

111

COMMON IDIOMS

ALL THE IDIOMS YOU NEED TO START
SOUNDING FLUENT IN ENGLISH!



Definitions and Transcriptions



Examples in Context



Quizzes to Test Your Knowledge

111 COMMON IDIOMS

Idioms are essential to learn on your English-speaking journey as they enhance language proficiency beyond grammar and vocabulary.

Understanding idiomatic expressions allows you to communicate naturally, grasp cultural nuances and convey meaning effectively. This eBook will aid you in learning some of the most common idioms so you sound fluent and natural in your daily conversations.

HAPPINESS

1. in seventh heaven

IPA Transcription:

/ɪn 'sevənθ 'hevŋ/

Meaning:

extremely happy or joyful

Example:

She was *in seventh heaven* after finding out she was pregnant.

2. to paint the town red

IPA Transcription:

/peɪnt ðə taʊn red/

Meaning:

to go out and enjoy oneself by engaging in lively activities

Example:

After their exams, Oliver and his mates decided *to paint the town red* by hitting as many pubs as they could.

3. over the moon

IPA Transcription:

/'əʊvə ðə mu:n/

Meaning:

extremely delighted or thrilled

Example:

When he received his dream job offer, he was **over the moon** with excitement.

4. on cloud nine

IPA Transcription:

/ɒn klaʊd naɪn/

Meaning:

a state of complete happiness or euphoria

Example:

Tabitha was **on cloud nine** when she found out her mum was coming for a visit.

5. on top of the world

IPA Transcription:

/ɒn tɒp əv ðə wɜːld/

Meaning:

feeling extremely successful, confident and happy

Example:

I just landed the lead part in the play; I'm **on top of the world!**

6. to have a whale of a time

IPA Transcription:

/hæv ə weɪl əv ə taɪm/

Meaning:

to have an extremely enjoyable and exciting time

Example:

During their vacation, they **had a whale of a time** exploring the beautiful beaches.

7. to have the time of one's life

IPA Transcription:

/hæv ðə taɪm əv wʌnz laɪf/

Meaning:

to have an exceptionally enjoyable or memorable experience

Example:

*With the wind in their hair and the ocean beneath their boards, they surfed, **having the time of their lives.***

8. full of the joys of spring

IPA Transcription:

/fʊl əv ðə dʒɔɪz əv sprɪŋ/

Meaning:

to be extremely happy, cheerful or full of enthusiasm

Example:

*Even though the rain showed no signs of letting up, she sat in her cosy chair with her book, **full of the joys of spring.***

9. to make one's day

IPA Transcription:

/meɪk wʌnz deɪ/

Meaning:

to greatly please or delight someone

Example:

*Receiving a handwritten letter from her favourite author **made her day.***

10. in raptures (about/over)

IPA Transcription:

/ɪn 'ræptʃəz ə'baʊt/'əʊvə/

Meaning:

a state of extreme delight or excitement

Example:

The audience was *in raptures over* the hilarious performance by the improv comedy act.

● **HEALTH**

11. to kick the bucket

IPA Transcription:

/kɪk ðə 'bʌkɪt/

Meaning:

to die or pass away

Example:

No, Bob isn't coming to the reunion; he *kicked the bucket* last spring.

12. a clean bill of health

IPA Transcription:

/ə kli:n bɪl əv helθ/

Meaning:

a statement or certification of being in good health

Example:

After a thorough medical examination, the doctor gave me *a clean bill of health*.

13. like death warmed up

IPA Transcription:

/laɪk deθ wɔ:md ʌp/

Meaning:

looking extremely ill or unhealthy

Example:

Sarah caught a terrible cold but went to work anyway despite looking *like death warmed up*.

14. as fit as a fiddle

IPA Transcription:

/əz fɪt əz ə 'fɪdl/

Meaning:

in excellent physical health and condition

Example:

John exercises regularly to remain **as fit as a fiddle** at the ripe old age of 86.

15. to go under the knife

IPA Transcription:

/gəv 'ʌndə ðə naɪf/

Meaning:

to undergo surgery or a medical operation

Example:

Emily was nervous but knew she had **to go under the knife** to have her appendix removed.

