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## English Idioms

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- A hot potato.** This idiom is used to speak of an issue (especially in current affairs) which many people are talking about.
- A penny for your thoughts.** This idiom is used as a way of asking someone what they are thinking about
- Add insult to injury.** When people add insult to injury, they make a bad situation even worse.
- As easy as pie.** Very easy (same as a piece of cake). He said it is a difficult problem, but I don't agree. It seems **as easy as pie** to me!
- Be sick and tired of.** I hate (also can't stand). I'm **sick and tired** of doing nothing but work.
- Bend over backwards.** Try very hard (maybe too much!). He **bent over backwards** to please his new wife, but she never seemed satisfied.
- Bite off more than one can chew.** Take responsibility for more than one can manage. John is so far behind in his studies. Besides classes, he plays sports and works at a part-time job. It seems he has **bitten off more than he can chew**.
- Broke.** To have no money. I have to borrow some money from my Dad. Right now, I'm **broke**.
- Caught between two stools.** When someone finds it difficult to choose between two alternatives
- Change one's mind.** Decide to do something different from what had been decided earlier. I was planning to work late tonight, but I **changed my mind**. I'll do extra work on the weekend instead.
- Costs an arm and a leg.** When something is very expensive.
- Cut corners.** When something is done badly to save money. For example, when someone buys products that are cheap but not of good quality.
- Cut it out!** Stop doing something bad. That noise is really annoying. **Cut it out!**
- Drop someone a line.** Send a letter or email to someone. It was good to meet you and I hope we can see each other again. **Drop me a line** when you have time.
- Feeling a bit un** . Feeling slightly ill.
- Figure something out.** Come to understand a problem. I don't understand how to do this problem. Take a look at it. Maybe you can **figure it out**.
- Fill in for someone.** Do their work while they are away. While I was away from the store, my brother **filled in for me**.
- For good** Si queremos indicar que hacemos algo de forma permanente, para siempre, usamos la expresión *for good*. *I finally left home for good*. Por fin me fui de casa para siempre. También puede decirse *for good and all*, que viene a ser de una vez por todas.
- Give someone a hand.** Help. I want to move this desk to the next room. Can you **give me a hand**?
- Hear it on the grapevine.** This means 'to hear a rumour' about something or someone.
- Hit the hay.** Go to bed (also hit the sack). It's after 12 o'clock. I think it's time to **hit the hay**.
- In ages.** For a very long time. Have you seen Joe recently? I haven't seen him **in ages**.
- In the black.** The business is making money, it is profitable. Our business is really improving. We've been **in the black** all year.
- In the nick of time.** Not too late, but very close!. I got to the drugstore just **in the nick of time**. It's a good thing, because I really need this medicine!
- In the red.** The business is losing money, it is unprofitable. Business is really going poorly these days. We've been **in the red** for the past three months.
- Keep one's chin up.** Remain brave and keep on trying. I know things have been difficult for you recently, but **keep your chin up**. It will get better soon.
- Kill two birds with one stone.** This means 'to do two things at the same time'.
- Know something like the back of your hand.** Know something very, very well. If you get lost, just ask me for directions. I know this part of town **like the back of my hand**
- Let me come clean. Para serte sincero
- Miss the boat.** This idiom is used to say that someone missed his or her chance at something.

**On the ball.** When someone understands the situation well.

**Once and for all** El equivalente en español es: "de una vez por todas" y se usa para mostrar que algo termina definitivamente, después de un gran esfuerzo o de muchos intentos. *The pipe has been leaking for months. I'm going to fix it once and for all.* La tubería lleva goteando meses. Voy a repararla de una vez por todas.

**Once in a blue moon.** This is used when something happens very rarely.

**Once in a while.** Sometimes, not very often. Have you been to the new movie theater? No, only see movies **once in a while.** I usually stay home and watch TV.

