

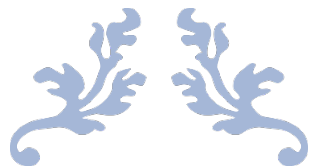


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SLS WELCOME TOKEN



English Dictionary of Idioms

ENGLISH DICTIONARY OF IDIOMS

(A1-C1)

(A1-C1)

This dictionary of selective English idioms is as a token of SLS gratitude to

.....

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22. NOVEMBER 2023

SUCCESS LANGUAGE SCHOOL

Sisseln AG Switzerland

Aa

ABC (A1)

 **as easy** (or simple) **as ABC** extremely (*very, tremendously*) easy or straightforward (*frank*).



Apple (A1)

 **a rotten** (or bad) **apple** a bad person in a group, typically one whose behaviour is likely to have a corrupting (humiliating, demeaning or belittling) influence on the rest, *informal*.



 **be in apple-pie order** to be perfectly arranged and tidy (*neat, orderly or organised*), UK.

Their house is always in apple -pie order.



Accident (A2)

 **accidents will happen** however careful you try to be, it is inevitable (*unavoidable, certain, sure or undeniable*) that some unfortunate or unforeseen events can happen.



Asleep (A2)

 **asleep at the wheel** not attentive or alert; inactive, informal.



Act (B1)



act your age behave in a manner appropriate to your age and not to someone much younger.



.....

Apple (B1)



the apple of your eye a person or thing of whom you are extremely fond and proud.



.....

Accord (B2)



of your own accord voluntarily or without outside intervention (*interference, involvement*).



.....

Ape (B2)



go ape go wild; become violently (*wildly, viciously, fiercely, savagely*) excited.



.....

Achilles (C1)



an achilles heel /àki: liz'hi: l/ a person's only vulnerable (*weak, sensitive, helpless*) spot (*weakpoint or difficulty*).

A serious or fatal (*deadly, lethal or ruinous*) weakness or fault.



.....

Air (C1)



airs and graces an affected manner of behaving, designed to attract or impress (*influence, affect, sway or dominate*).



.....

Bb

Back (A1)

 **on your back** in bed recovering from an injury (*wound, damage*) or illness.



Backwards (A1)

 **know something backwards** be entirely (*totally, utterly or completely*) familiar with something.



Backwards (B1)

 **bend over backwards** to do something and make every effort, especially to be fair or helpful, informal.



Bananas (B1)

 **go bananas** become extremely (*very, awfully or tremendously*) angry or excited, go mad, informal.



Bark (B2)

 **bark up the wrong tree** pursue (*follow, chase, trail*) a mistaken, misguided or ill-advised line of thought or course of action.



Bed (B2)

 **get out of bed on the wrong side** be bad tempered with unfriendly attitude (*manner*) all day long.



Beggar (C1)

✎ **beggars can't be choosers** said when you recognize (*realize, comprehend, apprehend or catch*) that you must accept an offer or a situation because it is the only one available to you, proverb.



.....

✎ **beggar on horseback** a formerly (*earlier, previously*) poor person made arrogant (conceited, *egoistical or self-centered*) or corrupt (*dishonest*) through achieving wealth (*prosperity or affluence*) and luxury.



.....

Baffle (C1)

✎ **Baffle somebody** to confuse (*puzzle, obscure or perplex*) someone.
computers really baffle me. I'm not cut out for the mod cons at all.



.....

✎ I **was baffled by** her behaviour. What do you think has come recently over her?



.....

✎ Be in one's element (C1)

✎ to feel comfortable in a certain situation, to enjoy (*relish, adore, appreciate*) doing something because it is exactly right and suitable for that person.

✎ As an outgoing person, David is in his element when he has to make a speech off the top of his head in front of a crowd (mob, mass, swarm, flock or group) of people.



.....

Bob (C1)

✎ **Bob's your uncle** everything is fine; problem solved. British, informal.



.....

Cc

Cake (A1)

✍ **a piece of cake** something easily achieved (*got, received or attained*), informal.



Cart (A1)

✍ **in the cart** in trouble or difficulty. British, informal.



Cat (A2)

✍ **see which way the cat jumps** see what direction events are taking before committing yourself.



Charity (A2)

✍ **charity begins at home** a person's first responsibility (*duty, accountability, liability or obligation*) is for the needs (*desires or requirements*) of their own family and friends, proverb.



Chin (A2)

✍ **keep your chin up** remain cheerful (happy, jovial, merry or joyful) in difficult circumstances, (*conditions, situations, occurrences or incidences*), informal.



✍ **take it on the chin** endure or accept misfortune courageously (*bravely, valiantly or heroically*).



Chicken (B1)

 a **chicken-and-egg problem or situaion** an unresolved (*unanswered, vague, baffling or unsolved*) question as to which of two things caused the other.



Clapper (B1)

 like **the clappers** very fast or very hard. British, informal.



Coal (B2)

 **carry coals to Newcastle** something brought or sent to a place where it is already plentiful (*full, sufficient, ample, plenty or more than enough*).



Coin (B2)

 **the other side of the coin** the opposite or contrasting aspect of a matter.
(Syn. **the reverse of the medal or shield**).



Cover (C1)

 **blow someone's cover** discovers or expose someone's real identity (*character or individuality*).



Cut (C1)

 **cut someone dead** completely ignore (*disregard, overlook, snub*) or avoid (*evade or prevent*) someone. (Syn. **give someone a cold shoulder**).



