



IIT Madras
ONLINE DEGREE



PHRASES & IDIOMS YOU MUST KNOW

KARTHIKA SATHYANATHAN

PHRASES AND IDIOMS

- In common usage, a phrase is usually a group of words with some special idiomatic meaning or other significance, such as "all rights reserved", "economical with the truth", "kick the bucket", and the like. It may be a euphemism, a saying or proverb, a fixed expression, a figure of speech, etc.
- A euphemism is a polite word or expression that is used to refer to things which people may find upsetting or embarrassing to talk about, for example sex, the human body, or death.
- A proverb is a simple, concrete, traditional saying that expresses a truth based on common sense or experience.
- A saying is any concisely written or spoken expression that is especially memorable because of its meaning or style.
- Idioms. An idiom is a phrase, saying or a group of words that has a metaphorical (not literal) meaning, which has become accepted in common usage. An idiom's symbolic sense is quite different from the literal meaning or definition of the words of which it is made.

COMMON PHRASES

1. A dark horse – unexpected winner
2. Bite a bullet – to force yourself to do something that is unpleasant or difficult, or be brave in a difficult situation.
3. Break a leg – Good luck
4. Make a mountain out of a molehill – to exaggerate a minor difficulty
5. Kill two birds with one stone – achieve two aims with single effort
6. Move heaven and earth – to make maximum efforts
7. Keep the ball rolling – to continue the work
8. Be in the driving seat – Bearing all responsibilities
9. Out of my league – the other person is superior, better, at a higher level
10. Blessing in disguise – a good thing that seemed bad at first

COMMON PHRASES

1. A piece of cake – very easy
2. Money burns a hole in your (one's) pocket – to spend money quickly
3. Cut ones coat according to ones cloth – to live within one's means
4. Once in a blue moon – rarely
5. Put in cold storage – to keep a work pending
6. Look for a needle in a haystack – to seek what is impossible to find
7. To miss the boat – to miss the opportunity to do something
8. Pull yourself together – calm down and act normally
9. To hear on the grapevine – to hear a rumour or an unconfirmed story
10. Cut corners – To do something in the fastest and the cheapest way

COMMON PHRASES

1. Between the devil and the deep sea – between two difficult situations
2. Beat around the bush – avoid saying what you mean usually because it is uncomfortable
3. Better late than never – It is better to arrive or do something later than expected than to not arrive or not do something at all
4. Out of order – not working properly
5. Out of place – to feel or look different from other people in a specific place
6. Flog a dead horse – waste ones effort
7. Actions speak louder than words – what someone actually does means more than what they say they will do
8. Bite off more than you can chew – try to do something that is too difficult or too much for you
9. Out of character – behaving differently than usual
10. To get a taste of your own medicine – get treated the way you have been treating other people