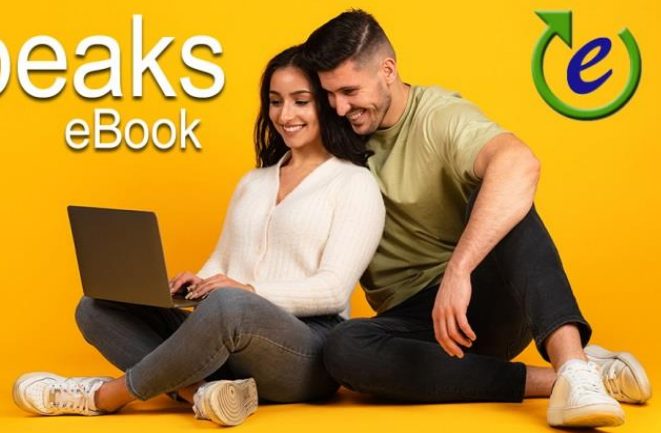


eSpeaks.com eBook
Phrasal verbs and Expressions

Welcome to eSpeaks eBook Phrasal verbs Expressions



By Jens van Vliet
(OISE-The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education / University of Toronto)

Phrasal verbs Expressions



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All content is used for the e-learning platform EnglishAZ and must be accompanied by the e-learning program on EnglishAZ.com.

Welcome to the EnglishAZ.com Phrasal Verbs and Expressions © Module

The phrasal verb and expression module is meant to fine tune a student of English as a second language. Phrasal verbs and expressions used accurately will increase the perceived level of the student from a listener's point of view. Basically, this module is meant to impress people with flashy technique. This module is found as the Resource module on the EnglishAZ.com e-learning program and is best used in conjunction with the elearning platform.

Method

This method is found on the EnglishAZ.com web site. For optimal use please go to www.EnglishAZ.com. Note that there are over 5,000 pages of content for this training. It is equally applicable in a blended or stand-alone context. Teachers and administrators have access to every step of a student's progress including strengths and weaknesses, time on site, and chronological progress.

Here are the seven steps of the EnglishAZ method including this book (Vocabulary Conversation)

1. **Level test and objectives:** Students have an entrance and an exit level test so as to measure the level at the beginning and at the end of the training (up to 12 months). There are also a series of progress tests to measure the progress according to level. Further in the initial evaluation the student sets objectives. This information is available for all administrators and teacher to help follow their students' progress.
2. **Daily Warm ups:** This module is portable and best for smart phone or lap top use. It is best for fluency and accent work
3. **General exercises:** According to the student's level (A1 A2 B1 B2 C1 C2) they are assigned automatically the appropriate series of modules (Beginner to Advanced) which appears systematically on the student's main page.
4. **Vocabulary and conversation:** This module is to develop vocabulary in the context of conversations.
5. **Grammar:** These modules are designed to prep for exams such as TOEIC and TOEFL and the Cambridge exams.
6. **Phrasal verbs and expressions:** The Resource module for phrasal verbs and expression development. This module also has video for listening.
7. **Video modules:** This module has video resources with access to subtitles and original texts so as to give students high quality video access.

Objectives

The objective of the EnglishAZ.com program is to have various streams of learning permitting the student to have a direct and an indirect learning balance. The direct is based on the web site and the e-learning platform and support and the indirect is a systematic learning process that permits for regularity in the learning. This permits for flexibility in the learning and a consistency in language development.

A sample week

It is important to note that Warm ups and Resource pages are updated on a weekly basis on EnglishAZ.com every Tuesday.

- **Monday:** Revision and Consolidation of the previous week. (Review the Strengths and weaknesses button on the site for information).
- E-learning Lessons on the site according to level. The student's level is displayed on the main student page automatically.
- **Tuesday:** New weekly Warm up (pdf and mp3) download and begin exercises. (remember the Warm ups should be done daily).
- Review new phrasal verbs and expressions (consolidate previous week) in the resource module.



- **Wednesday:** Weekly Vocabulary Conversation module. (optional video activities on the resource page)
- **Thursday:** Weekly Vocabulary Conversation module.
- **Friday:** Grammar module.
- **Weekend** Do the daily warm ups. Best used on a smart phone.

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Magic in Language Communication

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Introduction

Welcome to this exercise book. The objective of this book is to give you tools to give a strong impression when you communicate in English. The idea is to work on these techniques when you are learning, so if you need English for professional or for personal reasons this book will help you to impress people you are communicating with.

A quick story

When I lived in Canada I was lucky to learn French. I spent 5 years in French schools in Montreal and I felt I was completely bilingual. I was proud of my accomplishment and confident I was going to become very fluent. I became a High school teacher in a French public school in Toronto, Canada and I was able to work on my French even more. I liked the idea that I was becoming totally fluent in another language.

After 5 years teaching at the Toronto French High school I had the opportunity to live in France for a few years. I thought this would be great to make my French perfect. During my stay I had the luck to meet other language experts. I started to notice that my English-speaking friends had a lower French technical level than mine but they sounded more sophisticated. I wondered why. I realized that they used expressions and phrasal verbs very well. Also, they communicated very simply. Here is part 4 for the creation of magic in language communication.

General learning strategies

The four key steps to the learning process.

- 1 making common everyday English easy (Your warm ups)
- 2 progressive chronological learning (Your lessons)
- 3 building technique technical mastery (Your vocabulary and conversation and grammar)
- 4 creating a strong impression (This eBook)

How to use this eBook.

Here is the magic communicating formula. It really is not so magical but it works.

Strategies

- 1) Take a few phrasal verbs and a few expressions a week. Read them over so you understand them.
- 2) Try to simulate situations where you can use them.
- 3) Every time you have an opportunity try to communicate in English take a few ideas from this list and create a sentence that is technically perfect and that you can use.

A few tips

Watch out for irregular verbs.

Remember some phrasal verbs can be split.

For example

I wash the dishes up.

I washed up the dishes.

I wish you all the best of luck and do not hesitate to contact me at EnglishAZ.com.

*Note that a list of these phrasal verbs and expressions will appear on the resource page of EnglishAZ.com

Phrasal Verbs

Part 1

Phrasal verbs are a combination of a verb and a preposition where the definition of the verb changes because of the preposition.

For example, to eat out means to eat in a restaurant.

'To eat' is the verb and 'out' is the preposition. The combination changes the definition of to eat.

Remember there can be several definitions for phrasal verbs.

For example

get down

to descend

to have difficulty eating

to reduce

to have an affair



1. Phrasal Verbs

Here you will find a list of common phrasal verbs.

Verb: watch watched watched

watch over To take care of
They watched over the sensitive project.
watch with To share
They watched the movie with friends.

Verb: move moved moved

move ahead To continue
Let's move ahead with the next item on the agenda.
move away Leave the area where you have been living
Have you ever thought about moving away to another country.
move in Start living in a place (more general)
When did you move in?
move into Start living in a place (more precise)
Did he move into the new apartment.
move in on Approach, often in a competitive way
The competition was moving in on us.
move on Change the subject
Are there any questions? OK let's move on.
move out Leave a place you live in
When did you move out of the house?
move towards To go in the direction of (figurative or physical)
Are you moving towards your goals.
move up Move to a higher level
He is moving up in the company.

Verb: head headed headed

head for Move or travel towards (physical)
Are you heading for New York?
head off To leave (timing)
What time do you head off for vacation?
head off Stop someone or something
They wanted to head off the competition so they launched a new product.
head out Go out (timing)
Are you heading out? I will go with you.
head up Be in charge
He is heading up the project.

Verb: checked checked checked

check out To leave (Usually a hotel)
What time did you check out of the hotel?

check out To observe something interesting

Did you check out the movie?

check in To arrive (usually at a hotel or an airline flight)

When do you have to check in at the airport.

Verb: wear wore worn (split preposition / irregular verb)

wear away Erode, remove gradually (physical) To take away

The glaciers in the arctic are wearing away.

The project is wearing away at my energy.

The ocean is wearing the beach away.

wear down Make something or someone weaker

Going on business trips wears me down.

I feel worn down.

Jack wore the car down with all the business trips.

wear off Stop having an effect or diminish

The effect of the vacation wore off quickly when I returned to work.

The effect of the aspirin wore off quickly.

My interest in the project was wearing off after a few months.

wear out Use something until it stops working or is working less well.

The new connection is wearing my battery out.

My new job is really wearing me out.

The project will wear the team out.

Verb: add added added (Split preposition)

add on To include in a calculation

Can you add on the sales tax?

The books will add on to the total luggage weight.

They are adding all the services on to the bill.

add up The total, the sum (Mathematical)

Can you add the bill up?

She will have to add up the sales tax.

Mike will add up the total cost.

add up to To have a certain result (figurative)

Hard work adds up to success.

If you are not careful you will add up to nothing.