**Put wool over other people's eyes.** This means to deceive someone into thinking well of them.

**Rub salt into wound.** Meter el dedo en la llaga.

**See eye to eye.** This idiom is used to say that two (or more people) agree on something.

**Sharp.** Exactly at that time. I'll meet you at 9 o'clock **sharp.** If you're late, we'll be in trouble!.

**Sit on the fence.** This is used when someone does not want to choose or make a decision.

**Sleep on it.** Think about something before making a decision. That sounds like a good deal, but I'd like to **sleep on it** before I give you my final decision.

**Speak of the d** . This expression is used when the person you have just been talking about arrives.

**Take it easy.** Relax. I don't have any special plans for the summer. I think I'll just **take it easy.**

**Take what someone says with a pinch of salt.** This means not to take what someone says too seriously. There is a big possibility that what he/she says is only partly true.

**The best of both worlds.** All the advantages.

**The last straw.** The final problem in a series of problems.

**To be on the edge.** Se usa esta expresión cuando estás ansioso o tienes mucho estrés. Cualquier comentario te hará reaccionar de forma bastante agresiva. Tener los nervios a flor de piel. *You better stay away from her, she's on the edge right now. She's been through a lot lately.* Más vale que te apartes de ella, tiene los nervios a flor de piel. Lo está pasando mal últimamente.

**To get the ball rolling.** Start something, especially something big. We need to get this project started as soon as possible. I'm hoping you will help me **get the ball rolling.**

**To have a screw loose.** Tener un tornillo suelto. Se usa para indicar que una persona actúa de forma excéntrica o que es un lunático. En español se traduce como: "perder un tornillo" o "faltar un tornillo". En inglés también puede decirse "to have a screw missing". *I think that man has a screw loose. He usually goes out naked.* Creo que a ese hombre le falta un tornillo. Normalmente sale a la calle desnudo.

**To hear something straight from the horse's mouth.** To hear something from the authoritative source.

**Twenty-four/seven.** Every minute of every day, all the time. You can access our web site **24/7.** It's very convenient

**Up to the minute.** The most recent information. I wish I knew more about what is happening in the capital city. We need more **up to the minute** news.

**What are you up to?.** ¿A qué te dedicas?, ¿qué estás haciendo?, ¿qué te traes entre manos?.

**You are on your own.** La expresión *to be on your own* se usa cuando uno se enfrenta a una situación solo, sin ayuda de nadie, es decir, cuando haces algo por tu cuenta. No tiene una traducción directa, por lo que dependiendo del contexto varía la traducción. I'm not helping you. You'll have to find a place to live yourself. You are on your own. No te voy a ayudar. Tendrás que encontrarte un sitio donde dormir. Estás solo en esto. If you are want to stay up all night working on this project, you are on your own. Si quieres pasarte toda la noche despierto trabajando en este proyecto, no cuentas conmigo.

**You crack me up.** Me parto de risa contigo

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## **English Inversions**

**At no time** *At no time did I say I would accept late homework.* En ningún momento dije que aceptaría la tareas tarde.

**Hardly... when** *Hardly had I got into bed, when there was a knock at the door.* Apenas me había metido en la cama cuando alguien llamó a la puerta.

**Little** *Little did I know that he was a compulsive liar.* Yo no sabía que fuera un mentiroso compulsivo.

**No sooner... than** *No sooner [had I reached]/[did I reach] the door than I realised it was locked.* Tan pronto como llegué a la puerta que me di cuenta que estaba cerrada con llave.

**Not + object** Not a single word did she say. Ella no dijo ni una sola palabra.

**Not only... but also** *Not only did he arrived late but he also forgot to do the homework.* No sólo llegó tarde sino que también olvidó hacer las tareas.

**Not until** *Not until January will I have a holiday.*

**Nowhere** *Nowhere had I seen such beautiful thing.* En ninguna parte había visto algo tan hermoso

**Only after** *Only after the film started did I realise that I'd seen it before.* Sólo después de que la película comenzara me di cuenta de que la había visto antes.