16. to have one foot in the grave

IPA Transcription:

/hæv wʌn fʊt ɪn ðə greɪv/

Meaning:

to be near death or in very poor health

Example:

After his heart attack, Tom felt like he **had one foot in the grave** and wasn't about to waste a single moment.

17. to recharge one's batteries

IPA Transcription:

/,ri:'tʃɑ:dʒ wʌnz 'bætəriz/

Meaning:

to take a break and rest to regain energy and strength

Example:

Julia decided it was finally time to have a weekend getaway **to recharge her batteries.**

18. as right as rain

IPA Transcription:

/əz raɪt əz reɪn/

Meaning:

in perfect order or condition; perfectly fine

Example:

Although she had been feeling unwell, after a good night's sleep, she woke up feeling **as right as rain.**

19. as fresh as a daisy

IPA Transcription:

/əz freʃ əz ə 'deɪzi/

Meaning:

feeling or appearing refreshed and energetic

Example:

I felt **as fresh as a daisy** after my long shower, followed by a warm cup of tea.

20. as pale as a ghost/death

IPA Transcription:

/əz peɪl əz ə gəʊst/deθ/

Meaning:

having a very pale complexion, often due to fear, illness or shock

Example:

The loud crashing sound downstairs caused Jane to turn **as pale as a ghost.**

21. a bag of bones

IPA Transcription:

/ə bæɡ əv bæʊnz/

Meaning:

a person who is very thin, typically with prominent bones visible

Example:

She felt like **a bag of bones** after losing weight unintentionally.

WEATHER

22. to kick up a storm

IPA Transcription:

/kɪk ʌp ə stɔ:m/

Meaning:

to cause a significant commotion or controversy

Example:

The scandalous revelation **kicked up a storm** of media frenzy, sparking intense public interest.

23. the calm before the storm

IPA Transcription:

/ðə kɑ:m bɪ'fɔ: ðə stɔ:m/

Meaning:

a period of relative peace or tranquillity before a more turbulent or difficult situation arises

Example:

The office seemed quiet, but everyone knew it was just **the calm before the storm** of the new product launch.

24. to steal someone's thunder

IPA Transcription:

/sti:l 'sʌmwʌnz 'θʌndə/

Meaning:

to take attention or credit away from someone by doing or saying something that outshines or eclipses their achievement or idea

Example:

*Phyllis had prepared an elaborate surprise, but Jan's unexpected announcement **stole her thunder**.*

25. where there's smoke, there's fire

IPA Transcription:

/weə ðeəz sməʊk ðeəz 'faɪə/

Meaning:

if there are signs or indications of a problem or issue, it is likely that a problem or issue exists

Example:

*Rumours about layoffs at the company have been circulating, and **where there's smoke, there's fire**.*

26. to throw caution to the wind

IPA Transcription:

/θrəʊ 'kɔːʃən tə ðə wɪnd/

Meaning:

to act without considering the possible risks or consequences

Example:

*Despite the warnings, he **threw caution to the wind**, quite literally, and went skydiving for the first time.*

27. to chase rainbows

IPA Transcription:

/tʃeɪs 'reɪnbəʊz/

Meaning:

to pursue unrealistic or unattainable goals or dreams

Example:

*Instead of focusing on practical career options, he spent his life **chasing rainbows** and never achieved stability.*

28. a storm in a teacup

IPA Transcription:

/ə stɔ:m ɪn ə 'ti:kʌp/

Meaning:

a situation that is exaggerated or blown out of proportion, making it seem more significant or serious than it actually is

Example:

*The argument between the colleagues turned out to be **a storm in a teacup** and was quickly resolved.*

29. snowed under

IPA Transcription:

/snəʊd 'ʌndə/

Meaning:

overwhelmed with a large amount of work, tasks or responsibilities

Example:

*With the approaching exams, she was completely **snowed under** and had to study late into the night.*

30. to have one's head in the clouds

IPA Transcription:

/hæv wʌnz hed ɪn ðə klaʊdz/

Meaning:

to be daydreaming, not paying attention to or aware of what is happening around oneself

Example:

*During the meeting, Pia seemed **to have her head in the clouds** and didn't contribute much.*

31. to take a rain check

IPA Transcription:

/teɪk ə reɪn tʃek/

Meaning:

to decline an offer or invitation at the present time but suggest doing it at a later date

Example:

Sorry, I can't make it tonight. Can I **take a rain check** and reschedule?

