games with us. Just tell us if you're interested in the project or not."



<u>Play the game</u>	If you play the game , you accept to do things according to generally-accepted customs or code of behaviour. "Not all website owners play the game. Some download content from others without permission."
<u>Play havoc</u>	If someone or something plays havoc , they cause disorder and confusion. "The floods played havoc with the construction work."
<u>Play the market</u>	If you play the market , you buy stocks and shares in the hope of making a profit when you sell them. "It's always tempting to play the market, but it's more risky at the present time."
<u>Play by the rules</u>	If you play by the rules , you behave in a fair and honest way with people. "You can trust him, don't worry. He always plays by the rules."
<u>Play into someone's hands</u>	If you play into someone's hands , you do exactly what your opponent or enemy wants you to do, so that they gain an advantage over you. "When the leaders of the protest movement became violent, they played right into the hands of the police."
<u>Play possum</u>	When someone plays possum , they pretend to be dead or asleep in order to avoid something unpleasant. Sarah's not asleep. She's just playing possum because she doesn't want to come swimming.
<u>Play second fiddle</u>	If you play second fiddle to somebody, you accept to be second in importance to that person, or have a lower position.
<u>Play for time</u>	If you play for time , you try to delay or prevent something from happening in order to gain an advantage. "He decided to play for time in the hope that the price would decrease."
<u>Play truant</u>	If you play truant , you stay away from school without permission or excuse
<u>Play a waiting game</u>	If you play a waiting game , you deliberately delay taking action in order to be able to act more effectively later. "The cat kept its eyes on the bird, carefully playing a waiting game."
<u>(Not) playing with a full deck (of cards)</u>	Someone who is not playing with a full deck lacks intelligence or does not have full mental abilities. "Old Mrs.Whitehead was not playing with a full deck when she bought that fancy lawnmower!"
<u>As pleased (or as proud) as punch</u>	Someone who is as pleased (or as proud) as punch is delighted or feels very satisfied about something. "Danny was as proud as punch when he won the tennis match."
<u>Pluck something out of the air</u>	To pluck something out of the air means to say a name, date, number, etc. spontaneously, without thinking about it. "What are we going to call the cat?" "I just plucked a name out of the air and said "How about Daisy?"
<u>Plug something</u>	If you promote something by talking about it favourably, for example during an radio or TV interview, you plug something . "He will appear on the show if he can plug his new book."



<u>Plum job</u>	A desirable position which is well-paid and considered relatively easy is called a plum job . "Ideally he'd like to find himself a plum job in New York."
<u>Plum in your mouth</u>	Someone who speaks with an upper class accent is said to have a plum in their mouth . "He speaks just like an aristocrat - with a plum in his mouth!"
<u>Pocket of resistance</u>	This term refers to a small group of people who resist change or disagree with a proposal. "The new boss wants to introduce job-sharing, but there's a pocket of resistance in the sales department."
<u>Deep pockets</u>	A person or organization who has deep pockets has a lot of money. "Andy's business is not doing well at the moment. He says he needs a friend with deep pockets."
<u>Have somebody in your pocket</u>	If you have influence or power over someone, you have them in your pocket . "He was declared 'not guilty' but everyone knew that he had the jury in his pocket."
<u>Point of no return</u>	When you reach the point of no return , you must continue what you have started, because you have gone so far that it is impossible to go back. "I've agreed to speak and accepted the fee. I've now reached the point of no return and must make the speech I promised."
<u>Beside the point</u>	If something is beside the point , it does not relate to the topic or is irrelevant. "We need to know if he is qualified for the job. The fact that he plays golf is beside the point!"
<u>Come/get to the point</u>	If you come or get to the point , you reach or focus on the essential part or the heart of the matter. "We don't need a long explanation Barry. Just get to the point."
<u>Sore point</u>	A sore point is a subject to be avoided because it causes anger or embarrassment. "Don't talk to Mary about weight - that's a sore point!"
<u>Poker face</u>	Someone who has a poker face has an expressionless face that shows no emotion or reaction at all. "He sat with a poker face all through the show, revealing nothing of his thoughts."
<u>Polish something off</u>	If you polish something off , you finish it quickly or easily. "Susan thought there was too much food but the boys polished it all off in no time."
<u>Politically correct</u>	When people are politically correct , they carefully choose the language they use in order to avoid offending particular groups of people. 'Most people today make a conscious effort to be politically correct.'
<u>Pop one's clogs</u>	This is a euphemistic way of saying that a person is dead. "Nobody lives in that house since old Sam popped his clogs."
<u>Pop the question</u>	When you ask someone to marry you, you pop the question . It was during a trip to Venice that James popped the question.



<p>Is the <u>Pope Catholic</u>?</p>	<p>A sarcastic way of answering a question in the affirmative when the answer is obviously 'yes'. "Do birds fly? Of course they do! Is the Pope catholic?"</p>
<p>Take <u>pot luck</u></p>	<p>If you take pot luck, you accept whatever is available without knowing what it will be like. "We were so hungry we decided to take pot luck and stopped at the first restaurant we saw."</p>
<p>The <u>pot</u> calling the kettle black</p>	<p>This expression is used to refer to a situation where a person with a fault criticizes someone else for having the same fault. "After being disqualified for not obeying the rules, the player accused another competitor of cheating; it was a case of the pot calling the kettle black!"</p>
<p>Hot <u>potato</u></p>	<p>To refer to a subject as a hot potato means that it is a very sensitive and controversial matter which is difficult to deal with. "The new Prime Minister hasn't been confronted with any hot potatoes yet."</p>
<p>Drop (someone/something) like a <u>hot potato</u></p>	<p>If you drop someone or something like a hot potato, you leave them or immediately stop associating with them. "As soon as the article was published, she dropped him like a hot potato."</p>
<p>Small <u>potatoes</u></p>	<p>Something that is small potatoes is considered unimportant or insignificant. "Her first publication was considered small potatoes but her new book has lead to a change of opinion."</p>
<p><u>Pound</u> the pavement</p>	<p>Someone who pounds the pavement, walks the streets or goes from company to company, usually in search of employment. You also pound the pavement in an effort to raise funds or gain support for a cause. "Charlie is out there pounding the pavement since he lost his job."</p>
<p><u>Pour cold water</u> on something</p>	<p>If you pour cold water on someone's plans, opinions or ideas, you discourage them by showing little enthusiasm or expressing your misgivings. "The committee threw cold water on the idea of accepting new members."</p>
<p><u>Pour your heart out</u></p>	<p>If you pour your heart out to someone, you express your feelings and troubles freely. "When she needs to pour her heart out to someone, she goes to visit her grandmother."</p>
<p><u>Power behind the throne</u></p>	<p>Someone with no apparent authority who has great influence over the person officially in charge is said to be the power behind the throne. "It's essential to be on good terms with his wife. Apparently she's the power behind the throne."</p>
<p><u>Pregnant pause</u></p>	<p>A pregnant pause is a moment of silence full of unexpressed meaning or significance. "There was a pregnant pause before the president answered the journalist's question."</p>
<p><u>Press (something) home</u></p>	<p>If you press something home, you insist on a point in a discussion or argument. "Her lawyer kept pressing home the fact that she was a single mother."</p>



<u>Pressed for time</u>	If you're pressed for time , you have hardly enough time to do something, so you must hurry. "Sorry. I can't talk to you now - I'm a bit pressed for time."
<u>Pretty penny</u>	If something costs you a pretty penny , it costs you a lot of money. "That new car must have cost him a pretty penny!"
<u>Prey on someone's mind</u>	If something preys on your mind , it troubles you so much that you keep thinking about it. "The vision of the house on fire kept preying on her mind."
<u>Price oneself out of the market</u>	If you price yourself out of the market , you charge such a high price for your goods or services that nobody buys them. "He was so eager to make money that he priced himself out of the market."
<u>Price you have to pay</u>	This expression refers to what you have to endure in return for something you gain or achieve. "Lack of privacy is the price you have to pay for being a celebrity."
<u>Prick up your ears</u>	If you prick up your ears , you suddenly pay attention to what is being said. "The children pricked up their ears when they heard the word 'cookies'."
<u>Prime of one's life</u>	A time in one's life when a person is the most successful or in their best physical condition is called the prime of one's life . "At the age of 75, the singer is not exactly in the prime of his life!"
<u>Prod someone into doing something</u>	If you prod someone into doing something , you make a slow or hesitant person do something that they are reluctant to do. "She was ideal for the job, but I had to prod her into applying for the position."
<u>Keep a low profile</u>	People who keep a low profile avoid doing things that will draw attention to them.
<u>Prolong the agony</u>	If someone prolongs the agony , they make an unpleasant or tense situation last longer than necessary. "Please don't prolong the agony. Just tell me whether I've been accepted or not."
<u>The proof of the pudding is in the eating.</u>	This expression means that something new can only be judged after it has been tested.
<u>Proud as a peacock</u>	A person who is as proud as a peacock is extremely proud. "When his son won first prize, Bill was as proud as a peacock."
<u>Pull a fast one</u>	To pull a fast one means to gain an advantage over someone by deceiving them. "The street vendor pulled a fast one on Tom. He sold him a big bunch of roses, but wrapped a smaller bunch while Tom was taking out his wallet."
<u>Pull no punches</u>	When someone pulls no punches , they speak openly and honestly, holding nothing back. "The doctor pulled no punches. He explained in detail the risks of the operation."



<p><u>Pull out all the stops</u></p>	<p>If you pull out all the stops, you do everything you can to make something successful. "We'll have to pull out all the stops to get the store ready for the opening day."</p>
<p><u>Pull somebody's leg</u></p>	<p>If you pull somebody's leg, you tease them by telling them something that is not true. "Of course I'm not going to buy a sports car. I was just pulling your leg!"</p>
<p><u>Pull the other one (it's got bells on)</u></p>	<p>After hearing an unlikely story, this expression is used jokingly to tell the speaker that you are not going to believe what they say next. "You have a date with George Clooney? Yeah - now pull the other one!"</p>
<p><u>Pull strings</u></p>	<p>If somebody pulls strings, they use influential friends in order to obtain an advantage. "David found a job easily - his Dad just pulled a few strings!"</p>
<p><u>Pull the plug (on something)</u></p>	<p>If you pull the plug on something, you put an end to it or provide no more support for it. "There were so few enrolments that the school decided to pull the plug on the yoga class."</p>
<p><u>Pull through</u></p>	<p>If you pull through, you recover from a serious illness.</p>
<p><u>Pull the rug from under someone's feet</u></p>	<p>If you pull the rug from under someone's feet, you suddenly and unexpectedly remove all help or support. "When Andy's mother stopped sending him money, she pulled the rug from under his feet and forced him to find a job."</p>
<p><u>Pull your weight</u></p>	<p>If you say that someone pulls their weight, you mean that they do their fair share of the work. "It's great working with Sandra. She always pulls her weight."</p>
<p><u>Punch above one's weight</u></p>	<p>If you punch above your weight, you try to perform at a level that is considered to be beyond your ability. "She submitted her idea for the 'invention of the year' award, knowing that she was punching above her weight."</p>
<p><u>Punch line</u></p>	<p>The punch line is the funny sentence that ends a joke or an amusing story. "When my dad tells jokes, he never gets the punch line right!"</p>
<p><u>Push the envelope</u></p>	<p>When you push the envelope, you do something in an extreme way, or exceed the limits of what is considered acceptable. "Some TV programmes really push the envelope when they expose people's private lives."</p>
<p><u>Push one's luck</u></p>	<p>If you push your luck, you try to get more than what you have already obtained, and risk spoiling the situation. "You've got your father's permission to go to the concert. Don't push your luck by trying to borrow his car!"</p>
<p><u>If/when push comes to shove.</u></p>	<p>You use the expression if, or when, push comes to shove, to refer to what you will do if the situation becomes critical and you have to make a decision or take action. "There should be enough room for everyone, but if push comes to shove we can go to the hotel."</p>



<p><u>Pushing up the daisies</u></p>	<p>If you say of someone that they are pushing up the daisies, you mean that they are dead. "Old Johnny Barnes? He's been pushing up the daisies for over 10 years!"</p>
<p><u>Put a damper on something</u></p>	<p>If someone or something puts a damper on a situation or event, they make it less successful or enjoyable. "The party was going great until the neighbour's complaints put a damper on it."</p>
<p><u>Put a spanner in the works</u> (Throw a (monkey) wrench in the works)</p>	<p>To put a spanner in the works means to cause problems and prevent something from happening as planned. (In the US, the word 'wrench' or 'monkey wrench' is used instead of 'spanner'.)</p>
<p><u>Put it mildly</u></p>	<p>This expression means that you express your opinion or reaction in a controlled way, without exaggeration. "She's three years old and already able to read. That's promising, to put it mildly."</p>
<p><u>Put on a brave face</u></p>	<p>When confronted with difficulties, if you put on a brave face, you try to look cheerful and pretend that the situation is not as bad as it is. "Even at the worst of times she put on a brave face."</p>
<p><u>Put on ice</u></p>	<p>To say that a plan or project is put on ice means that all further action has been postponed for an indefinite period of time. "Plans for a nuclear power station have been put on ice."</p>
<p><u>Put one's best foot forward</u></p>	<p>If someone puts their best foot forward, they do something as fast as they can. "It's a long way to the station, but if I put my best foot forward I should catch the next train."</p>
<p><u>Put one's feet up</u></p>	<p>When you put your feet up, you sit down and relax. "You must be tired. Come in and put your feet up."</p>
<p><u>Put one's foot down.</u></p>	<p>To put one's foot down means to exert authority to prevent something from happening. "The child wanted to sleep on the sofa, but his father put his foot down and made him go to bed."</p>
<p><u>Put one's foot in one's mouth</u></p>	<p>If you put your foot in your mouth, you do or say something that offends, upsets or embarrasses someone else. "She really put her foot in her mouth when she mentioned the housewarming party - Andy hadn't been invited!"</p>
<p><u>Put your head on the block</u></p>	<p>If you put yourself in a situation where you risk losing reputation or your job if things go wrong, you put your head on the block. "Jenny asked me to recommend her son for the job but I'm not prepared to put my head on the block for someone I hardly know."</p>
<p><u>Put your heart (and soul) into something</u></p>	<p>If you put your heart (and soul) into something, you are very enthusiastic and invest a lot of energy and hard work in something. Paul was determined to make a success of the project. He put his heart and soul into it.</p>



<p><u>Put one's house in order</u></p>	<p>If you put your house in order, you organize your own affairs or improve your methods before criticizing others. "The government should put its own affairs in order before telling other countries what to do."</p>
<p><u>Put the kibosh on something</u></p>	<p>If you do something to prevent a plan or activity from happening or developing, you put the kibosh on it. "The bank's refusal to grant him a loan put the kibosh on Jack's project."</p>
<p><u>Put one's pants on one leg at a time</u></p>	<p>To say that someone puts their pants on one leg at a time means that the person is a human being no different from anyone else. "Don't be scared to speak to him. He puts his pants on one leg at a time just like the rest of us!"</p>
<p><u>Put one's shoulder to the wheel</u></p>	<p>If you put your shoulder to the wheel, you start putting a lot of effort into a difficult task. "We'll have to put our shoulders to the wheel to get the store ready for the opening day."</p>
<p><u>Put out feelers</u></p>	<p>Before doing something, if you try to discover what people think about it by making discreet enquiries, you put out feelers. "Before making any proposals, I'm going to put out feelers to test the general reaction to the project."</p>
<p><u>Put someone through their paces</u></p>	<p>If you put someone or something through their paces, you test their ability to do something by making them perform certain actions. "During the presentation, the machine was put through its paces."</p>
<p><u>Put someone out to pasture</u></p>	<p>To say that someone has been put out to pasture means that they have been forced to retire or give up their responsibilities. "He's in good health and feels it's too early to be put out to pasture."</p>
<p><u>Put someone in the picture</u></p>	<p>If you give somebody all the information necessary to enable them to fully understand a situation, you put them in the picture. "Let me put you in the picture about what happened during your absence."</p>
<p><u>Put someone in their place</u></p>	<p>If someone causes offence or irritation by speaking or behaving in an inappropriate manner, you put them in their place by letting them know that they are not as important as they seem to believe. "The new trainee is not in a position to criticize our methods. He needs to be put in his place!"</p>
<p><u>Put something on the long finger</u></p>	<p>If you put something on the long finger, you postpone it indefinitely. "She says she intends to go back to college, but she keeps putting it on the long finger."</p>
<p><u>Put the squeeze on someone</u></p>	<p>If you put the squeeze on somebody, you put pressure on them to force them to act in a particular way. "Bob was reluctant to replace his colleague until the boss put the squeeze on him."</p>
<p><u>Put somebody on the spot</u></p>	<p>If you put somebody on the spot, you put them in a difficult situation, for example by asking embarrassing or difficult questions which they cannot avoid. "When the reporter was asked to reveal his source, he was really put on the spot."</p>



<u>Put that in your pipe and smoke it!</u>	You have to accept what I say, whether you like it or not. "I am <u>not</u> going to buy you a scooter, so put that in your pipe and smoke it! "
<u>Put in a good word (for someone)</u>	If you put in a good word for someone , you say positive things in support of that person in order to help them. "If you want to apply for the job, I'll put in a good word for you."
<u>Put words in somebody's mouth</u>	If you claim, wrongly, that someone has said something, or suggest what they should say, you are putting words in their mouth . "You're putting words in my mouth. I did <i>not</i> say I saw Mr. Brown; I said I saw his car!"
<u>Pyrrhic victory</u>	A victory that is obtained at a tremendous cost, or causes such a considerable loss that it is not worth winning, is called a Pyrrhic victory . "It was a Pyrrhic victory. The shop owner won the lawsuit but went bankrupt because of the legal expenses involved."

