**A** **Idioms**

**A** **big** **cheese**- an important or a powerful person in a group or family

**A** **bird’s** **eye** **view**- a view from a very high place which allows you to see a large area **A** **bone** **of** **contention**- something that people argue for a long time

**A** **cock** **and** **a** **bull** **story**- a story or an explanation which is obviously not true.

**At** **the** **crack** **of** **the** **dawn**- very early in morning

**A** **cuckoo** **in** **the** **nest**- someone in a group of people but not liked by them.

**A** **litmus** **test**- a method which clearly proves something

**As** **the** **crow** **flies**- measuring distance between two places in a straight line.

**A** **dead** **letter**- an argument or law not followed by anyone.

**At** **the** **drop** **of** **the** **hat**- u do something easily and without any preparation

**An** **early** **bird**- someone who gets early in the morning

**An** **educated** **guess**- a guess which was likely to get corrected

**At** **the** **eleventh** **hour**- be too late.

**A** **queer** **fish**- a strange person

**A** **wakeup** **call**- an event done to warn someone

**A** **worm’s** **eye** **view**- having very little knowledge about something

**A** **witch** **hunt**- an attempt to find and punish those who have options that are believed to be dangerous

**At** **the** **heels** **of**- to follow someone

**A** **dish** **fit** **for** **Gods**- something of very high quality

**A** **game** **of** **two** **equal** **halves**- a sudden change in circumstances

**Afraid** **of** **one’s** **own** **shadow**- to become easily frightened

**Against** **the** **clock**- to be in a hurry to do something before a particular time

**Air** **one’s** **dirty** **laundry**- to make public something embarrassing that should be kept secret. **All** **systems** **go-** everything is ready.

**An** **arm** **and** **a** **leg**- a large amount of money

**Appear** **out** **of** **now** **here**- to appear suddenly without warning.

**Apple** **of** **someone’s** **eye**- someone loved very much.

**Ask** **for** **the** **moon**- to ask for too much.

**Asleep** **at** **the** **switch**- not to be alert on opportunity

**At** **sixes** **and** **sevens**- to be lost and bewildered

**At** **someone’s** **beck** **and** **call**- to be always ready to serve

**At** **the** **bottom** **of** **the** **ladder**- at the lowest level

**A** **house** **of** **cards**- a poor plan

**At** **an** **arm’s** **length**- to keep at a distance

**At** **sixes** **and** **sevens**- in disorder

**A** **boon** **in** **disguise**- a benefit in loss

**A** **bull** **in** **a** **China** **shop**- an awkward person

**A** **red** **letter** **day**- an important day

**A** **nine** **days** **wonder**- pleasure for a short time

**A** **bit** **under** **the** **weather**- falling ill

**B** **idioms**

**Bad** **blood**- feelings of hate between two families

**Bend** **your** **ears**- to talk to someone for a very long time about something boring

**Bite** **your** **tongue**- to stop yourself from saying something because it would be better not to **Black** **and** **blue**- full of bruises

**Blue** **blood**- belonging to high social class

**Be** **above** **board**- to be honest and legal

**Be** **bouncing** **off** **the** **walls**- excited and full of nervous energy

**Bow** **and** **scrap**- try too hard to please someone in a position of authority

**Brass** **monkey** **weather**- extremely cold weather

**Be** **tailor** **made**- to be completely suitable for someone.

**Break** **the** **ice**- to make more comfort or relaxed with a person whom you have not met earlier, to break the silence

**Be** **as** **clear** **as** **mud**- to be impossible to understand

**Be** **on** **cloud** **nine**- be very happy

**Between** **the** **devil** **and** **deep** **blue** **sea**- a type of situation where u must choose between two equally unpleasant situations

