

101+ Idioms with Meaning and Examples

20 Most Commonly Used Idioms in English

S.No.	Idioms	Meaning
1.	<u>Beat around the bush</u>	To avoid talking about what's important
2.	<u>Get your act together</u>	Get organized and do things effectively
3.	<u>Hit the sack</u>	Go to sleep
4.	<u>Your guess is as good as mine</u>	I do not know
5.	<u>Good things come to those who wait</u>	To have patience
6.	<u>Back against the wall</u>	Stuck in a difficult circumstance with no escape
7.	<u>Up in arms</u>	Being grumpy or angry about something
8.	<u>Scrape the barrel</u>	Making the most of the worst situations or things
9.	<u>Burn your boats/bridges</u>	Doing something that makes it impossible to go back to the original state.
10.	Break fresh/new ground	Doing something that has never been done before
11.	<u>Sell like hot cakes</u>	Quick sellout
12.	<u>Run around in circles</u>	Putting efforts into something that is not a worthwhile result
13.	<u>On cloud nine</u>	Being very happy
14.	<u>Left out in the cold</u>	Being ignored
15.	<u>Blow hot and cold</u>	Alternate inconsistently between moods and actions
16.	<u>Cut corners</u>	Doing something in an easier and least expensive manner
17.	Boil the ocean	Taking up an almost impossible or overly ambitious project

18.	Keep an ear to the ground	Staying informed about everything
19.	<u>Eat like a horse</u>	Eating too excessively
20.	<u>A snowball effect</u>	The aspect of momentum in every event and how they build upon each other

15 Most Useful Idioms for Competitive Exams

1. **At First Blush** - First sight
Example: At first blush, the proposal seems promising, but upon closer examination, its flaws become apparent.
2. **A wet blanket** - A person who discourages enjoyment or enthusiasm
Example: Sarah's constant pessimism and negative comments about potential challenges threw a wet blanket on their celebration.
3. **Your Guess is as Good as Mine** - To have no idea about anything
Example: "Will this flight reach on time?" "Your guess is as good as mine."
4. **Tuck in** - To put something in a secure place, to start eating, or to encourage someone to start eating something.
Example: Mother cooked some delicious food and asked us to tuck in.
5. **Speak of the Devil** - The person you're talking about shows up at the exact time
Example: I hope he doesn't show up to the office today - oh, speak of the devil, here he comes.
6. **Not a spark of decency** - No manners
Example: The class showed not a spark of decency by refusing to stand up when their principal entered the classroom.
7. **In the heat of the Moment** - Overwhelmed by what is happening at the moment
Example: I'm afraid I was very arrogant; I was caught up in the heat of the moment.
8. **Hear it on the grapevine** - To hear rumours
Example: I heard on the grapevine that my brother-in-law got the promotion, but I don't know much about it."
9. **To cook the books** - To alter facts and figures
Example: Their accountant was charged with cooking the books, and now he's in jail.
10. **Devil's Advocate** - A person who advocates an unpopular cause for the sake of an argument.
Example: I don't believe all that - I was just playing devil's advocate.
11. **A cash cow** - A product or service that generates a lot of revenue for a company.
Example: A singer deemed a *cash cow* for the record label.
12. **Burn the midnight oil** - Work or study hard
Example: I have a big exam tomorrow, so I'll be burning the midnight oil to review all the material."
13. **By fits and starts** - In short periods, not regularly
Example: The project progressed in fits and starts, with periods of intense productivity followed by long periods of inactivity.

14. **Under his thumb** - Under his control
Example: I feel like I'm always under his thumb.
15. **Out of the way** - Strange
Example: Alex realized they were in a tight corner when the client demanded a lower price.

79+ Idioms and Phrases for Advance Vocabulary

1. In for a penny, in for a pound

Meaning: That someone is intentionally investing his time or money for a particular project or task.

Example: When Athlead was booming, Jim was **in for a penny and in for a pound**, that's how dedicated he was.