 **cut your coat according to your cloth** undertake (*accept, commerce or assume*) only what you have the money or ability to do and no more. UK, proverb.



Dd

Dark (A1)

✍ a **dark horse** a person, especially a competitor (*contestant, rival, opponent or challenger*) about whom little is known.



Dodo (A1)

✍ **dead as a (or the) dodo** no longer alive or no longer effective, valid or interesting, informal.



Dice (A2)

✍ **dice with death** take serious risks or to act in a way that is very risky (*dangerous, unsafe hazardous, perilous or harmful*). (Syn. **play with fire**).



Dictionary (A2)

✍ **have swallowed a dictionary** use long and obscure (*unclear*) words when speaking, informal.



Dog (B1)

✍ **dog eat dog** a situation of fierce (*violent, severe, angry or forceful*) competition in which people are willing to harm (*damage, hurt or mal, -mistreat*) each other in order to succeed.



Dressed (B1)

✍ **dressed to kill** wearing attractive and flamboyant (*showy, impressive or eye-catching*) clothes in order to make a striking (*remarkable, noticeable*) impression (*attention or notice*).



Dutch (B2)

✎ **go Dutch** share the cost of something equally (*similarly, likewise or alike*).
(Syn. **fifty-fifty; club together**).



.....

Dusty (B2)

✎ **a dusty answer** a curt (*abrupt, short*), blunt and unhelpful reply.



.....

Dot (C1)

✎ **dot the i's and cross the t's** ensure (*certify, verify, indorse*) that all details (*facts, aspects, elements, parts or features*) are correct, informal.



.....

✎ **on the dot** exactly on time, informal. Compared with in time and being late.



.....

Dyed (C1)

✎ **dyed in the wool** (of a person) completely and permanently fixed in a particular belief or opinion; inveterate (*habitual and customary*).



.....

Ee

Early (A1)

✍ **early bird catches the worm** a person who gets up, arrives, or acts before the usual or expected time.



Enough (A1)

✍ **enough said** there is no need to say more; all is understood.



Eye (A2)

✍ **have eyes bigger than your stomach** have asked for or taken more food than you can actually eat.



✍ **an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth** used to refer to the belief that retaliation (*revenge*) in kind is the appropriate way to deal with an offence or crime.



Englishman (B1)

✍ **an Englishman's home is his castle** an English person's home is a place where they may do as they please and from which they may exclude (*ignore*) anyone they choose, British proverb.



Every (B1)

✍ **every man for himself** everyone must take care of themselves and their own interests and safety.



Enough (B2)

 **enough is as good as a feast** (*celebration, party or meal*) moderation (*fairness, balance or equability*) is more satisfying than excess (*extra or too much*), proverb.



.....

 **enough is enough** no more will be tolerated (*endured, accepted or withstood*).



.....

Easy (B2)

 **easy as falling off a log** (**cutting down trees**) very easy (*stress-free, laidback or tranquil*), informal. (Syn. **be as a piece of a cake**; **be as a child's play**).



.....

Eleventh (C1)

 **at the eleventh hour** at the latest possible moment (*jiffy, sec., mo., instant or flash*).



.....

Eyeball (C1)

 **eyeball to eyeball** face to face with someone, especially in an aggressive (*violent, hostile*) way.



.....

 **give someone the hairy eyeball** stare at someone in a disapproving (*critical, negative*) or angry way, especially with your eyelids partially (*partly or relatively*) lowered. North American, informal.



.....

Eye teeth (C1)

 **give your eye teeth for** go to any lengths (*distances, spans*) in order to obtain (attain, achieve or accomplish) something.



.....

Ff

Face (A1)

 **in your face** aggressively obvious (*clear*); assertive (*self-confident, firm, decisive*), informal.



.....

 **face the music** be confronted (*challenged, provoked, faced*) with the unpleasant (unfriendly, hostile or aggressive) consequences (*results, outcomes, ends or effects*) of your actions.



.....

Fair (B1)

fair and square with absolute (*total, entire, utter or complete*) accuracy or honestly and straightforwardly (*frankly*).



.....

Fancy (B1)

 **fancy your** (or someone's) **chances** believe that you (or someone else) are likely to be successful.



.....

Father (B2)

 **like father, like son** a son's character or behaviour can be expected to resemble that of his father.



.....

Favour (B2)

 **speak in sb's favour** to state your support for someone.
(Syn. **count on sb's support; backing sb**).



.....

Finger (C1)

✎ **be all fingers and thumbs** be clumsy (*ham-fisted, gauche, inept or incompetent*) or awkward (*embarrassed, uncomfortable, nervous or nervy, jumpy, panicky or panic-stricken, edgy and jittery*) in your actions. British, informal.



.....

Flea (C1)

✎ **fit as a flea** in very good health condition.



.....

Flesh (C1)

✎ **in the flesh** in person rather than via a telephone, film, article, etc.



.....

Flat-footed (C1)

✎ **catch someone flat-footed** take someone by surprise or at a disadvantage, informal.



.....

Flesh and blood (C1)

✎ **your (own) flesh and blood** near relatives; close family.



.....



Game (A1)

✎ **game over** said when a situation is regarded as hopeless or irreversible (*permanent or unending*).



.....

Garden (A1)

✎ **everything in the garden is lovely** (or rosy) all is well (fine, *acceptable, satisfactory*), informal.



.....

Gentleman (B1)

✎ **a gentleman's agreement** an arrangement or understanding which is based on the trust of both or all parties, rather than being legally (*legitimately, lawfully, legally or officially*) binding (necessary, *compulsory, obligatory, mandatory or enforced*).