● TRAVEL

32. thirst for adventure

IPA Transcription:

/θɜːst fə əd'ventʃə/

Meaning:

a strong desire or craving for exciting and daring experiences

Example:

My group of friends and I planned an epic road trip to satisfy our collective **thirst for adventure**.

33. off the beaten track

IPA Transcription:

/ɒf ðə 'bi:tɪn træk/

Meaning:

in a remote or less-travelled location, away from the mainstream or popular areas

Example:

They decided to go camping in a small village **off the beaten track** to escape the crowds.

34. to have itchy feet

IPA Transcription:

/hæv 'ɪtʃi fi:t/

Meaning:

to have a strong desire or restlessness to travel or explore new places

Example:

*After staying in the same city for years, we **had itchy feet** and wanted to experience new cultures.*

35. to get away from it all

IPA Transcription:

/get ə'weɪ frəm ɪt ɔ:l/

Meaning:

to escape or take a break from one's usual routine or responsibilities, often in search of relaxation

Example:

*Escaping to a remote tropical island is the perfect way **to get away from it all**.*

36. to hit the road

IPA Transcription:

/hɪt ðə rəʊd/

Meaning:

to begin a journey or trip, usually by driving

Example:

*It's time to **hit the road** and start our next adventure.*

37. hustle and bustle

IPA Transcription:

/'hʌsl ən 'bʌsl/

Meaning:

busy and noisy activity, often associated with a crowded or lively environment

Example:

*The city centre was full of **hustle and bustle** with people rushing around.*

38. to catch some rays

IPA Transcription:

/kætʃ sʌm reɪz/

Meaning:

to spend time in the sun, often to relax or sunbathe

Example:

*They headed to the beach to **catch some rays** and enjoy the warm summer weather.*

39. a mile a minute

IPA Transcription:

/ə maɪl ə 'mɪnɪt/

Meaning:

at a very fast or rapid pace; quickly and energetically

Example:

*She talks **a mile a minute** but always has something interesting to say.*

40. in the same boat

IPA Transcription:

/ɪn ðə seɪm bəʊt/

Meaning:

in the same situation as others; facing a common challenge or circumstance

Example:

*We may have different backgrounds, but during tough times, we're all **in the same boat**.*

41. right up one's street

IPA Transcription:

/raɪt ʌp wʌnz stri:t/

Meaning:

perfectly suited or aligned with one's interests or preferences

Example:

*With her passion for cooking, this culinary class is going to be **right up her street**.*

● TIME

42. round the clock

IPA Transcription:

/raʊnd ðə klɒk/

Meaning:

all day and all night without stopping

Example:

*My mum was a nurse who often worked **round the clock** to take care of her patients.*

43. to call it a day/night

IPA Transcription:

/kɔːl ɪt ə deɪ/naɪt/

Meaning:

to stop what you are doing because you do not want to do any more or think you have done enough

Example:

*After hours of negotiations that were going round in circles, they decided **to call it a night**.*

44. the moment of truth

IPA Transcription:

/ðə 'məʊmənt əv truːθ/

Meaning:

the time when a person or thing is tested or a decision has to be made

Example:

*The job interview had arrived, and it was **the moment of truth** to showcase his skills and qualifications.*

45. donkey's years

IPA Transcription:

/'dɒŋkɪz jɪəz/

Meaning:
a very long time

Example:
*He's been telling that same joke **for donkey's years**, but it still manages to get a few laughs.*