2. A bird in the hand is better than two in the bush

Meaning: An opportunity in hand, currently, is better than a prospect in the future, because time never repeats itself.

Example: The detective apprehended 3 criminals and saw another one running but didn't chase him, because she knew **a bird in one hand was better than two in the bush**.

3. Chip off the old block

Meaning: A person is similar in behaviour or actions to his parents.

Example: When grandmother saw her grandson collecting coins like her son used to do, she knew he was a **Chip off the old block**.

4. Do unto others as you would have them do unto you

Meaning: Treat people the same way you want to be treated.

Example: I felt Peter was a little cold today towards that homeless man, he should **do unto others as he would have them do unto him**, because who knows about time.

5. Don't cry over spilt milk

Meaning: Don't cry over what has happened as it can not be fixed.

Example: Walter failed his examination but his dad came and said just one thing, "Son, **Don't cry over spilt milk**."

6. Every cloud has a silver lining

Meaning: Bad things one day eventually lead to good things.

Example: See, yesterday you were so morose as your phone was stolen but look at you today, you got a promotion. Is it rightly said that **every cloud has a silver lining**?

7. Beside yourself with joy

Meaning: To be extremely happy.

Example: I can see that you are **beside yourself with joy** on being selected for the job, congratulations.

8. Fair and square

Meaning: Being direct or fair.

Example: To tell you [fair and square](#), I did everything that I was meant to do, but I still feel unfulfilled.

9. Having an Ace up the sleeve

Meaning: Have an advantage that is currently being withheld for future purposes.

Example: Brian kept quiet at the board meeting, who knew he had an **Ace hidden up his sleeve** the whole time?

10. A black sheep

Meaning: Being a disgrace to the family.

Example: They don't talk about Olive anymore, turns out he was the [Black sheep](#) for the family, and he married someone else while he was still married to his fiancé.

11. Hook, line and sinker

Meaning: Doing something or trying to achieve something with thoroughness and passion.

Example: I have set my mind to go through the spreadsheets by Monday and I am working for it [Hook, line and sinker](#).

12. Looking to your laurels

Meaning: Do not be lost in your achievements and lose sight of what is supposed to happen.

Example: Look on your laurels but do not rest on them.

13. Bear a grudge

Meaning: To continue to feel angry or unfriendly toward someone or something because of a particular past incident.

Example: I **Bear a grudge** against him for not taking me into confidence.

14. By the skin of your teeth

Meaning: To just barely get by or make it.

Example: Lester made the dance team [By the skin of his teeth](#), you see the audition gates were about to get closed.

15. Down for the count

Meaning: Tired; giving up.

Example: My pet dog is [down for the count](#) after playing the whole day with the frisbee.

16. Draw the line

Meaning: To stop before a point where something okay gets not okay.

Example: Hey buddy, that's enough, [Draw the line](#) before someone comes and beats you to a pulp.

17. Easier said than done

Meaning: Not as easy as it appears to be.

Example: Listen, losing weight is [easier said than done](#), many people lack commitment.

18. Break a leg

Meaning: Saying good luck to someone.

Example: Hey Barry, it's time for you to get on the stage and present your monologue, [break a leg](#).

19. Up a creek without a paddle

Meaning: In an unlucky situation.

Example: Dan tried to dine and dash yesterday at a Chinese place but he was stopped by the waiters, guess he was [up a creek without a paddle](#) yesterday.

20. Give it a whirl

Meaning: To give something a try.

Example: I am terrified of skydiving, but I think once in my life, I will [give it a whirl](#).

21. Fish out of water

Meaning: To be out of your comfort zone.

Example: Tom felt like a [fish out of water](#) when his girlfriend took him to a Star Wars convention in LA.

22. In the fast lane

Meaning: A life filled with excitement.

Example: When Chris turned forty, he decided to live his life [in the fast lane](#) and quit his job for his hobbies.

23. Go the extra mile

Meaning: To make an extra effort.