**Be** **in** **the** **doldrums**- not very successful or nothing new is taking place

**Beat** **the** **drum**- to speak eagerly about something you support

**Be** **on** **the** **edge**- to be nervous or worried about something

**Be** **in** **seventh** **heaven**- extremely happy

**Be** **at** **each** **other’s** **throat**- two persons arguing angrily

**Batten** **down** **the** **hatches**- to prepare for trouble

**Back** **the** **wrong** **horse**- to support someone weak

**Back** **to** **square** **one**- to reach again to the starting point

**Back** **to** **the** **salt** **mines**- back to something that you don’t want to do

**Ball** **of** **fire**- active and energetic

**Beat** **one’s** **head** **against** **the** **wall-** to try to do something that is hopeless

**Bark** **up** **the** **wrong** **tree**- to make a wrong assumption

**Batten** **down** **the** **hatches**- prepare for difficult times

**Beat** **one’s** **brain** **out**- to work hard

**Begin** **to** **see** **the** **light**- to begin to understand

**Behind** **closed** **doors**- done in secret

**Bet** **on** **the** **wrong** **horse**- to misread the future

**Bent** **on** **doing**- to be determined to do something

**Bite** **off** **more** **than** **one** **can** **chew**- to do more than one’s ability

**Bite** **the** **bullet**- to face a difficult situation bravely

**Bitter** **pill** **to** **swallow**- an unpleasant fact that must be accepted

**Black** **sheep** **of** **the** **family**- worst member

**Blessing** **in** **disguise**- something that turns out to be good which earlier appeared to be wrong **Blind** **leading** **the** **blind**- someone who does not understand something but tries to explain it to other

**Blow** **one’s** **own** **horn**- to praise one

**Blow** **someone’s** **mind**- excite someone

**Bone** **of** **contention**- subject matter of the fight

**Bring** **home** **the** **bacon**- to earn money to live

**Blue** **in** **the** **face**- exhausted and speechless

**Break** **the** **back** **of**- reduce the power of something

**Burn** **a** **hole** **in** **one’s** **pocket**- to spend money quickly

**Burn** **the** **midnight** **oil**- to study till late of night

**Bushman’s** **holiday**- a holiday where you spend doing same thing as you did at working days **Button’s** **one** **lip**- to keep quite

**Break** **a** **leg**- to wish good luck

**C** **idioms**

**Carrot** **and** **sticks**- You use both awards as well as punishments to make someone do something. **Cloak** **and** **dragger**- when people behave in a very secret manner

**Cards** **are** **stacked** **against**- luck is against you

**Crack** **a** **book**- to open book to study

**Cross** **a** **bridge** **before** **one** **comes** **to** **it**- worry about the future in advance

**Carry** **coals** **to** **new** **castle**- to take something to a place or a person that has a lot of that thing already

**Cast** **in** **the** **same** **mould**- to be very similar

**Change** **horses** **in** **midstream**- to change plans

**Cap** **it** **all**- to finish

**Cried** **with** **eyes** **out**- cried a lot

**Carry** **the** **can**- If you carry the can, you take the blame for something, even though you didn't do it or are only partly at fault.

**Cast** **a** **long** **shadow**- Something or someone that casts a long shadow has considerable influence on other people or events.

**Cat** **and** **dog** **life**- If people lead a cat and dog life, they are always arguing.

**D** **idioms**

**Drive** **a** **wedge** **between**- to break relationship between the two

**Dances** **to** **the** **tune**- to always do what someone tells you to do

**Dressed** **up** **to** **the** **nines**- wearing fancy clothes

**Dragging** **its** **feet**- delaying in decision, not showing enthusiasm

**Davey** **Jones'** **locker-** Davey Jones' locker is the bottom of the sea or resting place of drowned sailors. ('Davy Jones' locker' is an alternative spelling.)

**Dancing** **on** **someone's** **grave-** If you will dance on someone's grave, you will outlive or Outlast them and will celebrate their demise

**Dog** **in** **the** **manger-** If someone acts like a dog in the manger, they don't want other people to have or enjoy things that are useless to them

**Don't** **cry** **over** **spilt** **milk-** When something bad happens and nothing can be done to help it people say, 'Don't cry over spilt milk'

**Don't** **wash** **your** **dirty** **laundry** **in** **public-** People, especially couples, who argue in front of others or involve others in their personal problems and crises, are said to be washing their dirty laundry in public; making public things that are best left private.

**Donkey** **work-** Donkey work is any hard, boring work or task.

**Don't** **throw** **bricks** **when** **you** **live** **in** **a** **glass** **house-** Don't call others out on actions that you, yourself do. Don't be a hypocrite.

**E** **idioms**

**Entering** **the** **80th** **orbit**- celebrating the 80th birthday

**Eleventh** **hour** **decision**- decision that is made at the last possible minute

**End** **in** **smoke**- to bear no result

**Earth** **shattering**- not at all surprising

**Eat** **humble** **pie**- to apologize humbly

**Elephant** **in** **the** **room-** An elephant in the room is a problem that everyone knows very well but no one talks about because it is taboo, embarrassing, etc.