**On no account/Un** On no account should you miss class. Bajo ningún concepto deberías faltar a clase.

**Only then/if/when/later** *Only then did I know what I had got myself into.* Sólo entonces supe lo que me había metido.

**Rarely/Seldom/Never** *Seldom have I seen him looking so miserable.* Pocas veces le he visto un aspecto tan miserable. *Rarely does a movie make you feel so warm and so uneasy at the same time.* *Never in her life had she experienced this exhilarating emotion.*

**Scarcely/Barely....when** *Scarcely had I arrived home when the phone rang.* Apenas había llegado a casa cuando el teléfono sonó.

**So... that** *So exciting was the soap opera, that I forgot to do my homework.* Tan emocionante estaba la telenovela que me olvidé de hacer mis tareas. It can also be used with much. *So much did she adore John, that she would not give him up.*

**Such... that** *Such was the popularity of the soap opera, that the streets were deserted whenever it was on.* Tal era la popularidad de la telenovela, que las calles estaban desiertas siempre que la ponían.

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### Phrasal Verbs Reference

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Ask Out	ask someone to go on a date
Bring About	cause
Bring Up	1) rear children 2) mention or introduce a topic
Call Back	return a telephone call
Call In	ask to come to an official place for a special reason
Call Off	cancel
Call On*	1) visit 2) ask a student a question in class
Call Up	call on the telephone
Catch Up (With)*	reach the same position or level as someone
Check In*	register at a hotel
Check Into*	investigate
Check Out	1) borrow a book from a library 2) investigate
Cheer Up	make (someone) feel happier
Clean Up	make clean and orderly
Come Across*	find by chance
Cross Out	draw a line through
Cut Out	stop an annoying activity
Do Over	repeat
Drop By*	visit informally
Drop In (On)*	visit informally
Drop Off	leave something/someone somewhere
Drop Out (Of)*	stop going to school or class
Figure Out	find the answer by logic
Fill Out	complete a form
Find Out	discover information
Get Along (With)*	to have a good relationship with
Get Back (From)	1) return from somewhere 2) receive again
Get In, Get Into*	1) enter a car 2) arrive
Get Off*	leave any vehicle
Get On*	enter any vehicle
Get Out Of*	1) leave a car 2) avoid some unpleasant activity
Get Over*	recover from an illness
Get Through*	finish
Get Up*	arise from bed, a chair etc.
Give Back	return something to someone
Give Up	stop doing something

Go Over*	review or check
Grow Up*	become an adult
Hand In	submit an assignment
Hang Up	1) stop a telephone conversation 2) put up clothes on a line or a hook
Have On	wear
Keep Out (Of)	not enter
Keep Up (With)*	stay at the same position or level
Kick Out (Of)	force (someone) to leave
Look After*	take care of
Look Into*	investigate
Look Out (For)*	be careful
Look Over	review or check
Look Up	look for information in a reference book
Make Up	1) invent 2) do past work
Name After	give a baby the name of someone else
Pass Away*	die
Pass Out	1) distribute 2) lose consciousness
Pick Out	select
Pick Up	1) go to get someone 2) take in one's hand
Point Out	call someone's attention to
Put Away	remove to an appropriate place
Put Back	return to original position
Put Off	postpone
Put On	dress
Put Out	extinguish a cigarette, fire
Put Up With*	tolerate
Run Into	meet by chance
Run Across	find by chance
Run Out (Of)	finish a supply of something
Show Up*	appear, come to
Shut Off	stop a machine, equipment, light etc.
Take After*	resemble
Take Off	1) remove clothing 2) leave on a trip 3) leave the ground (airplane)
Take Out	1) take someone on a date 2) remove
Take Over	take control
Take Up	begin a new activity
Tear Down	demolish, reduce to nothing
Tear Up	tear into many little pieces
Think Over	consider
Throw Away	discard; get rid of
Throw Out	discard; get rid of
Throw Up	vomit
Try On	put on clothing to see if it fits
Turn Down	decrease volume
Turn In	1) submit classwork 2) go to bed
Turn Off	stop a machine, equipment, light etc.
Turn On	start a machine, equipment, light etc.
Turn Out	extinguish a light
Turn Up	increase volume or intensity

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## Linkers

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### Giving examples

*for instance, namely*

- *Mainly, there are two problems, namely, the expense and the time.* Principalmente, hay dos problemas, a saber, el coste y el tiempo.

