



### IMPORTANT IDIOMS AND PHRASES

**1. A HOT POTATO**

Speak of an issue which many people are talking about and which is usually disputed

**2. A PENNY FOR YOUR THOUGHTS**

A way of asking what someone is thinking

**3. ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS**

People's intentions can be judged better by what they do than what they say.

**4. ADD INSULT TO INJURY**

To further a loss with mockery or indignity; to worsen an unfavorable situation.

**5. AN ARM AND A LEG**

Very expensive or costly. A large amount of money.

**6. AT THE DROP OF A HAT**

Meaning: without any hesitation; instantly.

**7. A CHIP ON YOUR SHOULDER**

Being angry about something that happened in the past; a grudge.

**8. A DIME A DOZEN :**

When something is extremely common and simple to acquire

**9. A FOOL AND HIS MONEY ARE SOON PARTED**

It's easy for someone acting foolish to lose his/her money through carelessness or by being tricked.

**10. A PIECE OF CAKE :**

A task that is simple to complete; similar to the common phrase "as easy as pie."

**11. AN ARM AND A LEG**

Something that is extremely expensive; an idiom meaning the price paid was costly, excessively so.

**12. ALL GREEK TO ME**

When something is incomprehensible due to complexity.

**13. A BIRD IN THE HAND IS WORTH TWO IN THE BUSH**

Having something that is certain is much better than taking a risk for more, because chances are you might losing everything.

**14. A BLESSING IN DISGUISE**

Something good that isn't recognized by first

**15. A BULL IN CHINA SHOP**

One who causes damage

**16. A CHIP ON YOUR SHOULDER**

Being upset for something that happened in the past



## Important Idioms and Phrases

- 17. A DAMP SQUIB**  
Complete failure
- 18. A DIME A DOZEN**  
Anything that is common and easy to get
- 19. A DOUBTING THOMAS**  
A skeptic who needs physical or personal evidence in order to believe something
- 20. A DROP IN THE BUCKET**  
A very small part of something big or whole
- 21. A FOOL AND HIS MONEY ARE EASILY PARTED**  
It's easy for a foolish person to lose his/ her money
- 22. A GENTLEMAN AT LARGE**  
An unreliable person
- 23. A GREEN HORN**  
Inexperienced
- 24. A HOUSE DIVIDED AGAINST ITSELF CANNOT STAND**  
Everyone involved must unify and function together or it will not work out.
- 25. A LEOPARD CAN'T CHANGE HIS SPOTS**  
You cannot change who you are
- 26. A LOST CAUSE**  
A hopeless case, a person or situation having no hope of positive change
- 27. A MAN OF STRAW**  
A weak person
- 28. A MARE'S NEST**  
A false invention
- 29. A PENNY SAVED IS A PENNY EARNED**  
By not spending money, you are saving money (little by little)
- 30. A PICTURE PAINTS A THOUSAND WORDS**  
A visual presentation is far more descriptive than words
- 31. A PIECE OF CAKE**  
A task that can be accomplished very easily
- 32. A SLAP ON THE WRIST**  
A very mild punishment



## Important Idioms and Phrases

**33. A STALKING HORSE**

Pretence

**34. A STEAL**

Very inexpensive, a bargain

**35. A TASTE OF YOUR OWN MEDICINE**

When you are mistreated the same way you mistreat others

**36. A TOSS-UP**

A result hat is still unclear and can go either way

**37. A WOLF IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING**

A dangerous person pretending harmless

**38. ABC**

Very common knowledge about to Ready to, just going to

**39. ABOVE ALL**

Mainly, especially

**40. ABOVE BOARD**

Fair and honest

**41. ACCORDING TO**

In the order of; on the authority of

**42. ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDSIT'S**

better to actually do something than hust talk about it

**43. ADD FUEL TO THE FIRE**

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

**44. AGAINST THE CLOCK**

Rushed and short on time

**45. ALL (DAY, WEEK, MONTH, YEAR) LONG**

The entire day, week, month, year

**46. ALL ALONG**

All the time, from the beginning (without change)