46. once in a blue moon

IPA Transcription:
/wʌns ɪn ə blu: mu:n/

Meaning:
very rarely

Example:
*He doesn't eat out often; it only happens **once in a blue moon**.*

47. round the corner

IPA Transcription:
/raʊnd ðə 'kɔ:nə/

Meaning:
very near or happening soon

Example:
*The deadline for the project is just **round the corner**, so we need to pick up the pace!*

48. like clockwork

IPA Transcription:
/laɪk 'klɒkwɜ:k/

Meaning:
happening exactly as planned without any trouble or delay

Example:
*The wedding went **like clockwork**, with every detail perfectly timed.*

49. down to the wire

IPA Transcription:

/daʊn tə ðə 'waɪə/

Meaning:

until the last possible moment

Example:

*With only seconds left on the clock, the game went **down to the wire**, keeping spectators on edge.*

50. at the 11th hour

IPA Transcription:

/æt ði ɪ'levənθ 'aʊə/

Meaning:

at the last possible moment

Example:

*The deal was saved **at the 11th hour** when an unknown investor stepped in with the necessary funds.*

51. in the nick of time

IPA Transcription:

/ɪn ðə nɪk əv taɪm/

Meaning:

just in time; at the last possible moment

Example:

*He arrived at the airport **in the nick of time**, just as his flight was due to depart.*

Quiz 1

Choose the correct idiom to complete each sentence.

1) Sarah received a _____ from her doctor, confirming that she was completely over her illness.

- a. clean bill of health
- b. like death warmed up
- c. on cloud nine

2) After months of hard work, John finally landed his dream job. He was _____.

- a. as fit as a fiddle
- b. over the moon
- c. chasing rainbows

3) Peter's birthday surprise for his sister was a huge success, but then his younger brother _____ by announcing his own surprise gift.

- a. stole his thunder
- b. had one foot in the grave
- c. kicked up a storm

4) The media coverage of the political scandal was blown out of proportion. It turned out to be just a _____.

- a. storm in a teacup
- b. bag of bones
- c. mile a minute

5) Tim is always full of enthusiasm and cheerfulness. He is consistently _____.

- a. having the time of his life
- b. as right as rain
- c. full of the joys of spring

Choose the correct answer for each question.

6) What does the idiom 'on cloud nine' mean?

- a. feeling extremely successful and confident
- b. having a whale of a time
- c. feeling extremely happy or euphoric

7) What does the idiom 'to take a rain check' mean?

- a. to decline an offer or invitation and suggest doing it at a later date
- b. to act without considering the risks or consequences
- c. to pursue unrealistic goals or dreams

8) Which idiom means 'looking extremely ill or unhealthy'?

- a. to look like death warmed up
- b. snowed under
- c. in the same boat

9) If you are recharging your batteries, what are you doing?

- a. feeling exceptionally happy or excited
- b. taking a break to rest and regain energy and strength
- c. planning to travel

10) What does the idiom 'a storm in a teacup' mean?

- a. a situation that is exaggerated or blown out of proportion
- b. overwhelmed with a large amount of work or responsibilities
- c. looking extremely ill or unhealthy

LOVE/RELATIONSHIPS

52. to fall head over heels

IPA Transcription:

/fɔ:l hed 'əʊvə hi:lz/

Meaning:

to fall deeply in love or become infatuated with someone or something (like an animal)

Example:

When she saw the adorable puppy, she **fell head over heels** and knew she had to adopt it.

53. the apple of one's eye

IPA Transcription:

/ði 'æpl əv wʌnz aɪ/

Meaning:

someone or something that is cherished or highly valued

Example:

His daughter is **the apple of his eye**; he adores her.

54. to tie the knot

IPA Transcription:

/taɪ ðə nɒt/

Meaning:

to get married or enter into a formal union

Example:

After years of dating, they decided it was time to finally **tie the knot**.