### Adding information

*and, in addition, as well as, also, too, apart from, furthermore, moreover, in addition to, besides*

- Also is used to add an extra idea or emphasis. *We also spoke about marketing.*
- You can use also with not only to give emphasis. *We are concerned not only by the costs, but also by the competition.*
- We don't usually start a sentence with also. If you want to start a sentence with a phrase that means also, you can use In addition, or In addition to this...

- As well as can be used at the beginning or the middle of a sentence. *As well as the costs, we are concerned by the competition. We are interested in costs as well as the competition.*
- Too goes either at the end of the sentence, or after the subject and means as well. *They were concerned too. I, too, was concerned.*
- Apart from and besides are often used to mean as well as, or in addition to. *Apart from Rover, we are the largest sports car manufacturer. Besides Rover, we are the largest sports car manufacturer.*
- Moreover and furthermore add extra information to the point you are making. *Marketing plans give us an idea of the potential market. Moreover, they tell us about the competition.*

### Summarising

*in short, in brief, in summary (en resumen), to summarise, in a nutshell (en dos/pocas palabras), to conclude, in conclusion*

- We normally use these words at the beginning of the sentence to give a summary of what we have said or written.

### Sequencing ideas

*The former... the latter. Firstly, secondly... finally. The first point is. Lastly. The following*

- The former and the latter are useful when you want to refer to one of two points. *Marketing and finance are both covered in the course. The former is studied in the first term and the latter is studied in the final term.*
- Firstly, ... secondly, ... finally (or lastly) are useful ways to list ideas. It's rare to use "fourthly", or "fifthly". Instead, try the first point, the second point, the third point and so on.
- The following is a good way of starting a list. *The following people have been chosen to go on the training course: N Peters, C Jones and A Owen.*

### Giving a reason

*due to / due to the fact that, because, because of, since, as*

- Due to must be followed by a noun. *Due to the rise in oil prices, the inflation rate rose by 1%.*
- If you want to follow these words with a clause (a subject, verb and object), you must follow the words with the fact that. *Due to the fact that oil prices have risen, the inflation rate has gone up by 1%.*
- Because of is followed by a noun. *Because of bad weather, the football match was postponed.*
- Because can be used at the beginning or in the middle of a sentence. For example, *Because it was raining, the match was postponed. We believe in incentive schemes, because we want our employees to be more productive.*
- Since / As. Since and As mean because. *Since the company is expanding, we need to hire more staff. As the company is expanding, we need to hire more staff.*

### Giving a result

*therefore, so, consequently, this means that, as a result*

- Therefore, so, consequently and as a result are all used in a similar way. *The company are expanding. Therefore / So / Consequently / As a result, they are taking on extra staff.* So is more informal.

### Contrasting ideas

*but, however, although / even though, despite / despite the fact that, in spite of / in spite of the fact that, in stead of (en vez de), nevertheless/ nonetheless (a pesar de, no obstante), while / whereas (mientras), unlike (a diferencia de), in theory... in practice...*