.....

Give (B1)

✎ **give and take** mutual concessions (*concerns*) and compromises, exchange of words and views.

✎ **give as good as you get** respond with equal force or strength when attacked.

✎ **give someone or something best** give someone furiously (*angrily or crossly*) to think.

✎ **give the game (or show) away** inadvertently (*carelessly*) reveal (*discover*) something secret or concealed.



.....

Greek (B2)

✎ **it's all Greek to me** I can't understand or get it at all, *it's actually all Greek to me!* informal.



.....

get (B2)

get at /to the hard of the matter to reach the main point or get to the point.

In a meeting if you want to go straight to the main issue, you can say: "I'd like to get to the heart of the matter".



Grindstone (C1)

keep your nose to the grindstone work hard and incessantly (*nonstop, constantly or continually*).
(Syn. **burn the midnight oil**).



Ground (C1)

✍ **break new (or fresh) ground** do something innovative (*new, novel or modern*) which is considered an advance (*enrichment, enhancement or improvement*) or positive benefit.

✍ **cut the ground from/under someone's feet** do something which leaves someone without a reason or justification (*explanation or clarification*) for their actions or opinions, informal.

✍ **get in on the ground floor** become part of an enterprise (*trade or skill*) in its early stages, informal.

✍ **get off the ground** (or **get something off the ground**) cause to start happening or functioning successfully.

✍ **go to ground** (of a fox or other animal) enter its earth or burrow (hole) to hide, especially when being hunted. (of a person) hide or become inaccessible (*unreachable*), usually for a prolonged (*continued*) period.

✍ **on the ground** in a place where real and practical work is done.



Guest (C1)

✍ **be my guest** please do, informal.



Half (A1)

 **half a chance** the slightest (*least*) opportunities (*chances, openings, prospects*), informal.



.....

half a loaf not as much as you want but better than nothing (zero, nil, zilch, zippo, (n)aught, nix or nada).



.....

Hand (A2)

 **hand in glove** in close collusion (*involvement, agreement*) or association (*connotation or meaning*).



.....

 **live (from) hand to mouth** satisfying only your immediate (*urgent, direct*) needs because of lack (*shortage, deficiency, scarcity or insufficiency*) of money for future plans and investments (*saving*).



.....

Hit (B1)

 **hit the nail on the head** state (check, verify, authenticate or confirm) the truth exactly.

Find exactly the right answer.



.....

 **hit the road** set off/ out on a journey; depart, informal.

Set off down the road on your bike. Set off on a round -the-world cruise.



.....

 **hit the sack** go to bed, informal.



.....

Hitch (B2)

 **hitch horses together** get on well together; act in harmony (*accord or synchronisation*), US.



.....

 **hitch your wagon to a star** make use of powers higher than your own.



.....

Hookey (C1)

 **play hookey** stay away from school without permission (*excuse, clarification or explanation*), US.
play truant (*absentee*), Uk, informal.



.....

Horses (C1)

 **horses for courses** different people are suited (well-matched or apt) to different things or situations.



.....

 **eat like a horse** eat heartily (*energetically or vigorously*) and greedily (*voraciously, insatiably, avidly*).



.....

 **frighten the horses** cause consternation (*anxious, anxiety*) or dismay (*panic*); shock.



.....

a horse of another (or different) colour a thing significantly (*considerably or noticeably*) different.



.....

Humble (C1)

 **eat humble pie** make a humble (*modest, meek or timid*) apology and accept humiliation (*disgrace, shame, degradation or indignity*).



.....

Hump (C1)

 **live on your hump** be self-sufficient and independent (*autonomous or self-governing*), informal.



.....

Ice (A1)

 **break the ice** do or say something to relieve (*reduce, ease, lessen*) tension (*pressure, worry, anxiety or concern*) or get conversation started at the start of a party or when people meet for the first time.



Imitation (A2)

 **imitation is the sincerest form of flattery** copying someone or something is an implicit (*implied or indirect*) way of paying them a compliment (*tribute, admire, congratulate or praise*), proverb.



Improve (B1)

 **improve the shining hour** make good use of time; make the most of your time, literary (*scholarly, academic or bookish*).



Indian (B1)

 **Indian summer** a period of dry, warm weather occurring (*happening or appearing*) in late autumn. A tranquil (*calm*) or productive period in someone's later years.



Inside out (B2)

 **know someone or something inside out** know someone or something very thoroughly (*fully*).



 **turn something inside out** turn the inner (*inside, central*) surface of something outwards. Change something utterly (*completely*).

"My every preconception (bias, prejudice) about Renaissance tapestry (*wall-hanging, embroidery, sampler*) had been turned inside out".



Insult (B2)

 **add insult to injury** do or say something that makes a bad or displeasing (*nasty, unpleasant, offensive, distressing, upsetting, disturbing or disappointing*) situation even worse.



Iron (B2)

 **have many (or *other*) irons in the fire** have many (*or a range, series of*) options or courses of action available or be involved in many activities or commitments (duties) at the same time.



Itching (C1)

 **an itching palm** an avaricious (*materialistic*) or greedy (*insatiable, desirous or wanting*) nature.



Itchy (C1)

 **get (or have) itchy feet** be restless; have a strong urge (*wish, desire, longing or lust*) to travel or move from place to place, informal.



Incline (C1)

 **incline your ear** listen favourably and carefully, literary.
(Syn. **read my lips** listen to me carefully).



Ivory (C1)

 **tickle (or *tinkle*) the ivories** play the piano, informal.
The ivories are the white keys of the piano, traditionally made of ivory.