**47. ALL AND SUNDRY**

Without making any distinction

**48. ALL BARK AND NO BITE**

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

**49. ALL GREEK TO ME**

Meaningless and incomprehensible like someone who cannot read, speak



## Important Idioms and Phrases

- 50. ALL IN ALL**  
Considering everything
- 51. ALL IN THE SAME BOAT**  
When everyone is facing the same challenges
- 52. ALL OF A SUDDEN**  
Suddenly, without warning (All at once)
- 53. ALL RIGHT**  
Acceptable, fine; yes, okay
- 54. ALPHA AND OMEGA**  
First and last letter of Greek alphabet, means beginning and end
- 55. AN ARM AND A LEG**  
Very expensive, A large amount of money
- 56. AN AXE TO GRIND**  
To have a dispute with someone
- 57. AN EYE WASH**  
A pretence
- 58. AN IRON HAND**  
By force
- 59. APPLE TO MY EYE**  
Someone who is cherished above all others
- 60. AS A MATTER OF FACT**  
Really, actually (also: as to)
- 61. AS FOR**  
Regarding, concerning (also: as to)
- 62. AS HIGH AS A KITE**  
Anything that is high up in the sky
- 63. AS SOON AS**  
Just after, when
- 64. AS USUAL**  
as is the general case, as is typical
- 65. AT ALL**  
To any degree (also: in the least)
- 66. AT HEART**



## Important Idioms and Phrases

Basically, fundamentally

**67. AT LAST**

Finally, after a long time

**68. AT LEAST**

A minimum of, no fewer (or less) than

**69. AT ODDS**

In dispute

**70. AT SIXES AND SEVEN**

Persons who are having different opinions

**71. AT THE DROP OF A HAT**

Willing to do something immediately

**72. BACK TO THE DRAWING BOARD**

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

**73. BALL IS IN YOUR COURT**

It is up to you to make the next decision or step

**74. BARKING UP THE WRONG TREE**

Looking in the wrong place. Accusing the wrong person

**75. BE GLAD TO SEE THE BACK OF**

Be happy when a person leaves.

**76. BEAT AROUND THE BUSH**

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

**77. BEST OF BOTH WORLDS**

Meaning: All the advantages.

**78. BEST THING SINCE SLICED BREAD**

A good invention or innovation. A good idea or plan.

**79. BITE OFF MORE THAN YOU CAN CHEW**

To take on a task that is way to big.

**80. BLESSING IN DISGUISE**

Something good that isn't recognized at first.

**81. BURN THE MIDNIGHT OIL**

To work late into the night  
alluding to the time before electric lighting.



## Important Idioms and Phrases

### **82. BACK TO SQUARE ONE**

To go back to the beginning; a popular saying that suggests a person has to start over.

### **83. BEATING A DEAD HORSE**

Something that is seen as futile; a popular saying used to describe how bringing up older issues that have already been resolved is pointless.

### **84. BETWEEN A ROCK AND A HARD PLACE**

Being faced with two difficult choices; a dilemma.

### **85. BREAK THE ICE**

Breaking down a social stiffness or awkwardness.

### **86. BURST YOUR BUBBLE**

To ruin someone's happy moment or mood, usually by telling them disappointing news or information act  
To the Drawing Board

Similar to the phrase above, it means starting over again from a previously failed attempt.

### **87. BACK AND CALL**

At the service

### **88. BACK AND FORTH**

In a backward and forward motion

### **89. BACK SEAT DRIVER**

People who criticize from the sidelines, much like someone giving unwanted advice

### **90. CAN'T JUDGE A BOOK BY ITS COVER**

Cannot judge something primarily on appearance.

### **91. CAUGHT BETWEEN TWO STOOLS**

When someone finds it difficult to choose between two alternatives.