	<u>Idiom</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
Q	<u>Quaking in one's boots</u>	When someone is extremely scared, it is said that they are quaking in their boots . "When he saw the crocodiles in the water, he started quaking in his boots."
	<u>In a quandary</u>	If you are in a quandary about something, you find it difficult to decide what to do. "The job they offer is less interesting but the salary is better. I'm in a quandary about what to do."
	<u>On the QT</u>	If something is done on the QT , it is done quietly or discreetly. "They got married on the QT last summer and told nobody."
	<u>Quick as a dog can lick a dish</u>	If you do something surprisingly fast, or suddenly, you do it as quick as a dog can lick a dish . "He packed his bag as quick as a dog can lick a dish."
	<u>(no) quick fix</u>	To say that there is no quick fix to a problem means that there is no simple solution. "There is no quick fix for unemployment; major reforms are necessary."
	<u>Have a quick temper</u>	If you have a quick temper , you get angry very easily. "He makes me nervous - he's got such a quick temper."
	<u>Quick off the mark</u>	To say that someone is quick off the mark means that they are quick to react to an event or take advantage of an opportunity. "You've got to be quick off the mark to avail of the airline's special offers."
	<u>Quick/slow on the uptake</u>	Someone who is quick or slow on the uptake is quick or slow to understand what is meant. "Please explain the problem in simple words - I'm a bit slow on the uptake."
	<u>(as) quiet as a mouse</u>	When someone is as quiet as a mouse , they make no noise at all. "The burglar was as quiet as a mouse as he moved around the house."



	Call it <u>quits</u>.	If you say " I'm going to call it quits ", this means that you are going to stop doing something, or end what you are doing.
R	A <u>race</u> against time	If someone is in a race against time , they have to work very quickly in order to do or finish something before a certain time. "It was a race against time to get everything ready for the inauguration."
	<u>Rack</u> one's brains	If you rack your brains , you try very hard to think of something or to remember something. "Christmas is always a hassle for me. I have to rack my brains every year to find ideas for presents."
	Go to <u>rack</u> and ruin	If something goes to rack and ruin , it deteriorates or falls into serious decline until it reaches a state of complete destruction. "When the factory closed down, the building was left to go to rack and ruin."
	On the <u>rack</u>	If you are in a stressful situation, having to answer a lot of questions or wait for a decision, you are on the rack . "The suspect was put on the rack by the police but he did not confess to anything."
	<u>Racked</u> with pain	When someone is suffering from severe pain, they are racked with pain . "The soldier was so badly injured that he was racked with pain."
	From <u>rags</u> to riches	If you go from rags to riches , you start off being very poor and become very rich and successful "By renovating old houses in the right places, he went from rags to riches."
	Take a <u>rain</u> check	To say that you will take a rain check means that you cannot accept an invitation or offer now, but you will be happy to accept it at a later date. "Do you mind if I take a rain check on that lunch invitation? I'm going to be away all week."
	It never <u>rains</u> but it pours	This expression is used to comment on the fact that when something bad happens, other bad things often happen too, and make the situation even worse. "First he forgot his briefcase, then he lost his wallet, and when he reached the car park, his car had been stolen - it never rains but it pours! "
	<u>Raining</u> cats and dogs	If it's raining cats and dogs , it's raining very heavily. "We'll have to cancel the picnic I'm afraid. It's raining cats and dogs."
	<u>Raise</u> eyebrows	If you raise your eyebrows at something, you show surprise or disapproval by the expression on your face. "When the boss arrived in jeans, there were a lot of raised eyebrows."
	<u>Raise</u> the roof	When people raise the roof , they make a lot of noise by cheering, shouting, whistling or clapping their hands. "The concert was such a success, the audience raised the roof."
	<u>Raise</u>/lower one's sights	If you raise or lower your sights , you raise or lower your expectations, or you are more or less ambitious.. "He had to lower his sights and accept a less well-paid job than what he had hoped for."
	<u>Rake</u> over the ashes	When people rake over the ashes , they discuss an unpleasant event which took place in the past. "My grandfather's business went bankrupt years ago but he still rakes over the ashes from time to time."



<u>Rant and rave</u>	If you rant and rave about something, you protest noisily and forcefully. "The old man ranted and raved about the new waste collection system, but he had to accept it."
<u>Rap on the knuckles</u>	If someone gets a rap on/across the knuckles , they are punished or reprimanded, not very severely, but as a reminder not to do that again. "Andy got a rap on the knuckles for coming home late."
<u>Take the rap</u>	If you take the rap for something, you accept blame or punishment for something, even if you have not done it. "The whole class had to take the rap for the disorder."
<u>In raptures</u>	If you are in raptures about something, you are delighted or very enthusiastic. "Julie is in raptures about her new apartment."
<u>Smell a rat</u>	To say " I smell a rat " means that you suspect that something is wrong, or that someone is doing something dishonest or incorrect.
<u>Rather you than me</u>	This expression is used to express sympathy with a person who has to do something that you consider unpleasant or difficult, and you would not like to be in their situation. "I have to announce the bad news to the child's parents." "Oh dear, rather you than me ."
<u>Reach for the moon</u>	If you reach for the moon , you are very ambitious and try to achieve something, even if it's difficult. "His parents were hardworking people who encouraged their children to reach for the moon."
<u>Reach saturation point</u>	When something reaches saturation point , it is so full that nothing more can be added. "That's enough revision for today. My brain has reached saturation point!"
<u>Read the riot act</u>	If you declare with force and authority that something must stop, and announce the consequences if it happens again, you read the riot act . "Dad read us the riot act when we messed up his tool-shed."
<u>Ready and waiting</u>	If something or someone is ready and waiting , they are prepared and available for a particular task or occasion. "There was a vast amount of food ready and waiting for the guests."
<u>Ready to drop</u>	Someone who is ready to drop , is nearly too exhausted to stay standing. "I've been shopping all day with Judy. I'm ready to drop!"
<u>Reap the harvest</u>	If you reap the harvest , you benefit or suffer as a direct result of past actions. "When he won his first match, he began to reap the harvest of all the hard training."
<u>Rear its ugly head</u>	If something unpleasant reappears after lying dormant for some time, it rears its ugly head . "It is a sad fact that fascism is rearing its ugly head again in some countries."
<u>Recharge your batteries</u>	When you recharge your batteries , you take a break from a tiring or stressful activity in order to relax and recover your energy. "Sam is completely over-worked. He needs a holiday to recharge his batteries."
<u>Recipe for disaster</u>	If you refer to a plan or an idea as a recipe for disaster , you think it is likely to produce bad results.



	"Our two families together for Christmas? Sounds like a recipe for disaster!"
Set the <u>record</u> straight	To set the record straight means to correct a mistake or misunderstanding.
In the <u>red</u>	If a person or organization is in the red , they owe money or have a negative account. "I'm afraid I can't lend you any money. I'm in the red myself."
See <u>red</u>	If someone sees red , they suddenly become very angry or annoyed about something. "Discrimination of any kind makes me see red!"
<u>Red carpet</u>	To roll out the red carpet means to give special treatment to an important or honoured visitor. The management is going to roll out the red carpet for the visit of the Nobel prize winner.
<u>Red-handed</u>	If a person is caught red-handed , they are caught while they are doing something wrong or illegal. "The boy was caught red-handed stealing chocolate in the supermarket."
<u>Red herring</u>	A red herring refers to a fact or argument introduced into a discussion which draws attention away from the main point. "Look, bureaucracy is a red herring. How to deal with the oil crisis is the important issue today."
<u>Red light district</u>	This term refers to an area of a town or city where there is a concentration of sex shops, prostitution, strip clubs, etc. "A photograph of the politician taken in a red-light district caused a scandal."
<u>Red tape</u>	The term red tape refers to official rules and bureaucratic paperwork that prevent things from being done quickly. "If there wasn't so much red tape, the company would be up and running already."
<u>Redress the balance</u>	An effort to redress the balance is an attempt to make things equal. "With too few girls entering university, the authorities declared that steps would be taken to redress the balance."
<u>Reduce to tears</u>	If your behaviour or attitude makes someone cry, you reduce them to tears . "The teacher criticized her presentation so harshly that she was reduced to tears."
<u>Refresh someone's memory</u>	If you refresh someone's memory , you remind them of facts they seem to have forgotten. "Let me refresh your memory - you've already missed three classes this term."
The <u>rest</u> is history	This is a way of saying that there is no need to finish a story because everyone knows what happened next. "Facebook was launched in 2004, was initially restricted to students from Harvard, and the rest is history ..."
Take someone for a <u>ride</u>	To take someone for a ride means to cheat or deceive them.
<u>Ride roughshod over something</u>	If you ride roughshod over something, you behave in a harsh or thoughtless manner, or you treat a situation with contempt. "The government rode roughshod over all opposition to the new measures."
<u>Ride (something) out</u>	If you manage to survive a dangerous or very unpleasant situation, you ride it out .



	"His business was hit by the recession but he managed to ride it out."
<u>Let something ride</u>	When you decide to do nothing about a particular situation and allow it to remain as it is, you let it ride . "Bill didn't like the way his wife spoke to the operator, but he let it ride so as to avoid another quarrel."
<u>Riding high</u>	Someone who is riding high is enjoying a period of success or popularity. He's been riding high since the success of his last film.
<u>Right as rain</u>	If someone is (as) right as rain , they are in excellent health or condition. "I called to see my grandmother, thinking she was ill, but she was (as) right as rain!"
<u>Right up your alley</u>	If something is right up your alley , it is the sort of thing you like or have knowledge about. "You like cooking, don't you? This book will be right up your alley!"
<u>Ring out the old year and ring in the new</u>	This expression means to announce and celebrate the end of one year and the beginning of the next. Happy New Year!
<u>Rip-off</u>	To say that something is a rip-off means that it costs much more than it should. "\$10 for a hamburger? That's a rip-off!"
<u>Ripple effect</u>	When an action has an effect on something, which in turn effects something else, it is said to have a ripple effect . "An increase in the price of oil will have a ripple effect on the economy as a whole."
<u>Rise to the occasion</u>	If you rise to the occasion , you manage to do something successfully in difficult circumstances. "When her boss broke his leg, Julie had to represent the company at the congress, and she rose to the occasion extremely well."
<u>Risk life and limb</u>	If you risk life and limb , you are in danger of death or serious injury. "The roads are icy today; you'll risk life and limb if you go by car."
<u>Hit the road.</u>	To hit the road means to start a journey. "It's getting late. It's time to hit the road."
<u>Road rage</u>	Aggressive driving habits sometimes resulting in violence against other drivers. "A number of car accidents today are a result of road rage ."
<u>Roaring trade</u>	If you do a roaring trade in a particular field, you do excellent business. "The sports shop is doing a roaring trade in bicycles these days."
<u>Rob the cradle</u>	If you rob the cradle , you have a romantic relationship with someone who is much younger than yourself. "My uncle Tom is dating a twenty-year-old girl. That's really robbing the cradle! "
<u>Rob Peter to pay Paul</u>	If a person robs Peter to pay Paul , they pay one debt with money borrowed from somewhere else, thus creating another debt. "David borrowed money from a friend to cover his overdraft; a typical case of robbing Peter to pay Paul!"
<u>Rock the boat</u>	If you tell someone not to rock the boat , you are asking them to do nothing that might cause trouble or upset a stable situation. "After the recent riots, it was decided not to rock the boat by introducing strict measures."



<u>Rocket science</u>	It's not rocket science/You don't need to be a rocket scientist This expression is used to emphasize that something presents no particular difficulty. "Bob will explain how it works. Don't worry - it's not rocket science!"
<u>Roll up your sleeves</u>	When you roll up your sleeves , you get ready for hard work. "The living-room was in a mess after the party, so we had to roll up our sleeves and start cleaning."
<u>Roll with the punches</u>	When someone has to roll with the punches , they have to deal with a difficult situation by being flexible. "The atmosphere has become very aggressive. We'll just have to roll with the punches."
When in <u>Rome</u>, do as the Romans.	This expression means that you should adopt the customs of the people or country you are visiting, and behave in the same way.
Go through the <u>roof</u>	If someone goes through the roof , they become very angry "His father went through the roof when Paul damaged his new car."
<u>Root and branch</u>	If an action is performed thoroughly or completely, it is done 'root and branch' . "The causes of the disease must be eliminated root and branch."
<u>Rooted to the spot</u>	If you are so shocked, surprised or scared that you are rooted to the spot , your reaction is so strong that you are unable to move. "Joe stood rooted to the spot as the plane landed on the water."
Learn the <u>ropes</u>	If you learn the ropes , you learn how to a particular job correctly.
<u>Rotten apple</u>	This term refers to a person who is considered to be dishonest or immoral and has a bad influence on others in a group. "It is said that in any profession there's always a rotten apple."
<u>Rough and ready</u>	Something which is rough and ready is adequate but rather rudimentary or unrefined. "The accommodation is rough and ready but the scenery is fantastic!"
<u>Rough diamond</u>	This expression refers to a person who is good-natured but who lacks polished manners and/or education. "He's a great guy, but a bit of a rough diamond! "
<u>Rough justice</u>	Treatment or punishment that does not seem fair, or is too severe, is called rough justice , especially if it is not legal. "The way the player was treated by the media was very rough justice."
<u>Rub salt into the wound</u>	If you are in a difficult or unpleasant situation, and somebody rubs salt into the wound , they do or say something to make things worse. "The separation was already difficult for Pete. Tom's comments about Julie's new boyfriend just rubbed salt into the wound."
<u>Rub shoulders</u>	If you rub shoulders with someone, you have an opportunity to meet and talk to a person who is wealthy, famous or distinguished. "In her job in public relations, she sometimes rubs shoulders with famous people."
When the <u>rubber</u> hits the road	This expression refers to the moment when you put a theory into practice or actually apply what you have learned. "The plan sounds good. I'd like to be there when the rubber hits the road. "



<p><u>Rue the day</u></p>	<p>If you rue the day you did something, you bitterly regret what you did that day. "Her father disapproved of Tony. He said she would rue the day she married him."</p>
<p><u>Sweep something under the rug</u></p>	<p>If you sweep something under the rug (or carpet), you try to hide it or ignore it because it is embarrassing.</p>
<p><u>Rule the roost</u></p>	<p>If you rule the roost, you are the most important and powerful person in a group or community. "Officially David runs the company, but it's his father who really rules the roost."</p>
<p><u>Run the gamut</u></p>	<p>If you run the gamut of something, you cover the entire range of what is possible. "He enjoys reading. His taste runs the gamut from popular novels to poetry."</p>
<p><u>Run with the hare and hunt with the hounds</u></p>	<p>This expression refers to someone who wants to stay on friendly terms with both sides in a quarrel "Bob always wants to keep everyone happy, but I'm afraid he can't run with the hare and hunt with the hounds this time - the issue is too important.</p>
<p><u>Run a mile</u></p>	<p>This expression is used by someone who is anxious to avoid something. "She said she'd run a mile if she saw reporters in the area.</p>
<p><u>Run riot</u></p>	<p>If people run riot, they behave in a frenzied, uncontrolled manner, running around in all directions. "I dread the arrival of my sister with her kids - she always lets them run riot."</p>
<p><u>Run a taut ship</u> also: run a <i>tight ship</i></p>	<p>This expression means that a group or an organization is run in a well-ordered and disciplined manner. "The director of the scout camp runs a taut ship."</p>
<p><u>Run out of steam</u></p>	<p>If you say that a person, a process or an organized event is running out of steam, you mean that there is a loss of impetus, energy or enthusiasm "The anti-immigrant movement seems to be running out of steam."</p>
<p><u>Run rings/circles around</u></p>	<p>If you do something much better than your opponent, by showing more skill or ability, you run rings (or circles) around them. "In a quiz show on TV yesterday, a teenage girl</p>



	ran rings around the other contestants."		
		Run round in circles	People who run round in circles have difficulty in achieving things because of lack of organization. "Running round in circles will get us nowhere - we need to set up a plan."
		Be run down	A person who is run down is in poor physical condition.
		run-of-the-mill	Something described as run-of-the-mill is considered ordinary or uneventful. "I've got nothing extraordinary to tell; it was a run-of-the-mill sales meeting."
		It runs in the family	This refers to a physical or moral characteristic that is common to many members of a family "Black hair and blue eyes - the combination runs in the family ."
		A running battle	If two people or groups have a running battle with each other, they argue or disagree about something over a long period of time. "There's been a running battle between the local authorities and the population over the school bus route."
		In a rut	If you are in a rut , you have a monotonous and boring way of life. "If you feel you're in a rut, why don't you look for a new job?"

	Idiom	Meaning
S	Get the sack / be sacked	If someone gets the sack , they lose their job, usually because they have done something wrong. "Charlie got the sack when his boss caught him stealing."
	Saddled with debt	If you are saddled with debt , the amount of money that you owe is a financial burden. "Be careful. If you buy a house that is too expensive, you could be saddled with debt for many years."



<u>Safe bet</u>	To say that something is a safe bet means that it is very likely to happen. "It's a safe bet that you'll get a good job if you graduate from one of the top universities."
<u>In safe hands</u>	If something is in safe (or good) hands , it is being looked after by a reliable person or organization, and is therefore at no risk. "I'll look after Jamie while you go shopping. Don't worry - he'll be in safe hands."
<u>On the safe side</u>	If you do something to be on the safe side , you want to avoid taking any risks. "I think I locked the door, but I'll check again to be on the safe side."
<u>Safety in numbers</u>	This expression means that being part of a group makes people feel more secure and more confident when taking action. "None of the group went sightseeing alone, knowing that there was safety in numbers ."
<u>Sail close to the wind</u>	If you sail close to the wind , you do something dangerous or act just within the limits of what is legal or acceptable. "He seems to invest his money well although he often sails close to the wind."
<u>Sail through something</u>	If you sail through something, for example a test or an exam, you succeed in doing it without difficulty.
<u>Take the wind out of someone's sails</u>	If someone or something takes the wind out of your sails , they make you feel less confident, by doing or saying something that you do not expect. "The Chairman's rejection of our marketing strategy really took the wind out of our sails"
<u>Take something with a pinch/grain of salt.</u>	To say that certain information should be taken with a grain of salt means that you doubt the accuracy of the information.
<u>Salt of the earth</u>	To refer to someone as the salt of the earth means that you consider them to be honest and reliable.
<u>Same boat</u>	If two or more parties in the same boat , they are in the same unpleasant or difficult situation. "When the factory closed down, the workers all found themselves in the same boat."
<u>By the same token</u>	If you apply the same rule to different situations, you judge them by the same token , or in a similar way. "Teenagers should be less rebellious, but by the same token, parents should be more understanding."
<u>What's sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander</u>	This expression means that if something applies to one person, it should also apply to others "Women should earn the same salary as men for the same job." What's sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander! "
<u>Save someone's bacon</u>	If you save someone's bacon , you rescue them from a dangerous or difficult situation. "When Dave was a student, finding a room in return for dog-sitting really saved his bacon!"