Jack (A1,2)

✎ **before you can say Jack Robinson (or knife)** very quickly (*suddenly or abruptly*), informal.



.....

✎ **jackaroo** a man/ **jillaroo** a woman who is learning to work on a sheep or cattle farm, Australian English.



.....

✎ **Jack of all trades and master of none** a person who can do many different types of work, but has special skill (*ability, talent, skillfulness or competence*) in none.



.....

Jam (B1)

✎ **have jam on it** have some additional quickly or suddenly pleasure, ease, or advantage, informal.



.....

✎ **jam tomorrow** a pleasant thing which is often promised but rarely (*hardly*) materialises, British.



.....

Jewel (B1)

the jewel in the (or **someone's**) **crown** the most attractive or tempting (*appealing, likeable, gorgeous*) or successful (*effective, applicable or efficient*) part of something.



.....

Joy (B1)

 **full of the joys of spring** lively and cheerful (*jolly, joyful, merry, jovial or fun-loving*)



.....

 **wish someone joy** used to congratulate (*acknowledge, admit, praise, applaud or cheer*) someone on something. British, chiefly ironic.



.....

Judas (B2)

a **Judas kiss** an act of betrayal (*duplicity, disloyalty, unfaithfulness or infidelity*) especially one disguised (*hidden, concealed, mysterious, secretive or shadowy*) as a gesture (*sign or act*) of friendship.



.....

Jovial (B2)

 **jovial chap or chappy** cheerful and friendly man in a good mood or enjoyable thing because of being friendly (*welcoming, approachable*) and pleasant (*amiable, cordial, likeable, jovial or warm*).
A jovial time/evening/chat which causes pleasure (liking, indulgence or understanding)



.....

Jury (C1)

 **the jury is out** a decision has not yet been reached on a controversial (*irritable, contentious, combative, argumentative or quarrelsome*) subject.

1998, New Scientist: *The jury is still out*, but it looks as if there are no significant changes in the cosmic dust flux during past climate cycles.



.....

Justice (C1)

 **do someone or something justice** (or **do justice to someone or something**) treat or represent someone or something with due (*proper, suitable, fitting or correct*) fairness or appreciation (*gratefulness, thankfulness or gratitude*).



.....

 **do yourself justice** perform (*accomplish, implement, undertake, complete*) as well as you are able to. Try or give your best.



.....



Keep (A1)

 **keep open house** provide general hospitality (*welcome, friendliness, cordiality or amiability*).
1950, Elizabeth Goudge *Gentian Hill*: "All well-to do Devon farmhouses keep open house on Christmas Eve".



Keen (A2)

 **keen as mustard** *extremely* eager or enthusiastic (*fervent, zealous, excited and passionate*).
British, informal.
Keen is used here to mean 'operating on the senses like a sharp instrument'.



Kettle (B1)

 **A pretty (or fine) kettle of fish** an awkward (difficult) state of affairs, informal.
Late 18th-century Scotland, a kettle of fish was a large saucepan of fish, typically freshly caught salmon, cooked at Scottish picnics, and the term was also applied to the picnic itself.
By the mid 18th century, the novelist Henry Fielding was using the phrase to mean 'a muddle (mess, confuse or mix-up of things).'



Kissy-face (B2)

 **play kissy-face (or kissy-kissy) behave** in an excessively (*very, extremely, tremendously, awfully*) friendly way in order to gain favour (*kindness, courtesy, consideration or attention*), informal.



Kitten (B2)

 **have kittens** be extremely nervous or upset (*distressed, distraught, upset or hurt*). British, informal.



Knee (B2)

 **at your mother's (or father's) knee** at an early age.



 **bring someone or something to their knees** reduce someone or something to a state of weakness or submission (*obedience or agreement*).

1997, *Sunday Times*: "Doom and gloom merchants everywhere are predicting all kinds of plagues befalling the world's computer systems anytime now, bringing business to its knees".



Knife-edge (C1)

 **on a knife-edge (or razor's edge)** in a tense (*anxious, stressed*) situation, especially one finely balanced between success and failure.

2000, *South African Times UK*: "With the game poised on a knife-edge, the Wallabies won a ruck and George Gregan's pass was floated to the flyhalf, who picked his line perfectly".



knot (C1)

 **at a rate of knots** very fast. British, informal.

A knot here is a nautical (marine, naval, navigational) unit of speed, equal to one nautical or sailing mile per hour.



 **tie the knot** get married, informal.
(Syn. go/down the aisle).



 **tie someone (up) in knots** make someone completely confused, baffled or bewildered, informal.
1996, *Daily Star*: "It looks like an open and shut case until the brilliant QC starts getting the prosecution (trial or court- martial) witnesses tied up in knots".



Lamb (A1)

 **like a lamb to the slaughter** as a helpless victim (*prey, target, sufferer or case*).

This expression is found in the Bible in Isaiah 53:7: 'he is brought *as a lamb to the slaughter*', an image later applied to Jesus.



Language (A1)

 **speak the same language** understand one another as a result of shared opinions and values.

1990, *New Age journal*: "I translate between Greenpeace-speak and record industry-speak, because the two groups just don't speak the same language".



Last word (A2)

 **have the last word** 1. make or have the right to make the final decision or pronouncement (*announcement, declaration, statement, testimonial or recommendation*) about something.
2. carry out a final and conclusive (*final, decisive, sure*) action in a process or course of events.