The work you are doing is adding up to results.

Verb: roll rolled rolled

roll out To launch something like a new product

They rolled out the new car. It went into production last month.

They are rolling out the new software. It will take a few days.

The company was rolling out the new product.

roll over To turn over

The dog rolls over when asked. Try it. Just say 'roll over'.

He rolled over after he fell.

Can you roll over the sausage, so it cooks well?

roll with To adapt to something (to change accordingly)

They had to roll with the changes in the industry. They modified the product.



Can you roll with the modifications in the team?
I have to roll with the changes in the software?

roll into To combine into one

They rolled the two departments into one. Now they all have one manager.

They rolled the project into one. It is more efficient.

I would like to roll all my bank payments into one if possible.

Verb: jack jacked jacked

jack up To augment or lift

They jacked up the price of gas last week.

They jacked up the car to fix the tire.

The company jacked up the size of the database.

jack around To not be honest

He jacked the supplier around in the deal.

Don't Jack me around. I need the truth.

My boss was jacking me around. I was taken off the project.

Verb: touch touched touched

touch up To fix up small imperfections

They touched up the pictures.

Mike had to do some touch ups on the project.

Before the video they did some touch ups on her hair.

touch down When an airplane arrives

They touched down at 2 pm. We picked them up.

They will touch down in Miami at 3 pm.

We will have touched down by the time you arrive.

Verb: opt opted opted

opt for To choose

She opted for the vacation package.

I opted for business class.

You can opt for the luxury version.

opt in Choose to be part or a member of something

I opted in for the employee retirement package.

I opted in for some golf with my colleagues.

I would like to opt in for the volunteer group.

opt out of Choose not to be part of something

They opted out of the projet. They did not have the manpower to do it.

Would you like to opt out of the volunteer program?

To opt out would not be a bad idea seeing that you are so busy.

Verb: blow blew blown

blow away Beat rivals or competitors by a large margin

They were blown away by the competition.

They blew them away in finals.

The want to blow them away in the public offer.

blow away Impress greatly

I was blown away by the presentation.

He blew me away when he played the piano.

That trip blew me away.

blow down When the wind moves something from a place or when the wind forces something to fall

The tree was blown down by the storm.

The house was blown down by the hurricane.

The umbrella blew down in the wind.

blow in Arrive, sometimes suddenly or unexpectedly

The wind blew the pollution through the window.

Well look who blew in. It is Jack.

The insects were blown in through the window.

blow off Ignore, not do something

He blew off the meeting. He did not think it was important.

Mike likes to blow people off.

Sophie blew the test off.

blow out Extinguish candles, matches, etc.

Jack blew out the match.

Mike blew his birthday candles on the cake.

The lighter kept blowing out in the wind.

blow over When a scandal gets forgotten

The financial scandal blew over a year later.

The political problem is going to blow over in time.

The argument blew over last month.

blow up To explode

The bomb blew up.

The issue blew up in the press.

Don't blow up the problem.

blow up To inflate

I have to blow up the balloon.

They had to blow the tires up.

Can you blow up the bed?

blow up Enlarge (e.g., pictures)

I cannot see the details in the documents. Can you blow them up?

They blew up the ad for the campaign.

She blew the picture up.

blow by To pass very quickly

He blew by the other car on the highway.

The French TGV blew by the fields.

The racing car blew by the crowd.

Verb: **walk walked walked**

walk away from To leave something you don't like

He walked away from the offer.

The diplomats walked away from the table during the negotiations.

Mike will walk away from the contract he is being offered, if I know him.

walk in on To enter somewhere unexpectedly

She walked in on the meeting and surprised the attendees.

Walking in on a meeting with your boss can be embarrassing.



When I am late for a meeting I feel like am walking in on it uninvited.

walk into To bump into something

I walked into the door by accident. (Accident)

Look across the street. He is going to walk into the pole.

If I don't get glasses, I will walk into something.

walk off with To take without permission or to steal something

The robber walked off with all the cash. (Stolen)

He walked off with the computer. It was not his.

They walked off with the project but were not the best qualified.

walk away with Also to win easily

They walked away with millions after winning the lotto.

Walking away with the project was their objective.

Mike thought that they would walk away with the project.

walk out A strike

They walked out and had a strike.

If the employees do not get a raise they walk out next week.

There was a walk out the Parisian metro.

walk out (on) To leave because you disagree or you're not happy

I walked out on them after the fight.

To walk out of a meeting means you are not happy.

Did you see Jack walking out of the meeting?

walk through To explain or demonstrate something carefully to someone

Peter was walked through best practices.

Walking me through would be easier than a book on the subject.

Can you walk me through the tax declaration?

walk up to To go directly to someone to talk to them.

The sales manager walked up to the CEO and sold the idea.

Can you walk up to important people in a conference?

Walking up to people you do not know can be intimidating.

Verb: **pop popped popped**

pop up To appear suddenly

Look what pops up on my computer every time I turn it on.

I was surprised at what popped up on Google while looking for the answer.

Can you turn the pop ups off on the screen?

pop in To visit unexpectedly

He will pop in later today.

The vice president popped in yesterday.

Janet popped in to brief me on the situation.

Verb: **split split split**

split up Break up into two

The company split up.

Anna split up with her boy friend last month.

Did you split the profits up?

split over To be undecided

They were split over the decision.

split into To make smaller

We split the project to several smaller pieces.

Verb: act acted acted

act on To do something about

They acted on the suggestion.

You should act on it now before it becomes a big problem.

To act on it would be a good idea.

act upon To do something about

They had to act upon the decision.

Let's act upon it.

Had you acted upon it it would have been fixed.

act out To play a role

She acted out her feelings.

You should act out what you think.

Mike acted out the roll of CEO.

act up To not work properly

The computer started acting up. She could not access the hard drive.

My car is acting up. I should fix it.

My back has been acting up. Every year it is the same thing.

Verb: answer answered answered

answer to When somebody has authority over you

Sandra had to answer to the board.

The company had to answer to the clients.

Mike is a politician. He has to answer to the voters.

answer for To respond for someone

She answered for me.

I have an answering service. They answer for me.

Can you answer for me? I will be out this afternoon.

answer for To take responsibility for someone or something

Mike is going to answer for the failed project.

Answering for problems is the job of a politician.

The company had to answer for the product failure.

Verb: bank banked banked

bank on When someone or something is very reliable

The company was banking on the project.

We can bank on that supplier. They have never let us down.

You can bank on me.

Verb: bang banged banged

bang around To make a lot of noise

They were banging around the boxes in the office.

The kids were banging around in their room yesterday.

Can you stop banging around? I can't get to sleep.

bang up To damage

They banged up the car on the road.

They really banged up the computer on the plane.



Have you ever banged up your phone?

bang out To produce quickly

He banged out the document.

The law firm bangs out contracts every day.

Can you bang out a PowerPoint presentation for tomorrow?

Verb: bring brought brought

bring down To put in a bad mood

He was brought down by the announcement.

That movie brought me down.

The results brought the team down.

bring up To grow up

He was brought up in Canada.

Where were you brought up?

I was brought up in Italy. And you?

bring up To discuss

He brought up the subject.

Mike brought the subject up in the meeting.

I would not bring the problem up if I were you.

Verb: be was been (were past simple plural- we you they)

be in To not be absent

I will be in tomorrow at the office.

be for To support

I am for the new project.

be over To finish

The project is over.

be with To accompany

He was with his boss on the trip.

be into To be a fan of

Jack is into tennis.

be around To stay around

Is he around today?

be off To go

I am off on a business trip tomorrow.

be out of No more

Are you out of batteries?

be up to To be doing something

What is she up to tomorrow?

be down To be unhappy

He was down last week after he lost his phone.

be away To be gone

Are you away next week?

Verb: beat beat beaten

beat out To win

They beat out the competition last week.

beat up To attack

The hockey player was beaten up in the game.

Verb: block blocked blocked

block in To not be able to move (stopped from both sides)

They were blocked in traffic.

block off To stop from one point

They blocked off the road because of the construction.

block out To not have access

The technician blocked out the spam email.

The curtain blocked out the sun.

block up To not be able to move

The sink was blocked up.

The highway was blocked up.

Verb: book booked booked

book into To check into a hotel or event

They booked into the hotel.

Did the marketing team book into the conference?

Booking into the hotel was easy.

Verb: burn burned burned (also an irregular verb burn burnt burnt)

burn up To destroy completely with fire

The garbage burnt up.

The space ship burnt up when it returned to earth.

The will burn up many cars during the demonstration.

burn out To not have any energy left

The executive burned out after the huge project.

I felt burnt out after the trip.

If you are not careful she will burn out. She needs a break.

Verb: call called called

call around To make calls to get information

He called around for a better price.

Calling around is a good idea.

If you call around you will find the right person.

call over To invite to where you are

He called his boss over.

