

Introduction:

Doubt has a critical function to suspend one from taking an immediate belief stance and discern truth. Without this critical function of doubt, human beings can be trapped with all kinds of false beliefs, knowledge, and misinformation. Uncertainty as used here means the range of possible values within which the true value of the measurement lies.

20 Words, phrases and idioms is given below with explanation:

1. Toing and froing

So this expression is a really useful one when someone is going from this to this to this. We say that they are toing and froing. Going backwards and forwards from one to the other you know, when it's really difficult to decide you know, when it's really difficult to decide what you're actually gonna do.

2. (to be) in two minds

You can say that you are in two minds when you are having difficulty deciding what to do. And this is a really great one to use at work in a professional context so instead of saying "I don't know" which is negative and it doesn't really make you seem very professional or helpful but by saying that you're in two minds about something suggests that you're actively thinking about it.

3. (to) put feelers out

What is that? This is really useful when you want the advice or opinions of others before you make your decision.

You're just asking for a few people just to see if what you're thinking is the right sort of thing.

So imagine you're organising the staff office party. You're not sure what everyone might want to do, bowling, river cruise. There's lots of options. So you could say:

4. (to be) in a quandary

Alright so what on earth is a quandary? If you're in a quandary. A quandary. Say it with me. It's a bit tricky. Quandary.

This is a really great expression when you're stuck and you can't actually decide what to do you know.

5. (to) sleep on it

Alright I'm sure you've heard this one before. It's a very common expression 'to sleep on it'.

So if someone is expecting you to make a decision but you need a little bit more time to think about it, then this idiom is perfect and by using it, you're asking for some more time until the next day to think something over before making that decision so you sleep on it.

6. (to be) on the fence

You know, when you are faced with a choice, you've got two different options and you need to make a decision and you're thinking about those two different options but you haven't decided yet you know.

7. (it) could go either way

So that was a useful expression when you are in control of the outcome. You get to make the decision right but if you're not in control of the outcome and you're trying to predict something, what the result will be, then you can say "It could go either way."

8. Up in the air

So if you have something like a plan or a decision and it's up in the air, it means that it hasn't been decided yet or it hasn't been settled yet but the thing is this expression is a little negative. I'm wondering if you can guess why. It doesn't actually suggest any action, you know, the result is out of your control, you're just waiting to hear what the result will be.

So usually if something is up in the air, it makes you feel a little uncomfortable or a little uneasy like what's gonna happen?

9. The jury's (still out)

The jury's out or it's still out. This expression means that something is being considered but no decision has been reached yet okay?

Now in case, this word is a little new for you. A jury is the group of people who decide the verdict in a court.

10. (it) remains to be seen

And you can express that same idea a little more formally by saying that the result remains to be seen so we don't know what the result will be yet.

The government's pledge to fund three new schools but the location of each school remains to be seen.

Okay so there are just a few more to go my friends.

11. Chop and change

But unlike toing and froing where you're switching between different opinions or different ideas well this expression is more about actions and decisions so when you keep changing the plan.

12. Cold feet

What if you have made a decision to do something? To buy a house, to quit your job, to start a family, well, that's great but then you start to panic. Is that really what I want? Maybe I rushed into this decision. Maybe I need more time. So that's when you get cold feet.

I'm not really sure where this expression comes from exactly but I love it. I've always imagined that you've had this amazing wonderful idea to go for a swim at the beach. The ocean looks beautiful so you run down, ready to get in and as soon as your feet hit the water, you realise it's actually freezing cold.

13. (to have) second thoughts

Now this is another idiom that has a very similar meaning to 'to get cold feet'

You can also say "I wanted to bid at the auction but I had second thoughts."

So it's used when you want to change your opinion about something you know and you start to doubt your opinion or your ideas.

14. Perhaps/maybe

These two words are used for saying that you are not certain about something, or that something may or may not be true.

Perhaps is more formal and is used in writing while maybe is used more in spoken English

I wondered if perhaps he had changed his mind about attending the party.

‘When can you give me an answer?’ ‘I don’t know. Maybe tomorrow.’

15. Probably/possibly – these two words can confuse even native speakers

Probably is used for saying that something is likely to be true, and

Possibly that it may be true but you are not certain

If house prices are low, it’s probably because there is a lack of demand.

‘Would you consider moving to another country for your work?’ ‘Possibly, I’m not sure.’

16. Apparently

Is used when what you are saying is based on what you have heard, not on what you know is true and therefore fact

Apparently, she resigned because she had an argument with her boss.

There is, apparently, going to be an announcement about the new CEO tomorrow.

17. As far as I know/ as far as I am aware

These two expressions are used when you have partial (incomplete) knowledge of an issue or fact.

No one has complained, as far as I know.

As far as I am aware, the invitations to the party have all been sent.

18. To the best of my knowledge

This phrase is used for saying that you think something is true, but you are not completely certain. This is quite a formal expression

To the best of my knowledge, no similar book has been published.

19. Not to my knowledge

This is used for saying that you think something is not true, although you are not completely certain:

‘Has the report been sent yet?’ ‘Not to my knowledge.’

20. I imagine/suppose/guess

These are used when you think something is probably true, but you can't be sure. "Guess" is more frequently used in American English, although you can hear it in British English, too. "Suppose" is more characteristic of British English and is often used in the negative.

I imagine they've already left for the airport.

It's difficult, I imagine, to keep the same enthusiasm for the job after 30 years.

I suppose she must be delighted about getting the job.

I don't suppose you'd consider staying for another week?

I guess he will want to meet all the team members before the conference.

Conclusion:

To know the right expression is very needed in real life. We express doubt and expression everyday in our life.