

20 Idioms You Should Know

1. Adding insult to injury – Make things worse

You got her title wrong then called her old! You added insult to injury.

I wore the wrong shirt and then spilled coffee on it. Talk about adding insult to injury.

2. Beat around the bush – Avoid saying something

Quit beating around the bush, if you don't like it say so.

They beat around the bush for a while before eventually telling me I didn't get the job.

3. Blessing in disguise – An unexpectedly good thing

It was a blessing in disguise that I missed the train, it broke down for two hours.

Losing that job was a blessing in disguise because she went to culinary school and is now a chef.

4. Birds of a feather flock together – People with a lot in common become good friends

They all went to the same high school, birds of a feather flock together.

We bonded over our interest in learning languages, birds of a feather flock together.

5. Biting off more than you can chew - Be overwhelmed

Trying to memorize 100 idioms and their meanings with sentences in an hour was biting off more than I could chew.

You bit off more than you could chew, try asking for a deadline extension,

6. Costs an arm and a leg – Expensive

It costs an arm and a leg to get the latest iPhone.

I was going to order steak, but I saw it would cost an arm and a leg.

7. Devil's Advocate – Offer another point of view

I played devil's advocate and pointed out that online learning allows you to choose your own schedule.

I was devil's advocate, told them the stock might be cheap, but it was also risky.

8. Don't judge a book by its cover – Appearances can be deceiving

Don't judge a book by its cover, he may dress sloppy but he's a tech genius.

I thought my husband was a snob, am I glad I didn't judge a book by its cover.

9. Don't count your chickens before they hatch – Don't make assumptions

Don't count your chickens before they hatch, make a follow-up call to the customer.

Don't count your chickens before they hatch, practice the speech one last time with your tutor.

10. Give someone the cold shoulder – Ignore

They gave Karen the cold shoulder and ignored her invitation to lunch.

My boyfriend and I argued over where we would go for the holidays so are giving him the cold shoulder.

11. Hit the books – Go study

You seem confused about the different pronouns; you need to hit the books more.

I have an exam tomorrow; I need to go hit the books

12. Hit the sack – Go to sleep

I have a meeting early tomorrow; I need to hit the sack.
You seem very tired; maybe you should hit the sack?

13. Jumped at the chance – Acted on an opportunity

I jumped at the chance to work here when it was just a promising startup.
She jumped at the chance to spend a summer learning Italian in Florence.

14. Lose your touch – No longer good

I used to be unbeatable at beer pong, but I've lost my touch.
They used to be good with crying children, but they seem to have lost their touch.

15. Missed the boat – Lost an opportunity

I missed the boat and didn't enroll while there was a discount.
They missed the boat and didn't buy into the company earlier this year.

16. Through thick and thin – Loyal

My grandparents stuck together through thick and thin and now they are celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary.
You deserve that promotion for staying with the company through thick and thin.

17. Twist someone's arm – Convince

I had to twist his arm to get him to agree to sell.
I love Star Wars! You don't need to twist my arm; I'll watch the movie with you.

18. Sit tight – Just wait

Sit tight, I'll get us drinks.
I am looking into the issue. Sit tight and wait for my e-mail.

19. Stab someone in the back – Betray someone

Rob and Ben were best friends until Rob stabbed Ben in the back and stole his girlfriend.
Mary stabbed me in the back and told them I wasn't right for the job.

20. Under the weather – Sick

I need to postpone our tutoring session; I'm feeling under the weather. She was under the weather, coughing and sneezing, so I told her to stay home.