**Egg** **on** **your** **face-** If someone has egg on their face; they are made to look foolish or embarrassed

**Eye** **for** **an** **eye-** This is an expression for retributive justice, where the punishment equals the crime. **Eyes** **are** **bigger** **than** **one's** **stomach-** If someone's eyes are bigger than their stomach, they are greedy and take on more than they can consume or manage.

**F** **idioms**

**From** **cradle** **to** **grave**- during the whole span of your life.

**Face** **the** **music**-to accept punishment for something you have done.

**Feel** **the** **pinch**- to have problems with money.

**Fall** **on** **your** **own** **sword**- to be cheated by someone you trust.

**Feather** **in** **one’s** **cap**- something that you achieve and proud of.

**Firing** **on** **all** **cylinders**- work every possible way to succeed.

**French** **leave**- absent without permission, to take French leave is to leave a gathering without saying goodbye or without permission.

**Fall** **on** **our** **feet-** If you fall on your feet, you succeed in doing something where there was a risk of failure.

**Fall** **on** **your** **sword-** **If** someone falls on their sword, they resign or accept the consequences of what they have done wrong.

**Fingers** **and** **thumbs-** If you are all fingers and thumbs, you are being clumsy and not very skilled with your hands.

**Finger** **in** **the** **pie-** If you have a finger in the pie, you have an interest in something.

**Flash** **in** **the** **pan-** If something is a flash in the pan; it is very noticeable but doesn't last long, like most singers, who are very successful for a while, then forgotten.

**Follow** **your** **nose-** When giving directions, telling someone to follow their nose means that they should go straight ahead.

**Fool's** **paradise-** A fool's paradise is a false sense of happiness or success

**Foot** **in** **mouth-** **This** is used to describe someone who has just said something

Embarrassing, inappropriate, wrong or stupid

**For** **a** **song-** If you buy or sell something for a song, it is very cheap

**For** **donkey's** **years-** If people have done something, usually without much if any change, for an awfully long time, they can be said to have done it for donkey's years

**G** **idioms**

**Get** **off** **the** **hook**- free from all obligations

**Give-up** **the** **ghost**- to die

**Got** **the** **slap** **on** **the** **wrist**- got light punishment

**Give** **someone** **a** **bird**- make fun

**Got** **the** **wind** **up**- to be scared

**Get** **a** **raw** **deal**- not treated equally

**Gift** **of** **the** **gab**- talent of speaking, if someone has the gift of the gab, they speak in a persuasive and interesting way

**Gives** **cold** **shoulder**- to ignore

**Get** **your** **wires** **crossed-** If people get their wires cross, they misunderstand each other, especially

when making arrangements.('Get your lines crossed' is also used.)

**Give** **me** **five-** If someone says this, they want to hit your open hand against theirs as a

Way of congratulation or greeting

**Give** **me** **a** **hand-** If someone gives you a hand, they help you

**Give** **someone** **a** **piece** **of** **your** **mind-** If you give someone a piece of your mind, you criticize them strongly and angrily.

**Go** **bananas-** If you go bananas, you are wild with excitement, anxiety, or worry

**Go** **tell** **it** **to** **birds-** This is used when someone says something that is not credible or is a lie **Go** **under** **the** **hammer-** If something goes under the hammer, it is sold in an auction

**Graveyard** **shift-** If you have to work very late at night, it is the graveyard shift

**Grease** **monkey-** A grease monkey is an idiomatic term for a mechanic

**H** **idioms**

**Have** **ants** **in** **your** **pants**- not be able to keep still because you are very excited or worried about something.

**Having** **a** **whole** **of** **a** **time**- to enjoy very much

**Hold** **one’s** **horse**- be patient

**Have** **a** **big** **mouth**- one who gossips more or tells secret

**Himalayan** **blunder**- a serious mistake

**Have** **a** **one** **track** **mind**- think only of one thing

**Have** **clean** **hands**- be guiltless

**Have** **an** **egg** **on** **the** **face**- be embarrassed

**Have** **eyes** **bigger** **than** **stomach**- desiring more food than one can eat

**Heart** **missed** **a** **beat**- very excited

**Heart** **in** **the** **right** **place**- good natured

**Hit** **the** **nail** **on** **the** **head**- done the thing correctly

**Hand** **to** **mouth-** Someone who's living from hand to mouth, is very poor and needs the little money they have coming in to cover their expenses

**Have** **no** **truck** **with-** If you have no truck with something or someone, you refuse to get involved with it or them

**Hit** **the** **bull's-eye-** If someone hits the bull's-eye, they are exactly right about something or achieve the best result possible.

