List of idioms and Phrases

An idiom is a phrase where the words together have a meaning that is different from the dictionary definitions of the individual words.

A Bird In The Hand Is Worth Two In The Bush:
Having something that is certain is much better than taking a risk for more, because chances are you might lose everything.

A Blessing In Disguise:
Something good that isn't recognized at first.

A Chip On Your Shoulder:
Being upset for something that happened in the past.

A Dime A Dozen:
Anything that is common and easy to get.

A Doubting Thomas:
A skeptic who needs physical or personal evidence in order to believe something.

A Drop in the Bucket:
A very small part of something big or whole.

A Fool And His Money Are Easily Parted:
It's easy for a foolish person to lose his/her money.

A House Divided Against Itself Cannot Stand:
Everyone involved must unify and function together or it will not work out.

A Leopard Can't Change His Spots:
You cannot change who you are.

A Penny Saved Is A Penny Earned:
By not spending money, you are saving money (little by little).

A Picture Paints a Thousand Words:
A visual presentation is far more descriptive than words.

A Piece of Cake:
A task that can be accomplished very easily.
A Slap on the Wrist:
A very mild punishment.

A Taste Of Your Own Medicine:
When you are mistreated the same way you mistreat others.

A Toss-Up:
A result that is still unclear and can go either way.

Actions Speak Louder Than Words:
It’s better to actually do something than just talk about it.

Add Fuel To The Fire:
Whenever something is done to make a bad situation even worse than it is.

Against The Clock:
Rushed and short on time.

All Bark And No Bite:
When someone is threatening and/or aggressive but not willing to engage in a fight.

All Greek to me:
Meaningless and in comprehensible like someone who cannot read, speak, or understand any of the Greek language would be.

All In The Same Boat:
When everyone is facing the same challenges.

An Arm And A Leg:
Very expensive. A large amount of money.

An Axe To Grind:
To have a dispute with someone.

Apple of My Eye:
Someone who is cherished above all others.

As High As A Kite:
Anything that is high up in the sky.

At The Drop Of A Hat:
Willing to do something immediately.
**Back Seat Driver:**
People who criticize from the sidelines, much like someone giving unwanted advice from the back seat of a vehicle to the driver.

**Back To Square One:**
Having to start all over again.

**Back To The Drawing Board:**
When an attempt fails and it's time to start all over.

**Baker's Dozen:**
Thirteen.

**Barking Up The Wrong Tree:**
A mistake made in something you are trying to achieve.

**Beat A Dead Horse:**
To force an issue that has already ended.

**Beating Around The Bush:**
Avoiding the main topic. Not speaking directly about the issue.

**Bend Over Backwards:**
Do whatever it takes to help. Willing to do anything.

**Between A Rock And A Hard Place:**
Stuck between two very bad options.

**Bite Off More Than You Can Chew:**
To take on a task that is way too big.

**Bite Your Tongue:**
To avoid talking.

**Blood Is Thicker Than Water:**
The family bond is closer than anything else.

**Blue Moon:**
A rare event or occurrence.

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

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

**C**

**Can't Cut The Mustard :**
Someone who isn't adequate enough to compete or participate.

**Cast Iron Stomach:**
Someone who has no problems, complications or ill effects with eating anything or drinking anything.

**Charley Horse:**
Stiffness in the leg / A leg cramp.

**Chew someone out:**
Verbally scold someone.

**Chip on his Shoulder:**
Angry today about something that occurred in the past.

**Chow Down:**
To eat.

**Close but no Cigar:**
To be very near and almost accomplish a goal, but fall short.

**Cock and Bull Story:**
An unbelievable tale.

**Come Hell Or High Water:**
Any difficult situation or obstacle.

**Crack Someone Up:**
To make someone laugh.

**Cross Your Fingers:**
To hope that something happens the way you want it to.

**Cry Over Spilt Milk:**
When you complain about a loss from the past.
**Idioms and Phrases**

**Cry Wolf:**
Intentionally raise a false alarm.

**Cup Of Joe:**
A cup of coffee.

**Curiosity Killed The Cat:**
Being Inquisitive can lead you into a dangerous situation.

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

**Dark Horse:**
One who was previously unknown and is now prominent.

**Dead Ringer:**
100% identical. A duplicate.

**Devil's Advocate:**
Someone who takes a position for the sake of argument without believing in that particular side of the argument. It can also mean one who presents a counter argument for a position they do believe in, to another debater.