Can you call Mike over so we can go over the problem?

He was called over to the boss's office.

call in To update someone like your office or your family

He called in to let them know how the project was going.

Can you call in to let me know what is going on.

The sales person calls in every week.

call up To contact someone (more casual)

He called the manager up.

Call up the company to see if you have a discount.

I called up my friends to have a beer.

Verb: carry carried carried

carry around To take with you (generally)

He carried his book around.



To carry heavy things can damage your back.
Had you not carried the heavy load, you would have been fine.
carry on To continue
Can you carry on with the project?
Can everyone carry on with their work?
The consultant carries on to much. He should let others speak.
carry out To do something
Can you carry out the project.
The project was carried out by the team.
Has she carried out her duties?

Verb: catch caught caught

catch up To make an extra effort to complete a project
They caught up with their work after the long holiday.
Have you caught up with your studies?
You'd better catch up or you'll be late.
catch up to meet and to update on stories
Let's catch up next week. You can tell me about the trip.
Can you catch up with Mike to go over the issues for the project?
We will have caught up before the end of the week.
catch on To become popular or trendy
The product was catching on. They were selling more and more.
I think the new process is catching on. Everyone is using it.
Would you like the new program to catch on? It could.

Verb: clean cleaned cleaned

clean off To clean, to wipe
He cleaned off the windows.
Can you clean off the table, so we can work? We just has lunch here.
Cleaning of the desk would be a very good idea. It is a mess.
clean out To empty
They cleaned out the drawer. There were a lot of things.
Jack cleaned out the room of his things after the presentation.
Cleaning out a cupboard is very important once in a while.
clean out To empty financially
He cleaned out the bank account.
The company got cleaned out. They went broke.
That cleaned us out. We have to find money.
clean up To tidy, to wash
He cleaned his office up.
Let's clean the mess up.
The kids cleaned themselves up before dinner.

Verb: clear cleared cleared

clear away To remove not important things
Susan cleared away the papers from her desk.
That had cleared away for the project.
Did you clear away the snow from the front?
clear off To remove
Steve cleared the icons off his desk top.

Can you clear off the desk?
Can you clear off the table?
clear out To leave
They had to clear out of the building.
clear up To fix
They had to clear up the problem.

Verb: **close closed closed**

close down To shut
The lawyers will close down the company.
He is closing the project down.
They closed the street down for construction.
close up To shut
They had to close up the restaurant.
Can you close up the office?
Close up the window. It is cold.
close off To block
They closed off the road.
The water was closed off.
Close off the entrance please.
close in on To approach the leader
The racers were closing in on the lead.
They were closing in on the market leader.
Have they been closing in on us?

Verb: **count counted counted**

count down The final moments
The count down started today for the project release.
They are counting down for the rocket launch.
The project is being counted down. It starts next week.
count up To add
They counted up the receipts at the end of month.
Can you count up the time on site.
Counting up the mistakes will give the total.
count over To count again
We have to count over the votes.
They counted the expenses over.
Counting over the bill will help.
count on To depend on
Mike was counting on the team.
Can you count on them?
We are counting on the contract. It must be signed.

Verb: **cut cut cut**

cut off To block
They were cut off by the car.
Is the cut off date is July 1st?
They were cut off by the bar tender. They had too much to drink.
cut into To move in front
Cutting into the traffic is very rude.



Didn't they cut into the line?
He always cuts into the conversation.
cut around To go around
They cut around the traffic jam.
Jack and Mike cut around the problem by using a consultant.
Can you cut around the parade?
cut short To reduce in length (like a meeting)
His vacation was cut short.
Can we cut the meeting short? We have a technical problem.
Cutting the trip short will not help.

Verb: do did done

do up To make nice (attractive)
They did up the presentation.
Do yourself up for the party.
Janet was all done up for the cocktail.
do over To do again
He did the class over again. He failed.
You should do the project over. It is not very well done.
Don't do it over. It is fine.
do in To destroy
They did in the car.
If you are not careful you will do the computer in.
Have you ever done in a phone?
do without To accept to not have
They did without the computer.
Doing without a phone is hard.
To do without a plane is not a good idea.

Verb: draw drew drawn

draw up To create, to formulate, to draft (like a document or presentation)
They drew up the contract.
Can you draw up the paperwork for the contract?
They drew up the document for the project.
draw out To make longer than planned (like a meeting)
Jack had to draw out the presentation. He had too much time.
The meeting was too long. It was drawn out by the project manager.
Mike likes to draw out his presentations.
draw into To bring someone or something into an unpleasant or pleasant situation
He was drawn into the conflict.
They were drawn into the city by the art exhibit.
Jack was drawn into the company by the good salary.

Verb: double doubled doubled

double as (to double up as) To do something else
He doubles as the IT guy in the office.
double over To bend over (in pain or in humor)
He doubled over in pain after the marathon.
It was so funny I doubled up in laughter.

double up To share an accommodation
Can you double up with Jack?

Verb: eat ate eaten

eat away To consume (erode) Takes your energy away
The schedule was eating away at the team.

eat in To eat at home
We are eating in tonight.

eat out To go to a restaurant
They ate out last week.

Verb: make made made

make off with To steal (to take without permission)
The thief made off with some cash.

make up To invent a story or situation
He has to make up an excuse to cover the problem.

make up Stop being angry with someone (to apologize)
I was angry with my colleague. I finally made up with her last week.

make up for To make an extra effort to compensate for something (to do something extra)

I made up for my extra long holiday by working harder.

make do with (or without) Accept something less satisfactory because there's no alternative

I had to make do with the smaller hotel room.

I could not make do without my phone.

make into Change something into something else
I made the idea into a company.

make it Arrive or get a result or be successful

He made it finally. He had been trying to finish school for a while.

Verb: talk talked talked

talk back Respond rudely or impolitely to a person in authority (like a teacher, parent or an official)

My daughter talked back to the teacher. We told her not to. The teacher was upset.

talk down to Talk in a way to show your superiority not communicate
A bad manager talks down to the team. They will lose respect for him.

talk into Persuade someone to do something

I had to talk the guys into going on the trip. They finally agreed.

talk out of Persuade someone not to do something (to dissuade)

I talked my boss out of doing the project. It was not easy.

talk over Discuss something with someone

I talked it over with Jack. He was happy.

talk through To guide someone through a process or something. (like a new job)

When I arrived at the company she talked me through the job.

talk up To talk enthusiastically about someone or something

We talked up the project at the trade show. The attendees were interested.



Verb: round rounded rounded

round off To move to the closest 0.

He rounded off the bill from 9.99 to 10 dollars.

round up To collect

Jack rounded up the team for the meeting.

Verb: dig dug dug

dig in A things to say when you begin eating a meal

Ok everyone dig in. Bon appetite.

dig out To look for and find something you haven't seen or used for a long time

I dug up some old pictures to show my friends. I have not seen them for a while.

dig up Find something that is supposed to be secret and to used it against someone

The reporters eventually dug up the truth about the affair. They published it in the newspaper.

Verb: nail nailed nailed

nail down (or to nail) Succeed or achieve something

I nailed the job down in the first interview. I was offered the job.

Verb: pick picked picked

pick at (something) Criticize excessively

My boss always picks at my work. He is never happy.

pick on (someone) To tease, bother, annoy, criticize or make fun of someone

My colleagues always pick on me because I am always late.

pick out Choose something

She picked out the ones she wanted to take and left the rest.

pick up To get something

Can you pick up some things from the store?

pick up after Clean a mess someone else has made

I always have to pick up after him because he leaves things all over the office.

Verb: face faced faced

face off To confront

The two teams faced off for the tender.

face up to To take responsibility

She faced up to the problems she had at school.

Verb: fall fell fallen

fall apart When something breaks into pieces

The project fell apart.

fall down To drop to the ground

I fell down when I went skiing.

fall out of When something escapes

The money fell out of my wallet.

fall back on To have a back up plan

Paul fell back on his parents help to pay for school when the loan failed.

fall behind To not be up to speed or up to date (to be late)

She fell behind in her work.

fall into To get something not expected like a job promotion

Jack fell into the position because nobody wanted to do it.

fall for To be tricked (can be for fun or serious)

The company fell for the plan that was not fair.

I fell for the joke. It made me laugh.

fall through When a situation does not work out

The project fell through early in the planning.

fall over To lose balance

The cup fell over on the table.

Verb: **gang ganged ganged**

gang up When a group is formed to attack unfairly

They ganged up against Jack.

gang up against To bully or harass or be unfair

The clique ganged up against the group of girls.

gang up on To bully or harass or be unfair

They ganged up on him.