**Hold** **water-** When you say that something does or does not 'hold water', it means that the point of view or argument put forward is or is not sound, strong or logical. For e.g. 'Saying we should increase our interest rates because everyone else is doing so will not hold water'

**Hornets'** **nest-** A hornets' nest is a violent situation or one with a lot of dispute. (If you create the problem, you 'stir up a hornets' nest'.)

**I** **idioms**

**In** **dribs** **and** **drabs**- in small amounts at a time

**In** **black** **and** **white**- to give in writing

**In** **the** **blues**- low spirited

**In** **cahoots** **with**- in a partnership usually for a dishonest reason

**If** **the** **shoe** **fits,** **wear** **it-** This is used to suggest that something that has been said might apply to a person

**In** **droves-** When things happen in droves, a lot happen at the same time or very quickly **In** **the** **doghouse-** **If** someone is in the doghouse, they are in disgrace and very Unpopular at the moment.

**J** **idioms**

**Jack** **Frost** - If everything has frozen in winter, then Jack Frost has visited.

**Jack** **the** **Lad** - A confident and not very serious young man who behaves as he wants to without thinking about other people is a Jack the Lad.

**Jack-of-all-trades**- A jack-of-all-trades is someone that can do many different jobs. **Jam** **on** **your** **face** **-** If you say that someone has jam on their face, they appear to be caught, embarrassed or found guilty.

**Jam** **tomorrow** **-** This idiom is used when people promise good things for the future that will never come.

**Jane** **Doe** - Jane Doe is a name given to an unidentified female who may be party to legal proceedings, or to an unidentified person in hospital, or dead. John Doe is the male equivalent. **Jekyll** **and** **Hyde** **-** Someone who has a Jekyll and Hyde personality has a pleasant and a very unpleasant side to the character.

**Jersey** **justice** **-** **J**ersey justice is very severe justice.

**Jet** **set** **-** Very wealthy people who travel around the world to attend parties or functions are the jet set.

**Jet-black** **-** To emphasise just how black something is, such as someone's hair, we can call it jet- black.

**Job's** **comforter** **-** Someone who says they want to comfort, but actually discomforts people is a Job's comforter.

**Jobs** **for** **the** **boys** **-** Where people give jobs, contracts, etc, to their friends and associates, these are jobs for the boys.

**Jockey** **for** **position** - If a number of people want the same opportunity and are struggling to emerge as the most likely candidate, they are jockeying for position.

**Jog** **my** **memory-** If you jog someone's memory, you say words that will help someone trying to remember a thought, event, word, phrase, experience, etc.

**John** **Doe-** John Doe is a name given to an unidentified male who may be party to legal proceedings, or to an unidentified person in hospital, or dead. Jane Doe is the female equivalent.

**Joe** **Public** **-** Joe Public is the typical, average person.

**Johnny** **on** **the** **spot** **-** A person who is always available; ready, willing, and able to do what needs to be done.('Johnny-on-the-spot' is also used.)

**Johnny-come-lately** **-** A Johnny-come-lately is someone who has recently joined something or arrived somewhere, especially when they want to make changes that are not welcome.

**Join** **the** **club** **-** Said when someone has expressed a desire or opinion, meaning "That viewpoint is not unique to you". It can suggest that the speaker should stop complaining since many others are in the same position. Example: "If this train doesn't come, I'll be late for work!" "Join the club!"

**Joined** **at** **the** **hip** **-** If people are joined at the hip, they are very closely connected and think the same way.

**Judge,** **jury** **and** **executioner** **-** If someone is said to be the judge, jury, and executioner, it means they are in charge of every decision made, and they have the power to be rid of whomever they choose.

**Juggle** **frogs** **-** If you are juggling frogs, you are trying to do something very difficult.

**Jump** **down** **someone's** **throat** **-** If you jump down someone's throat, you criticise or chastise them severely.

**Jump** **on** **the** **bandwagon** **-** If people jump on the bandwagon, they get involved in something that has recently become very popular.

**Jump** **ship** **-** If you leave a company or institution for another because it is doing badly, you are jumping ship.

**Jump** **the** **broom** **-** To jump the broom is to marry. (Jump over the broom, jump over the broomstick, jump the broomstick are also used.)

**Jump** **the** **gun** **-** If you jump the gun, you start doing something before the appropriate time.

**Jump** **the** **track** **-** Jumping the track is suddenly changing from one plan, activity, idea, etc, to another.

**Jump** **through** **hoops** - If you are prepared to jump through hoops for someone, you are prepared to make great efforts and sacrifices for them.