**Dog Days of Summer:**
The hottest days of the summer season.

**Don't count your chickens before they hatch:**
Don't rely on it until you're sure of it.

**Don't Look A Gift Horse In The Mouth:**
When someone gives you a gift, don't be ungrateful.

**Don't Put All Your Eggs In One Basket:**
Do not put all your resources in one possibility.

**Doozy:**
Something outstanding.

**Down To The Wire:**
Something that ends at the last minute or last few seconds.

**Drastic Times Call For Drastic Measures:**
When you are extremely desperate you need to take extremely desperate actions.

**Drink like a fish:**
To drink very heavily.

**Drive someone up the wall:**
To irritate and/or annoy very much.

**Dropping Like Flies:**
A large number of people either falling ill or dying.

**Dry Run:**
Rehearsal.

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

**Elvis has left the building:**
The show has come to an end. It's all over.

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

**Every Cloud Has A Silver Lining:**
Be optimistic, even difficult times will lead to better days.

**Everything But The Kitchen Sink:**
Almost everything and anything has been included.

**Excuse my French:**
Please forgive me for cussing.

**Cock and Bull Story:**
An unbelievable tale.

**Cock and Bull Story:**
An unbelievable tale.

**Feeding Frenzy:**
An aggressive attack on someone by a group.
Field Day:
An enjoyable day or circumstance.

Finding Your Feet:
To become more comfortable in whatever you are doing.

Finger lickin' good:
A very tasty food or meal.

Fixed In Your Ways:
Not willing or wanting to change from your normal way of doing something.

Flash In The Pan:
Something that shows potential or looks promising in the beginning but fails to deliver anything in the end.

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

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

Flip The Bird:
To raise your middle finger at someone.

Foam at the Mouth:
To be enraged and show it.

Fools' Gold:
Iron pyrites, a worthless rock that resembles real gold.

French Kiss:
An open mouth kiss where tongues touch.

From Rags To Riches:
To go from being very poor to being very wealthy.

Fuddy-duddy:
An old-fashioned and foolish type of person.

Full Monty:
This idiom can mean either, "the whole thing" or "completely nude".
Funny Farm:
A mental institutional facility.

Get Down to Brass Tacks:
To become serious about something.

Get Over It:
To move beyond something that is bothering you.

Get Up On The Wrong Side Of The Bed:
Someone who is having a horrible day.

Get Your Walking Papers:
Get fired from a job.

Give Him The Slip:
To get away from. To escape.

Go Down Like A Lead Balloon:
To be received badly by an audience.

Go For Broke:
To gamble everything you have.

Go Out On A Limb:
Put yourself in a tough position in order to support someone/something.

Go The Extra Mile:
Going above and beyond whatever is required for the task at hand.

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

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

Great Minds Think Alike:
Intelligent people think like each other.

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

**Gut Feeling:**
A personal intuition you get, especially when feel something may not be right.

**Haste Makes Waste:**
Quickly doing things results in a poor ending.

**Hat Trick:**
When one player scores three goals in the same hockey game. This idiom can also mean three scores in any other sport, such as 3 homeruns, 3 touchdowns, 3 soccer goals, etc.