<u>Save your breath</u>	If you tell someone to save their breath , you tell them not to waste their time speaking, because their words will have no effect. "I've already given him the same advice and he won't listen, so you might as well save your breath."
<u>Save one's neck/skin</u>	If you manage to escape from serious danger or trouble, you save your neck (or your skin). "He saved his neck by jumping off the bridge just before it collapsed."
<u>Saved by the bell.</u>	If you are saved by the bell , something happens at the last minute to rescue you from a difficult situation. "Saved by the bell! A friend arrived just when I realized I had no money for the parking metre!"
<u>Saving grace</u>	A person who has a saving grace has a quality which prevents them from being totally bad. "She's a horrible person but she has one saving grace, her kindness to animals."
<u>Say a mouthful</u>	If you make an important, perceptive or lengthy remark, you say a mouthful . "The customer said a mouthful when he gave the main reason for his dissatisfaction."
<u>Scales fall from your eyes</u>	When the scales fall from your eyes , you finally understand the truth about something. "It was only when my neighbour was arrested for theft that the scales fell from my eyes and I realized where his money came from."
<u>Scared stiff</u>	Someone who is scared stiff is so frightened that they are unable to move. "My mother is scared stiff of heights."
<u>Scarce as hen's teeth</u>	To say that something is as scarce as hen's teeth emphasizes that it is extremely rare, to the point of non-existence. "Take enough supplies. Water is as scarce as hen's teeth where you're going!"
<u>Scare somebody out of their wits</u>	If something scares you out of your wits , it makes you very frightened or worried. "The feeling that their house is haunted can scare people out of their wits."
<u>Scare the (living) daylight out of someone</u>	If something scares the daylight out of you, it terrifies you. "The sudden screaming scared the daylight out of me."
<u>School of hard knocks</u>	Someone who goes through the school of hard knocks learns through the positive and negative experiences of life rather than through a formal classroom education. "He never went to college but the school of hard knocks made him a shrewd businessman."
<u>Get off/go scot-free</u>	To say that someone got off scot-free means that they escaped the punishment they deserved. "We were all punished except James who managed to get off scot-free!"
<u>Scrape the bottom of the barrel</u>	If you scrape the bottom of the barrel , you use the worst or the least satisfactory ideas, things or people because you have no choice. "When they started to recruit, they had to scrape the bottom of the



	barrel because the best people had already found jobs elsewhere."
<u>Scratch the surface</u>	When you only scratch the surface of a problem or subject, you deal with only a small part of it. "Some countries are only scratching the surface of their environment problems."
<u>Not up to scratch</u>	If something or somebody is not up to scratch , they are not as good as they should be.
<u>Scream blue murder</u>	Someone who screams blue murder shouts or complains very loudly as if something very serious has happened. "The crowd started screaming blue murder when the football match was interrupted."
<u>Have a screw loose</u>	If someone has a screw loose , their behaviour is strange and they appear slightly mad. "She wears a fur coat in summer - she must have a screw loose!"
<u>Scrimp and save</u>	If you scrimp and save , you spend as little as possible over a certain period of time in order to save money. "The parents scrimped and saved for years so that their children would have a college education."
<u>Sea legs</u>	A person who has sea legs is used to walking on a moving ship, or has the ability to adjust to a new situation. "It takes a while in a new job to find your sea legs."
<u>Seal of approval</u>	If a project or contract receives a seal of approval , it receives formal support or approval from higher authorities. "We can't conclude the deal without the director's seal of approval."
<u>Come apart at the seams</u>	To say that someone is coming apart at the seams means that they are extremely upset or under severe mental stress. "Bob has had so many problems lately, he's coming apart at the seams."
<u>Seamy side of life</u>	This expression refers to the most unpleasant, disreputable or sordid aspects of life that we normally do not see (just as the stitched seams of clothes are generally not seen). "Social workers really see the seamy side of life."
<u>Play second fiddle</u>	If you play second fiddle to somebody, you accept to be second in importance to that person, or have a lower position. "When the company was taken over, Tom had to play second fiddle to the new manager."
<u>Second a motion</u>	During a meeting, if you second a motion , you formally agree with a proposal. "She seconded the motion to introduce flexible working hours."
<u>Second nature</u>	If something you do is second nature to you, it is something that you do easily or automatically because you have done it so often or for so long. "Skiing is second nature to Harry. He grew up in a ski resort."
<u>Second to none</u>	To say that something is second to none means that it is excellent - better than everything else. "The service was perfect and the food was second to none."



<u>See the colour of somebody's money</u>	If you want to see the colour of somebody's money , you want to make sure that the person in question has enough money to pay you before you accept to do something. "I want to see the colour of his money before shipping the goods."
<u>See the error of your ways</u>	When someone sees the error of their ways , they understand that what they are doing is wrong and accept to change their behaviour. "He talked to a counsellor who tried to make him see the error of his ways."
<u>See red</u>	If someone sees red , they suddenly become very angry or annoyed about something. "Discrimination of any kind makes me see red!"
<u>Seeing is believing</u>	This expression means that when you see something, you can be sure it exists, or that what you have been told is really true. "Mark says bananas grow in his garden, but seeing is believing! "
<u>Seen better days</u>	If something has seen better days , it has aged visibly in comparison to when it was new. "My much-travelled suitcase has seen better days!"
<u>Sell someone down the river</u>	If you sell someone down the river , you betray someone who trusts you. "When the Trade Union signed the salary agreement, the workers felt they had been sold down the river."
<u>Sell your soul</u>	This is a humorous way of saying that you would be willing to do something morally or legally wrong to obtain what you want. "He'd sell his soul to get an interview."
<u>Send a shiver down one's spine</u>	If something sends a shiver down your spine , it makes you feel anxious, nervous or excited. "That song always sends a shiver down my spine."
<u>Send (someone) about their business</u>	If you tell someone, in an irritated or unfriendly way, to go away, you send them about their business . "An insurance company representative keeps calling on my mother, but I told her to send him about his business."
<u>Send someone packing</u>	If you send someone packing , you tell them to leave, in a very forceful and unfriendly way. "When Amanda discovered that Jack had been unfaithful, she sent him packing."
<u>Senior moment</u>	A momentary lapse of memory, especially in older people, or an absent-minded action such as putting the cereals in the fridge, is humorously referred to as having a senior moment . "I found the phone in the cupboard. I must have had a senior moment!"
<u>Separate the sheep from the goats</u>	If you separate the sheep from the goats , you examine a group of people and decide which are good and which are not so good. "Examining job applications is the first stage in separating the sheep from the goats."
<u>Set you back</u>	The sum of money something sets you back is the amount it costs you. "Changing the heating system would set us back about \$5 000."



<u>Set in one's ways</u>	A person who is set in their ways is someone who is unable or unwilling to change their ideas, habits or methods, often because they are old "My grandmother has the same routine every day. She's very set in her ways."
<u>Set great store by (someone or something)</u>	When you consider something to be very important or valuable, you set great store by it . "The company sets great store by its after-sales service."
<u>Set in stone</u>	When something is set in stone , it is permanent and cannot be changed in any way. "The agenda isn't set in stone; we can add an item if need be."
<u>Set the records straight</u>	If you set or put the records straight , you provide facts or an explanation of events in order to correct a mistake or misunderstanding. "An interview on television enabled the actress to set the records straight about her health."
<u>Set the stage (for something)</u>	If you set the stage for an event or a development, you create conditions that allow it to happen. "The agreement set the stage for their future working relationship."
<u>Settle a score</u>	To settle a score means to retaliate against someone or take revenge for a past wrong. "Jack has made an appointment with his lawyer - he has a score to settle with someone."
<u>Shake like a leaf</u>	If you shake like a leaf , you tremble with fear or nervousness. "At the beginning of the interview I was shaking like a leaf."
<u>Shank's pony</u>	If you go somewhere on Shank's pony , you have to walk rather than travel by bus, car, etc. "It was impossible to find a taxi after the party so it was Shank's pony for us!"
<u>Shape of things to come</u>	If something, such as a trend or a fashion, is the shape of things to come , it is a sign of what is likely to be used or enjoyed by many people in the future. "Do you think speed-dating is the shape of things to come?"
<u>Shape up or ship out</u>	This expression is used to warn someone that if they do not improve, they will have to leave their job. "When Tom started neglecting the customers, he was told to shape up or ship out ."
<u>In bad shape</u>	A person who is in bad shape is in poor physical condition. "Have you seen Tony recently? He's really in bad shape."
<u>Get back into shape</u>	To get yourself back into shape , you need to take exercise in order to become fit and healthy again.
<u>Sharp cookie</u>	Someone who is not easily deceived or fooled is a sharp cookie . "You can't fool my grandmother. She's a sharp cookie!"
<u>Sharp practice</u>	Trying to achieve something by using underhand, deceitful or dishonourable means that are barely within the law or bordering on dishonesty is called sharp practice . "The company is under investigation for sharp practice so it's better to



	avoid dealing with them."
<u>Sharp as a tack</u>	A person who is as sharp as a tack is able to think quickly and learn very fast. "You won't have to explain it to him twice. He's as sharp as a tack."
<u>Shed light</u>	If you shed light on something, you help to explain it or make it easier to understand. "It was hoped that the testimony of the witnesses would shed light on the causes of the accident."
<u>Shelf life</u>	If something, such as food, drink or medicine, has a particular shelf life , it must be used or sold before the end of that period of time. "Dairy products have quite a short shelf life."
<u>Come out of one's shell</u>	To come out of one's shell means to become less shy, more talkative and outgoing.
<u>Shilly-shally</u>	If you shilly-shally , you hesitate a lot about something and have difficulty reaching a decision. "Come on! Don't shilly-shally - just make up your mind!"
<u>That ship has sailed</u>	The expression 'that ship has sailed' means that a particular opportunity has passed by and it's now too late. "Is the offer this open?" "Sorry, that ship has sailed - you missed your chance!"
<u>Like ships that pass in the night</u>	This expression is used to refer to people who meet briefly and are not likely to meet again. "The two men met once, like ships that pass in the night , and never met again."
<u>Keep your shirt on!</u>	If you tell somebody to keep their shirt on , you are asking them to calm down. "Keep your shirt on Bob. Just give your version of the story!"
<u>The shoe is on the other foot</u>	When the circumstances have reversed and one person now doing what the the other person did in the past, you can say that the shoe is on the other foot . "I used to advise my children to eat healthy food. Now my daughter is a nutritionist and the shoe is on the other foot - she advises me!"
<u>Where the shoe pinches</u>	When people talk about ' where the shoe pinches ', they are referring to an area that is often the source of problems or difficulties. "She thinks the public transport system works perfectly, but she'll soon find out where the shoe pinches!"
<u>In someone's shoes</u>	To talk about being in someone's shoes means to imagine how you would react if you were in a similar situation as them. "Tom's sales have dropped by 30% this month. I wouldn't like to be in his shoes!"
<u>On a shoestring</u>	If you do something on a shoestring , you do it with very little money. "When I was a student I lived on a shoestring."
<u>Shoot yourself in the foot</u>	If you shoot yourself in the foot , you do or say something which is against your own interests. "When Julie was asked at the interview if she had any weaknesses, she really shot herself in the foot the way she answered."



<u>Shop around</u>	If you shop around , you visit a number of shops selling similar articles in order to compare the prices. "You can usually save money by shopping around."
<u>Shop till you drop</u>	If you shop till you drop , you go shopping for a very long time, until you're exhausted. "If you go to London with Julie you'll shop till you drop, so take comfortable shoes!"
<u>Shopping spree</u>	If you go on a shopping spree , you enjoy a lively outing, usually with much spending of money. "Liza is planning to go on a shopping spree during the sales."
<u>Shopping therapy</u>	This term refers to the idea that buying things can make you feel better. "A little shopping therapy can usually cheer up bored teenagers."
<u>Window shopping</u>	When people go window shopping , they look at things in shop windows, without actually purchasing anything. "I haven't been paid yet, so I can only go window shopping."
<u>Short and sweet</u>	Something that is short and sweet is brief but pleasant. "It didn't take us long to agree. Our conversation was short and sweet."
<u>Short fuse</u>	When someone has a short fuse , they are likely to become angry easily or quickly. "Be careful how you explain the situation. The boss has a very short fuse these days!"
<u>Short shrift</u>	If someone or something gets short shrift , they are given little attention or sympathy. "When the boss is very busy, he gives short shrift to anyone who bothers him."
<u>Shot in the dark</u>	To refer to a question or statement as a shot in the dark means that it is a complete guess, but at the same time it might be close to the truth. "He didn't know which players had been selected, so mentioning Carter's name was just a shot in the dark."
<u>Shotgun approach</u>	If you use a shotgun approach , you cover a wide range in a non-selective, haphazard and inefficient manner. "Identifying a specific segment of the market as our target will be more effective than a shotgun approach."
<u>Shoulder surfing</u>	The practice of looking over somebody's shoulder when they are using a computer, cash dispenser or other electronic device in order to obtain personal information (identification, account number, password, etc.) is called shoulder-surfing .
<u>A chip on the shoulder</u>	If someone has a chip on their shoulder , they feel resentful because they feel they are being treated unfairly, especially because of their background, their sex or their colour.
<u>Give someone the cold shoulder</u>	To give someone the cold shoulder means to deliberately ignore someone. "After giving my opinion, he gave me the cold shoulder."



<u>Shouting match</u>	An argument or debate where people shout loudly at each other is called a shouting match . "The debate between the two politicians turned into a shouting match which spoiled the event for viewers."
<u>Show one's true colours</u>	When a person shows their true colours , their behaviour reveals their real nature and shows their qualities and/or weaknesses. "In times of crisis people show their true colours."
<u>Show somebody the ropes</u>	If you show someone the ropes , you teach or explain to them how to do a particular job. "The manager is busy showing the ropes to two new trainees."
<u>Shrinking violet</u>	A person referred to as a shrinking violet is a timid or shy person. "The witness was no shrinking violet. She had no difficulty expressing herself!"
<u>Shrug something off</u>	If you shrug something off , you dismiss it as being unimportant. "He was aware of the danger but he just shrugged it off."
<u>Shut the stable door after the horse has bolted</u>	If you shut the stable door after the horse has bolted , you try to prevent something bad from happening when it is already too late. "Jack decided to insure the contents of his apartment after it was burgled. That's really shutting the stable door after the horse has bolted!"
The other <u>side</u> of the coin	When you want to mention a different or contradictory aspect of a situation, you refer to the other side of the coin . "The house is lovely and spacious, but the other side of the coin is that it is far from shops and schools."
A <u>sight</u> for sore eyes	This expression refers to a person or thing you are happy to see. "Sam! You're a sight for sore eyes! Haven't seen you in a long time."
Raise/lower your <u>sights</u>	If you raise or lower your sights , you raise or lower your expectations, or you are more or less ambitious. "He had to lower his sights and accept a less well-paid job than what he had hoped for."
<u>Sign of the times</u>	This expression refers to something that shows the nature of today's society. "The rising level of violence is a sign of the times ."
<u>Sign your own death warrant</u>	If you do something that causes your own downfall, or prevents you from being successful, you sign your own death warrant . "When he decided to drop out of college, he signed his own death warrant."
<u>Sign on the dotted line</u>	If you sign on the dotted line , you formally give your consent to something by signing an official document. "I consulted my lawyer before signing on the dotted line."
<u>Signed, sealed and delivered</u>	When an agreement, contract or treaty is signed, sealed and delivered , all the legal documents have been signed. "It is hoped that the agreement will be signed, sealed and delivered before the end of the week."
<u>Significant other</u>	The term significant other refers to a person, such as a spouse, partner or lover, with whom you have a long-term relationship.
<u>Silver bullet</u>	This term refers to an extremely effective or magical solution to a difficult problem. "There is no silver bullet that will put an end to unemployment."



<u>Silver lining</u>	A silver lining refers to the good or pleasant side-effects of an unpleasant situation. Every cloud has a silver lining means that there is a positive or hopeful side to every unpleasant situation.
Born with a <u>silver spoon</u> in one's mouth.	To say that someone was born with a silver spoon in their mouth means that their family is very rich and privileged. "She never has to worry about money; she was born with a silver spoon in her mouth."
<u>Silver surfer</u>	A silver surfer is an elderly person who uses the internet. "After just a few lessons my grandmother was ready to join the silver surfers."
<u>Silver-tongued</u>	A person who is a smooth talker, and speaks so convincingly that they manage to persuade others to do what they want, is said to be silver-tongued . "A silver-tongued salesman persuaded my mother to buy a new washing machine although the one she had was fine!"
<u>Simplicity itself</u>	Something that is simplicity itself is extremely easy to do. "Using the tool is simplicity itself; just turn it on and the instructions appear."
<u>Since time immemorial</u>	If something has existed since time immemorial , it has been there for such a long time that nobody can recall a time without it. "I don't know when that bridge was built. It's been there since time immemorial."
<u>Sing a different tune</u>	If somebody sings a different tune , they change their opinion about something or their attitude towards something. "He had no consideration for people out of work until he lost his own job; now he's singing a different tune!"
<u>Sink their differences</u>	If people or organizations sink their differences , they decide to forget their disagreements. "We must sink our differences and build a peaceful community."
<u>Sink or swim</u>	If somebody has to sink or swim , they have to do something alone, and their success or failure depends entirely on their own efforts. "The sink or swim attitude in the company can be very difficult for young recruits."
<u>Sink one's teeth into something</u>	If you sink your teeth into something , you do it with a lot of energy and enthusiasm. "When Julie got promoted, she immediately sank her teeth into her new job."
<u>Siphon something off</u>	If someone siphons something off , they transfer something from one place to another, often illegally. "It was discovered that he had siphoned off money from the business into an account in a tax haven."
<u>Sit on the fence</u>	If you sit on the fence , you avoid taking sides in a discussion or argument. "It's an important issue. You can't continue to sit on the fence!"
<u>Sit up and take notice</u>	A person who sits up and takes notice becomes alert and attentive. "The announcement of the winner made everyone sit up and take notice."
<u>A sitting duck</u>	To refer to someone as a sitting duck means that they are an easy target to criticize, attack.