55. to steal one's heart

IPA Transcription:

/sti:l wʌnz hɑ:t/

Meaning:

to captivate or charm someone in a way that they fall in love or become deeply attracted

Example:

*Her infectious laughter and warm personality instantly **stole his heart**.*

56. to pop the question

IPA Transcription:

/pɒp ðə 'kwɛstʃən/

Meaning:

to propose marriage to someone

Example:

*With the diamond ring hidden in his coat pocket, he planned the perfect moment **to pop the question**.*

57. to play hard to get

IPA Transcription:

/pleɪ hɑ:d tə get/

Meaning:

to act uninterested in order to increase one's desirability or attractiveness to another person

Example:

*It was clear she was interested, but she couldn't resist **playing hard to get**, adding to the excitement.*

58. to hit it off (with someone)

IPA Transcription:

/hɪt ɪt ɒf/

Meaning:

to have an instant connection or rapport with someone

Example:

*From the moment they met, they **hit it off** and became close friends.*

59. to be stood up

IPA Transcription:

/bi: stʊd ʌp/

Meaning:

to be intentionally or unexpectedly left waiting for someone who doesn't show up for a planned meeting or date

Example:

Glenda arrived at the restaurant eagerly, only **to be stood up** by her date.

60. a match made in heaven

IPA Transcription:

/ə mætʃ meɪd ɪn 'heɪvən/

Meaning:

a couple or pairing that is perfectly suited for each other and seems destined to be together

Example:

With their shared interests and values, they truly are **a match made in heaven**.

61. an old flame

IPA Transcription:

/ən əʊld fleɪm/

Meaning:

a past romantic partner or love interest

Example:

When Marsha moved back to her hometown, she reconnected with **an old flame** from sixth form.

● COLOUR

62. to get the green light

IPA Transcription:

/get ðə gri:n laɪt/

Meaning:

to receive permission to proceed with a project or action

Example:

We finally *got the green light* to start the new marketing campaign.

63. out of the blue

IPA Transcription:

/aʊt əv ðə bluː/

Meaning:

suddenly and unexpectedly

Example:

I hadn't heard from him in years, and then he called me *out of the blue*.

64. green with envy

IPA Transcription:

/ɡriːn wið 'envi/

Meaning:

very jealous or envious

Example:

She was *green with envy* when she saw her friend's new car.

65. to be tickled pink

IPA Transcription:

/biː 'tɪkld pɪŋk/

Meaning:

to be very pleased or amused

Example:

Tony *was tickled pink* by the surprise party his friends threw for him at the office.

66. golden opportunity

IPA Transcription:

/'gəʊldən ɒpə'tjuːnəti/

Meaning:

an excellent opportunity that is not likely to be repeated

Example:

This job is *a golden opportunity* for someone with a background in journalism like yourself.

67. rose-coloured/rose-tinted spectacles

IPA Transcription:

/rəʊz 'kɒləd/tɪntɪd 'spektəklz/

Meaning:

an optimistic perception of something; a positive perspective

Example:

She always sees the world through *rose-tinted spectacles*, but sometimes I feel she needs *a reality check*.

Bonus idiom!

a reality check

IPA Transcription:

/ə ri'æləti tʃek/

Meaning:

an event or situation that brings a person back to the harsh or practical realities of life

68. a grey area

IPA Transcription:

/ə greɪ 'eəriə/

Meaning:

a situation not clearly defined or that falls between two extremes

Example:

Their relationship was undefined, existing in *a grey area* between friendship and romance.

69. to be caught red-handed

IPA Transcription:

/bi: kɔ:t red 'hændɪd/

Meaning:

to catch someone in the act of doing something wrong

Example:

My daughter *was caught* stealing biscuits *red-handed*, or should I say, *biscuit-faced!*

70. yellow-bellied / yellow

IPA Transcription:

/ˈjeləʊ 'beli:d/ˈjeləʊ/

Meaning:

cowardly or easily scared

Example:

He was too *yellow-bellied* to confront his boss about the ongoing issues he faced.

71. on a silver platter

IPA Transcription:

/ɒn ə 'sɪlvə 'plætə/

Meaning:

if you are given something on a silver platter, it is given to you without you having to work or make an effort for it

Example:

He expected success to come to him effortlessly, always wanting things served *on a silver platter*.

● ANIMALS

72. eager beaver

IPA Transcription:

/ˈiːgə bi:və/

Meaning:

a person who is enthusiastic, energetic and eager to work or participate

Example:

Rommel is always the first one to volunteer for new projects; he's such an *eager beaver*.