Example: He was willing to [go the extra mile](#) for the love of his life, Mia.

24. Snug as a bug in a rug

Meaning: Warm and cosy.

Meaning: The baby looks **as** [snug as a bug in a rug](#) next to her mother.

25. Step up your game

Meaning: To start performing better

Example: Jennifer **better step up her** game if she wants to make big in Basketball.

26. To not see the wood for the trees

Meaning: To be so involved in trivial matters that you don't get the important facts.

Example: He always argues on the silliest topics, it's like **he can't see wood for the trees**.

27. Lose your marbles

Meaning: To go insane.

Example: Our mailman has [lost his marbles](#), every day he drops Mr. Smith's mail on our door.

28. Straight from the Horse's mouth

Meaning: Directly from the person involved.

Example: Listen to the news [straight from the horse's mouth](#), his factory burned down right in front of his eyes.

29. Crying Wolf

Meaning: To ask for help when you don't need it.

Example: You have been a [crying Wolf](#) so many times that no one believes you now.

30. Palm off

Meaning: Pass off something as genuine when it is spurious.

Example: This shopkeeper always [palms off](#) old stock to the customers.

31. Has bigger fish to fry

Meaning: Has more important work to do.

Example: Please don't bother me today with any calls, I **have** [bigger fish to fry](#).

32. Look before you leap

Meaning: Calculate the risks before advancing towards a possibility.

Example: You can't just sell all of your shares when the market is low, [look before you leap](#), Trump is coming tomorrow, and the shares may grow.

33. On thin ice

Meaning: In a precarious or risky situation.

Example: Andy played hooky from work for a week saying he was sick, and now his boss said that he is [on thin ice](#).

34. Play devil's advocate

Meaning: To argue, just for the sake of it.

Example: He was not agreeing to back off as if he was [playing devil's advocate](#).

35. Rain on someone's parade

Meaning: To spoil a moment.

Example: He told his wife that he didn't want to [rain on her parade](#), but they had to shift their vacation dates.

36. Take a rain check

Meaning: Postpone a plan.

Example: He asked me whether I would like to have dinner with his family, but I had a thing so I said, [rain check](#).

37. Take it with a grain of salt

Meaning: Don't take it too seriously.

Example: She tells great tales but we take whatever she says with [a grain of salt](#).

38. Like a cakewalk

Meaning: So easy task.

Example: Everyone took hours to write the code but Adam did it **like a cakewalk**.

39. Throw caution to the wind

Meaning: Take a risk.

Example: The caretaker [threw caution to the wind](#) by taking a sick baby outside.

40. Penny-wise and Pound foolish

Meaning: Careful in trivial matters but wasteful or extravagant in large matters.

Example: That man eats Ramen noodles daily for dinner but for his dog, he throws a big party. He is indeed [penny-wise and pound-foolish](#).

41. The whole nine yards

Meaning: Everything, all the way.

Example: I want to know everything there is to know about this merger, [the whole nine yards](#) of the deal.

42. The best thing since sliced bread

Meaning: A really good invention.

Example: Bluetooth is officially [the best thing since sliced bread](#).

43. Bite off more than you can chew

Meaning: Take on difficult work that is beyond your capabilities.

Example: Andrew told his boss that he would triple the sales but in reality, he [bit off more than he can chew](#) and now all of us are in trouble.

44. Play by the ear

Meaning: To improvise.

Example: I just went to Canada and did everything [playing by the ear](#), no itinerary, no schedules.

45. Ignorance is bliss

Meaning: You are better off not knowing some things.

Example: His wife always asked him what it was he did late at night, turned out, he was insider trading. But she knew nothing about this so she won't be convicted, sometimes [ignorance is bliss](#).

46. Put something on ice

Meaning: To put something on hold.

Example: As per the boss' order, Michael has [put his personal matters on ice](#).

47. You can say that again

Meaning: That's absolutely true.

Example: "The Earth is bleeding", [you can say that again, pal](#).