### **92. COSTS AN ARM AND A LEG**

This idiom is used when something is very expensive.

### **93. CROSS THAT BRIDGE WHEN YOU COME TO IT**

Deal with a problem if and when it becomes necessary, not before.

### **94. CRY OVER SPILT MILK**

When you complain about a loss from the past.

### **95. CURIOSITY KILLED THE CAT**

Being Inquisitive can lead you into an unpleasant situation.

### **96. CUT CORNERS**

When something is done badly to save money.



## Important Idioms and Phrases

### **97. CUT THE MUSTARD**

To succeed; to come up to expectations; adequate enough to compete or participate

### **98. CLOSE BUT NO CIGAR**

Coming close to a successful outcome only to fall short at the end.

### **99. CRY WOLF**

Lying; a common phrase meaning someone is calling for help when it's not really needed.

### **100. CUP OF JOE**

A cup of joe is an American nickname for a cup of coffee.

### **101. CUT TO THE CHASE**

To get to the point, leaving out all of the unnecessary details. Similar to popular sayings such as "beating around the bush."

### **102. DEVIL'S ADVOCATE**

To present a counter argument

### **103. DON'T COUNT YOUR CHICKENS BEFORE THE EGGS HAVE HATCHED**

This idiom is used to express "Don't make plans for something that might not happen".

### **104. DON'T GIVE UP THE DAY JOB**

You are not very good at something

You could definitely not do it professionally.

### **105. DON'T PUT ALL YOUR EGGS IN ONE BASKET**

Do not put all your resources in one possibility.

### **106. DRASTIC TIMES CALL FOR DRASTIC MEASURES**

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

Elvis has left the building

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

### **107. EVERY CLOUD HAS A SILVER LINING**

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

Far cry from , Very different from.

### **108. FEEL A BIT UNDER THE WEATHER**

Meaning: Feeling slightly ill.

Give the benefit of the doubt ; Believe someone's statement, without proof.

### **109. FABIAN POLICY**

Policy of delaying decisions

### **110. FACE-TO-FACE**

Direct, personal; directly, personally (written without hyphens)



## Important Idioms and Phrases

**111. FAIR AND WIDE**

Equal opportunity to all

**112. FAR AND WIDE**

Every where

**113. FEW AND FAR BETWEEN**

Not frequent, unusual, rare

**114. FIELD DAY**

An enjoyable day or circumstance

**115. FIFTY- FIFTY**

Divided into two equal parts

**116. FINDING YOUR FEET**

To become more comfortable in whatever you are doing

**117. FINGER LICKING GOOD**

To become more comfortable in whatever you are doing

**118. Fire and BRIMSTONE**

A very tasty food or meal

**119. FIRE AND FURY**

Fearful penalties

**120. FIRST AND FOREMOST**

Extreme enthusiasm

**121. FISHY: DOUBTFUL**

Highest priority

**122. FIXED IN YOUR WAYS**

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

**123. FLASH IN THE PAN**

Something that shows potential or looks promising in the beginning but fails to Deliver

**124. FLEA MARKET**

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

**125. FLESH AND BLOOD-**

This idiom can mean living material of which people are made of, or it can refer to human nature

**126. FLIP THE BIRD**

To raise your middle finger at someone





## Important Idioms and Phrases

**127. FOAM AT THE MOUTH**

To be enraged and show it

**128. FOOLS' GOLD**

Iron pyrites, a worthless rock that resembles real gold

**129. FOOT THE BILL**

Bear expenses

**130. FOR GOOD**

Permanently, forever

**131. FOR ONCE**

This one time, for only one time

**132. FOR SURE**

Without doubt (also: for certain)

**133. FOR THE TIME BEING**

Temporarily (also: for now)

**134. FREE AND EASY**

Natural and simple

**135. FROM NOW ON**

From this time into the future

**136. FROM RAGS TO RICHES**

To go from very poor to being very wealthy

**137. FUDDY- DUDDY**

An old-fashioned and foolish type of person

**138. FULL MONTY**

This idiom can mean either, "The whole thing" or "Completely nude"