73. to take the bull by the horns

IPA Transcription:

/teɪk ðə bʊl baɪ ðə hɔːnz/

Meaning:

to confront a difficult or challenging situation directly and decisively

Example:

*Instead of avoiding the issue, he decided **to take the bull by the horns** and address the problem head-on.*

74. to let the cat out of the bag

IPA Transcription:

/let ðə kæt aʊt əv ðə bæɡ/

Meaning:

to reveal a secret or disclose confidential information unintentionally or carelessly

Example:

*My dad couldn't contain his excitement and **let the cat out of the bag** about our vacation destination.*

75. until the cows come home

IPA Transcription:

/ən'tɪl ðə kaʊz kʌm həʊm/

Meaning:

for a very long time; indefinitely or without a definite end

Example:

*I know you want to play video games **until the cows come home**, but eventually, you need to do your homework.*

76. to drop like flies

IPA Transcription:

/drɒp laɪk flaɪz/

Meaning:

to rapidly decrease in number or weaken significantly, often due to illness or other negative factors

Example:

During the flu season, people were **dropping like flies**, and the hospital was overwhelmed.

77. to hold one's horses

IPA Transcription:

/həʊld wʌnz 'hɔːsɪz/

Meaning:

to be patient, wait, or stop rushing

Example:

I know you're excited, but **hold your horses** and let's make a plan first.

78. to pig out

IPA Transcription:

/ˌpɪɡ 'aʊt/

Meaning:

to eat excessively or indulge in large quantities of food, often in an uncontrolled manner

Example:

After weeks of dieting, he decided **to pig out** and enjoy a cheat day with all his favourite snacks.

79. to smell a rat

IPA Transcription:

/smel ə ræt/

Meaning:

to suspect or sense that something is wrong or suspicious

Example:

Carolina's instincts told her to be cautious as she began **to smell a rat** in their business dealings.

80. to have ants in one's pants

IPA Transcription:

/hæv ænts ɪn wʌnz pænts/

Meaning:

to be unable to sit still or be restless due to impatience, excitement or anxiety

Example:

*I've got **ants in my pants** about this presentation tomorrow—help me calm down!*

81. to have other/bigger fish to fry

IPA Transcription:

/hæv 'ʌðə/'bɪgə fɪʃ tə fraɪ/

Meaning:

to have more important or pressing matters to attend to; to be preoccupied with other tasks or concerns

Example:

*Sorry, I can't join you for dinner tonight; I **have other fish to fry** with this project deadline.*

● PEOPLE

82. chatterbox

IPA Transcription:

/'tʃætəbɒks/

Meaning:

a person who talks a lot

Example:

*My little niece is such a **chatterbox**; she can talk for hours about the most random things!*

83. loose cannon

IPA Transcription:

/lu:s 'kænən/

Meaning:

a person who behaves in an uncontrolled or unpredictable manner, often causing damage or danger

Example:

He's a *loose cannon*, you never know what he might say or do next.

84. wet blanket

IPA Transcription:

/wet 'blæŋkɪt/

Meaning:

a person who spoils other people's fun by failing to join in with or by disapproving of their activities

Example:

Don't invite him to the party; he's such a *wet blanket*.

85. to blow one's own trumpet

IPA Transcription:

/bləʊ wʌnz əʊn 'trʌmpɪt/

Meaning:

to boast or brag about one's own abilities or achievements

Example:

He never misses an opportunity to *blow his own trumpet*.

86. the salt of the earth

IPA Transcription:

/ðə sɒlt əv ði ɜ:θ/

Meaning:

a person or people of great kindness, reliability or honesty

Example:

She's *the salt of the earth*, always ready to help those in need.