<u>Sitting pretty</u>	Someone who is sitting pretty is a good or fortunate situation, especially compared to others who are not so lucky. "He sold his shares at a good time so he's now sitting pretty and enjoying life."
<u>Skating on thin ice</u>	If you are skating on thin ice , you are doing or saying something that could cause disagreement or trouble. "Don't mention that subject during the negotiations or you could be skating on thin ice."
<u>Skeleton staff/crew</u>	If a business or organization works with a skeleton staff , it is run with the smallest number of people necessary. "The office is closed the week after Christmas but there will be a skeleton staff to handle essential operations."
<u>Skin someone alive</u>	If you are angry and threaten to skin someone alive , you mean that you are going to punish them severely. "If that kid damages my car again, I'll skin him alive!"
All <u>skin</u> and bone	If someone is all skin and bone , they are very thin, or too thin "After trekking in the Himalayas, he was all skin and bone."
By the <u>skin</u> of your teeth	To do something by the skin of your teeth means that you just manage to do it, but that you almost fail. "He passed the driving test by the skin of his teeth."
It's no <u>skin</u> off my nose	To use this expression means that you don't care if something happens. "It's no skin off my nose if he doesn't accept the invitation - I don't care one way or another."
Jump out of one's <u>skin</u>	If you jump out of your skin , you are extremely surprised or shocked. "Jane nearly jumped out of her skin when the horse put its head through the window!"
(Put) <u>skin</u> in the game	If you put skin in the game , you show your confidence in a company by making a considerable investment or financial commitment. "I got good news today. Apparently a serious investor is willing to put skin in the game."
There's more than one way to <u>skin</u> a cat	This expressions means that there are many different ways of achieving something "How about trying a different method? There's more than one way to skin a cat you know!"
The <u>sky's</u> the limit	To say " the sky's the limit " means that there is no limit to the possibility of success or progress for someone or something. "How successful do you think the project will be? Who knows... the sky's the limit!"
<u>Slap</u> on the wrist	If you get a slap on the wrist , you receive a mild punishment or you are reprimanded for something you have done. "I got a slap on the wrist from my wife for leaving the kitchen in a mess."
A <u>sledgehammer</u> to crack a nut	Using a sledgehammer to crack a nut means using disproportionate force to solve a problem or obtain a result. "He called the police because his neighbour was rude? - Now that's using a sledgehammer to crack a nut!"



<u>Sleep like a log</u>	If you sleep like a log , you sleep deeply or soundly. "After a day at the beach, I usually sleep like a log!"
<u>Sleeping /silent partner</u>	This term refers to a person who invests money in a business without taking an active part in its management, and whose association with the enterprise is not public knowledge. "He works alone, but his business is partly financed by a sleeping partner ."
<u>Slice/share of the cake (or pie)</u>	When people feel entitled to a share of the benefits or profits, they want a (larger) slice of the cake . "Since profits are higher this year, the workers feel they deserve a bigger slice of the cake."
<u>Sling mud</u>	To say that someone is slinging mud at another person means that they are trying to damage that person's reputation by saying bad things about them. "During election campaigns, candidates often sling mud at each other."
<u>It slipped my mind</u>	If something has slipped your mind , you have forgotten about it "Oh dear! It had slipped my mind that the banks were closed today."
<u>Slippery as an eel</u>	To say that someone is as slippery as an eel means that they are difficult to catch and they manage to avoid answering questions. "That man is as slippery as an eel. He was arrested for theft several times but was never convicted."
<u>Quick/slow on the uptake</u>	Someone who is quick or slow on the uptake is quick or slow to understand what is meant. "Please explain the problem in simple words - I'm a bit slow on the uptake."
<u>Slush fund</u>	This term refers to an account or fund in politics or business where money is set aside for various unofficial purposes, often unethical or even illegal. "A large commission taken from the slush fund ensured the success of the negotiations."
<u>On the sly</u>	If you do something on the sly you do it secretly or furtively. "He made such quick progress that the others suspected him of having private lessons on the sly."
<u>Smack dab in the middle</u>	If something is smack dab in the middle , it's right in the centre. "I couldn't hide the stain on my shirt. It was smack dab in the middle."
<u>Small dog, tall weeds</u>	This expression is used to refer to someone you think is incapable or does not have the resources to perform a task. "It may be too difficult for the trainee - small dog, tall weeds!"
<u>Small fry</u>	People or organizations that are unimportant can be referred to as ' small fry '. This term also refers to young children. "The police seized a large quantity of drugs and some small fry, but not the organizers they were hoping to catch."
<u>Small hours</u>	If you refer to the small hours , you mean after midnight, or the very early hours of the day. "Sarah worked until the small hours on her speech for the ceremony."
<u>Small potatoes</u>	Something that is small potatoes is considered unimportant or insignificant. "Her first publication was considered small potatoes but her new book



	has lead to a change of opinion."
<u>Small world</u>	This expression is used by someone who is surprised to meet familiar people, events or situations in unexpected places. "Wow! It's a small world. I never expected to meet a neighbour on a transatlantic flight!"
<u>Smart alec</u>	A smart alec is an annoying self-assertive person who tries to show off how clever they are. "Some smart alec interrupted the game claiming that the answers were incorrect!"
<u>Smash hit</u>	A very successful performance in music, films, theatre, etc. is called a smash hit . "The film 'Titanic' was a smash hit all over the world."
<u>Smoke like a chimney</u>	When someone smokes like a chimney , they smoke a large amount of tobacco on a regular basis. "My grandfather smoked like a chimney."
<u>Smoke signals</u>	To say that there are smoke signals means that there are indications that something is probably going to happen. "All the smoke signals seem to indicate that the company is going to be taken over."
<u>Smoke and mirrors</u>	An attempt to conceal or distort the truth (like a magician) in order to confuse people is called smoke and mirrors . "The outgoing president used smoke and mirrors to make the situation look better."
<u>A smokescreen</u>	A smokescreen is an action or tactic intended to conceal or divert attention from your real intentions or activities. "His travel business was just a smokescreen for his political activities."
<u>Smokestack industries</u>	Industries involved in heavy manufacturing such as the production of iron and steel, especially if they cause a lot of pollution, are called smokestack industries . "Smokestack industries are no longer authorized in residential areas."
<u>Smoking gun</u>	A smoking gun is a piece of evidence or the indisputable sign of someone's guilt. "The fingerprints the thief left on the door-handle was the smoking gun that enabled the police to arrest him."
<u>Smooth the path/way</u>	Someone or something that smooths the path for something, makes progress easier or enables it to happen. "Speaking the language smoothed the path for negotiations."
<u>Smooth somebody's ruffled feathers</u>	If you smooth somebody's ruffled feathers , you make that person feel less angry or offended. "Tom took the criticism badly, but James managed to smooth his ruffled feathers"
<u>In smooth waters</u>	A business or operation which is in smooth waters is making regular and easy progress. "The company seems to be in smooth waters these days."
<u>Snail mail</u>	This term refers to the standard system of mail delivery, or postal service, considered very slow compared to electronic mail. "More and more people are using e-mail rather than traditional delivery services, snail mail ."



<u>Snail's pace</u>	If something moves at a snail's pace , it goes very slowly. "The old man was driving the car at a snail's pace."
<u>Snake in the grass</u>	This expression refers to someone who pretends to be your friend while actually betraying you. "I thought I could trust my new colleague but he turned out to be a snake in the grass. "
<u>Snap decision</u>	A quick decision based on an impulse, without taking time to weigh the consequences, is called a snap decision . "Completely overworked, he suddenly turned off his computer and made a snap decision to go swimming."
<u>Snatch victory from the jaws of defeat</u>	If you manage to win something, such as a match or a contest, when you are on the verge of losing, you snatch victory from the jaws of defeat . "With a last-minute goal, the team snatched victory from the jaws of defeat."
<u>Snowed under</u>	Someone who is snowed under has so many things to do, usually work, that they feel unable to cope with it all. "With the 'flu epidemic, doctors and nurses are completely snowed under."
<u>Snug as a bug in a rug</u>	This is a humorous way of saying that you are warm and comfortable. "Wrapped up in a blanket on the sofa, she looked as snug as a bug in a rug. "
<u>A social butterfly</u>	This term refers to a person who has a lot of friends and acquaintances and likes to flit from one social event to another. "Julie is constantly out and about; she's a real social butterfly. "
<u>Pull up one's socks</u>	If you pull up your socks , you work harder in order to achieve something. "You'll have to pull up your socks if you want to pass your exam."
<u>Soft option</u>	If you choose the easiest course of action available, which is usually not very effective, you take a soft option . "Their father took a soft option and confiscated the skateboard for a week, hoping his sons would stop quarrelling."
<u>Have a soft spot</u>	If you have a soft spot for someone or something, you particularly like them. "My grandfather has always had a soft spot for fast cars."
<u>Soften the blow</u>	When someone tries to soften the blow , they do something to make an unpleasant event or action easier to accept. "In spite of the cash payments given to soften the blow, the loss of their jobs was a catastrophe for the miners."
<u>Sound/smell fishy</u>	If something sounds or smells fishy , you are suspicious about it. "Do you believe what she said? Her story sounds fishy to me."
<u>Sound hollow</u>	If an explanation, apology or promise sounds hollow , it seems false or insincere. "I don't think he's sorry at all. His apology sounded hollow to me."
<u>Soup to nuts</u>	If you do something from soup to nuts , you do it all the way through, from the beginning to the end (like from the first to the last course of a meal). "She told us the whole story, from soup to nuts."



<u>Sow</u> the seeds of suspicion	If someone's behaviour, or something they say, sows the seeds of suspicion , it leads others to suspect that they are guilty. "The fact that the boy spent a lot of money after the burglary sowed the seeds of suspicion in the neighbours' minds."
<u>Sow</u> one's wild oats	A person, usually a man, who sows their wild oats goes through a period of carefree pleasure-seeking while they are young. "He was advised to sow his wild oats before he got married."
Put a <u>spanner</u> in the works	To put a spanner in the works means to cause problems and prevent something from happening as planned. (In the US, the word 'wrench' or 'monkey wrench' is used instead of 'spanner')
<u>Go spare</u>	If you go spare you lose your temper completely. "Lea's dad would go spare if he found out how much she had spent in London!"
<u>Spare-part</u> surgery	This term refers to surgery in which a diseased or non-functioning organ of a person is replaced with a transplanted or artificial organ.
<u>Spare</u> tyre	If a person has a spare tyre , they have a roll of flesh around the waist. "I'd better go on a diet - I'm getting a spare tyre!"
<u>Speak</u> ill of someone	If you speak ill of someone, you say bad or unkind things about them. "He's very loyal and refuses to speak ill of his colleagues."
<u>Speak</u> off the cuff	If you say something off the cuff , you say it spontaneously, without previous thought or preparation. "Politicians are usually careful not to speak off the cuff."
<u>Speak</u> out of turn	If someone speaks out of turn , either they intervene at the wrong moment or they say something tactless or inappropriate. "At the first meeting, I was afraid of speaking out of turn."
<u>Speak</u> softly and carry a big stick	If you speak softly and carry a big stick , you express your views in a quiet non-aggressive manner, but you make clear that you are in a position to use force if necessary. "As a leader he recommends the 'speak softly and carry a big stick' method."
<u>Speak</u> the same language	If two or more people speak the same language , they have similar tastes and ideas. "We work well together because we speak the same language."
<u>Speak</u> volumes	If something speaks volumes , it expresses a reaction or opinion very clearly, with no need for words. "The happy smile on the child's face when he opened the box spoke volumes about my choice of gift."
<u>Speed</u> networking	This refers to a relatively new urban trend which consists in making a potential business contact by briefly talking to a series of people at an organised event and exchanging contact details.
<u>Spick</u> and span	To refer to something, usually a place, as spick and span , means that it is very clean, neat and tidy. "The apartment has got to be spick and span before our guests arrive."
<u>Spill</u> the beans	If you spill the beans , you reveal a secret or talk about something private. "Come on! Spill the beans! What did he say?"



<u>Spin</u> doctor	A spin doctor is a press agent or public relations officer employed to promote a favourable interpretation of events in business or politics. "For a long time spin doctors lead us to believe that the situation was under control."
<u>Spin</u> a yarn	If you spin a yarn , you tell a story, usually a long improbable one, with distorted truths. "He failed the exam and spun a yarn about the exam papers being stolen."
<u>Spinach</u> cinema	Films that are neither exciting nor interesting but are considered educational or uplifting, in the same way as certain foods are good for your health, are referred to as spinach cinema .
<u>Spiral</u> out of control	When difficulties or costs spiral out of control , they get worse or increase continuously, creating a situation that becomes difficult to manage. "Some items were expensive but we were careful not to let the costs spiral out of control."
<u>Spit</u> in someone's eye	If you spit in someone's eye , you treat that person with disrespect or contempt. "You father raised you as best he could. Don't start spitting in his eye."
<u>Spitting</u> image	If one person is the spitting image of another, they look exactly like each other. "Sarah is the spitting image of her mother."
<u>Spitting</u> in the wind	If you spend time trying to do something that is impossible to achieve, you are said to be spitting in the wind . "You'll never make him change his mind. You're just spitting in the wind."
<u>Splash</u> out	If you splash out on something, you spend a lot of money on it. "Sarah's parents really splashed out on her wedding."
<u>Split</u> hairs	If you split hairs , you pay too much attention to differences that are very small or not important. "If we start splitting hairs, we'll never reach an agreement!"
<u>Sponge</u> off somebody	When you sponge off somebody , you live at the expense of another person, accepting their hospitality without sharing the costs or doing something in return. "Amy has been sponging off her grandparents for the past two months. She neither shares the expenses nor helps in the house."
<u>Spoon</u>-feed someone	If a person is spoon-fed , they are helped too much rather than encouraged to think by themselves or use their own initiative. "Some teachers tend to spoon-feed their pupils."
<u>Spot</u> on	To say that something is spot on means that it is exactly right. "That's absolutely correct! Your answer is spot on!"
<u>Spread</u> like wildfire	If something such as news, rumours or gossip spreads like wildfire , it becomes widely known very fast. "As soon as the nomination was announced, the news spread like wildfire."
<u>Spread</u> one's wings	When someone spreads their wings , they become independent, begin to use their abilities and develop their interests. "There comes a time when young people must be encouraged to spread their wings."



<u>Spread oneself too thin</u>	If you spread yourself too thin , you do too many things at the same time and can't do any of them well. "Don't spread yourself too thin or you'll get nowhere! "
<u>No spring chicken</u>	To say that someone is no spring chicken means that they are quite old or well past their youth. "How old is the owner?" "I don't know but she's no spring chicken."
<u>On the spur of the moment</u>	If you do something on the spur of the moment , you do it as soon as you think of it, spontaneously, without any planning. "He decided on the spur of the moment to buy flowers for his wife."
<u>Square meal</u>	When people talk about a square meal , they mean a substantial and satisfying meal. "I don't need a fancy restaurant, just a place where I can get a square meal."
<u>Square peg in a round hole</u>	To say that a person is a " square peg in a round hole ", means that they are not suitable for the job they are doing or the situation they are in. "Sarah wasn't happy in her her job. She said she felt like a square peg in a round hole."
<u>Stab in the back</u>	If someone stabs you in the back , they betray you by doing something harmful to you when you thought you could trust them. "His best friend stabbed him in the back by voting against him."
<u>At stake</u>	Someone who has a lot at stake is in a risky situation, with a lot to be won or lost. "He was nervous about signing the agreement because there was a lot at stake ."
<u>Stand on ceremony</u>	When people stand on ceremony , they behave in a very formal way. "We'd be delighted to come and see you, but please don't stand on ceremony with us."
<u>Stand on your own two feet</u>	If you stand on your own two feet , you are independent and need no help from anyone. "When young people leave home, they learn to stand on their own two feet."
<u>Stand one's ground</u>	If you stand your ground , you maintain your position and refuse to yield or give way. "He claimed innocence and stood his ground in spite of the repeated accusations."
<u>Stand (somebody) in good stead</u>	To say that a skill, an ability or previous experience will stand you in good stead means that it will be beneficial to you in the future. "Being able to speak another language will stand you in good stead when looking for a job."
<u>Stand the test of time</u>	If something stands the test of time , people continue to find it valuable or useful after many years. "The teaching method has stood the test of time. It is still used in schools today."
<u>Stand up for (someone or something)</u>	When you defend or support a person, a belief or an idea, you stand up for them. "A growing number of citizens are standing up for the victims of discrimination."



<u>Stark raving mad</u>	If you refer to someone as stark raving mad , you mean that they are completely crazy "You're stark raving mad to go sailing in this weather."
<u>Starter marriage</u>	A starter marriage is a short-lived first marriage that ends in divorce with no kids, no property and no regrets.
<u>Stars in one's eyes</u>	If someone has stars in their eyes , they are looking extremely happy. "She had stars in her eyes when she saw the car she had won."
<u>State of the art</u>	If something is described as state-of-the-art , it is the most advanced model currently available, incorporating the latest and best technology.
<u>Steal someone's thunder</u>	This expression means to take another person's idea or plan, and draw attention and praise away from the originator by presenting or using it first. "Bob had developed a plan to reduce production costs, but the plant manager stole his thunder by announcing Bob's ideas at the regional meeting."
<u>Steal the show</u>	A person who steals the show gets more attention or praise than the other participants. "The Japanese competitor stole the show at the Olympic Games."
<u>It's a steal!</u>	If you find something you want to buy for a very low price, much lower than what it is worth, you can say " It's a steal! " "He's selling it for \$10? At that price it's a steal!"
<u>Let off steam</u>	A person who lets off steam releases surplus energy or strong feelings either through intense physical activity or by talking in an unrestrained manner. "Let's bring the kids to the playground so they can let off steam."
<u>Under your own steam</u>	If you go somewhere under your own steam , you do so without any help from others. "There's no need to pick us up. We'll get there under our own steam."
<u>Steamed up</u>	If someone is or gets steamed up about something, they become very angry, excited or enthusiastic about it. "Calm down - there's no need to get all steamed up about it! "
<u>Stem the tide</u>	If you stem the tide (of events), you stop the development of something bad or undesirable. "The authorities seem unable to stem the rising tide of violence in schools."
<u>Step into the breach</u>	If you step into the breach , you do work that someone is unexpectedly unable to do. "Steve stepped into the breach when his colleague David had a car accident."
<u>Step into someone's shoes</u>	If you step into someone's shoes , you take over a job or position held by someone else before you. "William has been trained to step into his father's shoes when he retires."
<u>Step on the gas</u>	If someone tells you to step on the gas they are encouraging you to accelerate or hurry up in order to get something done quickly. "We'd better step on the gas and get these figures printed. The meeting starts in half an hour."



