

# 100 Important Idioms

English (Precis & Composition)



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## **100 Important Idioms**

### **IDIOMS MEANINGS**

1. To add insult to injury; To intensify a person
2. To be born with a silver spoon in one's mouth; To be born in a rich family
3. A bolt from the blue; An expected disaster
4. To blow one's own trumpet; To boast
5. A bone of contention ; Cause of quarrel
6. To burn one's fingers ; To suffer
7. To beat black & blue ; To beat mercilessly
8. To cast an aspersion ; To bring discredit
9. To cry over spilt milk ; To feel sorry for what has happened
10. To cut a sorry figure ; To make a poor impression
11. To die in harness ; To die while doing one's duty
12. To end in smoke ; To fail
13. To go to the dogs ; To be ruined
14. To hang in the balance ; To remain undecided
15. To hit the nail on the head; To do the right thing at the right time
16. To hold water ; To sound logical
17. To live no stone unturned ; To try one's level best
18. To live from hand to mouth ; To live with great difficulty
19. To make up one's mind ; To decide
20. To see eye to eye with ; Agree
21. To play ducks and drakes ; Waste
22. To put the cart before the horse ; To do a thing in a wrong way
23. To have too many irons in the fire ; To have too many things in hand
24. To read b/w the lines ; To try to understand the hidden meaning



25. To turn over a new leaf ; To change for the better
26. To take the bull by horns; To face difficulties boldly
27. To win laurels ; To distinguish oneself
28. At daggers drawn ; At enmity or fighting
29. Black and white ; Written
30. By leaps and bounds ; Very fast
31. In cold blood ; deliberately
32. Laid up with ; Confined to bed
33. Ins and outs ; Full details
34. A black sheep ; Scoundrel; a bad person
35. A cock and bull story ; An absurd tale
36. A gala day ; A day of festivity; a holiday with rejoicing
37. A hard nut to crack ; A difficult person or problem to deal with
38. A turn coat ; One who changes one's opinion or party
39. A fool's paradise ; In a state of happiness founded on vain hopes
40. Beat a retreat ; To retire before the enemy
41. To be on the horns of a dilemma; To have a choice b/w two equal evils
42. To beat about the bush ; Approach a subject in a round about method
43. Bury the hatchet ; To make peace
44. By fits and starts ; Irregularly
45. Capital punishment ; Death sentence
46. By hook or by crook ; By fair or foul means
47. Eat humble pie ; To face humiliation
48. Hit below the belt ; To act unfairly
49. In apple pie order ; In perfect order
50. Leave one in lurch ; To desert in difficulty
51. To make a clean breast of ; To confess fully one's faults
52. To nip the evil in the bud ; To destroy an evil in early stage



53. Pick holes in another's coat ; To find fault with another
54. Scot free ; To go unpunished
55. Smell a rat ; To have a reason to suspect
56. Through thick and thin ; Through every difficulty
57. True to one's salt ; Faithful to one's master
58. To turn the corner ; To begin to improve
59. With a grain of salt ; To accept a statement with doubt as to its complete true
60. Worship the rising sun ; To respect one rising in power
61. A Herculean task ; An extremely difficult or dangerous task
62. A fish out of water ; In a wrong place
63. A leap in the dark ; An act of which we can't force consequences
64. A thorn in one's side ; A constant source of annoyance
65. To be at one's beck and call ; Under one's absolute control
66. Bread and Butter ; Means of subsistence
67. Burn one's fingers ; To get into trouble
68. Burn the candle at both ends; Use up too much energy
69. To cut the Gordian knot ; To solve the difficulty
70. Cut and dried ; Ready-made
71. Feather one's own nest ; To make money by unfair means
72. To fish in troubled water ; To do something under very unpromising circumstance
73. To give oneself airs ; Affected manners
74. To give the devil his due ; To allow even a bad man the credit due
75. To hang by thread ; To be in a critical condition
76. A henpecked husband ; A man habitually snubbed by his wife
77. Hush money ; Money given as a bribe to hush or make one keep silent
78. Kick up a row ; Make a great noise
79. To let the cat out of the bag; To reveal a secret



- 80. Null and void ; Not valid; of no effect
- 81. On the spur of the moment; At once
- 82. Pay one back in one's own coin ; To treat in the same way as one has been treated
- 83. Put in cold storage; To forget or neglect something
- 84. Pull wires ; To manage the show by secret Influence
- 85. Read b/w the lines ; To hit at the real meaning
- 86. Sit on the fence ; To avoid taking sides; to remain neutral
- 87. A square deal ; Justice
- 88. Sword of Damocles ; Treating danger
- 89. To take up the gauntlet ; To accept the challenge
- 90. To eat one's heart out ; To suffer silently, bitterly
- 91. B/t the devil and the deep sea ; B/w two dangers equally harmful
- 92. A sweet tooth ; A liking for sweetmeat
- 93. A dark horse ; An unknown person
- 94. A bottleneck ; Anything that cause delays
- 95. To put one's foot down ; To show determination
- 96. A wet blanket ; A grumbling, depressing person
- 97. To throw up the sponge ; To acknowledge defeat
- 98. A feather in one's cap ; Something to be proud of
- 99. A red letter day ; An auspicious day
- 100. Bag and baggage ; With all one's belongings

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