**Jump** **to** **a** **conclusion** - If someone jumps to a conclusion, they evaluate or judge something without a sufficient examination of the facts.

**Jumping** **Judas!** **-** An expression of surprise or shock.

**Jungle** **out** **there** **-** If someone says that it is a jungle out there, they mean that the situation is dangerous and there are no rules.

**Jury's** **out** **-** If the jury's out on an issue, then there is no general agreement or consensus on it. Just around the corner- If something is just around the corner, then it is expected to happen very soon.

**Just** **coming** **up** **to** **-** If the time is just coming up to nine o'clock, it means that it will be nine o'clock in a very few seconds. You'll hear them say it on the radio in the morning.

**Just** **deserts** **-** If a bad or evil person gets their just deserts, they get the punishment or suffer the misfortune that it is felt they deserve.

**Just** **for** **the** **heck** **of** **it** **-** When someone does something just for the heck of it, they do it without a good reason.

**Just** **for** **the** **record** **-** If something is said to be just for the record, the person is saying it so that people know but does not necessarily agree with or support it.

Just in the nick of time - If you do something in the nick of time, you just manage to do it just in time, with seconds to spare.

**Just** **off** **the** **boat** **-** If someone is just off the boat, they are naive and inexperienced.

**Just** **what** **the** **doctor** **ordered** **-** If something's just what the doctor ordered, it is precisely what is needed.

**Justice** **is** **blind** **-** Justice is blind means that justice is impartial and objective.

**K** **idioms**

**Kick** **up** **a** **row**- to start a fight, to create disturbance

**Keep** **ones** **eye** **on** **the** **ball**- be ready for something

**Kangaroo** **court-** When people take the law into their own hands and form courts that are not legal, these are known as kangaroo court

**Keep** **body** **and** **soul** **together-** If you earn enough to cover your basic expenses, but nothing more than that, you earn enough to keep body and soul together.

**Keep** **your** **eye** **on** **the** **ball-** If you keep your eye on the ball, you stay alert and pay

Close attention to what is happening

**Know** **which** **way** **the** **wind** **blows-** This means that you should know how things are

Developing and be prepared for the future.

**L** **idioms**

**Loaves** **and** **fishes**- done for material benefits

**Like** **a** **shag** **on** **a** **rock**- completely alone.

**Let** **someone** **slide**- neglect something

**Let** **the** **cat** **out** **of** **the** **bag**- reveal the secret

**Let** **nature** **take** **its** **course**- to allow someone to live or die naturally.

**Like** **a** **sitting** **duck**- totally unaware

**Lion’s** **share**- a major share

**Left** **to** **your** **own** **devices-** **If** someone is left to their own devices, they are not controlled and can do

whatever they want

**M** **idioms**

**Make** **castles** **in** **the** **air**- plans or hopes that have very little chances of happening.

**Make** **a** **bee** **line** **for**- to go directly towards something.

**Make** **ones** **bed** **and** **lie** **on** **it**- to be responsible for what you have done and accept the results

**Meet** **ones** **waterloo**- meet ones final end

**Monkey** **around**- to waste time here and there

**My** **hands** **are** **full**- I am busy

**Make** **a** **dry** **face**- show disappointment

**Make** **a** **monkey** **of** **someone-** If you make a monkey of someone, you make them look foolish **Man** **of** **his** **word-** A man of his word is a person who does what he says and keeps his Promises

**Many** **moons** **ago-** A very long time ago

**N** **idioms**

**Nobody’s** **fool**- one who can take care of himself

**not** **having** **a** **leg** **to** **stand** **for**- not having proof

**Never-never** **land**- ideal best place.

**No** **love** **lost** **between**- dislike

**Needle** **in** **a** **haystack-** If trying to find something is like looking for a needle in a haystack, it means that it is very difficult, if not impossible to find among everything around it

**New** **brush** **sweeps** **clean-** 'A new brush sweeps clean' means that someone with a new perspective can make great changes. However, the full version is 'a new brush sweeps clean, but an old brush knows the corners', which warns that experience is also a valuable thing

**No** **smoke** **without** **fire-** This idiom means that when people suspect something, there is Normally a good reason for the suspicion, even if there is no concrete evidence. ('Where's there's smoke, there's fire' is also used.)