**139. FUNNY FARM**

A mental institutional facility

**140. GALL AND WORMWOOD**

Source of irritation

**141. GET DOWN TO BRASS TACKS**

To become serious about something

**142. GET OVER IT**

To move beyond something that is bothering you

**143. GET UP ON THE WRONG SIDE OF THE BED**



## Important Idioms and Phrases

Someone who is having a horrible day

**144. GET YOUR WALKING PAPERS**

Get fired from the job

**145. GIRD UP THE LOIN**

To be ready

**146. GIVE AND TAKE**

Compromise, cooperation between people

**147. GIVE HIM THE SLIP**

To get away from, to escape

**148. GIVE IN**

Surrender

**149. GO DOWN LIKE A LEAD BALLOON**

To be received badly by an audience

**150. GO FOR BROKE**

To gamble everything you have

**151. GO OUT ON A LIMB**

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

**152. GO THE EXTRA MILE**

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

**153. GOOD SAMARITAN**

Someone who helps others when they are in need, with no discussion for

**154. GRAVEYARD SHIFT**

Working hours from about 12:00 am to 8.00

**155. GREAT MINDS THINK ALIKE**

Intelligent people think like each other

**156. GREEN ROOM**

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

**157. GUT FEELING**

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

**158. HAD BETTER**

Should, ought to, be advisable to

**159. HAND A GLOVES**

Very intimate friends



## Important Idioms and Phrases

**160. HARD AND FAST**

Certain

**161. HARD OF HEARING**

Partially deaf, not able to hear well

**162. HASTE MAKES WASTE**

Quickly doing things results in a poor ending

**163. HAT TRICK**

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

**164. HAUGHTY AND NAUGHTY**

Arrogant and naughty

**165. HAVE AN AXE TO GRIND**

To have a dispute with someone

**166. HAVE GOT**

To have, to possess

**167. HAVE GOT TO**

Must (also: have to)

**168. HE LOST HIS HEAD**

Angry and overcome by emotions

**169. HEAD AND SHOULDER**

Superior

**170. HEAD OVER HEELS**

Very excited and/ or joyful, especially when in love

**171. HEART AND SOUL**

With full devotion

**172. HELL IN A HAND BASKET**

Deteriorating and headed for complete disaster

**173. HELTER SHELTER**

Here and there

**174. HERCULEAN TASK**

A tedious job

**175. HIGH FIVE**

Slapping palms above each others heads as celebration gesture

**176. HIGH ON THE HOG**



## Important Idioms and Phrases

Living in luxury

**177. HIT BELOW THE BELT**

Contrary the principles of fairness

**178. HIT THE BOOKS**

To study, especially for a test or exam

**179. HIT THE HAY**

Go to bed or go to sleep

**180. HIT THE NAIL ON THE HEAD**

Do something exactly right or say something exactly right

**181. HIT THE SACK**

Go to bed or go to sleep

**182. HITHER AND THITHER**

Here and there

**183. HOCUS POCUS**

In general, a term used in magic or trickery

**184. HOLD YOUR HORSES**

Be patient

**185. HOLE AND CORNER POLICY**

A secret policy for an evil purpose

**186. HORNET'S NEST**

Raise controversy

**187. HUE AND CRY**

Great noise

**188. HUSH MONEY**

A bribe

**189. ICING ON THE CAKE**

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

**190. IDLE HANDS ARE THE DEVIL'S TOOLS-**

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

**191. ONE IF IT'S NOT THING, IT'S ANOTHER**

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

**192. ILL AT EASE**



## Important Idioms and Phrases

Uncomfortable or worried in a situation

**193. IN A HURRY**

Hurried, rushed (also: in a rush)

**194. IN CASE**

In order to be prepared if the meaning is in order to be prepared if something happens

