

IDIOMS

(INTERMEDIATE-ADVANCED LEVEL)

1. A hot potato

Speak of an issue (mostly current) which many people are talking about and which is usually disputed.

Example: "Choosing a location for our new store is a hot potato right now"

2. A penny for your thoughts

A way of asking what someone is thinking

Example: "For several minutes they sat silently, then finally she looked at him and said, "A penny for your thoughts, Walter."

3. In the long run

Over a lengthy period of time, in the end.

Example: "It means spending a bit now, but in the long run it'll save us a lot of money."

4. Ball is in your court

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

Example: "I've told him he can have his job back if he apologizes. The ball's in his court now."

5. Up to someone

Meaning Decided by someone

Example: "My father said the decision is up to my mom"

6. Bite off more than you can chew

To decide or agree to do more than one can finally accomplish.

Example: "Don't bite off more than you can chew. Let someone else organize the party."

7. Blessing in disguise

Something good that isn't recognized at first.

Example: "Dad's illness was a blessing in disguise; it brought the family together for the first time in years."

8. Can't judge a book by its cover

Cannot judge something primarily on appearance.

Example: "She doesn't look very intelligent, but you can't judge a book by its cover"

9. Caught in the middle

When someone finds it difficult to choose between two alternatives.

Example: "My mother and sister are always arguing and I find myself caught in the middle."

10. Costs an arm and a leg

This idiom is used when something is very expensive.

Example: "The man's new sports car cost an arm and a leg."

11. Cry over spilled milk

When you complain about a loss from the past.

Example: "Quit crying over spilt milk, It wasn't a big deal"

12. Curiosity killed the cat

Being Inquisitive can lead you into an unpleasant situation.

Example: "Don't ask so many questions. Remember, curiosity killed the cat."

13. Don't count your chickens before the eggs have hatched

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

Example: Don't count your chickens before they hatch! There are still 5 minutes to play so we haven't won anything yet.

14. Don't put all your eggs in one basket

Do not put all your resources in one possibility

Example: "My father is a very careful investor; he never puts all of his eggs in one basket."

15. Drastic times call for drastic measure

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

Example: "Sales have been slow and we had to let go three of our employees; drastic times call for drastic measures."

16. Bottom line

The most important part of something: the most important thing to consider

Example: "I like you, but you are too old. That's the bottom line."

17. Under the weather

Meaning: Feeling slightly ill.

Example: "I feel sort of under the weather today. Whatever I ate for lunch is making me feel a bit under the weather."

18. Hit the road

To depart; to begin one's journey, especially on a road trip

Example: "Well, I think it's time to hit the road, I have to get up early tomorrow"

19. Hit the sack / sheets / hay

To go to bed.

Example: "I'm going to hit the sack - I'm exhausted."

20. Pull the leg

To kid, fool, or trick someone.

Example: "Look; your shoes are untied... Ha! Just pulling your leg."

21. It takes two to tango

Actions or communications need more than one person

Example: "He hit me first; it wasn't my fault!. Remember: It takes two to tango."

22. Kill two birds with one stone

This idiom means, to accomplish two different things at the same time.

Example: "I killed two birds with one stone and saw some old friends while I was visiting my parents."

23. Make a long story short

Come to the point - leave out details

Example: "To make a long story short, I wasn't thinking and I made a big mistake."

24. Out of the blue

Meaning: Something that happens suddenly.

Example: "Out of the blue, my husband decided to buy me a brand new car for my birthday."

25. Piece of cake

A job, task or other activity that is easy or simple.

Example: "Dancing salsa is a piece of cake".

26. Play Devil's Advocate

To present a counter argument

Example: I agree with your plan. I'm just playing the devil's advocate so you'll know what the opposition will say.

27. Speak of the devil

This expression is used when the person you have just been talking about arrives.

Example: "I think we should get Rebecca to organize our party. Oh, speak of the devil! Here she is"

28. Taste of your own medicine

Means that something happens to you, or is done to you, that you have done to someone else

Example: "I saw you pushing my brother yesterday... maybe I should give you a taste of your own medicine!"

29. Whole nine yards

Everything. All of it.

Example: "For you I'll go the whole nine yards."