 **last but not least** last in order of mention or occurrence (*occasion*) but not of importance.



 **(drinking) in the last chance saloon** (B1)

having been allowed one final opportunity to improve or get something right, informal.

1998, *Times*: "Gascoigne has finally found himself in the last chance saloon".



Lemon (B1)

 **the answer's a lemon** the response or outcome is unsatisfactory (*in, - unacceptable*), informal.

A lemon here is used to represent a bad, inadequate, or second-rate thing, possibly because the lemon is the least valuable symbol that can be achieved by playing a fruit machine.



Level (B2)

 **do your level** do your utmost (*greatest, highest or supreme*).

Make all possible efforts. Try (or give) your best.



 **a level playing field** a situation in which everyone has a fair and equal chance of succeeding.

1998, *Times*: "Most damagingly (*harmfully*), the Brusselscentred concept of the level playing field had also proved a wonderfully convenient alibi (*explanation, self-justification*) for protectionist lobbies".



 **on the level** honest and truthful (*honest, straightforward, trustful or authentic*), informal.



Love (C1)

 **for the love of Mike** used to accompany an exasperated (annoying or irritating) request or to express dismay (sadness, depress, grief, anguish, fear, angst or sorrow), British informal.

Mike is perhaps used here as a generic name for an Irishman; compare with mickey in take the mickey out of (at MICKEY).



 **love me, love my dog** if you love someone, you must accept everything about them, even their faults, proverb.



 **love's young dream** 1. the relationship of young lovers.

2. the object of someone's love.

3. a man regarded as a perfect lover.



Lurch (C1)

 **leave someone in the lurch** leave an associate or friend abruptly and without assistance or support when they are in a difficult situation. Lurch as a noun meaning 'a state of discomfort (anxious, nervous, worried, apprehensive or hesitant) dates from the mid 16th century, but it is now used only in this idiom. 1987, Eileen Dunlop: "the House on the Hill what have Gilmores ever done but leave her in the lurch? Poor Jane, she just can't run the risk of being hurt again".



Mad (A1)

 **mad as a hatter** (hatmaker) or a **March hare** (rabbit) completely (*wholly*) crazy, informal.

In this expression, a hatter refers to Lewis, Carroll's character, the Mad Hatter, in Alice's Adventures in Wonderland (1865).

It is thought that hatters suffered from the effects of mercury poisoning (intoxication) because of the fumes (gasses, vapors or smokes) arising from the use of mercurous in the manufacture of felt hats.

The March hare version refers to the way hares leap (spring or jump) about during the breeding (upbringing) season (time, period or term).



.....

 **mad as a (cut) snake** crazy or eccentric (odd, *unusual, strange or weird*). Australian informal.



.....

Map (B1)

 **off the map** (of a place) very distant or remote (*far-off, out-of-the-way, faraway, aloof or inaccessible*). (Syn. **off the beaten track**).



.....

 **put something on the map** make something prominent (*noticeable, obvious*) or significant.



.....

 **wipe something off the map** obliterates (*remove, destroy, demolish*) something totally (*entirely*).



.....

Marble (B2)

 **lose your marbles** go insane (mad); become irrational or senile (*confused or perplexed*), informal. Marbles as a term for 'a person's mental faculties' probably originated as early 20th century. American slang. The underlying reference is apparently to the children's game played with multicoloured glass balls. 1998 Spectator.

At least, that is how I recall the event, but I am losing my marbles.



 **pick up your marbles and go home** withdraw (*remove, leave or depart*) petulantly (*impatiently*) from an activity after having suffered a setback, informal, chiefly US. The image here is of a child who refuses sulkily or glumily (*sulk: moody: shorttempered*) to continue playing the game of marbles.



Mud (B2)

 **someone's name is mud** someone is in disgrace or unpopular (disliked, hated or detested), informal.

Mud was a colloquial term for a fool from the early 8th century to the late 19th century. 1998, Times. Just because I smoked a few *lousy* (*useless, crummy, budget or inexpensive*) cigarettes every hour for 25 years, *my name is henceforth* (*thus, therefore, consequently*) *mud* in the insurance business.



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Muddy (C1)

 **muddy the waters** make an issue or a situation more confusing and harder to understand by introducing complications. The figurative use of muddy to mean 'make something hard to perceive or understand' occurs in Shakespeare. Muddy the waters dates from the mid 19th century.



Muchness (C1)

 **much of a muchness** very similar; nearly the same, informal.
Muchness, used in Middle English in the sense 'large size, bigness', is now very seldom used outside this expression, which dates from the early 18th century.



Mushroom (C1)

 **like mushrooms** suddenly and in great numbers (*plentiful, abundant, ample, lavish*).



Music (C1)

 **music to your ears** something that is very pleasant or gratifying (*rewarding, satisfying*) to hear or discover.



Mutton (C1)

mutton dressed as lamb a middle-aged or old woman dressed in a style suitable for a much younger woman. British informal.

1988, in Salman Rushdie's *the Satanic Verses*: "Mutton dressed as lamb, fifty plus and batting her eyelashes like an eighteen-year-old".



Naked (A1)

 **the naked truth** the plain (*basic, pure, simple, normal, ordinary or conventional*) truth (*fact or reality*), without concealment (*disguise, mask, cover or concealment*) or embellishment (*exaggeration, hyperbole, overemphasis or overstatement*).