**O** **idioms**

**Once** **in** **a** **blue** **moon**- very rarely

**On** **the** **bandwagon**- doing something because others are also doing it

**Open** **Pandora’s** **box**- to discover more problems

**Over** **the** **moon**- being too happy

**On** **its** **last** **legs**- in a bad condition and will not last long

**Old** **flames** **die** **hard-** It's very difficult to forget old things

**On** **pins** **and** **needles-** If you are on pins and needles, you are very worried about something **On** **the** **carpet-** When you are called to the bosses office (since supposedly, they are the only ones who have carpet) and its definitely not for a good reason, i.e., you are in

trouble, something has not gone according to plan and either maybe you are responsible and/or have some explaining to do

**On** **the** **hook-** If someone is on the hook, they are responsible for something.

**Only** **the** **wearer** **knows** **where** **the** **shoe** **pinches-** This means that it's hard to know how much

someone else is suffering.

**P** **idioms**

**Pass** **muster**- to be approved

**Pick** **someone** **to** **pieces**- to criticize sharply

**Paper** **over** **the** **cracks**- to try to hide something

**Put** **the** **cart** **before** **the** **horse**- doing things in a wrong manner

**Pull** **up** **the** **shocks**- do things in the right manner and correctly

**Parrot** **fashion-** If you learn something parrots fashion; you learn it word for word

**Pay** **on** **the** **nail-** If you pay on the nail, you pay promptly in cash

**Pen** **is** **mightier** **than** **the** **sword-** The idiom 'the pen is mightier than the sword' means that words and communication are morepowerful than wars and fighting

**Pick** **someone’s** **brains-** **If** you pick someone's brains, you ask them for advice,

Suggestions and information about something they know about

**Pieces** **of** **the** **same** **cake-** Pieces of the same cake are things that have the same Characteristics or qualities

**Play** **fast** **and** **loose-** If people play fast and loose, they behave in an irresponsible way And don't respect rules, etc.

**Poker** **face-** Someone with a poker face doesn't show any emotion or reaction so that

People don't know what they are feeling

**Q** **idioms**

**Quarrel** **with** **bread** **and** **butter-** Bread and butter, here, indicate the means of one’s living. If a sub- ordinate in an organization is quarrelsome or if he is not patient enough to bear the reprimand he deserves, gets angry and retorts or provokes the higher-up, the top man dismisses him from the job. So, he loses the job that gave him bread and butter. Hence we say, he quarreled with bread and butter (manager or the top man) and lost his job

**Quiet** **as** **a** **cat-** If somebody is as quiet as a cat they make as little noise as possible and try to be unnoticeable

**Quiet** **as** **a** **mouse-** If someone's as quiet as a mouse, they make absolutely no noise

**Queer** **fish-** A strange person is a queer fish

**R** **idioms**

**Round** **the** **twist**- go crazy

**Read** **between** **the** **lines-** read hidden meanings

**Rack** **and** **ruin-** **If** something or someone goes to rack and ruin, they are utterly destroyed or wrecked **Rain** **on** **your** **parade-** If someone rains on your parade, they ruin your pleasure or your plans

**Rake** **someone** **over** **the** **coals-** If you rake someone over the coals, you criticize or scold them severely

**Recipe** **for** **disaster-** A recipe for disaster is a mixture of people and events that could only possibly result in trouble

**Red** **carpet-** If you give someone the red-carpet treatment, you give them a special Welcome to show that you think they are important

**Red** **herring-** If something is a distraction from the real issues, it is a red herring

**Red** **letter** **day-** A red letter day is a one of good luck, when something special happens to you **Reduce** **to** **ashes-** If something is reduced to ashes, it is destroyed or made useless. His infidelities reduced their relationship to ashes

**Round** **the** **houses-** If you go round the houses, you do something in an inefficient way when there is a quicker, more convenient way

**Rub** **shoulders-** If you rub shoulders with people, you meet and spend time with them, Especially when they are powerful or famous