**Have an Axe to Grind:**
To have a dispute with someone.

**He Lost His Head:**
Angry and overcome by emotions.

**Head Over Heels:**
Very excited and/or joyful, especially when in love.

**Hell in a Handbasket:**
Deteriorating and headed for complete disaster.

**High Five:**
Slapping palms above each others heads as celebration gesture.

**High on the Hog:**
Living in Luxury.

**Hit The Books:**
To study, especially for a test or exam.

**Hit The Hay:**
Go to bed or go to sleep.

**Hit The Nail on the Head:**
Do something exactly right or say something exactly right.

**Hit The Sack:**
Go to bed or go to sleep.
**Hocus Pocus:**
In general, a term used in magic or trickery.

**Hold Your Horses:**
Be patient.

**Icing On The Cake:**
When you already have it good and get something on top of what you already have.

**Idle Hands Are The Devil's Tools:**
You are more likely to get in trouble if you have nothing to do.

**If It's Not One Thing, It's Another:**
When one thing goes wrong, then another, and another...

**In Like Flynn:**
To be easily successful, especially when sexual or romantic.

**In The Bag:**
To have something secured.

**In The Buff:**
Nude.

**In The Heat Of The Moment:**
Overwhelmed by what is happening in the moment.

**In Your Face:**
An aggressive and bold confrontation.

**It Takes Two To Tango:**
A two person conflict where both people are at fault.

**It's A Small World:**
You frequently see the same people in different places.

**Its Anyone's Call:**
A competition where the outcome is difficult to judge or predict.

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

Jaywalk: Crossing the street (from the middle) without using the crosswalk.

Joshing Me: Tricking me.

Keep An Eye On Him: You should carefully watch him.

Keep body and soul together: To earn a sufficient amount of money in order to keep yourself alive.

Keep your chin up: To remain joyful in a tough situation.

Kick The Bucket: Die.

Kitty-corner: Diagonally across. Sometimes called Catty-Corner as well.

Knee Jerk Reaction: A quick and automatic response.

Knock On Wood: Knuckle tapping on wood in order to avoid some bad luck.

Know the Ropes: To understand the details.

Last but not least: An introduction phrase to let the audience know that the last person mentioned is no less important than those introduced before him/her.

Lend Me Your Ear: To politely ask for someone's full attention.
Let Bygones Be Bygones:
To forget about a disagreement or argument.

Let Sleeping Dogs Lie:
To avoid restarting a conflict.

Let The Cat Out Of The Bag:
To share a secret that wasn't suppose to be shared.

Level playing field:
A fair competition where no side has an advantage.

Like a chicken with its head cut off:
To act in a frenzied manner.

Liquor someone up:
To get someone drunk.

Long in the Tooth:
Old people (or horses).

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

Make No Bones About:
To state a fact so there are no doubts or objections.

Method To My Madness:
Strange or crazy actions that appear meaningless but in the end are done for a good reason.

Mumbo Jumbo:
Nonsense or meaningless speech.

Mum's the word:
To keep quiet. To say nothing.

Nest Egg:
Savings set aside for future use.
**Never Bite The Hand That Feeds You:**
Don't hurt anyone that helps you.

**New kid on the block:**
Someone new to the group or area.

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

**No Dice:**
To not agree. To not accept a proposition.

**No Room to Swing a Cat:**
An unusually small or confined space.

**Not Playing With a Full Deck:**
Someone who lacks intelligence.

**Off On The Wrong Foot:**
Getting a bad start on a relationship or task.

**Off The Hook:**
No longer have to deal with a tough situation.

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

**On Pins And Needles:**
Anxious or nervous, especially in anticipation of something.

**On The Fence:**
Undecided.

**On The Same Page:**
When multiple people all agree on the same thing.

**Out Of The Blue:**
Something that suddenly and unexpectedly occurs.

**Out On A Limb:**
When someone puts themself in a risky situation.
Out On The Town:
To enjoy yourself by going out.

Over My Dead Body:
When you absolutely will not allow something to happen.

Over the Top:
Very excessive.

Pass The Buck:
Avoid responsibility by giving it to someone else.

Pedal to the metal:
To go full speed, especially while driving a vehicle.

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

Pick up your ears:
To listen very carefully.

Pig In A Poke:
A deal that is made without first examining it.