<p><u>Step/tread on someone's toes</u></p> <p><u>Step out of line</u></p>	<p>If you annoy or irritate somebody by intervening in a situation that is their responsibility, you step on their toes. "I could offer some advice but I'm afraid of stepping on someone's toes."</p> <p>If you step out of line, you behave badly, do something unacceptable or break the rules. "It was made clear upon arrival that we would be dismissed if we stepped out of line."</p>
<p><u>In a stew</u></p>	<p>When someone is in a stew about something, they are worried and agitated. "When she was organizing the wedding reception, Laura got into a stew over the seating arrangements."</p>
<p><u>Stew in your own juice</u></p>	<p>If you let somebody stew in their own juice, you leave them to worry about the consequences of their own actions. "Jack spent last night in prison for starting a fight - let him just stew in his own juice!"</p>
<p><u>Stick in one's throat (or craw)</u></p>	<p>If a situation, or someone's attitude, sticks in your throat (or craw), it is difficult to accept and makes you angry or resentful. "The way he treats women really sticks in my throat!"</p>
<p><u>Stick out like a sore thumb</u></p>	<p>If something sticks out like a sore thumb, it is very obvious or visible in an unpleasant way. "The modern building sticks out like a sore thumb among the old houses."</p>
<p><u>Stick something out</u></p>	<p>If you stick something out, you continue to the end in spite of the difficulties or unpleasant aspects of the situation. "Life is difficult here, but he is going to stick it out because he is determined to succeed."</p>
<p><u>Stick out a mile</u></p>	<p>If something sticks out a mile, it is very obvious or very easy to see. "You can see she's had a facelift - it sticks out a mile!"</p>
<p><u>Stick to one's guns</u></p>	<p>If you stick to your guns, you show determination when faced with opposition. "The government stuck to its guns in spite of the criticism."</p>
<p><u>Stick to your last</u></p>	<p>If you tell someone to stick to their last, you are asking them to restrict their intervention or comments to an area where they have knowledge and experience, and to keep away from areas where they know nothing. (A 'last' is used in making and repairing shoes.) "Why don't you stick to your last and let me handle this matter."</p>
<p><u>Sticking point</u></p>	<p>A sticking point is a controversial issue that causes an interruption or blocks progress in discussions or negotiations. "The choice of distributor was a sticking point in the negotiations."</p>
<p><u>Sticky fingers</u></p>	<p>Someone who has sticky fingers has a tendency to steal. "Items have been disappearing from the stock recently. Do any of the employees have sticky fingers?"</p>
<p><u>On a sticky wicket</u></p>	<p>If you find yourself on a sticky wicket, you are in a situation that is difficult to deal with. "They've refused to sign the contract so we're on a sticky wicket now!"</p>
<p><u>Sting someone for something</u></p>	<p>If you sting someone for an amount of money, you make them pay for something, usually in a deceitful manner. "Not only was the lunch boring but I was stung for 25\$."</p>



<u>Stink to high heaven</u>	If something has a very strong unpleasant smell, it stinks to high heaven . "Take off those socks - they stink to high heaven!"
<u>Stir up a hornet's nest</u>	If you stir up a hornet's nest , you do something which causes a commotion and provokes criticism and anger. "His letter to the Board stirred up a real hornet's nest."
<u>Stir-crazy</u>	If a person is or goes stir-crazy , they become very agitated or nervous because they have been confined to one place for too long. "After several days in quarantine, people were going stir-crazy."
<u>In stitches</u>	When people are in stitches , they are laughing a lot. "The story was so funny, everyone was in stitches."
<u>A stitherum</u>	Someone who is (all) in a stitherum is excited, agitated or confused about something. "The mayor's resignation created quite a stitherum in the town."
<u>A stone's throw away</u>	To say that something is a stone's throw away means that it is just a short distance away. "It's a residential area but the shops are just a stone's throw away."
<u>Stool pigeon</u>	A person who acts as an informer, especially one who gives information to the police or the authorities, is called a stool pigeon . "I don't trust Jack, I think he's a stool pigeon for the manager."
<u>Stop dead in one's tracks</u>	If you stop dead in your tracks , you stop suddenly because you are frightened or surprised. "When Steve saw the snake, he stopped dead in his tracks."
<u>Stop at nothing</u>	Someone who would stop at nothing would do anything, even something illegal or immoral, in order to obtain what they want. "He'd stop at nothing if there was a possibility of making money."
<u>Stop the rot</u>	When you prevent a situation from deteriorating, especially in politics or business, you stop the rot . "There was so much conflict in the office that a new manager was appointed to stop the rot."
<u>A storm is brewing</u>	To say that a storm is brewing means that the atmosphere indicates that there is going to be trouble, probably with outbursts of anger or emotion. "As soon as we saw Pete's face, we knew there was a storm brewing."
<u>A storm in a teacup</u>	To refer to something as a storm in a teacup means that you think that people are making a lot of unnecessary fuss or excitement about something unimportant.
<u>The eye of the storm</u>	If you are in the eye of the storm you are deeply involved in a situation which is difficult or controversial and affects a lot of people.
<u>A stormy relationship</u>	If you have a stormy relationship with someone, you have a lot of arguments and disagreements. "After a very stormy relationship, they decided to separate."
<u>Cut a long story short</u>	When talking about something, if you say " to cut a long story short ", you indicate that you are going to mention the main point quickly rather than go into the details. "To cut a long story short, Anne and Jim are getting a divorce."
<u>(Same) old story</u>	A common occurrence or something that happens regularly, or always in the same way, is called an old story or the same old story . "It's always the same old story : we do all the work and the boss takes all the credit!"



<u>Straight as an arrow</u>	Someone who is as straight as an arrow is a morally upright person who is extremely honest. "You can leave the keys with Andy. He's as straight as an arrow."
<u>Straight as a ramrod</u>	Someone who is straight as a ramrod is a person who keeps a straight back and looks very serious. "When my grandfather invited us for dinner, he used to sit straight as a ramrod at the head of the table."
<u>Strange bedfellows</u>	This expression refers to the unusual or unlikely association of two or more people, companies or states. "A car manufacturer and a bakery - strange bedfellows don't you think?"
<u>That's the last straw!</u>	The expression means that this is the latest unpleasant event, and that you cannot tolerate the situation any longer.
<u>Street smart</u>	A person who is street smart has enough experience and knowledge about life in the city to be able to deal with difficult or dangerous situations. "The kids living in this area are in less danger than us - they're street smart."
<u>Streets ahead</u>	If a person or organization is streets ahead of another, they are much better or more advanced. "In measures to preserve the planet, the Scandinavians are streets ahead of us."
<u>By no stretch of the imagination</u>	This expression means 'however hard you may try to believe or imagine something'. "By no stretch of the imagination could he be called handsome."
<u>Stretch the truth</u>	When you stretch the truth you exaggerate the facts or say things that are not exactly true. Some candidates are tempted to stretch the truth about their skills or work experience.
<u>Strictly business</u>	An appointment or event that is entirely devoted to business, with no leisure or relaxation, is called strictly business . "Yes we had lunch together but it was strictly business."
<u>Strike a false note.</u>	If you strike a false note , you do something wrong or inappropriate. "He struck a false note when he arrived at the cocktail party wearing old jeans."
<u>Strike gold</u>	If you strike gold , you find exactly what you need: satisfaction, wealth, happiness, etc. "I think she has struck gold this time in her new job. It suits her perfectly!"
<u>Strike home</u>	When someone's comments or remarks strike home , they make you fully understand the situation. "The seriousness of his injuries struck home as he listened to the surgeon."
<u>Strike (it) lucky</u>	When someone strikes it lucky , they run into good luck. "We had a sunny week in Scotland. We struck it lucky! "
<u>Strike pay dirt</u>	If you strike pay dirt , you are lucky and suddenly find yourself in a successful money-making situation. "Charlie finally struck pay dirt with his latest invention."



<u>Strike (or hit) a raw nerve</u>	If something you say strikes a raw nerve , it upsets someone because they are very sensitive about the subject. "You struck a raw nerve when you mentioned divorce."
<u>Strike (or hit) the right note</u>	If you strike (or hit) the right note , you say or do something suitable or appropriate. "He struck the right note with his future mother-in-law when he gave her a book on gardening - her favourite hobby!"
<u>Another string to your bow</u> <u>two strings to your bow</u>	If you have another string to your bow , you have another skill or possible course of action if what you are doing now is unsuccessful. "As well as her excellent qualifications, she's got another string to her bow to help her find a job. She speaks fluent Chinese."
<u>String someone along</u>	If you string someone along , you deliberately mislead them about your intentions. "Bob finally realized that Mary has just been stringing him along; she had no intention of marrying him."
<u>With no strings attached.</u>	An offer with " no strings attached " is an offer made without conditions or restrictions, and requires nothing in return. "I managed to get a loan with no strings attached."
<u>Struck dumb</u>	If someone is struck dumb , they are unable to speak because they are so surprised, shocked or frightened by something. "The accused was struck dumb when the verdict was announced."
<u>As stubborn as a mule</u>	If someone is as stubborn as a mule , they are very obstinate and unwilling to listen to reason or change their mind. "His friends advised him to accept the offer, but you know Jack - he's as stubborn as a mule!"
<u>Stumbling block</u>	This term refers to a problem or obstacle which prevents you from achieving something. "My father adapted quite well but the language was always a stumbling block for my mother."
<u>On the stump</u>	Before an election, when politicians are campaigning for support and votes, they are on the stump . "On the stump for months, the candidates attended meeting after meeting."
<u>Sublime to ridiculous</u>	If something goes from the sublime to the ridiculous , it deteriorates in quality from serious or admirable to absurd or unimportant. "An opera followed by a Mr Muscle contest is going from the sublime to the ridiculous!"
<u>Sugar the pill</u>	If you sugar the pill , you try to make some unpleasant news more acceptable by saying something pleasant at the same time. "When Tim's parents announced that he was going to boarding school, they tried to sugar the pill by telling him he'd be home at the weekends."
<u>Suit every pocket</u>	This term refers to the amount of money you are able to spend or the price you can afford. "The store offers a wide range of computers at prices to suit every pocket ."
<u>Suss out</u>	If you suss out something, such as a situation, you examine it and manage to understand it. "Ask Jack to explain - he's got it all sussed out!"



<u>Swallow the bait,</u>	If you swallow the bait , you accept an offer made specially to persuade you to do something. "When customers see a 'special offer' sign, they usually swallow the bait and purchase the product."
<u>Swallow one's pride</u>	If you swallow your pride , you accept something humiliating or embarrassing, for example having to admit that you are wrong, or that you have less knowledge than you thought. "When Jill failed the exam, she had to swallow her pride and repeat the course."
<u>Swallow your words</u>	If you swallow your words , you admit that you said something wrong. "He said I'd never get the job, but he had to swallow his words when I was appointed."
<u>Sweat of your brow</u>	If you earn or achieve something by the sweat of your brow , you do it through hard work and without help from anyone. "I got a comfortable lifestyle by the sweat of my brow. I owe it to nobody but myself."
<u>Sweet nothings</u>	Pleasant but unimportant words that lovers say to each other are called sweet nothings . "He whispered sweet nothings in her ear as they danced."
<u>Sweetheart deal</u>	The term sweetheart deal is used to refer to an abnormally lucrative arrangement between two parties. "Opponents say that the contract was awarded to the builder as part of a sweetheart deal, and is therefore illegal."
<u>A swelled/swollen head</u>	Someone who has a swelled/swollen head has become proud or conceited, usually because of recent success. "Larry's promotion has given him a swelled head!"
<u>Swim against the tide</u>	A person who is doing or saying the opposite to most other people is said to be swimming against the tide . "Perhaps it's because she always swims against the tide that her books are so successful."
<u>Get into the swing of things</u>	When you get into the swing of something, you become involved in it or get used to it and begin to enjoy it. "It'll be more fun when you get into the swing of things."
<u>In full swing</u>	When something, such as an event, gets into full swing , it is at its busiest or liveliest time. "When we got back to the office, the Christmas party was in full swing."
<u>Swings and roundabouts</u>	(What you lose on the swings you gain on the roundabouts) This expression refers to a situation in which there are as many advantages as there are disadvantages, or what is lost in one area can be gained in another. "The more you earn, the more tax you pay; it's swings and roundabouts ."
<u>Swishing/swishing party</u>	Swishing is the name given to a new fashion phenomenon - a party organised to swap second hand clothes. Everyone takes along clothes they no longer wear and people can then choose the ones they want.



	<u>Idiom</u>		<u>Meaning</u>
T	On somebody's <u>tail</u>		If you are on somebody's tail , you follow them closely. "The suspect hasn't been arrested yet, but the police are on his tail."
	The <u>tail</u> wagging the dog		This expression is used to refer to a situation where there is a reversal of roles, with a small or minor element of something having a controlling influence on the most important element. "If you let your children decide on everything, it will be a case of the tail wagging the dog. "
	<u>Take a back seat</u>		If you take a back seat , you choose to have a less important function and become less involved in something. "He decided it was time to take a back seat and let someone younger run the club."
	<u>Take the bloom off something</u>		If an incident or event takes the bloom off something , it spoils it or makes it less enjoyable. "Their noisy argument in the middle of the party took the bloom off the atmosphere."
	<u>Take the bull by the horns</u>		To take the bull by the horns means that a person decides to act decisively in order to deal with a difficult situation or problem. "After a number of children were hurt in the school playground, Sally took the bull by the horns and called the headmaster."
	<u>Take it on the chin</u>		When you take it on the chin , you are brave and accept adversity, criticism or defeat without complaining. "When his contract was not renewed, Mark took it on the chin."
	<u>Take one's cue (from someone)</u>		When you take your cue from someone , you follow someone's example, or wait for a signal, so as to know what to do yourself, or when to act. "The waiter took his cue from Jack and started serving the drinks."
	<u>Take a dim view of something</u>		If you take a dim view of something , you don't approve of it. "When Harry and Sally decided to live together without getting married, their grandparents took a dim view of the situation."
	<u>Take it easy</u>		When you relax, or do things at a comfortable pace, you take it easy . "It's nice to slow down at the week-end and take it easy."
	<u>Take the easy way out</u>		If you take the easy way out , you choose the easiest way to deal with a difficult situation, even if it's not the best solution. "The weather conditions were so bad that Mary took the easy way out and cancelled her appointment."
	<u>Take a fancy</u>		If you take a fancy to someone or something, you develop a fondness or begin to like them. "I think John has taken a fancy to the new intern!"



<p><u>Take the floor</u></p>	<p>When someone takes the floor, they rise to make a speech or presentation. "When I take the floor, my speech will be short." he said.</p>
<p><u>Take the law into one's own hands</u></p>	<p>If, instead of calling the police, you act personally against someone who has done something wrong, you take the law into your own hands. "Instead of calling the police, he took the law into his own hands and confronted the youth who had stolen his son's scooter."</p>
<p><u>Take leave of one's senses</u></p>	<p>To say to someone 'have you taken leave of your senses?' means that you think their behaviour is crazy! "You're going skiing in this blizzard? Have you taken leave of your senses?"</p>
<p><u>Take one's life in one's hands</u></p>	<p>To say that someone is taking their life in their hands means that they are taking the risk of being killed. "If you drive home on this icy road, you'll be taking your life in your hands."</p>
<p><u>Take a load/weight off somebody's mind</u></p>	<p>If something takes a load or weight off somebody's mind, it brings great relief because a problem has been solved. "When the company closed down, finding a new job took a load off Tom's mind."</p>
<p><u>Take your mind off (something)</u></p>	<p>If an activity takes your mind off something that you are worrying about, it helps you to stop thinking about it for a while. "Sarah was worried about the result of the test so Tom took her to the cinema to take her mind off it."</p>
<p><u>Take it upon yourself</u></p>	<p>If you take something upon yourself, you do it without asking for permission or agreement. "My colleague took it upon herself to redecorate the office during my absence."</p>
<p><u>Take matters into your own hands</u></p>	<p>If you take matters into your own hands, you take action yourself rather than waiting for others to act. "When Susan saw the lack of progress, she decided to take matters into her own hands."</p>
<p><u>Take a nosedive</u></p>	<p>If something takes a nosedive, it drops or decreases in value very rapidly. "The stock market took a nosedive when the property market began to weaken."</p>
<p><u>Take pains</u></p>	<p>If you take pains to do something, you try very hard or make a special effort to do something as well as possible. "Great pains were taken to ensure the athletes' security."</p>
<p><u>Take the plunge</u></p>	<p>If you take the plunge, you finally decide to venture into something you really want to do, in spite of the risks involved. "Mark and Julie finally took the plunge and opened a guesthouse."</p>
<p><u>Take a rain check</u></p>	<p>To say that you will take a rain check means that you cannot accept an invitation or offer now, but you will be happy to accept it at a later date. "Do you mind if I take a rain check on that lunch invitation? I'm going to be away all week."</p>



<u>Take the rough with the smooth</u>	If you take the rough with the smooth , you accept what is unpleasant or difficult as well as what is pleasant or easy. "Life isn't always easy; you have to learn to take the rough with the smooth."
<u>Take shape</u>	When something such as a plan or project begins to take shape , it starts to become organized and acquire a definite form. "My new website is beginning to take shape."
<u>Take (someone) down a peg</u>	To take someone down a peg means to make that person realize that they are not as important as they think they are. "He was too proud. Somebody had to take him down a peg."
<u>Take somebody for a ride</u>	If you are taken for a ride , you are deceived or cheated by someone. "When my father was persuaded to invest in the new casino, he was really taken for a ride."
<u>Take someone under your wing</u>	If you offer protection and guidance to someone younger or less experienced, you take them under your wing . "I owe a lot to Tom who took me under his wing when I first arrived."
<u>Take something as read</u>	Something that does not need to be discussed because it is already understood or agreed upon can be taken as read . "We're getting married in September and you can take it as read that you are all invited."
<u>Take something in good part</u>	A person who takes something in good part reacts to in a good-humoured way, without taking offence. "He got a lot of teasing about his promotion but he took it in good part."
<u>Take something in your stride</u>	When in a difficult situation, you take it in your stride , you deal with the situation calmly and without any special effort. "When the take-over was announced, Tom stayed calm and took it in his stride."
<u>Take to something like a duck to water</u>	If you take to something like a duck to water , you do it naturally and easily, without fear or hesitation. "When Sophie first tried skiing, she took to it like a duck to water"
<u>Take something lying down</u>	If you take something lying down , you suffer as the result of an offensive act without reacting or protesting. "Jack won't take the accusation lying down - he'll fight to defend his reputation."
<u>Take something offline</u>	If you suggest that a subject be taken offline , (during a meeting for example), you consider that it is a separate issue and should be discussed at another time. "Peter, you're confusing things, so let's take that offline shall we?"
<u>Take something with a grain of salt</u>	To say that certain information should be taken with a grain of salt means that you doubt the accuracy of the information. "I heard that the tuition fees are going to be reduced, but that should be taken with a grain of salt."
<u>Take a stand</u>	When you take a stand , you adopt a firm position on an issue and publicly declare whether you support it or are against it. "The politician was asked to take a stand on the government's proposed measures to curb illegal immigration."
<u>Take the sting out of something</u>	If you take the sting out of something , you manage to reduce the severity or unpleasantness of something. "A comforting voice and sympathetic attitude can take the sting out of bad news."