87. fair-weather friend

IPA Transcription:

/ˈfeə weðə frend/

Meaning:

a person who is only a friend when circumstances are pleasant or profitable

Example:

*When I was rich, I had many friends, but I found out most of them were just **fair-weather friends**.*

88. jack of all trades

IPA Transcription:

/dʒæk əv ɔ:l treɪdz/

Meaning:

a person who can do many different types of work but who is not necessarily very competent at any of them

Example:

*He's a **jack of all trades**; he can fix anything in the house.*

89. worrywart

IPA Transcription:

/ˈwʌriwɔ:t/

Meaning:

a person who tends to worry habitually and often needlessly

Example:

*Don't be such a **worrywart**; everything will be fine.*

90. armchair critic

IPA Transcription:

/ˈɑ:mtʃeə ˈkrɪtɪk/

Meaning:

a person who offers advice or an opinion on something in which they have no expertise or involvement

Example:

He's an **armchair critic**, always talking about football but never playing it.

91. free spirit

IPA Transcription:

/fri: 'spɪrɪt/

Meaning:

a person who lives according to their own wishes and beliefs, unconstrained by society's conventions

Example:

Shannon's a true **free spirit**, finding joy in simple pleasures and embracing life's little adventures.

NUMBERS

92. to dress to the nines

IPA Transcription:

/dres tə ðə naɪnz/

Meaning:

to dress in a stylish, elegant or glamorous manner

Example:

My mum always **dresses to the nines** for special occasions like parties and weddings.

93. to put two and two together

IPA Transcription:

/pʊt tu: ənd tu: tə'geðə/

Meaning:

to infer or deduce something by combining or connecting available information or clues

Example:

When she saw the muddy footprints and wet raincoat, she **put two and two together** and realised he had been outside in the rain.

94. in two minds

IPA Transcription:

/ɪn tuː maɪndz/

Meaning:

uncertain or undecided; to have conflicting thoughts or opinions about something

Example:

*My uncle was **in two minds** about accepting the job offer because it meant moving to a different city.*

95. nine-to-five

IPA Transcription:

/naɪn tə faɪv/

Meaning:

referring to regular office or business hours; a typical full-time job

Example:

*He works a **nine-to-five** job from Monday to Friday and enjoys his weekends off.*

96. back to/at square one

IPA Transcription:

/bæk tə/ət skweə wʌn/

Meaning:

returning to the beginning or starting point of a task or process, often due to a lack of progress or a setback

Example:

*After the computer crashed and deleted all the files, they had to start the project **back at square one**.*

97. the third degree

IPA Transcription:

/ðə θɜːd diː'ɡriː/

Meaning:

intense or thorough questioning, often to extract information or elicit a confession

Example:

Detective Roberts gave the suspect *the third degree*, relentlessly questioning and probing for answers to solve the case.

98. two left feet

IPA Transcription:

/tu: left fi:t/

Meaning:

lacking coordination or being clumsy, especially when it comes to dancing or physical activities

Example:

I can't dance; I've got *two left feet* and always end up stepping on my partner's toes.

99. two peas in a pod

IPA Transcription:

/tu: pi:z ɪn ə pɒd/

Meaning:

two people or things that are very similar or nearly identical; often used to describe close friends or siblings

Example:

They have the same taste in music, fashion and hobbies; they're like *two peas in a pod*.

100. forty winks

IPA Transcription:

/'fɔ:ti wɪŋks/

Meaning:

a short nap or a brief period of sleep, usually during the day

Example:

I'll just lie down and take *forty winks* before dinner; I'm feeling a bit tired.

101. second to none

IPA Transcription:

/'sekənd tə nəʊn/

Meaning:

unmatched or unrivalled; the best or highest quality

Example:

Their customer service is *second to none*; they always go above and beyond to assist their clients.

● **FOOD**

102. to bring home the bacon

IPA Transcription:

/brɪŋ həʊm ðə 'beɪkən/

Meaning:

to earn a living or provide financial support for oneself or one's family

Example:

He took on multiple jobs *to bring home the bacon* and save up for his dream holiday.

103. one's bread and butter

IPA Transcription:

/wʌnz bred ənd 'bʌtə/

Meaning:

a person's primary source of income or livelihood

Example:

Writing is her *bread and butter*; you should read some of her early works—masterpieces!