- But is more informal than however. It is not normally used at the beginning of a sentence. *He works hard, but he doesn't earn much. He works hard. However, he doesn't earn much.*
- Although, despite and in spite of introduce an idea of contrast. With these words, you must have two halves of a sentence. *Although it was cold, she went out in shorts. In spite of the cold, she went out in shorts.*
- Despite and in spite of are used in the same way as due to and owing to. They must be followed by a noun. If you want to follow them with a noun and a verb, you must use the fact that. *Despite the fact that the company was doing badly, they took on extra employees.*
- Nevertheless and nonetheless mean in spite of that or anyway. *The sea was cold, but he went swimming nevertheless. (In spite of the fact that it was cold.) The company is doing well. Nonetheless, they aren't going to expand this year.*
- While, whereas and unlike are used to show how two things are different from each other. *While my sister has blue eyes, mine are brown. Taxes have gone up, whereas social security contributions have gone down. Unlike in the UK, the USA has cheap petrol.*
- In theory... in practice... show an unexpected result. *In theory, teachers should prepare for lessons, but in practice, they often don't have enough time.*

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## English Collocations

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### Have

have a bath  
have a drink  
have a good time  
have a haircut  
have a holiday  
have a problem  
have a relationship  
have a rest  
have lunch  
have sympathy

### Do

do business  
do nothing  
do someone a favour  
do the cooking  
do the housework  
do the shopping  
do the washing up  
do your best  
do your hair  
do your homework

### Make

make a difference  
make a mess  
make a mistake  
make a noise  
make an effort  
make furniture  
make money  
make progress  
make room  
make trouble

### Take

take a chance  
take a look  
take a rest  
take a seat  
take a taxi  
take an exam  
take notes  
take someone's place  
take someone's temperature

### Break

break a habit  
break a leg  
break a promise  
break a record  
break a window  
break someone's heart  
break the ice  
break the law

break the news to someone  
break the rules

### Catch

catch a bus  
catch a chill  
catch a cold  
catch a thief  
catch fire  
catch sight of  
catch someone's attention  
catch someone's eye  
catch the flu

### Pay

pay a fine  
pay attention  
pay by credit card  
pay cash  
pay interest  
pay someone a compliment  
pay someone a visit  
pay the bill  
pay the price  
pay your respects

### Save

save electricity  
save energy  
save money  
save one's strength  
save someone a seat  
save someone's life  
save something to a disk  
save space  
save time  
save yourself the trouble

### Keep

keep a diary  
keep a promise  
keep a secret  
keep an appointment  
keep calm  
keep control  
keep in touch  
keep quiet  
keep someone's place  
keep the change

### Come

come close  
come complete with  
come direct  
come early  
come first  
come into view

come last  
come late  
come on time  
come prepared  
come right back  
come second  
come to a compromise  
come to a decision  
come to an agreement  
come to an end  
come to a standstill  
come to terms with  
come to a total of  
come under attack

### Go

go abroad  
go astray  
go bad  
go bald  
go bankrupt  
go blind  
go crazy  
go dark  
go deaf  
go fishing  
go mad  
go missing  
go on foot  
go online  
go out of business  
go overseas  
go quiet  
go sailing  
go to war  
go yellow

### Get

get a job  
get a shock  
get angry  
get divorced  
get drunk  
get frightened  
get home  
get lost  
get married  
get nowhere  
get permission  
get pregnant  
get ready  
get started  
get the impression  
get the message  
get the sack  
get upset  
get wet

get worried

### Miscellaneous Time

bang on time  
dead on time  
early 12th century  
free time  
from dawn till dusk  
great deal of time  
late 20th century  
make time for  
next few days  
past few weeks  
right on time  
run out of time  
save time  
spare time  
spend some time  
take your time  
tell someone the time  
time goes by  
time passes  
waste time

### Business english

annual turnover  
bear in mind  
break off negotiations  
cease trading  
chair a meeting  
close a deal  
close a meeting  
come to the point  
dismiss an offer  
draw a conclusion  
draw your attention to  
launch a new product  
lay off staff  
go bankrupt  
go into partnership  
make a loss  
make a profit  
market forces  
sales figures  
take on staff

### Classifiers

a ball of string  
a bar of chocolate  
a bottle of water  
a bunch of carrots  
a cube of sugar  
a pack of cards  
a pad of paper