

ESL 065 idioms summary

Meeting New People

1. **Baby Boomer:** someone born between 1945-1960 after World War II when many returning soldiers had many children creating a large population of children, or boom.

Example: My dad was born in 1948 after WWII. He's a **baby boomer**.

2. **Beating a dead Horse:** If someone is trying to convince people to do or feel something without any hope of succeeding, they're beating a dead horse. This is used when someone is trying to raise interest in an issue that no-one supports anymore; beating a dead horse will not make any difference.

Example: You've told me that story about your bad experience many times. I still think it's your fault. Stop **beating a dead horse**.

3. **Bet your bottom dollar:** If you can bet your bottom dollar on something, you can be absolutely sure about it.

Example:

Bob: Do you really think the Golden State Warriors will win the championship?

Joe: You bet your bottom dollar they will!

4. **Horse of a different color:** If something is a horse of a different color, it's a different matter or separate issue altogether.

Example:

Tim: So how is your girlfriend doing?

John: She's fine. By the way, did you ever ask your brother about that business deal?

Tim: Not yet. But that's a **horse of a different color**.

5. **It's been a slice:** When someone leaves and you have said your goodbyes it is usually the last thing you may say.....It's been a slice. I use it after a visit where we have had a good time.

Example:

Sarah: It was great seeing you again. **It's been a slice.** I have to go. See you later.

6. **My dogs are barking:** When someone says this, they mean that their feet are hurting.

Example: I worked for 10 hours today. I'm so tired! **My dogs are barking.**

7. **Nickel Tour:** If someone gives you a nickel tour, they show you around a place. ('Fifty-cent tour' is also used.)

Example: I wish I had more time to show you San Francisco, but I have work today. I'll just have to give you **the nickel tour**.

8. **Paint yourself into a corner:** If someone paints themselves into a corner, they get themselves into a mess/difficult situation/embarrassing situation.

Example:

Kelly: Hi Carla. Aren't you supposed to be at work today? The boss said you have a meeting today.

Carla: Oh no! I completely forgot about that. I was at the salon getting my hair done.

Kelly: I think you've **painted yourself into a corner**.

9. **Run around the bush:** If you run around the bush, it means that you're taking a long time to get to the point and should focus on talking about the main idea.

Example: Ok you've been telling me this story for 20 minutes. Can you please get to the point and **stop running around the bush**?

10. **Talk a blue streak:** If someone talks a blue streak, they speak quickly and at length. ('Talk up a blue streak' is also used.)

Example: My friend Sally loves to talk. She can **talk a blue streak**.

11. **Wallflower:** A shy person who is not asked to dance is a wallflower. This expression is also used in general to describe a shy person.

Example: Tina is so shy, she's such a **wallflower**.

12. **Whistling Dixie:** If someone is whistling Dixie, they talk about things in a more positive way than the reality.

Example:

Mark: Don't listen to Tim. He tries to make every situation sound overly positive. He's always **whistling Dixie**.