<u>Take stock of a situation</u>	If you take stock of a situation , you assess all the aspects in order to form an opinion. "He took time to take stock of the situation before making a suggestion."
<u>Take the words out of somebody's mouth</u>	If you say exactly what someone else was going to say, you take the words out of their mouth . "I entirely agree with you. You took the words out of my mouth."
<u>Taken to the cleaners</u>	If somebody is taken to the cleaners , they lose a lot of money in an unfair way, usually by being robbed or cheated. "When the company Tom had invested in went bankrupt, he realized he'd been taken to the cleaners."
<u>Talk shop</u>	If you talk shop , you talk about your work or business in a social situation with someone you work with, and make the conversation boring for the others present. "I never go out with my colleagues because we inevitably end up talking shop."
<u>Talk the hind leg(s) off a donkey</u>	This expression is used to describe a very talkative person. "It's difficult to end a conversation with Betty. She could talk the hind leg off a donkey!"
<u>Talk nineteen to the dozen</u>	If someone talks nineteen to the dozen , they speak very quickly. "He was talking nineteen to the dozen so I didn't catch the whole story!"
<u>A tall story</u>	A tall story is a statement or story which is difficult to believe because it sounds unlikely. "What he said about a stolen invention sounds like a tall story to me."
<u>On tap</u>	If something is on tap , it is easily obtained or available for immediate use, like water from a tap. "You can find a multitude of useful resources on tap on the internet."
<u>Tar baby</u>	This term refers to a sticky situation or problem for which it is virtually impossible to find a solution. He was advised not to get involved in the controversy which was considered a ' tar-baby ' issue.
<u>A taste of one's own medicine</u>	If you give someone a taste of their own medicine , you treat them in the same unpleasant way that they have treated you. "People who always arrive late should be given a taste of their own medicine."
<u>Not for all the tea in China</u>	To say that you would not do something for all the tea in China means that you would not do it under any conditions. "I wouldn't live there for all the tea in China."
<u>Teach someone a lesson</u>	If you teach someone a lesson , you do something to punish them for behaving badly and make them understand that they should not do it again. "The next time she arrives late, she'll find the door closed. That will teach her a lesson."
<u>(You can't) teach an old dog new tricks.</u>	This expression means that someone who is used to doing things in a certain way will find it difficult to change their habits. "Your grandfather will never use a smart phone. You can't teach an old dog new tricks. "



<u>Tear one's hair out</u>	If someone is tearing their hair out , they are extremely agitated or distressed about something. "I've been tearing my hair out all morning trying to find the error!"
<u>Tear a strip off someone</u>	If you tear a strip off someone , you reprimand them severely for doing something wrong. "The teacher tore a strip off Charlie for being late again."
<u>Tech savvy</u>	People who are tech savvy have sufficient technical knowledge and skills to be comfortable using computers and other electronic devices and gadgets. "Many students are more tech-savvy than their teachers."
<u>By the skin of your teeth</u>	To do something by the skin of your teeth means that you just manage to do it, but that you almost fail.
<u>Teeth chattering</u>	If your teeth are chattering , you are extremely cold. "Was I cold? My teeth were chattering!"
<u>Teething problems</u>	The difficulties encountered during the initial stages of an activity or project are called teething problems . We had some teething problems when we first opened the bookshop, but now everything is OK.
<u>Tell someone a thing or two</u>	If you tell someone a thing or two , you express your thoughts (usually criticism) very clearly. "Let me tell you a thing or two about your son's behaviour" said John to the boy's father.
<u>On tenterhooks</u>	A person who is on tenterhooks is in a state of anxious suspense or excitement.
<u>Test the water/waters</u>	If you test the water(s) , you try to find out how acceptable or successful something is before becoming involved in it. "You should go to a gym class to test the water before enrolling."
<u>Text-walking</u>	This term refers to a recently-developed and somewhat dangerous habit of walking while texting a message on a mobile phone, completely unaware of what's happening around you. "In recent months there has been an increase in the number of serious injuries involving text-walkers."
<u>Thank one's lucky stars</u>	When someone says they can thank their lucky stars , they are expressing heartfelt gratitude or feeling particularly fortunate. "I can thank my lucky stars I wasn't on the train that crashed."
<u>That figures!</u>	This expression is used to say that something seems logical or is as expected. "We'll have to get a bigger car when the baby arrives." "That figures."
<u>That makes my blood boil!</u>	If something makes your blood boil , it makes you really angry. "His condescending attitude made my blood boil!"
<u>That's going too far!</u>	If you go too far, you do something that is considered extreme or unacceptable. "Stealing is bad, but stealing from a poor person is really going too far! "
<u>That makes two of us!</u>	This expression is used to indicate agreement with what the other speaker has just said. "I found his speech rather boring." " That makes two of us "



<u>That's the last straw!</u>	To say ' that's the last straw ' expresses exasperation at the last in a series of unpleasant events which makes the situation intolerable. "After a harassing day of negotiating, the traffic jam was the last straw!"
<u>That takes the biscuit!</u>	This expression refers to something very irritating or annoying. "After waiting for an hour, we were told that there were no seats left. That really took the biscuit! "
<u>There for the taking</u>	If something is there for the taking , it is easy to obtain. "When our main competitor went out of business, the market was there for the taking."
<u>There's one born every minute</u>	This expression means that there are many people in the world who are stupid or easily fooled. "He really believed the boy found the money on the street? There's one born every minute! "
<u>There's no accounting for taste</u>	This expression is used to indicate surprise at another person's likes or dislikes. "She fell in love with a guy who's short, fat, bald and poor ... well, there's no accounting for taste! "
<u>There's nothing to it</u>	This expression is used to say that something is very simple or easy to do. "I'll show you how to make pancakes. There's nothing to it! "
<u>There are no two ways about it</u>	To say that there are no two ways about it means that there is only one suitable way of dealing with something. "There's no two ways about it. You can't accept the money, so you must give it back."
<u>There wasn't a soul</u>	To say that there wasn't a soul means that there was nobody. "We thought the museum would be crowded but there wasn't a soul."
<u>As thick as thieves</u>	To say that two people are " as thick as thieves " means that they are very close friends who are very loyal to each other. "Chris always takes Tom's side. They're as thick as thieves."
<u>Thin end of the wedge</u>	To refer to an event or action as the thin end of the wedge means that it is thought to be the beginning of something that will become more serious "According to the media, today's outsourcing is just the thin end of the wedge."
<u>A thin line/ fine line</u>	When there is a thin line between feelings or situations, there is a point where it is difficult to distinguish between them. "There's a thin line between showing concern and being indiscreet, so don't overdo it!"
<u>Thin on the top</u>	If someone, usually a man, is said to be thin on the top , they are losing their hair or going bald. "Dad's gone a bit thin on the top in the last few years."
<u>A thing of the past</u>	This expression refers to something which no longer exists or is rarely used today. "Few people use video cassettes today - they're becoming a thing of the past. "



<u>Things</u> are looking up	To say that things are looking up means that the situation is improving and you feel more positive about the future. "Andy has got two job interviews next week so things are looking up."
<u>Think</u> again	If you tell someone to think again , you advise them to reconsider the situation and perhaps change their decision. "Your apartment is so well located; you should think again before selling it."
<u>Think</u> outside the box/out of the box	People who think outside the box try to find innovative ideas or solutions. "Our competitors are more creative than us - they really think outside the box."
<u>Think</u> the sun rises and sets on someone	If you consider someone to be the most wonderful person in the world, it is said that you think the sun rises and sets on that person. "She adores her husband. She thinks the sun rises and sets on him."
<u>Think</u> the world of someone	If you think the world of someone , you like or admire them very much. "She's a wonderful grandmother - the children think the world of her."
<u>Thinly</u> veiled	If something such as a feeling or reaction is thinly veiled , it is barely hidden. "His disappointment was thinly veiled when he saw what he had won."
<u>A thorn</u> in your side	If you say someone is a thorn in your side , you mean that they continually irritate or annoy you.
<u>A thorny</u> issue	If you are faced with a thorny issue , you have to deal with a difficult or unpleasant problem. "Copyright and content duplication are thorny issues these days."
<u>Thrilled</u> to bits	If someone is thrilled to bits , they are extremely pleased about something. "Julie was thrilled to bits when her project was selected."
<u>At each other's</u> throats	Two people who are at each other's throats are always fighting or arguing. "The two candidates are constantly at each other's throats."
<u>Ram something</u> down someone's throat	This means to force someone to accept something against their will.
<u>Through</u> the grapevine	If you hear of something through the grapevine , you learn about it informally, for example through friends, colleagues or acquaintances. "How did you hear that? Oh, through the grapevine as usual!"
<u>Through</u> thick and thin	If you support someone through thick and thin , you remain loyal to them in good times and in bad times, whatever the difficulties may be. "The two friends swore that they stick together through thick and thin."
<u>Throw</u> caution to the wind	If you throw caution to the wind , you start taking risks and stop worrying about the danger involved. "I decided to throw caution to the wind and invest in my best friend's new company."



<p><u>Throw dust in somebody's eyes</u></p>	<p>If you throw dust in somebody's eyes, you prevent them from seeing the truth by misleading them. "He threw dust in the old lady's eyes by pretending to be a police officer, then stole her jewellery."</p>
<p><u>Throw good money after bad</u></p>	<p>Someone who spends additional money on something that was already considered a bad investment is said to throw good money after bad. "Buying a second-hand computer and then spending money to have it repaired is throwing good money after bad!"</p>
<p><u>Throw (or toss) one's hat in the ring</u></p>	<p>If you throw or toss your hat in the ring, you announce that you are going to enter a competition or take up a challenge. "He finally threw his hat in the ring and announced that he was going to stand for election."</p>
<p><u>Throw it over the wall</u></p>	<p>If someone throws something over the wall, they deal with part of a problem or project, then pass responsibility to another person or department without any communication or coordination. "You can't just manufacture a product and then throw it over the wall to the sales department."</p>
<p><u>Throw someone a bone</u></p>	<p>If you throw someone a bone, you say something kind or reward them in some way to make them feel good. "The old man can't help very much but Bill throws him a bone now and then to keep him happy."</p>
<p><u>Throw money at something</u></p>	<p>If you throw money at something, you try to solve a problem by spending money on it, without using any other methods. "The refugee problem cannot be solved just by throwing money at it."</p>
<p><u>Throw pearls to the pigs (cast pearls before swine)</u></p>	<p>This expression means that it is a waste to offer something valuable or useful to someone who does not understand or appreciate it. "She had a beautifully trained voice but the audience didn't listen - talk about throwing pearls to pigs!"</p>
<p><u>Throw something together</u></p>	<p>If you throw something together, you make or produce something quickly and without effort. "Why don't you stay for dinner - I'll throw something together!"</p>
<p><u>Throw a tantrum</u></p>	<p>If a person, especially a child, throws a tantrum, they become very angry and behave in an unreasonable way. "My sister's little boy is always throwing tantrums - no wonder they don't have many visitors!"</p>
<p><u>Throw in the towel</u></p>	<p>If you throw in the towel, you admit that you cannot succeed in doing something or that you are defeated. "After unsuccessfully competing in several championships, she decided to throw in the towel and go back to college."</p>
<p><u>Throw a wobbly (or a wobbler)</u></p>	<p>When someone (usually a capricious person) throws a wobbly, they have a fit of nerves or bad temper and lose all self-control. "He's very calm - not the type of man who'll throw a wobbly when he doesn't have a clean shirt!"</p>



<p><u>Tick all the right boxes</u></p>	<p>If something ticks all the right boxes, it is perfect for you because it meets all your criteria or requirements. "We're in luck! We visited an apartment today that ticks all the right boxes."</p>
<p><u>Tickle the ivories</u></p>	<p>This is a humorous way of talking about playing the piano. "My grandfather loves playing the piano; he tickles the ivories whenever he gets the chance."</p>
<p><u>Tide has turned</u></p> <p><u>Tide (someone) over</u></p>	<p>When a trend has changed from one thing to another, the tide has turned. "Before, people wanted to live in residential suburbs; now the tide has turned and warehouses are being converted into fashionable loft apartments." If you tide someone over, you support or sustain them through a difficult period for a certain length of time. "With this weather it's impossible to get to the shops, but we have enough food to tide us over until next week."</p>
<p><u>Tie the knot</u></p>	<p>When two people tie the knot, they get married. "Guess what! Tom and Sarah are finally going to tie the knot!"</p>
<p><u>Tie yourself (up) in knots</u></p>	<p>If you tie yourself up in knots, you become totally confused or confuse others when trying to explain something. "She tied herself up in knots when she tried to explain the rules of the game."</p>
<p><u>Tied to somebody's apron strings</u></p>	<p>If one person is tied to another's apron strings, they remain dependent at an age when they should be independent. "All his decisions are influenced by his mother. He's still tied to her apron strings."</p>
<p><u>Tight squeeze</u></p>	<p>If you are in a tight squeeze, you are in a cramped or crowded situation. "We managed to get on the bus but it was a tight squeeze."</p>
<p><u>Tight spot</u></p>	<p>Someone who is in a tight spot is in a very difficult situation. "The recent strike has put the airline company in a tight spot."</p>
<p><u>Tighten your belt</u></p>	<p>If you need to tighten your belt, you must spend your money carefully because there is less available. "Another bill? I'll have to tighten my belt this month!"</p>
<p><u>Till the cows come home</u></p>	<p>If you say till the cows come home you mean for a long time or forever. "You can ask till the cows come home but I'm not buying you a scooter!"</p>
<p><u>Time after time</u></p>	<p>If you do something time after time, you do it repeatedly or on many occasions. "The boy was surprised when the teacher punished him although he had been warned time after time."</p>
<p><u>Time flies</u></p>	<p>This expression is used to express surprise at how quickly time passes (usually in a very active or happy situation). "It's hard to believe we've been living here two years already. Time files, doesn't it?"</p>
<p><u>Time on your hands.</u></p>	<p>If you have time on your hands, you have a lot of free time, usually more than you need or want. "Since he retired, Bill has too much time on his hands. He should take up a hobby!"</p>



<u>Time of your life</u>	If you have the time of your life , you enjoy yourself very much. "The kids had the time of their lives at Disneyland."
<u>Time is ripe</u>	If the time is ripe for something, it is the right moment to do it. "He sold his business when the time was ripe."
<u>Time on your side</u>	If you have time on your side , you can afford to wait before doing or achieving something. "He didn't succeed this time, but he's young enough to try again. He's got time on his side. "
<u>In one's own sweet time</u>	If you do something in your own sweet time , you take as long as you please to do it, in spite of the orders or wishes of others. "OK, I'll do it - but in my own sweet time!"
<u>Since time immemorial</u>	If something has existed since time immemorial , it has been there for such a long time that nobody can recall a time without it. "I don't know when that bridge was built. It's been there since time immemorial."
<u>Time-honoured practice</u>	A custom that is universally respected, or a traditional way of doing something, is called a time-honoured practice .
<u>Tip of the iceberg</u>	The tip of the iceberg is the part that is known of a problem or situation which is thought to be much more serious. "Journalists say that the report on corruption only examines the tip of the iceberg."
<u>Tit for tat</u>	This expression refers to an injury or insult given in return for one received. "He kicked me, so I kicked him - it was tit for tat! "
<u>Keep someone on their toes</u>	If you keep someone on their toes , you make them stay alert and ready for action at any time.
<u>Toing and froing</u>	Someone who is toing and froing is either repeatedly going from one place to another and coming back, or is constantly changing their mind about something. "After months of toing and froing, a compromise was reached between the two parties."
<u>By the same token</u>	If you apply the same rule to different situations, you judge them by the same token , or in a similar way. "Teenagers should be less rebellious, but by the same token, parents should be more understanding."
<u>Tomorrow's another day</u>	This expression means that even if everything is not satisfactory at present, there will be opportunity for things to improve. "For the moment you need some rest; tomorrow's another day! "
<u>Bite your tongue.</u>	If you bite your tongue , you stop yourself from saying what you really want to say. "Tom decided to bite his tongue rather than get into an argument."
<u>Get your tongue round/around something</u>	If you are able to pronounce a difficult word or phrase, you can get your tongue round it . "She's from the village of Llanfairpwllgwyngyll. Try getting your tongue round that!"
<u>Tongue-lashing</u>	When you scold someone severely, you give them a tongue-lashing . "The teacher gave Jeremy a tongue-lashing when he arrived late for school."