Verb: **get got gotten**

get across To communicate

Did he get his idea across?

get ahead To advance in a career

He is really getting ahead. He is doing well.

get ahead of To go in front of

He got ahead in the competition.

get along To cooperate with (in an enjoyable way)

They are really getting along.

get around to To finally do something

I got around to it only yesterday.

get away To go to a nice place

I got away last week. It was great.

get away with To do something dishonest and to not get caught

She was cheating on the exam but got away with it.

get back together To start a relationship again

I thought they had broken up. Now they are together again. What is going on?

get by To have enough to survive

I just got by in school.

get down To descend

I had to get down from the ladder. I was scared.

get in To arrive home

What time did you get in yesterday?

get in To be accepted entrance in a school

She was accepted at Harvard? When did she get in?

get in To hand in a document or a project like for school or work

When do you have to get the project in?

get it To be punished



I better finish the project of I am going to get it.

get off To leave a vehicle

Where did you get off the plane?

get out of To not have to do

I got out of having to do my homework.

get out of To convince

I got the information out of her.

get over To stop being upset

Get over it It is not so bad.

get through To be able to contact someone

Did you get through to the client?

get through To endure a challenge

Did you get through the exam?

get together To meet up with people

Let's get together next week.

get up To stand up

He got up to go to the copy machine.

Verb: play played played

play on To make fun with something

He likes to play on words. He has a great sense of humor.

play down To make seem less serious

Paul played the problem down. He wanted to keep everyone calm.

play around To joke around

He was playing around with his friends.

Verb: worked worked worked

work on To spend time on something

He is working on the project now.

work out To be successful

That negotiation worked out well.

work out is To exercise

She worked out at the gym.

work around Cannot fix a problem so you work around the problem

They worked around the problem.

Verb: pick picked picked

pick up To get

He picked up the new computer at the store.

pick on To tease

The project manager was picking on the employee. It was not fair.

pick up on To understand

He was picking up on the bad mood of the client.

Verb: show showed shown

show off To proudly display

She showed off her new shoes.

show up To arrive (also to arrive un expected)

They showed up at the party.

Verb: wind wound wound

wind down To relax

I wound down after the really busy week. I was stressed.

wind up To end something

The project wound up last week.

Verb: speak spoke spoken

speak up To express your opinion

She spoke up in the meeting because she had something to say.

speak up To speak louder

She had to speak up. There was a lot of noise.

speak over To speak louder than

He had to speak over the background noise in the restaurants to be understood.

speak with To communicate with someone

Jack spoke with a client.

speak to To communicate with someone (same as speak with)

Did you speak to him?

Verb: back backed backed

back down Retract or withdraw your position or proposal in an argument

He backed down after the offer.

back off Retreat

They were told to back off after the aggressive negotiation.

back out of Fail to keep an agreement, arrangement

He backed out of the job offer.

back up To drive a vehicle backwards (reverse). I had to back up to park

He backed the car up into the garage.

back up Make a copy of computer data

They backed the computer up.

back up To support someone

He backed me up with the idea.

Verb: fill filled filled

fill in Complete a form

Can you fill in the form?

fill in for Substitute someone at work

She filled in for me.

fill out Complete a form

They filled in the passport form.

fill in on Give someone information

The client filled me in on his need.

fill up Fill something completely

I filled my coffee cup up.

Verb: ride rode ridden

ride over To flatten

I rode over the bottle in my car.

ride with To accompany

I have ridden with Jack to work. In fact we rode together last week.



ride into To crash
I rode into the car accidentally.

Verb: drop dropped dropped

drop in To visit
He dropped in yesterday.

drop by To visit
Jack dropped by my office on Monday. It was great to see him.

drop off To leave something or someone with a person or at a place
He dropped the computer off at his friend's house.

Verb: dress dressed dressed

dress up To dress formally
They dressed up for the party. It was a formal group of people.

dress down To dress informally
They dress down at that company. It is casual.

Verb: put put put

put down To insult someone or something
That comment was a real put down.

put in (put into) To enter something
He put the document in the box.

put off To delay
They put the meeting off to next week.

put up with To take or to tolerate someone or something
He put up with Jack even though he was late often.

Verb: give gave given

give away To reveal a secret
He gave away the secret to the competition.

give away To give something at no charge
He gave away his computer to a charity.

give in To be reluctant and stop a fight
That comment was a real put down but she gave in anyways to avoid a conflict.

give out To produce very good results
They were required to give out at the company. It was stressful.

Verb: go went gone

go against To disagree with an idea
She went against the proposal.

go out with To date
We dated for a few years.

Go without To not have something
He had to go without his computer.

Verb: come came come

come down with To feel like you are getting sick
He was coming down with a cold.

come apart To break into pieces / when something is no longer working
My jacket pocket was coming apart.

The project came apart. We have to start over.

come forward To give difficult information voluntarily

He came forward with the fact the project was not doing well.

come across as The impression you give

He came across as competent on the subject.

Verb: wait waited waited

wait around To wait for someone or something

He was waiting around for Jack when he saw his boss.

wait for To wait for someone or something

They waited for the presentation to begin.

wait with To wait accompanied by someone or something

Jane waited with me when the plane was late.

wait on To serve someone

They were waited on at the 5 star hotel.

wait up To wait for someone or something before leaving

Hey Jack, wait up I will be there in a few minutes.

Verb: max maxed maxed

max out To take to the extreme (usually in a financial context)

He maxed out on his credit card.

Verb: marry married married

marry into To marry into a group or a clan

He did not realize he was marrying into a clan.

marry off To find a partner for a son or daughter (usually a good marriage)

They married off their son.

Verb: edge edged edged

edge out To overtake slowly

They edged out the competition with the new product.

edge up To approach closely and slowly

He edged up to the curve in his car.

Verb: think thought thought

think over To carefully go over something

He thought over the problem and decided to take action.

think through To consider all the possibilities

He thought through the project and began.

think up To create

He thought up the story.

Verb: wash washed washed

wash up When someone is finished (a mistake)

He was washed up when the stock exchange crashed.

wash up To clean up

They washed up the dishes after the dinner.

washed out When water had destroyed something



The road was washed out by the flood.

wash down To drink something accompanying food

He washed the food down with a glass of water.

Verb: ask asked asked

ask around To ask a number of people for information or help

Did you ask around for help?

ask for it To provoke a negative reaction

He was asking for it. He was fired.

ask for To request to have or to be given

Did you ask for it?

ask in To invite somebody into your house

I asked the neighbour in for coffee.

ask over To invite over to where you are or where you will be (compared to ask in)

I asked him over to my office.

Verb: take took taken

take after To look like, resemble

She takes after Jack.

take apart To break down into fundamental pieces

I took the project apart to find out where the problem was.

take aside To get someone alone to talk to them

The boss took me aside last week to explain my promotion.

take away To remove

The waitress took the plate away.

take back To retract a statement, admit that something was wrong

Steve took back what he said about the supplier.

take down To make notes or write down in full

Do you take notes in meetings?

take in To absorb information

Can you take a meeting in when it is in Spanish?

take it To accept criticism

You have to tell him the bad news. Anyways he can take it.

take out on To abuse someone because you're angry

I think the boss was taking his frustration out on the team.

take off To make great progress

That project is really taking off.

take on To assume responsibility

I took on the new job responsibilities.

take out To borrow a library book or to get money from a bank or bank machine

Do you take out a book from the library?

take over To assume control of a company or organization

The company was taken over.

take through To explain something to someone

Will you take me through the project?

take to To enjoy and appreciate

He is really taking to his job.

take up To start a new hobby, pastime, etc
Have you taken up golf?

Verb: **end ended ended**

end up The final position or place
He ended up in first place after the race.

end in The conclusion (figurative)
The project ended in disaster.

Verb: **open opened opened**

open up To relax and communicate
He opened after a while. He was insecure in the beginning.

open to To be receptive to an idea
He was open to opinions.

open onto To have a view
The window opens onto a street.

Verb: **go went gone**

go over To review such as a document
I went over the document with my colleague.

go at it To fight or to attack something
They really went at it during the meeting.

go on To not stop talking (too much) talkative
He went on for hours about the problem.

Verb **run ran run**

run across Meet or find accidentally
I ran across Jack last week.

run after Chase, pursue
I am running after the courier because I forgot to give him a book.

run around Be very busy doing many things (not important)
Will you be around tomorrow?

run away Escape from people chasing you
He ran away from the bill collector.

run down Lose energy or power
The new employee seemed a little run down after the first week.

run for Campaign for a position
Would you like to run for president of the association?

run into Meet by accident
I ran into Paul at the trade show.

run on Be powered by (like a phone runs on batteries)
What does your phone run on?

run out of Have none left (like running out of fuel)
I have run out of ideas.

run through To rehearse a situation
Can we run through the presentation?

Verb **read read read**

read off To read a list
He read off the names for the new team.



read out To read out loud

He read out the announcement.

read out loud Read aloud rather than silently

Reading out loud is the best way to learn English.

read up on To check information

He read up on his subject before the exam.