**Run** **into** **the** **sand-** If something runs into the sand, it fails to achieve a result

**S** **idioms**

**Salt** **on** **the** **earth**- fundamental good people

**Sands** **of** **time**- tiny amounts of time

**Shake** **a** **leg**- to go fast, hurry

**Spill** **the** **beans**- to expose a secret

**Snake** **in** **the** **grass**- a hidden army

**Salt** **on** **the** **earth**- fundamental good people

**Sands** **of** **time**- tiny amounts of time

**Shake** **a** **leg**- to go fast, hurry

**Spill** **the** **beans**- to expose a secret

**Snake** **in** **the** **grass**- a hidden army

**Snake** **in** **the** **shoes**- to be in a state of fear

**Stood** **to** **his** **guns**- maintained to his opinion

**showing** **the** **door**- asking someone to leave

**Song** **and** **a** **dance-** an excuse

**Salad** **days-** Your salad days are an especially happy period of your life

**Sail** **under** **false** **colors-** **Someone** who sails under false colors is hypocritical or

Pretends to be something they aren't in order to deceive people

**T** **idioms**

**Threaded** **his** **way** **out**- walked carefully through.

**Take** **the** **cloth**- to become a priest.

**Talk** **turkey**- to discuss a problem with a real intension to solve it.

**Tit** **for** **tat**- an action done to revenge against a person who has done some wrong to you

**To** **crow** **over**- to triumph over someone

**to** **blow** **a** **fuse**- to turn someone angry

**though** **thick** **and** **thin**- under all conditions

**to** **bell** **the** **cat**- to take great risks

**To** **look** **through** **colored** **glasses**- to look the things not as they are

**Taking** **to** **a** **brick** **wall**- taking with a no response

**Turned** **a** **deaf** **ear**- disregarded

**Take** **a** **back** **seat**- choose to decrease involvement

**Tables** **are** **turned-** When the tables are turned, the situation has changed giving the advantage to the party who had previously been at a disadvantage

**Take** **someone** **under** **your** **wing-** If you take someone under your wing, you look after them while they are learning something

**Take** **your** **medicine-** **If** you take your medicine, you accept the consequences of something you have done wrong

**Talking** **to** **a** **brick** **wall-** If you talk to someone and they do not listen to you, it is like talking to a brick wall

**Taste** **of** **your** **own** **medicine-** If you give someone a taste of their own medicine, you do something bad to someone that they have done to you to teach them a lesson

**The** **apple** **does** **not** **fall** **far** **from** **the** **tree-** Offspring grow up to be like their parents

**Through** **thick** **and** **thin-** If someone supports you through thick and thin, they support you during good times and bad

**U** **idioms**

**Upset** **the** **apple** **cart**- to create difficulty

**Under** **a** **cloud**- If someone is suspected of having done something wrong, they are under a cloud **Under** **fire**- If someone is being attacked and criticized heavily, they are under fire

Under your nose- If something happens right in front of you, especially if it is surprising or audacious, it happens under your nose

**Up** **for** **grabs**- If something is up for grabs, it is available and whoever is first or is successful will get it

**Up** **to** **the** **neck**- If someone's in something up to the neck, they are very involved in it, especially when it's something wrong

**Up** **a** **river** **without** **a** **paddle**- If you up a river without a paddle, you are in an unfortunate situation, unprepared and with none of the resources to remedy the matter

**Uncharted** **waters-** If you're in uncharted waters, you are in a situation that is unfamiliar to you, that you have no experience of and don't know what might happen

**Under** **lock** **and** **key-** If something is under lock and key, it is stored very securely **V** **idioms**

**Vale** **of** **tears-** This vale of tears is the world and the suffering that life brings.

**Velvet** **glove** **-** This idiom is used to describe a person who appears gentle, but is determined and inflexible underneath. ('Iron fist in a velvet glove' is the full form.)

**Vent** **your** **spleen** - If someone vents their spleen, they release all their anger about something. **Vicar** **of** **Bray** - A person who changes their beliefs and principles to stay popular with people above them is a Vicar of Bray

**Vicious** **circle** **-** A vicious circle is a sequence of events that make each other worse- someone drinks because they are unhappy at work, then loses their job... 'Vicious cycle' is also used.

**Vinegar** **tits** - A mean spirited women lacking in love or compassion.

**Virgin** **territory** **-** If something is virgin territory, it hasn't been explored before.

**Voice** **in** **the** **wilderness** **-** Someone who expresses an opinion that no one believes or listens to is a voice in the wilderness,especially if proved right later.

**Volte-face** **-** If you do a volte-face on something, you make a sudden and complete change in your stance or position over an issue.

**Vultures** **are** **circling** **-** If the vultures are circling, then something is in danger and its enemies are

getting ready for the kill.