<u>Tongue-tied</u>	If you are tongue-tied , you have difficulty in expressing yourself because you are nervous or embarrassed. "At the start of the interview I was completely tongue-tied, but little by little I relaxed."
Give the (rough) edge of your <u>tongue</u>	If you give the (rough) edge of your tongue , you scold someone severely or speak to them very aggressively or rudely. "My boss was so angry that I really got the rough edge of his tongue."
<u>Slip of the tongue</u>	A slip of the tongue refers to a small spoken error or mistake. Did I say "blow down"? Sorry, I meant "slow down" - that was a slip of the tongue!
On the tip of your <u>tongue</u>	To say that a word or an answer is on the tip of your tongue means that you're sure you know it but have difficulty finding it. "What's that actor's name? Wait ... I know it - it's on the tip of my tongue!"
<u>Tongue in cheek</u>	If you describe a remark as tongue in cheek , you mean that it is not meant to be taken seriously; it is meant to be funny or ironic. "Peter's remark was taken more seriously than intended. It was supposed to be tongue in cheek."
<u>Tongues are wagging</u>	When tongues are wagging , people are beginning to gossip or spread rumours about someone's private life. "The photograph of the couple that appeared in a magazine really set tongues wagging!"
<u>Too much like hard work</u>	An activity or task that requires too much effort is too much like hard work . "It's so hot today, there's no way I'm going to do any cooking. It's too much like hard work!"
<u>Toot (or blow) your own horn</u>	If you toot your own horn , you like to boast about your abilities and achievements "Jack is very discreet about his success. He doesn't go round tooting his own horn."
<u>Top dog</u>	To say that a person, group or country is top dog means that they are better or more powerful than others. "She's top dog in cosmetics today."
At the <u>top</u> of one's lungs	If you shout at the top of your lungs , you shout as loudly as you possibly can. "The place was so noisy that I had to shout at the top of my lungs to be heard."
Be/feel on <u>top</u> of the world	If you are or you feel on top of the world , you are extremely happy because everything is going well for you. "It's been such a good year for Mary that she feels on top of the world."
<u>Top notch</u>	To say that something is top notch means that it is of the highest possible quality or standard. "The hotel was wonderful and the service was top notch."
<u>Toss-up</u>	When there are two options or possibilities to choose from, and both are equally good, the choice between the two is referred to as a toss-up (like tossing a coin). "Both boxers are in excellent condition. It's a toss-up which of them will win the match."



<u>Touch base</u>	If you touch base with someone, you make contact or renew communication with them. "I'll try to touch base with you next week in London."
<u>At the touch of a button</u>	If you can do something at the touch of a button , you can do it very easily, often thanks to new technology. "From now on the nursing staff can be alerted at the touch of a button."
<u>Touch wood/knock on wood</u>	This humorous expression, based on superstition, is used to avoid bad luck, often while touching something made of wood. "The order will be confirmed shortly - touch wood! "
<u>Not touch something with a ten-foot pole</u>	If you decide not to touch something with a ten-foot pole , you refuse to get involved with something or somebody. "I wouldn't touch politics with a ten-foot pole!"
<u>Touch-and-go</u>	If something is touch-and-go , the outcome or result is uncertain. "Dave's life is out of danger now, but it was touch-and-go after the operation."
<u>Tough as old boots</u>	If something, especially meat, is (as) tough as old boots , it is hard to cut and difficult to chew. (Can also refer to a person who is strong physically or in character.) "We were served a steak as tough as old boots."
<u>Tough cookie</u>	A person who is a tough cookie is one who is self-confident and ambitious and will do what is necessary to achieve what they want. "I'm not worried about Jason's future. He's a tough cookie!"
<u>Tower of strength</u>	This term tower of strength is used to describe a person who is very helpful and supportive during difficult times. "All during my illness, my sister was a tower of strength".
<u>Toy with the idea</u>	If you toy with an idea , you consider doing something but you do not really give it serious thought. "Sally has often toyed with the idea of moving abroad, but as you can see she's still here!"
<u>Trade secret</u>	This expression, which refers to the secrecy of a company's production methods, is often used teasingly. "Can you give me the recipe for your lemon meringue pie? No way - that's a trade secret! "
<u>Train of thought</u>	A sequence of connected ideas is called a train of thought . "I was considering the different options when the noise outside broke my train of thought."
<u>Travel light</u>	When you travel light , you travel with as little luggage as possible. "If you intend to go trekking, you'd better travel light."
<u>Tread water</u>	If you are treading water , your situation remains stationary in spite of your efforts, with no sign of any progress. "I've been treading water for the last year hoping for a better job."
<u>Trial and error</u>	Attempting to achieve a satisfactory result by testing and eliminating various methods until the best one is found is called trial and error . "Some of the best cooks learn by trial and error."
<u>Tricks of the trade</u>	This expression refers to a clever or expert way of doing things, especially in a job. "He's a tough negotiator; he knows all the tricks of the trade. "
<u>Tried and tested</u>	If a method has been tried and tested , it can be trusted because it has been used successfully in the past and is known to work.



<u>Trilemma</u>	This term is used for a situation which is even more difficult than a dilemma, because a choice must be made between three options that seem equally undesirable
<u>Truth will out</u>	This expression means that despite efforts to conceal the facts, the truth cannot be hidden forever. "I don't know if the police gave the full details, but inevitably ' truth will out '."
<u>Try somebody's patience</u>	Someone who finds it difficult to be patient with you, because of your irritating attitude or behaviour, can say that you are trying their patience "His constant interruptions began to try the teacher's patience."
<u>Tug at the heartstrings</u>	To say that something or someone tugs at the heartstrings means that they cause others to feel a great deal of pity or sadness. "The hospital's plea for donors tugged at the heartstrings of millions of viewers."
<u>Tunnel vision</u>	If a person has tunnel vision , they focus on only one aspect of something, or they are unable to see more than one way of doing things. "Our manager has tunnel vision. He sees no reason to change anything."
<u>Like turkeys voting for Christmas</u>	This expression is used to say that a particular option is unlikely to be chosen because it would not be in the interest of the people concerned. (In many countries people eat turkey at Christmas.) "Expecting them to accept a decrease in salary would be like turkeys voting for Christmas! "
<u>Turn a blind eye</u>	If you turn a blind eye to something, you pretend not to notice what someone is doing. "The old man turns a blind eye when he sees children taking apples from his garden."
<u>Turn a deaf ear</u>	If you turn a deaf ear to something, you refuse to listen. "Sandy turned a deaf ear to the guide's advice and got lost in the mountains."
<u>Not turn a hair</u>	If someone does not turn a hair , they show no emotion in circumstances when a reaction is expected. "When the police came to arrest him, he didn't turn a hair."
<u>Turn the tables</u>	If you turn the tables on a person or organization, you reverse the situation so as to be in a position of superiority. "The success of our new product has turned the tables on our competitors."
<u>Turn on/up the heat</u>	If you turn on/up the heat on a person or organization, you put pressure on them in order to obtain what you want. "If the goods are not delivered this week, we'll have to turn on the heat."
<u>Take a turn for the worse</u>	If a person who is ill takes a turn for the worse , their illness becomes more serious.
<u>Turn over a new leaf</u>	If a person decides to turn over a new leaf , they decide to change their behaviour and lead a better life. "When Charlie left prison, he was determined to turn over a new leaf."



<u>Turn on the waterworks</u>	If someone turns on the waterworks , they start to cry, especially to obtain something. "If he doesn't get what he wants, the child immediately turns on the waterworks."
<u>Turn up like a bad penny</u>	If someone turns up like a bad penny , they appear at a place or event where they are not welcome or not wanted. "I try to avoid Jane, but wherever I go she turns up like a bad penny."
<u>Twiddle one's thumbs</u>	A person who twiddles their thumbs is someone who has nothing to do, or is doing nothing useful.
<u>In the twinkling of an eye</u>	This expression means 'very fast' or 'instantaneously'. "Public opinion can change in the twinkling of an eye."
<u>Twist somebody's arm</u>	If you twist somebody's arm , you force or persuade them to do something, without using physical force. "He didn't have to twist my arm to get me to go out for dinner - I was happy to accept!"
<u>Twist in the wind</u>	If someone is left to twist in the wind , they are left to face a difficult situation without any assistance or support. "He walked out of the press conference and left the public relations officer to twist in the wind."
<u>Two of a kind</u>	People who are two of a kind are similar in character, attitude or tastes. "Pete and Tom are two of a kind. They enjoy sports and are both very competitive."
<u>Two can play at that game.</u>	This expression is used to tell someone that you can behave towards them in the same unpleasant way that they have been behaving towards you.
<u>Two-faced</u>	Someone who is two-faced is deceitful or insincere; they will say one thing to your face and another when you're not there "I don't trust Jack. I find him two-faced."
<u>Two left feet</u>	If you have two left feet , you are clumsy or awkward in your movements.
<u>In two minds</u>	If you are in two minds about something, you have difficulty deciding what to do. "I'm in two minds about whether or not to accept the offer."
<u>It takes two to tango</u>	You say this when you think that a difficult situation or argument cannot be the fault of one person alone "OK, we've heard Jack's side of the story - but it takes two to tango! "
<u>Two peas in a pod</u>	To say that two people are like two peas in a pod means that they are very similar in appearance. "It wasn't difficult to identify the brothers - they were like two peas in a pod!"
<u>Two shakes (of a lamb's tail)</u>	To do something in two shakes (of a lamb's tail) means to do it very quickly or in a moment. "It'll be ready in two shakes (of a lamb's tail)."
<u>Two-time somebody</u>	If one person two-times another, they cheat on their partner by having a romantic relationship with another person at the same time. "Sally left Harry when she discovered he was two-timing her."



<u>Two's company ... (three's a crowd)</u>	This is said of two people, particularly lovers, who would prefer to be alone together than to have someone else with them. "Would you like to come to the cinema with us?" "I'd rather not, thanks. Two's company... "
<u>Put two and two together.</u>	To " put two and two together " means to reach the correct conclusion based on the information that you have.

	<u>Idiom</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
U	<u>(as) ugly as sin</u>	This expression is used to refer to people or things that are considered to be very unattractive. "Have you seen the new neighbour's dog? It's as ugly as sin! "
	<u>Uncharted waters</u>	If you are in uncharted waters , you are in a situation that you have never experienced before, so you don't know what is going to happen. "In some countries, democracy is an adventure into uncharted waters."
	<u>Under one's belt</u>	If you have something under your belt , you have acquired experience or have satisfactorily achieved something. "You've got to have some work experience under your belt before you can hope to get a permanent job."
	<u>Under your thumb</u>	If someone is under your thumb , they are completely under your control or influence. "Nobody ever protests. He has the whole group under his thumb."
	<u>Unmitigated disaster</u>	To refer to something as an unmitigated disaster means that it is a total catastrophe or a complete failure. "The organization of the tournament was an unmitigated disaster."
	<u>You can't unring a bell</u>	This expression means that you cannot undo what has been done, so you must live with the consequences of your actions.
	<u>Until hell freezes over</u>	If you tell someone they can do something until hell freezes over , you mean that they can do it forever but they won't obtain the result they want. "You can ask until hell freezes over; I will not allow you to go bungee-jumping."
	<u>Unvarnished truth</u>	If you present someone with the plain facts, without trying to embellish or soften the reality, you give them the unvarnished truth . "OK, tell me how the accident happened, and give me the unvarnished truth."
	<u>Up and about</u>	If someone is up and about , they are out of bed or have recovered after an illness. "She was kept in hospital for a week but she's up and about again."
	<u>Up/down one's alley</u>	If something is (right) up or down one's alley , it is exactly the sort of thing that will suit their tastes or abilities. "Alex loves reading, so the job in the bookshop is right up his alley."
	<u>On the up and up</u>	If you are on the up and up , you are becoming increasingly successful. "That architect been on the up and up since he designed a building in Dubai."



<u>Up for grabs</u>	If something is up for grabs , it is available for anyone who wants to compete for it. "You should enter the competition - there are \$20 000 in prizes up for grabs!"
<u>Up in the air</u>	If something, such as a plan or a decision, is up in the air , it has not been decided or settled yet. "I can't give you a definite answer yet; the project is still up in the air."
<u>Up-to-the-minute</u>	To refer to something as up-to-the-minute means that it is the very latest or most recent version available. "The internet is the best place to find up-to-the-minute news."
<u>Up to no good</u>	When someone is up to no good , they are doing or planning something bad or wrong. "When the shopkeeper saw the boys hiding behind a car, he suspected they were up to no good."
<u>Up to par</u>	If something is up to par , it meets the required standard. "He didn't get the job because his English wasn't up to par."
<u>Up and running</u>	If a business or a plan is up and running , it has started and is functioning successfully. "In some countries you can have a company up and running in a very short time."
<u>Uphill battle</u>	A person faced with an uphill battle has to struggle against very unfavourable circumstances. "After the terrible accident, his recovery was an uphill battle all the way."
<u>Upper crust</u>	This term refers to the higher levels of society, the upper class or the aristocracy. "William hides his working-class background and pretends to be from the upper crust ."
<u>On one's uppers</u>	Someone who is on their uppers has very little money or not enough to cover their needs. "Because he was clearly on his uppers when he was hired, he was given an advance in salary."
<u>Use one's noodle</u>	If you manage to understand something by using your noodle , you use your brain or your common sense. "How did I figure that out? I just used my noodle!"
<u>Useful as a chocolate teapot</u>	Something which is of no practical use at all is about as useful as a chocolate teapot . "When there are no roads, a car is about as useful as a chocolate teapot."
V <u>Vanish into thin air</u>	If something vanishes into thin air , it disappears completely in a mysterious way. "The diamonds vanished into thin air - nobody knows what happened to them."
<u>Variety is the spice of life</u>	This expression means that life is more interesting when you try to do different things. "Since they retired, my parents have been trying out all sorts of new activities. Variety is the spice of life! "
<u>Vent your spleen</u>	When you vent your spleen , you release or express all your anger about something. "Whenever Jack is angry about new government measures, he vents his spleen by writing to newspapers."



<u>Nothing ventured, nothing gained</u>	This expression means that you cannot expect to achieve anything if you risk nothing. "He's going to ask his boss for a promotion even though he has little chance of obtaining satisfaction - nothing ventured, nothing gained! "
<u>Vertically challenged</u>	This expression is a humoristic way of referring to someone who is not very tall. "High shelves are difficult for vertically challenged shoppers."
<u>Vested interest</u>	If you have a vested interest in a situation or event, you expect to benefit or gain an advantage from it. "Tom has a vested interest in Jack's promotion; he hopes to get his job."
<u>Vicious circle</u>	When the solution to a problem creates a similar problem to the original, or makes it worse, so that the process starts all over again, the situation is called a vicious circle . "I borrowed money to reimburse Paul. Now I've got to reimburse the bank, with interest. It's a vicious circle."
<u>Take a dim view of something.</u>	If you take a dim view of something , you don't approve of it. When Harry and Sally decided to live together without getting married, their grandparents took a dim view of the situation.
<u>Vim and vigour</u>	If you are full of vim and vigour , you have lots of vitality, energy and enthusiasm. "After a relaxing holiday, my parents came back full of vim and vigour."
<u>Voice in the wilderness</u>	If you are the only person expressing a warning or an opinion on a matter which is ignored by most others, you are a voice in the wilderness . "For many years she was a voice in the wilderness protesting against child labour."
<u>Vote with one's feet</u>	If you vote with your feet , you show your dislike or disapproval of something by leaving. "If the conference is boring, people will probably vote with their feet."

	<u>Idiom</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
W	<u>On the wagon</u>	Someone who is on the wagon is no longer drinking alcohol. "No wine for me please. I'm on the wagon."
	<u>Wait for the cat to jump</u>	If you wait for the cat to jump , or to see which way the cat jumps , you delay taking action until you see how events will turn out. "Let's wait for the cat to jump before we decide."
	<u>Wait for a raindrop in the drought</u>	When someone is waiting for a raindrop in the drought , they are waiting or hoping for something that has little chance of happening. "For many people finding a job these days is like waiting for a raindrop in the drought! "
	<u>Waiting game</u>	A person who plays a waiting game delays taking any action or making any decisions because they prefer to wait and see how things develop, usually in the hope that this will put them in a stronger position.



<p><u>Waiting in the wings</u></p>	<p>If someone is waiting in the wings, they are waiting for an opportunity to take action, especially to replace someone else in their job or position. "There are many young actors waiting in the wings, ready to show their talent."</p>
<p><u>Walk on air</u></p>	<p>When you are happy and excited because of a pleasant event that makes you feel as if you are floating, you are walking on air. "Sophie has been walking on air since her painting won the first prize."</p>
<p><u>Walk and chew gum (at the same time)</u></p>	<p>If you can walk and chew gum, you are able to do more than one thing at a time. This expression is often used negatively to indicate incompetence. "Why did you hire that guy? He can't walk and chew gum at the same time!"</p>
<p><u>Walk on eggshells</u></p>	<p>If you walk on eggshells with someone, you are careful not to hurt or offend them. "She's so sensitive, you have to walk on eggshells with her all the time."</p>
<p><u>Walk into the lion's den</u></p>	<p>If you walk into the lion's den, you find yourself in a difficult situation in which you have to face unfriendly or aggressive people. "After the failure of the negotiations, he had to walk into the lion's den and face the Press."</p>
<p><u>Walk a tightrope</u></p>	<p>If a person is walking a tightrope, they are in a difficult or delicate situation where they must act carefully. "The management is walking a tightrope in their efforts both to keep the costs down and satisfy the trade unions."</p>
<p><u>Walking encyclopaedia</u></p>	<p>This term refers to a person who is very knowledgeable about a particular subject. "The origin of Halloween? Ask Jill - she's a walking encyclopaedia!"</p>
<p><u>Walking papers</u></p>	<p>If you are given your walking papers, your contract or a relationship is ended. "After causing a diplomatic incident, Carter got his walking papers."</p>
<p><u>Want someone's head on a platter</u></p>	<p>If someone makes you so angry that you want them to be punished, you want their head on a platter. "He was so angry when he read the article about his family that he wanted the journalist's head on a platter."</p>
<p><u>Been in/through the wars</u></p>	<p>If a person or thing has been in (or through) the wars, they show signs of rough treatment, injury or damage. "He arrived in a car that looked as if it had been in the wars."</p>
<p><u>Watch one's step</u></p>	<p>If you tell someone to watch their step, you are advising them to be careful how they behave or speak in order to avoid getting into trouble. "There is zero tolerance in this school for bad behaviour so watch your step! "</p>
<p><u>Watch someone like a hawk</u></p>	<p>If you watch someone like a hawk, you keep your eyes on them or watch them very carefully. "Sarah watches the children like a hawk when she takes them swimming."</p>



<u>First water</u>	Something that is of the first water is of the finest or most exceptional quality (like being compared to a diamond). "The violinist gave a performance that was of the first water."
<u>Hot water</u>	To say that somebody is in hot water means that they have done something wrong and people are angry with them. "John has been in hot water since his boss discovered that he had been using the Internet for personal purposes."
<u>Water down</u>	If you water down something such as a proposal, report or declaration, you try to make it weaker or less effective, or less likely to cause anger. "When announcing the rejection of the proposal, he tried to water down the committee's unfavourable comments."
<u>Water off a duck's back</u>	Criticism or comments which have no effect on someone is referred to as being "like water off a duck's back ".
<u>Water under the bridge</u>	If something difficult or unpleasant took place in the past but is no longer important, it is referred to as water under the bridge . "They had a serious disagreement in the past but that's water under the bridge."
<u>Wave a dead chicken</u>	When faced with a serious problem, if you take steps that you know in advance will be futile, but will show that you made an effort, you wave a dead chicken . "The TV set was permanently damaged, but the technician decided to wave a dead chicken to satisfy the old lady before announcing the bad news."
<u>On the same wavelength</u>	To say that two people are on the same wavelength means that they understand each other well because they share the same interests and opinions. "I get on very well with Alice. We're always on the same wavelength."
<u>Ways and means</u>	To say that there are ways and means of obtaining or achieving something means that there are several methods which will produce the result you want. "All ways and means will be used to provide assistance to the survivors."
<u>Weak at the knees</u>	If a person is weak at the knees , they are temporarily barely able to stand because of emotion, fear or illness. "The shock of the announcement made me go weak at the knees."
<u>Weal and woe</u>	This expression refers to the good and bad times, joys and sorrows, or prosperity and misfortune. "We all get our share of weal and woe in life."
<u>Wear many hats</u>	Someone who wears many hats has to do many different types of tasks or play a variety of roles. "Our company is small so the employees need to be flexible and accept to wear many hats."
<u>Wear your heart on your sleeve</u>	If you wear your heart on your sleeve , you allow others to see your emotions or feelings. "You could see she was hurt - she wears her heart on her sleeve."
<u>Wear the trousers</u>	The partner in a couple who wears the trousers is the one who makes the important decisions. "The salesman hesitated. It was difficult to see who wore the trousers in the couple."