Verb pass passed passed

pass around (pass round) Give out to everybody there

I passed around the documents at the presentation.

pass out To distribute

He passed out the report at the presentation.

pass by Visit briefly

Did the manager pass by the other day?

pass down Transmit information or give property to younger generations

My parents passed down my eating habits. I love French food.

pass on Give a message to someone

Can you pass on the news to Jack. I think it is important.

pass out Faint, lose consciousness

The tennis player passed out from fatigue.

pass over To be ignored for something

I was passed over for the job.

pass up Decline a chance

I passed up the invitation for the party.

Provide Provide provided provided

Provide with To supply with something

Can you provide me with the details.

Provide for To be responsible (usually financially)

He has to provide for his family.

Expressions Part 2

Expressions

All languages have their expressions. It is one of the most sophisticated forms of communication. Try to learn three of these expressions every week.

Middle of nowhere If someone says that they are in the middle of nowhere, they mean that they are not sure where they are.

We are lost we are in the middle of nowhere. We better get a GPS.

Off the wall If it is not conservative it is off the wall.

The new art exhibit is really off the wall.

(to get) on my back If someone is on your back they are bothering you.

My clients are really on my back. We have been having problems with one of our products.

Play by ear If you do not prepare you play by ear (improvise).

We should play that project by ear. Let's find out what happens when we get there.

A can of worms A lot of potential problems.

That project is a can of worms. Do you really think we should do it?

Over the top When something is over the top it is exaggerated.

The art exhibit was over the top. It was too extreme for my taste.

To go over someone's head If something goes over your head, it is too complex or difficult for you to understand.

The meeting went over the new employee's head.

Play hardball Someone plays hardball if they are serious (the term comes from American baseball – soft ball and hard ball).

I think the lawyer is playing hardball with us. He wants to get everything.

Put on ice To put something on ice is to delay a project or plans indefinitely.

The new building project has been put on ice.

Teeny-weeny If something is teeny-weeny, it is very small. ('Teeny-weeny' and 'teensie-weensie' are also used).

That smart phone is teeny-weeny. It can fit into your pocket.

Fish out of water If you are placed in a situation that is completely new to you and confuses you, you are like a fish out of water.

He is like a fish out of water with computers. Someone should help him.

Game plan A game plan is a strategy like for sports

The game plan was to launch a huge marketing project.

Go bananas If you go bananas, you are wild with excitement, anxiety, or worry.

The public went bananas over the superstar. Everybody was yelling.

To shoot yourself in the foot. To do something where you thought it had a positive impact but it turns out to be the opposite.

He shot himself in the foot when he presented the competition to the client.

All ears If you are all ears you are listening closely.

He was all ears at the meeting. He really wanted to know if we had a good solution.

On the dot If you arrive at 7 on the dot you are arriving at 7 exactly.



The meeting begins at 7 on the dot. The team doesn't like it if we are late.

To have/get a hot potato (to pass on a hot potato)

A hot potato is a subject or situation that is a problem.

The budget is a hot potato. Everyone seems to be passing it on.

Eat like a bird If someone eats like a bird, they eat very little.

After the big lunch she is like a bird at dinner.

Eat like a horse Someone who eats like a horse, eats a lot.

I was hungry last night, so I ate like a horse.

Give me a break This means to not be so demanding with someone or something.

We should give him a break. He has been under a lot of pressure.

To get a good bang for your buck Good value or a great deal.

We get a good bang for our buck at that restaurant.

Money laundering To clean dirty money

The bank has to be careful with money laundering.

Put your foot down When someone puts their foot down, they make a firm stand and establish their authority on an issue.

I had to put my foot down on the issue. It was going too far.

My hands are tied If your hands are tied, you are unable to act for some reason.

My hands are tied on the project. I am following orders from someone else.

Set the stage (set set set) If you create the conditions for something to happen or take place, you set the stage for it.

She has to set the stage for the new product release.

A lot on my plate If you have got a lot on your plate, you are very busy and have commitments.

She wants me to do the project but I feel I have a lot on my plate.

Play on words To have a double meaning.

She likes to play on words. She is funny.

Make it snappy To do something quickly.

My boss wants me to make it snappy. The project is due the day after tomorrow.

No pain no gain Without some effort there will be no results.

You will have to work on your presentation to get the funding. Remember no pain no gain.

To keep tabs To watch closely and to know what's going on.

He was keeping tabs on the new employee.

Go the extra mile To do extra work.

He went the extra mile and got the contract.

Steal the show (steal stole stolen) to get most of the attention and praise
She stole the show at the presentation.

Hush-hush Confidential. Something not talked about.

They were hush-hush about the project.

On the same page If people are on the same page, they have the same information and are thinking the same way.

Can you read the article before we have a meeting? I just want to make sure we are on the same page.

Knock 'em dead 'Knock 'em dead' (pronounced nock) is used as a way of wishing someone luck before they give a performance or have to appear before people, as in an interview, etc. ('em = them).

Just before I went for the job interview my friend said knock 'em dead.

To have the upper hand If you have the upper hand, you have the advantage.

They had the upper hand in the negotiation. They knew what the competition was offering.

Nothing to write home about Something that is not special or exciting is nothing to write home about.

Steve stayed home and read his book all weekend long. His weekend was really nothing to write home about.

To have get up and go If someone has lots of get up and go, they have lots of enthusiasm and energy.

To be a sales person you have to have a lot of get up and go. It often requires a lot of travel.

To get a raw deal If you get a raw deal, you are treated unfairly.

Sally got a raw deal. She didn't get the promotion she deserved.

Run the show If someone runs the show, they like to be in control and make all the decisions.

The CEO was running the show with the company.

To be at a loss If you are at a loss, you do not know what to say or do

Jack was at a loss. He was supposed to develop the project but couldn't.

To be at odds If you are at odds with someone, you cannot agree with them.

They were at odds for the project plan. They could not agree.

Practical joke A practical joke is a fun joke that can surprise someone.

That was a practical joke. They send an email to the entire company from his computer.

Pull rank A person of higher position or in authority pulls rank, when he or she exercises his/her authority, generally ending any discussion and ignoring other people's view.

Jack pulled rank and said the decision was made.

To hammer out a deal To work hard with many differences to come up with a deal.

They spend the whole week hammering out a deal.

Off the cuff An impromptu thought or statement (not thought out).

He said that off the cuff. He was not thinking.

No Sweat No Sweat means something is easy. For example, "This contest is just no sweat." meaning "This contest is just easy."

The project was no sweat. We finished on time.

Nail biter If a game, election, contest, etc, is a nail-biter, it is exciting.

because the competitors are so close that it is impossible to predict the result

The tennis game was a nail biter.

No dice No dice is a way of refusing to accept or agree to something.

I said no dice to the offer. It was too low.

No laughing matter something that is no laughing matter is very serious.

The situation for the project is no laughing matter.

It stinks (stink stank stunk) It stinks if it is a really bad idea, situation, experience, proposal or offer.

The movie stunk.

Slowly but surely Steady progress.

They wanted to progress slowly but surely.

On the brink of Ready to begin.



They were on the brink of bankruptcy.

I am Ok with that (also spelled Okay) To agree.

The boss said that he was Ok with that.

Spill the beans To tell confidential information

He spilled the beans at the meeting by telling everyone about the problems.

They were surprised.

To out manoeuvre To have a better strategy (a military term).

They out manoeuvred the competition and took over the market.

To be made redundant To have two people do the job so one has to go (the same as to be lay off).

He was made redundant after the project was over. He had to find a new job.

To have a profound impact When someone or something has a strong impact on a situation.

The new boss had a profound impact on the organization. She made it grow.

Food for thought A source of information or an idea that stimulates thought

The article was food for thought. It gave me many ideas.

Self-fulfilling prophesy When you think about something extraordinary and it happens.

Asking for the raise was a self-fulfilling prophecy. He had been thinking about it for weeks.

Twofold There are two steps in a process (you can say threefold, fourfold etc).

There were twofold steps in the project. One part marketing, one part Human Resources.

A word of caution Be careful.

A word of caution. Do not quit your job before you have another one.

N/A Not Available or Not Applicable (for statistics).

The report said the data was N/A or not available.

To think out of the box To think differently from the status quo.

They really should be thinking out of the box for this. All of our ideas are not working.

To take for a ride To deceive someone (like taking someone where they do not want to go).

He really took the client for a ride. He gave them a solution they didn't need

Keep your chin up To be in a good mood even though the situation might not be great (to stay optimistic).

Just before the difficult meeting my colleague told me to keep my chin up.

The ball is in your court The decision is yours.

I told my boss what I thought. Now the ball is in her court. She said she will decide later.

Murphy's Law Generally meaning "if anything can go wrong, it will".

"The laptop broke before the presentation. It was Murphy's Law."