**195. IN HAND**

Under firm control, well managed

**196. IN LIKE FLYNN**

To be easily successful, especially when sexual or romantic

**197. IN NO TIME**

Very quickly, rapidly

**198. IN THE BAG**

To have something secured

**199. IN THE HEAT OF THE MOMENT**

Overwhelmed by what is happening in the moment

**200. IN THE LONG RUN**

Eventually, after a long period of time

**201. IN THE WORST WAY**

Very much, greatly

**202. IN TIME TO**

Before the time necessary to do something

**203. IN TOUCH**

Having contact

**204. IN VAIN**

Useless, without the desired result

**205. IN YOUR FACE**

An aggressive and bold confrontation

**206. INS AND OUTS**

Full detail

**207. INSIDE OUT**

With the inside facing the outside

**208. INTENTS AND PURPOSES**



## Important Idioms and Phrases

Practically

### **209. IT FIGURES**

It seems likely, reasonable, or typical

### **210. IT TAKES TWO TO TANGO**

A two person conflict where both people are at fault

### **211. IT'S A SMALL WORLD**

You frequently see the same people in different places

### **212. IT ANYONE'S CALL**

A competition where the outcome is difficult to judge or predict

### **213. IVORY TOWER**

Imaginary world

### **214. IVY LEAGUE**

Since 1954 the Ivy League has been the following universities: Columbia,

### **215. JAYWALK**

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

### **216. JOSHING ME**

Tricking me

### **217. KEEP AN EYE ON HIM**

You should carefully watch him.

### **218. KEEP BODY AND SOUL TOGETHER**

To earn a sufficient amount of money in order to keep

### **219. KEEP YOUR CHIN UP**

To remain joyful in a tough situation

### **220. KICK THE BUCKET**

Die

### **221. KITH AND KIN**

Blood relatives

### **222. KITTY-CORNER**

Diagonally across. Sometimes called Catty- Corner as well

### **223. KNOCK ON WOOD**

Knuckle tapping on wood in order to avoid some bad luck

### **224. KNOW THE ROPES**

To understand the details



## Important Idioms and Phrases

**225. LAST BUT NOT LEAST**

An introduction phrase to let the audience know that the last person mentioned is also very important

**226. LAST STRAW**

The final event in a series of unacceptable actions

**227. LATIN AND GREEK**

Unable to understand

**228. LEAVE NO STONE UNTURNED**

Make all possible efforts

**229. LEND ME YOUR EAR**

To politely ask for someone's full attention

**230. LENGTH AND BREADTH**

All over

**231. LET ALONG**

certainly not (also: not to mention, to say nothing of)

**232. LET THE CAT OUT OF THE BAG**

To share a secret that wasn't supposed to be shared

**233. LEVEL PLAYING FIELD**

A fair competition where no side has an advantage

**234. LIFE AND SOUL**

Main support

**235. LIKE A CHICKEN AND ITS HEAD CUT OFF**

To act in a frenzied manner

**236. LIQUOR SOMEONE UP**

To get someone drunk

**237. LITTLE BY LITTLE**

Gradually, slowly (also: step by step)

**238. LIVE-WIRE**

Energetic

**239. LOAVES AND FISH**

Material interests

**240. LOCK AND KEY**



## Important Idioms and Phrases

In safe place

### **241. LONG IN THE TOOTH**

Old people (or horses)

### **242. LOOSE CANNON**

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

### **243. MAKE NO BONES ABOUT**

To state a fact so there are no doubts or objections

### **244. METHOD TO MY MADNESS**

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

### **245. MIGHT AND MAIN**

With all enthusiasm

### **246. MILK AND WATER**

Weak

### **247. MORE OR LESS**

Approximately, almost, somewhat, to a certain degree

### **248. MUMBO JUMBO**

Nonsense or meaningless speech


### **249. MUM'S THE WORD**


To keep quiet, To say nothing

### **250. NARROW-MINDED**

Not willing to accept the ideas of others

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