

English Idioms - Most Common

Common English Sayings and What They Mean

Idiom: a set of words that has a meaning to a group of people that may not be obvious to others based solely on the meanings of the words themselves

Expression: a word or phrase used to convey an idea

Saying or Proverb: a short, commonly known expression which generally offers advice or wisdom

Idiom	Meaning	Usage
a blessing in disguise	a good thing that seemed bad at first	as part of a sentence
a dime a dozen	Something common	as part of a sentence
beat around the bush	Avoid saying what you mean, usually because it is uncomfortable	as part of a sentence
Better late than never!	Better to arrive late than not to come at all	by itself
bite the bullet	To get something over with because it is inevitable	as part of a sentence
Break a leg!	Good luck	by itself
call it a day	Stop working on something	as part of a sentence or by itself
cut somebody some slack	Don't be so critical	as part of a sentence
cutting corners	Doing something poorly in order to save time or money	as part of a sentence

Idiom	Meaning	Usage
Easy does it.	Slow down	by itself
get out of hand	Get out of control	as part of a sentence
get something out of your system	Do the thing you've been wanting to do so you can move on	as part of a sentence
Get your act together!	Work better or leave	by itself
give someone the benefit of the doubt	Trust what someone says	as part of a sentence
go back to the drawing board	Start over	as part of a sentence
Hang in there!	Don't give up	by itself
hit the sack	Go to sleep	as part of a sentence
It's not rocket science.	It's not complicated	by itself
let someone off the hook	To not hold someone responsible for something	as part of a sentence
make a long story short	Tell something briefly	as part of a sentence
miss the boat	It's too late	as part of a sentence
No pain, no gain.	You have to work for what you want	by itself
on the ball	Doing a good job	as part of a sentence
pull someone's leg	To joke with someone	as part of a sentence
Pull yourself together!	Calm down	by itself
So far so good.	Things are going well so far	by itself

Idiom	Meaning	Usage
Speak of the devil.	The person we were just talking about showed up!	by itself
That's the last straw!	My patience has run out	by itself
the best of both worlds	An ideal situation	as part of a sentence
Time flies when you're having fun.	You don't notice how long something lasts when it's fun	by itself
to get bent out of shape	To get upset	as part of a sentence
to make matters worse	Make a problem worse	as part of a sentence
under the weather	Sick	as part of a sentence
We'll cross that bridge when we come to it.	Let's not talk about that problem right now	by itself
wrap your head around something	Understand something complicated	as part of a sentence
You can say that again!	That's true, I agree	by itself
Your guess is as good as mine.	I have no idea	by itself