Nana (A2)

 **do (or lose) your nana** loses your temper (*anger or mood*). Australian, informal.



 **off your nana** mentally deranged (*unbalanced, upset or offended*), Australian, informal.
Nana in these idioms is probably short for banana; compared with go bananas (get mad or very angry)



New York (B1)

 **a New York minute** a very short time; a moment, (*just for a sec. or mo.*), US, informal.



Nine (B1)

 **dressed (up) to the nines** dressed very smartly (*trimly, tidily or neatly*) or elaborately (*richly*).
This expression may come from the 99th Wiltshire Regiment, a military unit who were noted for their smart appearance.



 **nine to five** typical office hours. *compare with anti-social hours.*



 **nine times out of ten** on nearly every occasion (*occurrence, incidence, manifestation or sign*).



Numbered (B2)

 **someone's or something's days are numbered** someone or something will not survive (live) or remain in a particular (*certain, actual or specific*) position for much longer.



Nut (C1)

 **be nuts about (or on)** be very enthusiastic (*excited, keen or eager*) about or fond of (interested in) sth., informal.

1934, in Dashiell Hammett's The Thin Man: "she told me she had this job with Wynant and he was nuts about her and she was sitting pretty".



 **do your nut** be extremely angry or agitated (*nervous, restless, panicky or jumpy*). British informal. *In this phrase and in off your nut below, nut means 'head'.*



 **off your nut** out of your mind, crazy (*stupid, outlandish, eccentric, odd or unusual*), informal.



Nutshell (C1)

 **in a nutshell** in the fewest possible words.



Nutty (C1)

 **be nutty about** like very much, informal.



 **nutty as a fruitcake** completely *crazy (stupid, outlandish, eccentric or unusual)*, informal. *Nutty meaning 'mad or crazy' dates from the late 19th century, and this phrase, punning on the sense of 'full of nuts', from the 1930s.*

Fruitcake is also used on its own to mean 'a crazy or eccentric person'.





Odd (A1)

- ✎ **odd one (or man) out** 1. Someone or something that is different to the others.
2. someone who is not able to fit easily or comfortably into a group or society (*union*).



Off (A1)

- ✎ **off and on** intermittently (*irregularly, occasionally, erratically*); now and then; from time to time; now and again, discontinuously.



- ✎ **off and running** making good progress. Improving (*advancing or proceeding, developing, rising, cultivating, fostering, evolving or growing*).



Oil (A2)

- ✎ **burn the midnight oil**: work hard by being awake late at night.



- ✎ **no oil painting** not very attractive (*likeable, appealing, good-looking or eye-catching*), British, informal.



- ✎ **oil and water** two elements, factors, or people that do not agree or blend together.
Water and oil are two liquid substances that repel (resist, counterattack) each other and cannot be mixed together.



- ✎ **oil the wheels** help something go smoothly (*effortlessly, easily, efficiently, ably or skillfully*).
Squeaking wheel gets the oil.



One-horse (B1)

 **one-horse race** a contest (*match, game, race, tourney or event, competition or tournament*) in which one candidate or competitor is clearly superior to all the others and seems certain to win. 1995, Sun Baltimore: "The Rangers, who have won six of their last seven, could make it a one-horse race in a hurry (*rush or rushness, haste or hastiness, quickness, dash or run*).



.....

 **one-horse town** a small town with few and poor facilities (*conveniences or amenities*), informal.



.....

Onion (B2)

 **Know your onions** be fully knowledgeable about something. British, informal. *Onions* is perhaps short for rhyming slang onion rings, meaning 'things'. The phrase dates from the 1920s.



.....

Omnious (B2)

 **omnious sound** of an engine on the road or ominous silence among the board of directors whether your contract is going to be renewed or terminated.



.....

Opener (B2)

 **for openers** to start with; first of all (*initially, primarily, firstly, principally or mainly*), informal.



.....

Order (C1)

 **orders are orders** commands (*orders, instructions, rules or procedures*) must be obeyed, however much you may disagree (*differ, vary, oppose or counter*) with them.



 **out of order** 1. not in normal sequence.
2. (of a machine) not working. 3. (of behaviour) improper (*rude, incorrect, unfitting or in, -unacceptable*), informal.



Other half (C1)

 **how the other half lives** used to express or allude (*refer or indicate*) to the way of life of a different group in society, especially a wealthier (*richer or better-off*) one. British, informal.



Over-egg (C1)

 **over-egg the pudding (or cake)** go too far in embellishing (*exaggerating*) or doing something.



Overplay (C1)

 **overplay your hand** spoil (*ruin or risk*) your chance of success through excessive confidence in your position. In a card game, if you overplay your hand, you play a hand on the basis of an overestimate (overrate, overvalue, misjudge, miscalculate or mistake) of your likelihood of winning.



Pp

Pain (A1)

 **no pain no gain** suffering is necessary in order to achieve (*get, reach or attain*) something.
(Syn. **Rome was not built in a day**, proverb; **burn the midnight oil**, idiom).



Ps and Qs (A2)

 **mind your Ps and Qs** be careful to behave well and avoid (*prevent*) giving offence.
Various suggestions have been made concerning the significance of P and Q. One obvious one is that a child learning to read or write might have difficulty in distinguishing (deciding or differentiating) between the two tailed letters p and q. Another is that printers had to be very careful not to confuse the two letters when setting type.



 **Pack your bag or bags** put your belongings in a bag or suitcase in preparation for your imminent (close or very soon) departure.



 **pack it in** stop what you are doing, informal.



Paint (B1)

 **paint the town red** go out and enjoy yourself flamboyantly (*showily*: attractively or charmingly) and in a fancy (*impressively*) colourful manner (*style, mode or fashion*), informal.