Pig Out:
To eat alot and eat it quickly.

Pipe Down:
To shut-up or be quiet.

Practice Makes Perfect:
By constantly practicing, you will become better.

Pull the plug:
To stop something. To bring something to an end.

Pulling Your Leg:
Tricking someone as a joke.

Put a sock in it:
To tell noisy person or a group to be quiet.
Idioms and Phrases

**Q**

Queer the pitch:  
Destroy or ruin a plan.

**R**

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

Raining Cats and Dogs:  
A very loud and noisy rain storm.

Ring Fencing:  
Separate usual judgement to guarantee protection, especially project funds.

Rise and Shine:  
Time to get out of bed and get ready for work/school.

Rome Was Not Built In One Day:  
If you want something to be completely properly, then it’s going to take time.

Rule Of Thumb:  
A rough estimate.

Run out of steam:  
To be completely out of energy.

**S**

Saved By The Bell:  
Saved at the last possible moment.

Scapegoat:  
Someone else who takes the blame.

Scot-free:  
To escape and not have to pay.

Sick As A Dog:  
To be very sick (with the flu or a cold).

Sitting Shotgun:  
Riding in the front passenger seat of a car.
Sixth Sense:
A paranormal sense that allows you to communicate with the dead.

Skid Row:
The rundown area of a city where the homeless and drug users live.

Smell A Rat:
To detect someone in the group is betraying the others.

Smell Something Fishy:
Detecting that something isn't right and there might be a reason for it.

Son of a Gun:
A scamp.

Southpaw:
Someone who is left-handed.

Spitting Image:
The exact likeness or kind.

Start From Scratch:
To do it all over again from the beginning.

The Ball Is In Your Court:
It is your decision this time.

The Best Of Both Worlds:
There are two choices and you have them both.

The Bigger They Are The Harder They Fall:
While the bigger and stronger opponent might be alot more difficult to beat, when you do they suffer a much bigger loss.

The Last Straw:
When one small burden after another creates an unbearable situation, the last straw is the last small burden that one can take.

The Whole Nine Yards:
Everything. All of it.
Third times a charm:
After no success the first two times, the third try is a lucky one.

Tie the knot:
To get married.

Til the cows come home:
A long time.

To Make A Long Story Short:
Something someone would say during a long and boring story in order to keep his/her audience from losing attention. Usually the story isn't shortened.

To Steal Someone's Thunder:
To take the credit for something someone else did.

Tongue And Cheek:
humor, not to be taken serious.

Turn A Blind Eye:
Refuse to acknowledge something you know is real or legit.

Twenty three skidoo:
To be turned away.

U

Under the weather:
Feeling ill or sick.

Up a blind alley:
Going down a course of action that leads to a bad outcome.

Use Your Loaf:
Use your head. Think smart.

V

Van Gogh's ear for music:
Tone deaf.

Variety Is The Spice Of Life:
The more experiences you try the more exciting life can be.
**W**

**Wag the Dog:**
A diversion away from something of greater importance.

**Water Under The Bridge:**
Anything from the past that isn't significant or important anymore.

**Wear Your Heart On Your Sleeve:**
To openly and freely express your emotions.

**When It Rains, It Pours:**
Since it rarely rains, when it does it will be a huge storm.

**When Pigs Fly:**
Something that will never ever happen.

**Wild and Woolly:**
Uncultured and without laws.

**Wine and Dine:**
When somebody is treated to an expensive meal.

**Without A Doubt:**
For certain.

**X**

**X marks the spot:**
A phrase that is said when someone finds something he/she has been looking for.

**Y**

**You Are What You Eat:**
In order to stay healthy you must eat healthy foods.

**You Can't Judge A Book By Its Cover:**
Decisions shouldn't be made primarily on appearance.

**You Can't Take it With You:**
Enjoy what you have and not what you don't have, since when you die you cannot take things (such as money) with you.

**Your Guess Is As Good As Mine:**
I have no idea.

Z

Zero Tolerance:
No crime or law breaking