<u>Wear out one's welcome</u>	If someone wears out their welcome , they stay too long as a guest, causing inconvenience to their host. "Alan and Sue invited us to stay on for a few days but we didn't want to wear out our welcome."
<u>Under the weather</u>	If you are under the weather , you are not feeling very well. "You look a bit under the weather. What's the matter?"
<u>Weather the storm</u>	If you weather the storm , you succeed in surviving a difficult period or situation. "Given the current recession, the company is weathering the storm better than some others."
<u>Weigh the pros and cons</u>	If you weigh the pros and cons , you consider the advantages and disadvantages, the arguments <i>for</i> or <i>against</i> something. "We'd better weigh the pros and cons before deciding."
<u>Weigh your words</u>	If you weigh your words , you choose your words carefully in order to express exactly what you mean and avoid any misunderstanding. "At the press conference he spoke very clearly, weighing his words."
<u>Pull your weight</u>	If you pull your weight , you work as hard as everyone else in a team, a group or a company.
<u>Wet the baby's head</u>	This expression means to have to drink to celebrate the birth of a baby. "When his first child was born, Tom invited his colleagues to a local bar to wet the baby's head."
<u>A wet blanket</u>	A person who is a wet blanket is so boring or unenthusiastic that they prevent other people from enjoying themselves. "Come on! Don't be such a wet blanket!"
<u>A whale of a time</u>	When people have a whale of a time , they enjoy themselves very much. "We had a whale of a time at the party last night."
<u>What goes around comes around</u>	This expression means that if you do something bad, something bad will happen to you eventually. "He felt guilty about what he did, with a feeling that what goes around comes around ."
<u>Whatever floats your boat</u>	This expression means that although you don't quite agree with the other person, it's their choice and you think they should do whatever makes them happy. "You're going to spend your honeymoon in Alaska? Well, whatever floats your boat! "
<u>Wheeling and dealing</u>	Someone accused of wheeling and dealing is thought to be involved in complicated, if not dishonest, deals in business or politics. "Since the beginning of the election campaign, there's been a lot of wheeling and dealing going on."
<u>The wheels fall off</u>	When a situation gets out of control and everything starts to go wrong, the wheels fall off . "The wheels fell off her career when she started taking drugs and cancelling concerts."



<u>When the going gets tough...</u>	This expression means that when faced with a difficult or dangerous situation, strong people take action in order to solve the problem. "Tom has a positive attitude. He often says "when the going gets tough, the tough get going" ."
<u>When the rubber hits the road</u>	This expression refers to the moment when you put a theory into practice or actually apply what you have learned. "The plan sounds good. I'd like to be there when the rubber hits the road. "
<u>While the going is good</u>	If you take an action while the going is good , you do something before the situation changes and it becomes impossible. "There's a 50% discount on subscriptions this month. I think I'll subscribe while the going is good."
<u>Whistle in the dark</u>	If you whistle in the dark , you try to hide your fear in a frightening or dangerous situation. "Tom looks confident but he's just whistling in the dark; he knows he's going to lose his job."
<u>White Christmas</u>	A white Christmas is when it snows at Christmas and the ground is white. "We haven't had a white Christmas in twenty years."
<u>White as a ghost</u>	A person who is as white as ghost looks very pale and frightened.
<u>White lie</u>	To tell a white lie means to tell a harmless lie in order to avoid hurting somebody.
<u>Whiz-kid</u>	A whiz kid is someone, usually young, who is very talented and successful at doing something. "Apparently the new engineer knows what he's doing - a real whiz-kid from what I've heard."
<u>Why buy a cow when you can get milk for free?</u>	This expression refers to not paying for something that you can obtain for free. (Sometimes used to refer to a decision not to marry when you can have the benefits of marriage without any commitment.) <i>Rent is high so Bobby is still living with his parents. He says:</i> Why buy a cow when you can get milk for free?
<u>Whys and wherefores</u>	To talk about the whys and wherefores means to talk about the reasons. "We need to discuss the whys and wherefores of our failure/success."
<u>Wide berth</u>	If you give someone or something a wide berth , you stay at a prudent distance from them in order to avoid unwanted consequences. "The only way to avoid traffic jams is to give the town centre a wide berth."
<u>Wide of the mark</u>	If something is (or falls) wide of the mark , it is incorrect or inadequate, or it is not what is required or expected. "The price offered was wide of the mark - it was sold for ten times more!"
<u>Wild goose chase</u>	If you say that you were sent on a wild goose chase , you mean that you wasted a lot of time looking for something that there was little chance of finding.



	"They tried to discover who sent the anonymous complaint, but it turned out to be a wild goose chase."
At will	When it is possible to do something at will , you can do it as and when you please, wherever or whenever you wish, without restriction or limit. "He's so rich, he can travel the world at will."
Win by a nose	When there is a very slight difference between the winner and the other competitors, victory is won by a nose . "One second ahead of the others, he won the race by a nose."
Win-win	The term win-win refers to a situation or proposition where both or all parties benefit from the outcome. "There were smiles all round when the contract was signed - it was a win-win situation."
Wind up in the wrong hands	If something winds up in the wrong hands , it comes into the possession of someone undesirable, for example an opponent or a competitor. "Put the plans away carefully. We don't want them to wind up in the wrong hands."
Wind someone up/be wound up	When someone is so excited that they talk non-stop, they are wound up . "Claire had so much to tell us after her trip that she was wound up."
Get wind of something	If you get wind of something , you hear about something you were unaware of, usually a private or secret matter. "The chairman didn't want the press to get wind of the takeover before the agreement was signed."
Window on the world	When something provides an opportunity to observe and learn about people and life in other countries, it is called a window on the world . "The Internet has become a window on the world."
Window shopping	When people go window shopping , they look at things in shop windows, without actually purchasing anything. "I haven't been paid yet, so I can only go window shopping."
Go out the window	If a quality, principle or opportunity goes out the window , it disappears, is lost or abandoned. "When the plant closed down, all hopes of finding a job went out the window."
(You can't put) new wine in old bottles	This expression means that you should not try to combine new concepts or innovations with an old or long-established framework or system. "You'll never get that program to work on your father's old computer- you can't put new wine in old bottles!"
Wing it	To wing it means to improvise or to deal with a situation without any preparation. "She didn't expect to be interviewed so she just had to wing it."
Take someone under your wing	If you offer protection and guidance to someone younger or less experienced, you take them under your wing . "I owe a lot to Tom who took me under his wing when I first arrived."
Wink of sleep	If someone doesn't get a wink of sleep , they don't sleep at all. "It was so noisy in the hotel, I didn't get a wink of sleep."



<u>Winning ways</u>	If a person has winning ways , they have a charming or persuasive manner of gaining the affection of others or obtaining what they want. "My grandson is hard to resist - he's got such winning ways."
<u>Wipe the slate clean</u>	If you wipe the slate clean , you make a fresh start and forget all past offences, disagreements or mistakes. "When their father died, Bob and his brother decided to wipe the slate clean and forget the old family quarrels."
<u>Wipe that smile off your face!</u>	This expression is often used by parents, or people in authority, to indicate that the situation is not considered amusing at all. "This is a very serious matter, so wipe that smile off your face! "
<u>Get one's wires crossed</u>	If people get their wires crossed , they misunderstand each other or are confused about what was said. "We must have got our wires crossed. I thought we were to meet in front of the station."
<u>Wise up/get wise to something</u>	If you wise up or get wise to something, you become fully aware of a situation, finally accept the facts and are no longer fooled. "When Mike finally wised up to the methods being used, he resigned from the company."
<u>Wish the ground would swallow you up</u>	When you are so embarrassed by something that you would like to disappear, you wish the ground would swallow you up . "When I realized I was reading the wrong report, I stood there in front of the group wishing the ground would swallow me up."
<u>Your wish is my command!</u>	This is a humoristic way of saying that you are willing to do whatever the other person asks. "Breakfast in bed? Your wish is my command!"
<u>Wishful thinking</u>	Wishful thinking means believing that something that you want to happen is happening or will happen, even though it is neither true nor likely. "I think his health is improving a little, but perhaps that's just wishful thinking on my part."
<u>Wither on the vine</u>	If something withers on the vine , it comes to an end or dies because people do nothing to support or encourage it. "Let's hope that the recent efforts towards peace will not wither on the vine."
<u>Without a hitch</u>	If something happens without a hitch , it takes place exactly as planned, without any difficulties. "The ceremony went off without a hitch, to our great relief!"
<u>At your wits end.</u>	If you are at your wits' end , you are very anxious or worried about something and do not know what to do. "When her son dropped out of school for the second time, Susan was at her wits' end."
<u>A wolf in sheep's clothing</u>	To describe someone as a wolf in sheep's clothing means that although the person looks harmless, they are really very dangerous. "Be careful. He looks kind but in fact he's a wolf in sheep's clothing."
<u>Wonders will never cease!</u>	This saying is used to express pleasure or surprise at something. "Idioms are increasingly popular with learners of English." Wonders will never cease! "
<u>Can't see the wood for the trees</u>	If someone can't see the wood for the trees , they are so concentrated on the details that they can't see the situation



	<p>as a whole. "The new manager found the situation so complicated that he couldn't see the wood for the trees."</p>
<u>Touch wood/knock on wood</u>	<p>This humorous expression, based on superstition, is used to avoid bad luck, often while touching something made of wood. "The order will be confirmed shortly - touch wood!"</p>
<u>Wooden spoon</u>	<p>The person who finishes last in a race or competition receives an imaginary prize called the wooden spoon. "Our team got the wooden spoon in this year's tournament."</p>
<u>Come out of the woodwork</u>	<p>When things, or people, come out of the woodwork, they appear or emerge unexpectedly, as if from nowhere, and usually in large numbers. "As soon as we added the swimming pool, our children had "friends" coming out of the woodwork."</p>
<u>Word of mouth</u>	<p>Information passed on through conversation is transmitted by word of mouth "No announcement was necessary - the news had already spread by word of mouth."</p>
<u>From the word go</u>	<p>From the word go means right from the start of an event or activity. "She was unhappy about the situation from the word go."</p>
<u>(Not) get a word in edgeways</u>	<p>During a discussion, if you can't get a word in edgeways, you can't say something because someone else is talking so much. "I tried to give my opinion, but I couldn't get a word in edgeways!"</p>
<u>Put in a good word (for someone)</u>	<p>If you put in a good word for someone, you say positive things in support of that person in order to help them. "If you want to apply for the job, I'll put in a good word for you."</p>
<u>Put words in somebody's mouth</u>	<p>If you claim, wrongly, that someone has said something, or suggest what they should say, you are putting words in their mouth. "You're putting words in my mouth. I did <i>not</i> say I saw Mr. Brown; I said I saw his car!"</p>
<u>Words fail me!</u>	<p>This expression is often used when someone is so shocked, surprised or touched by something that they don't know what to say. "What do you think of Bob's attitude?" "Words fail me!"</p>
<u>Words of one syllable</u>	<p>If you explain something in words of one syllable, you use very simple language. "No so fast! Tell me in words of one syllable."</p>
<u>Have your work cut out</u>	<p>If you have to face a difficult task or deal with a challenging situation, you have your work cut out for you. "I've got a month to reorganize the accounts department. I have my work cut out for me!"</p>
<u>Work like a charm</u>	<p>If something, such as a product or a method, works like a charm, it functions very well or has the desired effect. "I tried cleaning it with vinegar and it worked like a charm."</p>
<u>Work your fingers to the bone</u>	<p>A person who works their fingers to the bone is extremely hardworking. "He deserves his success; he worked his fingers to the bone when he started the business."</p>



<u>Work to rule</u>	During a conflict, when employees decide to do only the minimum amount of work required by company rules, and refuse any overtime etc., they work to rule . "In protest against the new measures, the employees decided to work to rule."
<u>Work the system</u>	People who work the system learn how a state or public organization works in order to benefit as much as possible from the system. "He hasn't changed his lifestyle since he lost his job - he must know how to work the system!"
<u>A world of difference</u>	When comparing two things or situations, the expression a world of difference means that there is a vast difference between them. "A swimming pool would make a world of difference in this hot climate."
<u>Be in a world of your own</u>	If you are in a world of your own , you are so preoccupied by your own concerns that you are unaware of what is happening around you. "Dad's out there in the garden in a world of his own."
<u>Be/mean all the world to somebody</u>	When you are or mean all the world to someone, you are very important or precious to them. "His daughter means all the world to Mr. Jones. He says he couldn't live without her."
<u>Best of both worlds.</u>	To have the best of both worlds means to have the benefits and advantages of two different things or situations, without the problems.
<u>Come up in the world</u>	A person who has come up in the world is richer than before and has a higher social status. "My old school friend has bought an apartment overlooking Central Park. She has certainly come up in the world!"
<u>Do a world of good</u>	If something does you a world of good , it is beneficial and makes you feel you a lot better. "Why don't you go away for a few days? It'll do you a world of good to get a break."
<u>Have the world at your feet</u>	If you have the world at your feet , you are extremely successful and greatly admired. "The talented young actress has the world at her feet."
<u>The world is your oyster</u>	This expression means that you are free and able to enjoy the pleasures and opportunities that life has to offer. "She left college feeling that the world was her oyster ."
<u>Not for (all) the world</u>	If you say that you would not do something for (all) the world , you mean that you would never do it, not matter what you were offered. "I would not live in that building for the world."
<u>Out of this world.</u>	Something that you describe as out of this world is something that you think is extremely good or beyond compare.
<u>Worlds apart</u>	When two people are very different, they are said to be worlds apart . "As regards our political opinions, we're worlds apart."
<u>Worm one's way into/out of something</u>	If a person worms their way into or out of something , they use artful or devious means in order to participate or avoid participating in something. "You're not going to worm yourself out of this. You must do your share!"



	Even a <u>worm</u> will turn	This expression means that even someone who never complains will react in an intolerable situation. "Don't treat him so severely. He never protests, but even a worm will turn! "
	<u>Worm's-eye view</u>	To offer a worm's-eye view of a situation is to give your opinion based on what you see at close range from an inferior position, so it is therefore not a general view. "I'm not sure I can be of much help. I can only offer you a worm's-eye view of the situation."
	The <u>worse</u> for wear	If someone or something is the worse for wear , they are in poor condition, either worn, damaged or tired. "He came back from New York rather the worse for wear."
	<u>Worth one's salt</u>	This expression is used to say that a person who does their job well would or would not do certain things. "Any inspector worth his salt would have checked the papers carefully."
	<u>Worth one's/its weight in gold</u>	Someone or something that is worth its weight in gold is considered to be extremely helpful or useful and therefore of great value. "We couldn't run the farm without Tom. He's worth his weight in gold."
	<u>Wrap your brain around something</u>	If you concentrate on something so as to try to understand it, you wrap your brain around it. "I need a translation of that report urgently, so wrap your brain round it fast!"
	<u>Wrapped up in something</u>	If you are wrapped up in an activity, you are totally concentrated on it. "Emma was so wrapped up in her work that she didn't realize her colleagues had all left."
	<u>Wrapped up in cotton wool</u>	To say that someone is wrapped up in cotton wool means that they are over-protected from dangers and risks. "Their children are kept wrapped up in cotton wool."
	<u>Writing on the wall</u>	This expression refers to a situation in which there are signs showing that a problem is going to occur. "We all knew that Tom was going to lose his job, but Tom refused to see the writing on the wall. "
	<u>Written all over (someone's) face</u>	When someone's feelings or thoughts are very clear, you can say that they are written all over their face . "Her affection for her grandson was written all over the old lady's face."
X	<u>Xerox subsidy</u>	This term refers to the habit of using the photocopier at work for personal use. "A certain percentage of photocopies are in fact xerox subsidies. "
Y	<u>Yoke around one's neck</u>	An obligation, commitment or restraint that becomes an oppressive burden is called a yoke around one's neck . "When John lost his job, the repayments on the house became a yoke around his neck."
	<u>You don't know the half of it</u>	This expression is used to tell someone that they know some of the facts but they don't know how bad the situation is. " You don't know the half of it. He was beating her and terrorizing the children. That's why she left him."



	<u>Your guess is as good as mine</u>	When talking to another person, your guess is as good as mine means that neither of you knows the answer. "What happened between Bill and Harry?" "Your guess is as good as mine!"
	<u>Your wish is my command!</u>	This is a humoristic way of saying that you are willing to do whatever the other person asks. "Breakfast in bed? Your wish is my command! "
Z	<u>Zero in on something</u>	If you zero in on something, you focus all your attention on that particular thing. "The boss immediately zeroed in on the sales figures."

Source: http://www.learn-english-today.com/idioms/idiom-categories/alpha-list_A.html