Panic button (B1)

 **press (or push or hit) the panic button** responds to a situation by panicking (scaring, frightening) or taking emergency measures, informal.

A panic button is a security device which can be used to raise (increase) the alarm in an emergency.



Pancake (B1)

 **flat as a pancake** completely flat (*even or straight*).



.....

Pea (B2)

 **like peas** or **like as two peas in a pod** so similar as to be indistinguishable or exactly the same.



.....

 **peaches and cream** (of a girl's complexion meaning face) of a cream colour with *downy* (*soft like feather, fluffy like wool or fur*) pink cheeks.



.....

Poor (C1)

 **poor as a church mouse** (or as church mice) extremely poor.

Church mice may be considered to be particularly poor or deprived in that they do not have the opportunity to find pickings from a kitchen or larder, pantry or buttery (small storeroom for storing foods or wines for a household).



.....

 **poor little rich girl** (or **boy**) a wealthy (rich, affluent, well-off, well-heeled or well-to-do) young person whose money brings them no contentment, satisfaction or gladness (*often used as an expression of mock sympathy*).



.....

Pudding (C1)

 **in the pudding club** pregnant. British, informal.



.....

Putty (C1)

 **be like putty** (or **wax**) **in someone's hands** be easily manipulated or dominated by someone.

1975, in Sam Selvon's *Moses Ascending*: "Bob was there, and I gave him a little bit of *crumpet* (*thick cooked soft cake*), and afterwards he was like putty in my hand".



.....



Q.T. (A1)

 **on the q.t.** *secretly or secret; without anyone noticing. Informal. q.t. is a humorous abbreviation of quiet.*



Queer (A2)

 **queer someone's pitch** spoil someone's chances of doing something, specially secretly or maliciously (*unkindly, cruelly, unfeelingly or inhumanly, coldly or unsympathetically*), British.



 **In queer street** in difficulty, especially by being in debt. *British, informal and dated (old-fashioned).*
Queer Street was an imaginary street where people in difficulties were supposed to live.



Quid (B1)

 **be quids in** be in position where you have profited or are likely to profit from something.
British, informal.
Quids is *only found in this phrase, the normal plural being quid.*



Quits (B2)

 **call it quits** 1. agree or acknowledge that terms are now equal, especially on the settlement of a debt.
2. decide to abandon (*leave*) an activity or venture, especially so as to cut your losses.



Quote (C1)

 **quote — unquote** used parenthetically (is said addition to the 1st part) when speaking to indicate the beginning and end (or just the beginning) of a statement or passage that you are repeating, especially to emphasize the speaker's detachment (*impartiality or neutrality*) from or disagreement (*difference, divergence or variance*) with the original, informal.



Rr

Race (A1)

 **be in the race** have a chance of success (*victory, triumph, feat or achievement*).
Australian & New Zealand, informal.



Rain (A2)

 **it never rains but it pours** misfortunes (*bad luck, disasters, calamities*) or difficult situations tend (*manage, be possible*) to follow each other in rapid succession (*progression, series, sequence or chain*) or to arrive all at the same time.



 **rain cats and dogs** rain very hard.



Read (B1)

 **read between the lines** look for or discover a meaning that is hidden or implied rather than explicitly (*openly, clearly, obviously or visibly*) stated.

In 1994, American Spectator: "Those familiar with the virulent (infectious, contagious) animosity (hostility) in this element of black racism can read between the lines to get a fuller picture".



 **read someone like a book** be able to understand someone's thoughts and motives (*reasons, causes, purposes or intentions*) clearly or easily.



 **read my lips** listen carefully.

It is used to emphasise the importance of the speaker's words or the earnestness (*seriousness, importance or significance*) of their intent (*focus or emphasis*). North American, informal.



River (B2)

 **sell someone down the river** betray someone, especially so as to benefit yourself, informal.



.....

Rob (C1)

 **rob Peter to pay Paul** take something away from one person to pay another, leaving the former at a disadvantage; discharge one debt only to incur (*obtain, get, achieve, attain or accomplish*) another.



.....

Rome (C1)

 **all roads lead to Rome** there are many different ways of reaching the same goal or conclusion.



.....

 **Rome was not built in a day** a complex or ambitious task is bound (*sure, certain, assured, guaranteed, promised or failsafe*) to take a long time and should not be rushed (*swift or rapid*). This warning against rashness and impatience has been current in English since the mid 16th century.



.....

 **when in Rome do as the Romans do** when abroad or in an unfamiliar environment you should adopt (*accept, admit, consent, agree or approve*) the customs or behaviour of those around you.



.....

Sabbath (A1)

 **a sabbath day's journey** a short and easy journey (*trip, voyage, adventure, tour, crossing*).



Sack (A2)

 **hit the sack** go to bed, informal.



Salad (B1)

 **Your salad days** 1. The period when you are young and inexperienced (*green, inexperienced, unsophisticated, amateurish, sloppy or unprofessional*).

2. The peak or heyday (*prime, zenith, top or summit*) of something.



Scout (B2)

 **Scout's honour** used to indicate that you have the honourable (*worthy or noble*) standards associated with Scouts, and so will stand by a promise or tell the truth, informal.

A Scout is a member of the Scout Association, an organization for boys founded in 1908 by Lord Baden-Powell with the aim of developing their character by training them in self-sufficiency (autonomy, independence, sovereignty) and survival (existence or endurance) techniques in the outdoors.