48. Bite the bullet

Meaning: To get something over with because it is inevitable.

Example: Vik was diagnosed with second-stage cancer but he didn't want to get chemotherapy. By the will of his wife, he [bit the bullet](#).

49. Go back to the drawing board

Meaning: Start over.

Example: It is not too late to go [back to the drawing board](#) and assess your mistakes.

50. Call it a day

Meaning: Stop working on something.

Example: Ah! So if we didn't complete the puzzle today, let's [call it a day](#) and come back again tomorrow.

51. Beating Around the Bush

Meaning: To talk about unnecessary things.

Example: When I asked my secretary about the missing file and documents, she was [beating around the bush](#).

52. Be in a Tight Corner

Meaning: Being in a difficult situation.

Example: Radha's low grades despite her constant efforts have put her in a very [tight corner](#).

53. At the 11th Hour

Meaning: At the last moment.

Example: While leaving for Shimla, Harshit kept his mobile phone charger in the bag [at the 11th hour](#).

54. Swan Song

Meaning: The last piece of work of an artist before his/her death.

Example: This painting was M.F Hussain's [swan song](#).

55. Wild Goose Chase

Meaning: Futile Chase

Example: Catching the two thieves together on a jam-packed road was no less than a [wild goose chase](#) for the policeman.

56. Bury the Hatchet

Meaning: Ending a quarrel to make peace.

Example: My father **buried the hatchet** by equally dividing the pasta between me and my sister.

57. To Bell the Cat

Meaning: To face a risk.

Example: He [belled the cat](#) when he was trying to escape the prison.

58. Turn a deaf ear

Meaning: To ignore what someone is saying.

Example: Whenever her mother complained of her excessive use of her mobile phone, Anu turned a deaf ear.

59. At Sea

Meaning: Confused

Example: I was **at sea** while choosing a lehenga for my sister's wedding at Manish Malhotra's store.

60. To be in the doldrums

Meaning: To be in a low spirit

Example: When I got to know about the increasing cases of COVID-19 in my area, I was **in the doldrums**.

61. Hit the books

Meaning: Going to study

Example: I won't be able to come for dinner as I have to hit the books for my half-yearly examinations.

62. Twist someone's arm

Meaning: To convince someone

Example: I was not planning to come to the party but by reminding me of all the good food you **twisted my arm!**

63. Stab someone in the back

Meaning: To betray a close person

Example: My uncle trusted his driver so much but he **stabbed him in the back** when he saw all the money bags.

64. Go cold turkey

Meaning: To quit or stop addictive or dangerous behaviour

Example: No one could believe that my father left eating sweets! He went cold turkey when the doctors told him that he had diabetes.

65. Ring a bell

Meaning: Sounds familiar

Example: Why does this name **ring a bell** in my head? Was this girl in my school?

66. Cut to the chase

Meaning: Getting to the important point

Example: As the submissions were to be made tonight, the boss cut to the chase and asked us to start working.

67. Blow off steam

Meaning: Experiencing strong feelings like anger or stress

Example: Shina went running to blow off steam as she had a huge fight with her mother.

68. Face the music

Meaning: Face the reality

Example: Shikha asked her husband to not run away from the problem and just face the music once!

69. To have sticky fingers

Meaning: Thief

Example: The cashier had a sticky finger, he stole around \$2000 and ran away from the bank

70. Break the bank

Meaning: To be very expensive

Example: I had to break the bank to buy these shoes!

71. Face the music

Meaning: Confront the unpleasant consequences of one's actions.

Example: We have done it and now it's time to face the music!

72. It is always darkest before the dawn

Meaning: Things will get better

Example: I know you have gone through the worst, but remember **it is always darkest before the dawn.**

73. Jump the gun

Meaning: To act on something promptly before the right time

Example: I think I jumped the gun by sending the e-mail before they told me the time.

74. Wear your heart on your sleeve

Meaning: Expressing yourself too openly

Example: She wears her heart on her sleeve and often gets hurt.