104. a bad egg

IPA Transcription:

/ə bæd eg/

Meaning:

a person who is dishonest or untrustworthy

Example:

Watch out for him; he's known to be *a bad egg* who can't be trusted.

105. the cream of the crop

IPA Transcription:

/ðə kri:m əv ðə krɒp/

Meaning:

the best or finest individuals or things in a particular group or category

Example:

*The Olympic Games bring together athletes who are considered **the cream of the crop** in their respective sports.*

106. to spill the beans/tea

IPA Transcription:

/spɪl ðə bi:nz/ti:/

Meaning:

to reveal a secret or disclose information that was meant to be kept confidential.

Example:

*Do you know who **spilt the beans** about their affair?*

107. not one's cup of tea

IPA Transcription:

/nɒt wʌnz kʌp əv ti:/

Meaning:

something that one does not enjoy, have an interest in or find appealing

Example:

*Horror films are **not her cup of tea**; she prefers a cheesy rom-com.*

108. in a nutshell

IPA Transcription:

/ɪn ə 'nʌtʃəl/

Meaning:

in a concise or summarised form; briefly and clearly

Example:

*She explained the entire situation **in a nutshell**, highlighting only the relevant points.*

109. to eat humble pie

IPA Transcription:

/i:t 'hʌmbl paɪ/

Meaning:

to admit one's mistake or defeat and show humility or remorse

Example:

*After realising his error, he had **to eat humble pie** and apologise for his rude behaviour.*

110. egg on one's face

IPA Transcription:

/eg ɒn wʌnz feɪs/

Meaning:

to be embarrassed or humiliated by making a mistake or being proven wrong

Example:

*His incorrect prediction left him with **egg on his face** when the opposite outcome occurred.*

111. in a pickle

IPA Transcription:

/ɪn ə 'pɪkl/

Meaning:

in a difficult, complicated or problematic situation

Example:

*We're **in a pickle**; the car broke down, and we're late for an important meeting.*

IDIOM EXTRAS!

to catch the travel bug /kætʃ ðə 'trævl bʌg/ - to have a strong desire to travel across the world

not a moment to lose /nɒt ə 'məʊmənt tu luːz/ - no time to waste

chinwag /'tʃɪnwæg/ - a chat

to scratch the surface /skrætʃ ðə 'sɜːfɪs/ to deal with only a very small part of a subject or problem

Quiz 2

Choose the correct answer for each question.

- 1) What does the idiom 'to hold one's horses' mean?
 - a. to be patient or wait
 - b. to ride a horse
 - c. to control one's emotions
- 2) If you let the cat out of the bag, you _____?
 - a. go shopping for a new bag
 - b. play with a cat
 - c. reveal a secret
- 3) What does the idiom 'green with envy' mean?
 - a. feeling sick after eating something green
 - b. feeling jealous or envious
 - c. having a preference for the colour green
- 4) If someone is dressed to the nines, they are _____?
 - a. wearing casual clothes
 - b. dressed in a stylish or elegant manner
 - c. wearing mismatched clothes
- 5) What does the idiom 'to be caught red-handed' mean?
 - a. to be caught eating red-colored food
 - b. to be caught doing something wrong
 - c. to be caught wearing red clothes

Choose the correct idiom to complete each sentence.

- 6) When Sarah saw the beautiful dress, she fell _____ and had to buy it.
 - a. head over heels
 - b. until the cows come home
 - c. like two peas in a pod
- 7) Lisa couldn't contain her excitement and let _____ about the surprise party.
 - a. the cat out of the bag
 - b. the third degree
 - c. a bad egg
- 8) Despite facing numerous challenges, they decided to _____ and continue pursuing their dream of opening a restaurant.
 - a. tie the knot
 - b. bring home the bacon
 - c. take the bull by the horns
- 9) Mark's cousin is always the first one to volunteer for community service; he's such an _____.
 - a. eager beaver
 - b. armchair critic
 - c. old flame
- 10) Whenever there's a problem, John prefers to hold his horses and _____ before making a decision.
 - a. pop the question
 - b. dress to the nines
 - c. put two and two together