Sydney (C1)

 **Sydney or the bush** all or nothing (*nil, zilch, zippo, nada, n, - aught or null*). Australian, informal.



Syllable (C1)

 **in words of one syllable** using very simple language; expressed plainly (apparently, obviously).





Tandem (A1)

 **in tandem** 1. one behind another. 2. Alongside (*beside or near*) each other; together.



.....

Tango (A2)

 **it takes two to tango** both parties involved in a situation or argument are equally responsible for it, informal.



.....

Thinking (B1)

 **put on your thinking cap** meditate (*ponder, consider or contemplate*), think on a problem, informal.



.....

Thumb (B2)

 **be all fingers and thumbs** be clumsy and unable to finish a task properly (*suitably or accurately*).



.....

Tiger (C1)

 **have a tiger by the tail** or **have a wolf by the ears** have embarked (*entered or boarded*) on a course of action which proves unexpectedly difficult but which cannot easily or safely be abandoned (*stopped, controlled or restricted*).



.....

Two-way (C1)

 **two-way street** a situation or relationship between two people or groups in which action is required from both parties; something that works both ways.



.....

Uu

Ugly (A1)

 **an ugly duckling** a young person who turns out to be beautiful or talented (*gifted, able, brilliant*) against all expectations (*anticipations, believes, supposes, assumes or judges*).



Under (A2)

 **under age**; not yet adult, according to the law.



Upgrade (B1)

 **on the upgrade** improving or progressing (*advancing or proceeding*)



Uptake (B2)

 **be quick (or slow) on the uptake** be quick (or slow) to understand something, informal.



Upper (C1)

 **have (or gain) the upper hand** have or gain (*profit, achieve, attain, get or succeed*) advantage (*benefit, grand or value*) or control (*power, rule, domination or command*) over someone or something



 **on your uppers** extremely (*vastly, tremendously, immensely, massively*) short of money, informal.





Vain (A1)

 **take someone's name in vain** use someone's name in a way that shows a lack of respect.



.....

Variety (A2)

 **variety is the spice of life** new and exciting experience make life more interesting.
That gives all its flavour (*taste, smack, relish or enjoy, smell, aroma*).



.....

Virtue (B1)

 **make a virtue of necessity** derive (*have, take, get, gain, receive or obtain*) some credit or benefit (*advantage, value or gain*) from an unwelcome obligation.



.....

Voice (B2)

 **a voice in the wilderness** an unheeded (*unnoticed, disregarded or ignored*) advocate (*support, back, help or assist*) of reform.



.....

Vote (C1)

 **vote with your feet** indicate (*mean or show, imply or entail, denote, express or convey*) an opinion (*view, estimation or assessment, guess, belief or judgement*) by being present or absent.
1982, Christian Order: "Uncounted thousands have 'voted with their feet', i.e., have left the Church".



.....



Wake-up (A1)

 **be a wake-up (or awake up)** be fully alert or aware. Australian & New Zealand, informal.



Wall (A2)

 **drive someone up the wall** make someone very irritated or angry, informal.



Wish (B1)

 **if wishes were horses, beggars would ride** if you could achieve your aims simply by wishing for them, life would be very easy, proverb.

This expression was first recorded in the early 17th century as a Scottish proverb.



 **the wish is father to the thought** we believe a thing because we wish it to be true.



Whoop (B2)

 **whoop it up** 1. enjoy yourself or celebrate in a noisy way, usually in a group.
2. create or show excitement or enthusiasm. US, informal.



Wolf (B2)

 **cry wolf** call for help when it is not needed; raise a false alarm.



 **keep the wolf from the door** have enough money to avert (*avoid, prevent, turn away*) hunger or starvation.



Workman (C1)

✎ **a bad workman blames his tools** someone who has done something badly will seek to lay the blame on the equipment rather than admit to their own lack of skill, proverb.



Writing (C1)

✎ **the writing is on the wall** there are clear signs that something unpleasant or unwelcome is going to happen.



Written (C1)

✎ **be (or have something) written all over your face** used to convey that the presence of a particular quality or feeling is clearly revealed (*shown or announced*) by a person's expression, informal.





Yarn (A1)

 **spin a yarn** tell a story, especially a long and complicated one.

A yarn is one of the long fibres from which a rope is made.



Yes (A2)

 **yes and no** partly and partly not.

1981, Brian Murphy: "The Enigma Variations 'Do you believe that if you continue seeing me, you'll be damned?' 'Yes and no'".



Year (B1)

 **for donkey's years** for a very long time, informal.

For donkey's years is a pun referring to the length of a donkey's ears and playing on a former pronunciation of years as ears.



Yesterday (B2)

 **yesterday's man** a man, especially a politician, whose career is finished or past its peak.



 **yesterday's news** a person or thing that is no longer of interest.



You (C1)

 **you and yours** you together with your loved ones and close friends.

1937, American Home: "So, it's natural... to take good care of the home that gives you and yours this steadfast (unwavering or firm, royal, persistent, unfaltering, determined) protection".





« I know of no single formula for **success**. But over the years I have observed that some attributes of leadership are universal and are often about finding ways of encouraging people to combine their efforts, their talent, their insights, their enthusiasm and their inspiration to **work together**. »

-HM Queen Elizabeth II

My deep and sincere appreciation to all of you as the lovely SLS mates!

Do your level to Fancy your chances!

CHEERS

DAVID LASHGARI



success language school

Erfolg ist kein Zufall



I always rip out the last page
of a book. That way, it doesn't
have to end. I hate endings.

The Doctor

quotation

sls

success language school

Erfolg ist kein Zufall

THE END