75. Cut no ice

Meaning: Fail to make an impact

Example: Your poetry **cuts no ice** with me

76. Light at the end of the tunnel

Meaning: Seeing signs of improvement in the future

Example: I see the **light at the end of the tunnel** for my relationship with her

77. Through thick and thin

Meaning: Through good and bad times

Example: Books and music stay by your side through thick and thin.

78. Cry for the moon

Meaning: To ask for something that is rather difficult

Example: You are crying for the moon for this concert's tickets!

79. Read between the lines

Meaning: Understanding the real message behind something

Example: If you try to read between the lines, her song is actually about Nizagara

80. Pour out one's heart

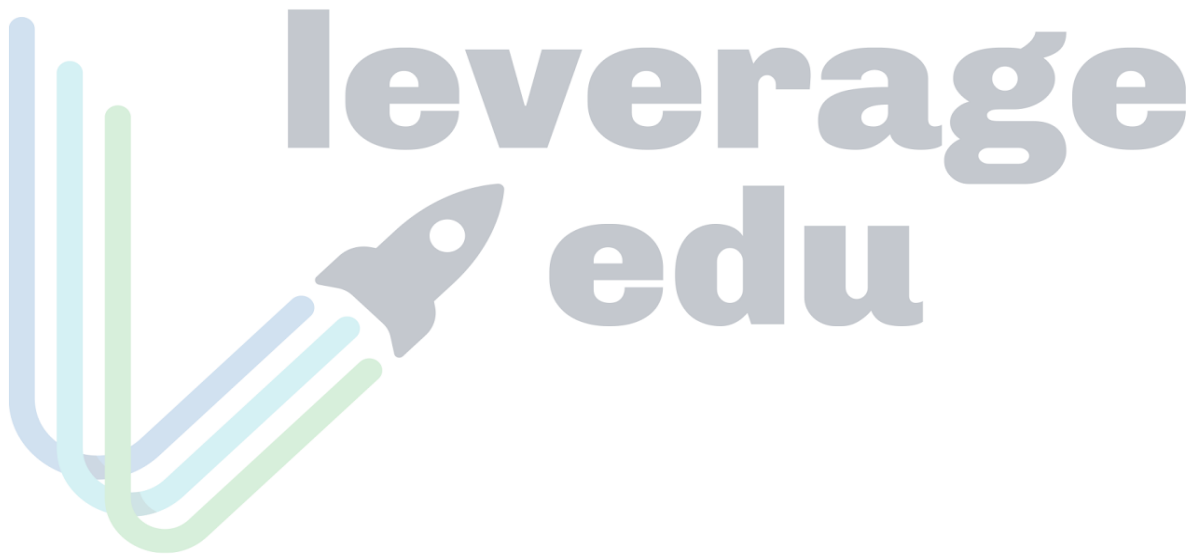
Meaning: To express openly

Example: I can't **pour my heart out to you** if you are too distracted by everything around you.

Top 10 Idioms for Money with Meanings You Should Know!

1. **Break the Bank:**
To spend a lot of money or exceed one's budget.
2. **Rolling in Dough:**
To be very wealthy or have a lot of money.
3. **Penny-Pincher:**
Someone who is extremely frugal and careful with their money.
4. **Cash Cow:**
A consistent and reliable source of income or profits.
5. **Broke the Bank:**
To deplete all available funds; to spend more than expected or affordable.

6. **Cost an Arm and a Leg:**
Something very expensive.
7. **In the Black:**
To be financially successful
8. **On a Shoestring Budget:**
Operating with very limited funds or resources.
9. **Money Talks:**
The power and influence that comes with having a lot of money.
10. **Rob Peter to Pay Paul:**
To take from one source to pay off another, often resulting in a cycle of debt or financial instability



A large, semi-transparent version of the LeverageEdu logo, featuring the stylized rocket ship icon and the text "leverage" above "edu" in a bold, grey, sans-serif font.