And so on and so forth Etcetera.

During the presentation he gave examples, statistics, charts and so on and so forth.

To bring to your attention To let you know.

I brought the problem to my boss' attention.

To be in the loop To be aware through communication.

She is in the loop. You should ask her.

To take the plunge To commit to something risky knowing there is a risk of

failure

He took the plunge and signed on for the project.

Eyes glazed over To not pay attention when someone is talking.

His eyes were glazing over during the presentation.

To take the heat To take the criticism for a failed situation.

He took the heat when there were problems. He had to fix them.

Talk is cheap It is easier to say than to do (to talk but not to do).

He said he could do the project without any problems. Talk is cheap.

To dust off To consult with something old (like a document or book).

We had better dust off the first contracts. I think there is going to be a law suit.

Tit for tat If you have done something superficially not nice I will do something back (revenge).

It was tit for tat. He was late for the meeting so I left early.

He is chicken To be scared to do something (you can also say a person is a chicken).

He was chicken so he did not apply for the new job.

To cave in A failed situation (also to cave).

They tried to complete the project but it caved in when the software failed.

Chalk it up To consider it an experience (chalk chalked chalked) (to acknowledge as a failed experience).

They chalked it up the bad deal up to experience. They want to learn but not go through it again.

To want it done yesterday It is due ASAP.

My boss wanted it done yesterday.

A late bloomer When someone does not obtain success with their interests, talents, or personality until later in their lives, we say they are a late bloomer.

She was a late bloomer. It took her a few years to become good at sales.

To trump To have a win all solution (used for playing cards).

The company trumped us with the offer. They had the best price. We couldn't beat them.

Real trouper Someone who is a real team player and does good work

A real trouper is someone who will fight for what they believe in and doesn't give up easily. (People often use 'Real trooper' as the two words sound the same.).

We should hire her. She is a real trouper.

Necessity is the mother of invention When you need something you will invent it out of necessity.

They came up with a solution after the problem. Necessity is the mother of invention.

Neck and neck Even at the end of a race.

The two politicians were neck and neck up to the election.

Have a ball To have a great time.

They had a ball on their vacation.

A picture is worth a thousand words A picture says more than words.

She uses pictures for her presentation. She thinks a picture is worth a thousand words.

Pass the buck To not take responsibility.

The manager was passing the buck for the failed project.

Get a good bang for your buck To get good value.



He got a good bang for his buck when he bought the computer.

Keep your fingers crossed To hope for good luck.

She kept her fingers crossed after the job interview.

Know the ropes To understand how something works.

She knows the ropes. She should do the project.

To pull an all nighter (To have an all nighter). To stay up all night either for fun or to work.

I pulled an all nighter for the client.

Take the rap To take the blame for something (even if not entirely responsible).

He took the rap for the problem. He was the boss and his team member made the mistake.

Break the bank Bankrupt (when there is no more money).

The bad contract broke the bank for the company. They had to declare bankruptcy.

(it goes) In one ear out the other When someone is not listening it goes in one ear out the other.

That comment went in one ear out the other.

Weak link The most vulnerable part of a team or a project (the weakest part)

She is the weak link in the project.

To move the needle To have an impact.

That marketing program moved the needle.

To test the waters To check a situation to see if it works. To see how an idea will float.

They tested the waters to see if it would work.

Sitting on the fence Someone who is undecided and not committed is sitting on a fence.

The project manager was sitting on the fence as far as the team selection was concerned and was not able to move the project ahead.

Money laundering Illegal money.

The bank was laundering money.

A piece of work someone who is interesting but can be hard to get along with.

She is great at her job but she is a piece of work.

To go over with fine tooth comb To examine very closely (like to comb your hair precisely).

We went over the report with a fine tooth comb.

Have haves and have nots People who do not have (there are haves and have nots).

There are haves and have nots. They are have nots.

A fall guy The person who takes the blame for a problem but who is not necessarily responsible.

Jack was the fall guy on the project after it failed.

Off the beaten path A way not often taken.

He decided to go off the beaten path for the trip.

Cross the line To go past a marked point with consequences (to have limits)

She crossed the line when she asked for a raise.

To have an ax to grind (axe UK) To have an argument that you take up with a person (to confront).

He had an ax to grind with his employer.

The king's ransom A lot of money (as much as the king).

They want the king's ransom for the project.

Nerves of steel If someone has nerves of steel, they do not get scared under pressure.

You have to have nerves of steel to work as a politician.

To put on the backburner If an issue is put on the back burner it is low priority.

The project was not important so they put it on the back burner.

To get out of hand If it is out of hand it is out of control.

The meeting got out of hand. Nothing was accomplished.

Under the weather If you are feeling a bit ill, or have a lack energy, you are under the weather.

Everyone was under the weather at work last week.

You're toast When someone or something is finished.

He was toast after the bad presentation. He had to start to look for a new job.

To tell a white lie If you tell a white lie you tell an innocent lie (like to a child) He said Santa Clause exists. It was a white lie.

The whole shebang When you include everything it is the whole shebang (everything).

He did not want to do the project because he knew he would have to do the whole shebang.

Hot under the collar To be irritated or angry.

He was hot under the collar when they had the meeting.

Jack of all trades (also a Jill of all trades) Someone who can do many different things.

He can fix computers, program and consult. He is a Jack of all trades.

Hard sell When someone uses a lot of pressure to sell something (like a car sales person).

He used a hard sell technique to sell the product. It was aggressive.

Soft sell When an indirect sales technique is used (Nike just uses a logo for a soft sell).

The sales team recommends to soft sell to their clients. They think a hard sell won't work.

Like clockwork Everything is on time and running smoothly.

The train system works like clockwork.

Lock horns To fight with someone.

I locked horns with my boss yesterday.

Picture perfect When a situation is perfect either in experience or image

The hotel was picture perfect. He had a great holiday.

Pull the plug To stop a project abruptly (Like turning off a light with the plug)

They decided to pull the plug on the project after several years of failure. It was stopped immediately.

Nip at the heels Someone or something that is very close in a competition

The competition was nipping at the heels of the market leader in the sector.

7 figure salary More than one million in salary or revenue (usually when talking about revenue).

He earns a seven-figure salary.

Eye candy Attractive and beautiful to look at.

The magazine has lots of eye candy images. It is really attractive.

Spread yourself too thin To do too many things at the same time.

He was spreading himself too thin when he took on the new project.



One off A one off event only happens once and will not be repeated
That was a one off consulting project.

Call the shots To make the decisions is to call the shots.
She calls the shots at the company.

Miss the boat You miss the boat if you miss an opportunity.
If you do not update your technology you will miss the boat.

Money to burn To have a lot of extra money.
They are rich if they have money to burn.
Goggle has money to burn.

Long weekend When you have an extra day on the weekend.
There are a few long weekends in May.

To cram to squeeze a lot of work into a short amount of time.
He had to cram for the exams at school.

A straight shooter someone who is honest and their dealings.
I like to work with John, he's a straight shooter.

To fork out to pay for something.
She forked out \$100 for the tickets.

Jump of the page When something you're reading stands out exceptionally.
The grammar mistake really jumped off the page.

Pull up your sleeves To get ready to do some hard work.
The team had to pull up its sleeves for the project.

The dust settle To wait for things to return to normal.
They decided to wait to make a decision after the dust settled.

Piece of cake It is easy.
That project was a piece of cake.

Pep talk Motivating people.
The boss gave the team a pep talk.

Cash cow A very profitable client or situation.
Something that makes a lot of easy money is a cash cow.
The new product became a cash cow.

Nitty gritty To do the nitty gritty is to do the details.
The team had to do the nitty gritty.

Nuts and bolts You know the essentials and basics when you understand the nuts and bolts.
He knows about the nuts and bolts of databases.

Head on To attack directly.
We have to deal with the problem head on.

Calm before the storm The calm period before a lot of activity.
The phone was not ringing. They knew it was the calm before the storm.

Carrot and stick Different forms of motivation are the carrot and stick.
They preferred the carrot compared to the stick approach for their teams.

Mom and pop A mom and pop business is a small business, especially if it is run by members of a family. It can be used in a wider sense to mean that something is small scale.
They run a mom and pop operation.

Top brass In the army or in other organizations, the top brass are the people in the highest positions.
The meeting was with the top brass.

Chase your tail If you work and are not productive you are chasing your tail.
I feel like I have been chasing my tail lately.

Child's play If it is easy it is child's play.
That project is child's play. Anyone can do it.

Close call If you have nearly had a major problem it is a close call.
We nearly lost the contract. That was a close call.

Buckle down To get ready for a challenging task.
They had to buckle down for the project.

Time flies Times moves quickly.
Time flies when you are having fun.

Double edged sword (pronounced sord) There are both advantages and disadvantages.
The new contract was a double edged sword. We sold a lot but we were losing money.

To ride a/the wave (ride rode ridden) To take advantage of a momentum.
They rode the wave of the new government policy and signed many new contracts.

Don't mention it Thank you or you are welcome.
Thanks for helping out. Don't mention it.

To be above board To be honest or to be transparent.
He was above board with the financial position of the company.

No strings attached To not have any hidden plans.
The contract show that there were no strings attached.

Deep pockets To be rich
They have deep pockets. We should talk to them.

To put your foot in your mouth To say something stupid.
He put his foot in his mouth when he told them about the problem.

To be all square All is accounted for (usually money).
At the end of the deal they agreed that they were all square.

Not my cup of tea To not be interested in something.
He said HR was not his cup of tea.

To dig your heels in (dig dug dug) To resist an idea.
They dug their heels in at the contract negotiation.

As a rule Generally practiced
As a rule I try to complete the projects on time.

Live wire Someone with nervous physical and mental energy
He is a real live wire. He gets upset easily.

To be dead wrong Completely wrong.
They were dead wrong in their projections. The project was a massive failure.

In the nick of time When you do something the last minute.
He completed his taxes in the nick of time.

Just in case To be sure.
Just in case I have brought all the documents for the presentation.

Need no introduction Someone who is well known.
The new project manager needed no introduction.

Win win The term win win refers to a situation or proposition where both or all parties benefit from the outcome.
Both the supplier and the dealer wanted a win win situation.

To play with fire To take a risk.
They were playing with fire and went bankrupt.

To put the cart before the horse To not have things in the right order.



They really put the cart before the horse when they bought the company before they had a loan.

To put your best foot forward To do your best.

To succeed in a good school you have to put your best foot forward.

A Ok When something is better than Ok.

The project is A OK. We signed the contract last week.

(to get) A steal (steal stole stolen) A great deal or a bargain

He bought the car because it was a steal.

A page turner A great book.

That book is a page turner.

(to be) Up for grabs When there is an opportunity to get something

The project is up for grabs. It is completely open.

A thing of the past It is over.

Writing letter is a thing of the past.

Nothing short of As good as + superlative or superlative idea

The project was nothing short of fantastic.

Act of God When a situation is out of control and is destructive like a war a strike it is an Act of God (Used for contracts).

The contract did not cover the Act of God clause

Iron(s) in the fire Several projects on the go

He has several irons in the fire. He is busy.

(to be) bumped up To go up a grade when travelling

He was bumped up to business class for the flight.

Have the floor When someone is given a chance to speak (officially)

After a long debate, he was given the floor.

Zip your lip To be discrete.

He was told to zip his lip during the meeting.

Under fire To be under pressure.

They were under fire in the project. They had to get it finished.

To go to bat To do a high risk activity and be the key influencer

He went to bat for me at the sales presentation.

From top to bottom to know everything about something

She knows programming from top to bottom.

gather dust Something not being used.

That old computer is gathering dust.

In the red When there is a negative accounting balance.

The company was in trouble. They were in the red.

In the black When there is a positive accounting balance.

We were happy to be in the black after a year like that.

The ins and outs. Knowing how something functions.

I was learning about the ins and outs of the business.

To waste your breath There is no use in trying to convince someone.

You are wasting your breath with her she has already decided to go.

A shot in the dark Luck or not you do not know.

That project is a real shot in the dark. It may or may not work.

To have a hot button A sensitive subject that creates a negative reaction

He knows that the budget was a hot button.

Keep your eye on the ball To stay in the game.

He told his colleague to keep his eye on the ball at work.

To keep posted To keep someone up to date with information

He needed to have an answer but no decision was made. His colleague said he would keep him posted.

In an instant Very soon. Right away.

I will be back in an instant.

Down and out To have really bad luck.

He was down and out. He needed some help.

Hit the road To leave, to travel.

He hit the road at 7 AM and was at the airport by 9 AM.

Lose your shirt To lose everything.

He lost his shirt on the stock exchange.

Lion's share To have a big portion.

When they gave out the rewards he got the lion's share.

Hit the mark (hit hit hit) When something is really right on. Well done. Precise.

He really hit the mark with his presentation.

Off the hook to not be responsible (or on the hook) to be responsible.

If someone is off the hook, they have avoided punishment or criticism for something they have done.

He was off the hook for the failed project.

To have ace in the hole Like the card, an ace in the hole creates advantage when needed without others knowing.

He has an ace in the hole if needed for the negotiation.

Hear a pin drop When it's very quiet.

It was so quiet you could hear a pin drop.

Rock the boat To upset.

He really rocked the boat when he talked about the problems in the office.

A1 It is the best if it is A1.

They are A1 suppliers. You should use them.

Level playing field Fair to all parties concerned in negotiation.

He felt that the company was not on a level playing field with the client.

To jump the gun When you begin too soon.

He jumped the gun at the presentation and gave too much information.

Above par Better than average or normal.

Their performance is above par.

Get off the ground To begin.

The company was just getting off the ground.

To run around To do a lot of things (unimportant).

I had to run around for my boss last week.

AKA Also Known As. A pseudonym.

This is Jack AKA the genius.

Flat out Full speed.

I went flat out at work last week. I had a lot of things to get done.

Run before you can walk To skip steps in a process.

He wanted to run the company. He had no experience. He was trying to run before he could walk.

Achilles' heel A person's weak spot is their Achilles' heel.

His Achilles' heel is that he talks too much. Someone should tell him.

(to go Dutch) a Dutch treat When each person pays their own share of the bill at a restaurant.

We can go to the restaurant tonight but it will be Dutch treat.



Word of mouth When people are talking about something and recommending it (like a buzz).

The computer company was growing quickly through word of mouth.

Rule of thumb A general rule (Something you do regularly).

The rule of thumb is to behave as the others.

When in Rome do as the Romans You should do the same.

What should I eat in New York? When in Rome do as the Romans.

You can say that again I completely agree.

I think the project is very difficult. You can say that again.

Bean counter. An accountant (Pejorative).

The bean counters prepare the profit and loss statements.

Beat around the bush To avoid a topic. To not be direct.

To avoid telling his boss the truth, he beat around the bush.

Free-for-all A confrontation during a meeting with everyone.

There was a free-for-all at the office yesterday. Everybody was upset and arguing.

Slow off the mark Slow to respond or act in a situation.

Jack was slow off the mark getting the report out.

To make it tick How it works (a watch ticks – the sound a watch makes)

What makes you tick?

(to be) Slave driver Someone works you very hard, often with unreal expectations

My boss can be a slave driver sometimes.

Take it up a notch You increase the effort or intensity exerted in a situation.

The team will be taking it up a notch because they have to put the system into production.

Hand to mouth You spend the money you earn immediately.

After a difficult few months they had to leave hand to mouth.

Pay peanuts (it costs peanut) If some is paid peanuts, their salary is very low.

I paid peanuts for that new cell phone.

All over the place If something is completely disorganized or confused, it is all over the place.

The last project I worked on was all over the place.

To keep up with the Joneses People who try to keep up with the Joneses are competitive about material possessions and always try to have the latest and best things.

They just bought a new big screen TV I think they're keeping up with the Joneses.

To pick up the pace To speed things up.

We are picking up the pace at work.

To spring to mind If something springs to mind, it appears suddenly and unexpectedly in your thoughts.

What springs to mind when I say vacation?

State of the art If something is state of the art, it is the most up-to-date. model incorporating the latest and best technology.

Their new solution will be state-of-the-art.

From/of all stripes Diverse make up of a team.

They need people of all stripes to make up the team.

To tackle a problem To meet and solve a challenge.

They had to tackle the budget.

To read between the lines When you see what is behind what is being communicated.

She could read between the lines in the CV. She thought he would be a good candidate.

To step up To take responsibility and to take charge

He stepped up and did the presentation.

Slam dunk An easy win.

That presentation was a slam dunk.

Snail mail Old style mail.

She sent the letter by snail mail.

Single handed To do something alone.

She did the project single handed.

Ivy league Top schools.

She is going to an Ivy League school.

Sink-or-swim to succeed or not either way you will try.

He was in a sink or swim situation. He knows he had no choice.

Honeymoon Period of celebration.

The CEO was still in her honeymoon period.

On boarding Brining a new person into a team.

They on boarded the manager.

Shell out To pay for.

They shelled out a fortune for the company.

Kick a habit To stop doing something you do regularly

He kick the smoking habit.

On the blink When something is breaking down.

(UK) Is a machine is on the blink, it isn't working properly or is out of order.

On a roll When things are going well.

If you're on a roll, you're moving from success to success.

Knock on wood For good luck. (pronounced nok)

I hope to get that promotion. Knock on wood.

Run before you can walk To skip steps in a process.

He wanted to run the company. He had no experience. He was trying to run before he could walk.

To run around To do a lot of things.

I had to run around for my boss last week.

Rock the boat To disturb.

He really rocked the boat when he talked about the problems in the office.

Gift of the gab To speak well.

He really has the gift of the gab. He convinced the client to sign the contract.

AWOL Absence Without Leave (a military expression – also AWL).

They went AWOL for the weekend and went hiking.

If it aint (isn't broken) broke, don't fix it. There is no point in improving on a system that works.

He wanted to improve the information flow in the office but his boss said if it aint broke don't fix it.

Long shot There is little chance of success. It is not likely.

They thought it would be a long shot to get the contract but they tried anyways.

In a flash When something happens very quickly.



I will be back in a flash. Give me a few minutes.

Lose your shirt To lose everything.

He lost his shirt on the stock exchange. He had nothing left.

In a nutshell To summarize.

After a complicated explanation, his boss said "In a nutshell I think we should start the project."

Left holding the bag When you are responsible.

He was left holding the bag when the audit found the accounts short.

To keep posted To keep up to date with information.

He needed to have an answer but no decision was made. His colleague said he would keep him posted.

Knock on wood Used for good luck.

Everything should be fine if we are careful, knock on wood.

To be a fan of To support.

He is a jazz fan. He goes up to many concerts.

Fair and square To be honest.

They won fair and square. It was a tough competition but they did well.

Your call You make the decision.

The decision was the CEO's call. She is the boss.

Wake up call An incident that is a warning.

The disaster last week is a wakeup call for our safety procedures.

Flat out When you give a maximum effort.

They went flat out to meet the project objective.

No ifs or buts No excuses.

His boss always says 'there're no ifs or buts'. He just wants results.

Off the shelf A product that can be used immediately.

They bought off the shelf solutions. they didn't want any customization.

Create a buzz To get everyone to talk about something.

They wanted to create a buzz around the new product.

It sucks It is no good.

They thought the new movie sucked.

Bankable It is a good investment.

That is a good company and they are bankable.

To lose it To lose control.

He lost it at the presentation. he wasn't able to finish.

The lion's share To get the majority of something.

The CEO got the lion's share of the bonuses.

A bit much If something is excessive or annoying, it is a bit much.

I think that presentation was a bit much. Nobody really believed what she was saying.

About face If someone changes their mind completely, this is an about face. It can be used when companies, governments, etc., change their position on an issue.

They did an about face and decided to move ahead with the project.

All bets are off (USA) If all bets are off, then agreements that have been made no longer apply.

All bets were off after the disastrous meeting.

All the rage If something's all the rage, it is very popular or fashionable at the moment.

The new restaurant is all the rage. Everyone wants to go.

Arm and a leg If something costs an arm and a leg, it is very expensive.
That car cost an arm and leg.

Ride high When things are going well you are riding high.
She is riding high after the job promotion.

Run something into the ground To not take care of something so it doesn't work is to run it into the ground.

We finally got a new computer after we ran the old one into the ground.

Quiet as a mouse To be very quiet is to be very quiet
She is as quiet as a mouse. She doesn't make any noise.

Rags to riches To go from being poor to rich is going from rags to riches.
They went from rags to riches. They have nothing in the beginning and now they're doing very well.

Red tape When there is bureaucratic interference there is red tape. This is a negative term.

There is a lot of red tape in that project. We have to make sure all the paperwork is ready.

Part and parcel If something is part of an activity it is part and parcel.
I don't like prospecting for new clients although it is part and parcel of my job.

Pay your dues To have to earn your position by paying your dues. Doing the dirty work.

He has paid his dues. He is going to be promoted.

On the house If it is free it is on the house.

We got drinks on the house. We didn't have to pay.

Out and about If you are out doing things you can be out and about.
They are out and about today. They're doing all kinds of things.

Off the record It is not official.

Off the record I want you to know that I support your idea.

Oh, my goodness! When you are surprised you say 'Oh my goodness'.
Oh my goodness I think I forgot my computer.

Cold feet If you no longer want to do something (usually significant) you get cold feet.

I wanted to start a company. I got cold feet and decided to wait.

Crack of dawn First thing in the morning.

We are leaving early tomorrow. We leave at the crack of dawn.

Odds and ends Insignificant and random things are odds and ends.
The sale was over. There were just odds and ends left over.

Chase your tail When you are not making any progress.

She felt like she was chasing her tail. She wasn't able to make any sales.

Mover and shaker (plural – movers and shakers) Someone who has influence is a mover and shaker.

He met with the movers and shakers at the party. They were able to sign some contracts.

Make a mint If you make a lot of money you are making a mint.

We made a mint on the stock exchange. We have money to invest in other stocks.

Social Butterfly Someone who is really social.

She is a social butterfly. She gets along with everyone.

To not bat an eye (sometimes to not blink an eye) To not react.
She did not bat an eye at the proposal.

To rack up To get a significant result.



He has racked up a lot of frequent flyer miles.

Pecking order The order according to position (to peck is how a bird eats).
In the pecking order she was last so she could not present.

Seal of approval To support or agree to something.
The organization gave their seal of approval.

Blow out of proportion When something is made worse than it is.
My colleague blew the problem out of proportion.

Penny pincher someone who is careful with money.
They are penny pinchers with the budget.

Fork in the road When there is a choice to be made.
She felt like she had reached a fork in the road when she was offered a job.

Rude awakening When you discover a truth in a situation.
Finding the marketing problem was a rude awakening.

Mickey Mouse It is Mickey Mouse if it is not important and easy.
That is a Mickey Mouse job. Anybody can do it.

Last laugh After overcoming obstacles and succeeding you can have the last laugh.

The competition had the last laugh when the project failed. They didn't get the project but it didn't work.

Labor of love When you are doing work or tasks you love not considering the reward you can say it is a labour of love.

The project was a labor of love. She really put her heart into it.

Made of money If you spend a lot of money people might say that you are made of money.

Jack said he was not made of money after he was asked to pay.

Neither here nor there If something is neither here nor there, it is of very little importance.

I am neither here nor there about the decision.

To talk a mile a minute Someone who talks fast.
He talks a mile a minute. He is difficult to understand.

Hi flyer A person who has a lot of success.
Jack is a hi flyer. He just bought a new Mercedes.

No go Something that is not going to happen.
The presentation is a no go.

To watch grass grow An activity or action that is painfully slow and boring.
Watching baseball is like watching grass grow.

Pandora's box An issue or situation that reveals many problems.
Bringing up the software problem in the meeting opened Pandora's Box

Fair game Within the rules even though it might seem unfair.
Criticizing political opponents is fair game.

Make ends meet If somebody finds it hard to make ends meet, they have problems living on the money they earn.

The small business had to make ends meet so they decided to cut costs to meet the budget.

Rub shoulders When you meet influential people you rub shoulders.
They rubbed shoulder with the decision makers at the conference. They met lots of people.

To be a know it all Someone who thinks he/she knows everything.
He is a know it all. It is hard to work with him.

To have a blast To have a really good time.

They had a blast at the concert. It was fun.

To blow away To impress greatly (blow blew blown)

They were blown away by the fireworks.

To zero in on To focus on intensely (zero zeroed zeroed).

They had to zero in on the problem.

Lower (raise) the bar If the standards are too difficult you lower the bar to make it easier. (Raise the bar).

The department had to lower the bar after the bugs in the program. They decided to minimize the objectives.

Look on the bright side When something has gone wrong looking on the bright side means looking in a positive way.

After they lost the bid, the manager said look at the bright side. We got the other contract.

Look after / out for number 1 Doing things in your own interest.

You should look out for number one when you consider your career progress.

Sore loser Someone who is upset when he/she loses.

She really gets upset when she loses a tennis game. She is a sore loser.

Day in day out The daily routine which can be boring.

My day in day out is not always fun.

Make my day If something makes your day, it satisfies you or makes you happy.

That compliment from the client really made my day.

To take to the cleaners To take everything.

They were taken to the cleaners by the partner. They had nothing left.

On the tip of my tongue You can just not remember something.

The answer to the question was on the tip of my tongue. I just could not remember it.

Out of bounds When something is not following the rules.

The comment about his tie was out of bounds. It is not relevant to the results.

Below the belt To be unfair.

He really hit below the belt. He was unfair.

To get my bearings To know where you are (figurative or physical)

I had to get my bearings at the new company.

Mess around To play around.

I messed around with my buddies this weekend. We had fun.

To pull the wool over your eyes To fool someone.

He tried to pull the wool over the eyes of the client. He did not tell him about the problem with the product.

Wishy washy Not clear.

He was wishy washy about what he wanted for the project. He was not clear.

Spinning your wheels To not be advancing.

We were spinning our wheels on the project.

Out on a limb To take a risk.

They went out on a limb with the proposal.

To have your back To protect someone.

I know he would defend me in the meeting. He had my back.