**W** **idioms**

**Weight** **one’s** **word**- be careful to what one says

**Wait** **for** **a** **raindrop** **in** **the** **drought-** When someone is waiting for a raindrop in the drought, they are waiting or hoping for something that is extremely unlikely to happen

**Walking** **on** **broken** **glass-** **When** a person is punished for something

**Wet** **behind** **the** **ears-** Someone who is wet behind the ears is either very young or inexperienced **Whale** **of** **a** **time-** If you have a whale of a time, you really enjoy yourself

**Work** **your** **fingers** **to** **the** **bone-** **If** you work your fingers to the bone, you work extremely hard on something

**Wrench** **in** **the** **works-** If someone puts or throws a wrench, or monkey wrench, in the works, they ruin a plan

**X** **idioms**

**X** **factor** - The dangers for people in the military that civilians do not face, for which they receive payment, are known as the X factor.

**X** **marks** **the** **spot** - This is used to say where something is located or hidden.

**X-rated** **-** If something is x-rated, it is not suitable for children.

**Y** **idioms**

**Yah** **boo** **sucks-** Yah boo & yah boo sucks can be used to show that you have no sympathy with someone.

**Yank** **my** **chain** **-** If some one says this to another person (i.e. stop yanking my chain) it means for the other person to leave the person who said it alone and to stop bothering them.

**Yell** **bloody** **murder** **-** If someone yells bloody murder, they protest angrily and loudly, or scream in fear.

**Yellow** **press** - The yellow press is a term for the popular and sensationalist newspapers. **Yellow** **streak**- If someone has a yellow streak, they are cowardly about something. **Yellow-bellied** - A yellow-bellied person is a coward.

**Yen** - If you have a yen to do something, you have a desire to do it.

**Yeoman's** **service** - To do yeoman's service is to serve in an exemplary manner.

**Yes-man** - Someone who always agrees with people in authority is a yes-man.

**Yesterday's** **man** **or** **Yesterday's** **woman** - Someone, especially a politician or celebrity, whose career is over or on the decline is yesterday's man or woman.

**You** **are** **what** **you** **eat** - This is used to emphasise the importance of a good diet as a key to good health.

**You** **can** **catch** **more** **flies** **with** **honey** **than** **with** **vinegar** - This means that it is easier to persuade people if you use polite arguments and flattery than if you are confrontational.

**You** **can** **choose** **your** **friends,** **but** **you** **can't** **choose** **your** **family** - Some things you can choose, but others you cannot, so you have to try to make the best of what you have where you have no choice.

**You** **can** **lead** **a** **horse** **to** **water,** **but** **you** **can't** **make** **it** **drink** - This idiom means you can offer something to someone, like good advice, but you cannot make them take it.

**You** **can** **say** **that** **again** **-** If you want to agree strongly with what someone has said, you can say 'You can say that again' as a way of doing so.

**You** **can't** **fight** **City** **Hall** - This phrase is used when one is so cynical that one doesn't think one can change their Representatives. The phrase must have started with frustration towards a local body of government.

**You** **can't** **have** **cake** **and** **the** **topping,** **too** **-** This idiom means that you can't have everything the way you want it, especially if your desires are contradictory.

**You** **can't** **have** **your** **cake** **and** **eat** **it** **-** This idiom means that you can't have things both ways. For example, you can't have very low taxes and a high standard of state care.

**You** **can't** **hide** **elephants** **in** **mouse** **holes** **-** means that some issues/problems/challenges cannot be hidden/concealed but have to be faced and dealt with.

**You** **can't** **make** **a** **silk** **purse** **out** **of** **a** **sow's** **ear** **-** If something isn't very good to start with, you can't do much to improve it.

You can't make an omelette without breaking eggs - This idiom means that in order to achieve something or make progress, there are often losers in the process.

**You** **can't** **take** **it** **with** **you** - Enjoy life, enjoy what you have and don't worry about not having a lot, especially money...because once you're dead, 'you can't take it with you.' For some, it means to use up all you have before you die because it's no use to you afterwards.

**You** **can't** **teach** **an** **old** **dog** **new** **tricks** **-** It is difficult to make someone change the way they do something when they have been doing it the same way for a long time

**You** **can't** **un-ring** **a** **bell** **-** This means that once something has been done, you have to live with the consequences as it can't be undone.

**You** **could** **have** **knocked** **me** **down** **with** **a** **feathe**r - This idiom is used to mean that the person was very shocked or surprised.

**You** **do** **not** **get** **a** **dog** **and** **bark** **yourself** **-** If there is someone in a lower position who can or should do a task, then you shouldn't do it.

**You** **get** **what** **you** **pay** **for** **-** Something that is very low in price is not usually of very good quality. **You** **reap** **what** **you** **sow** **-** This means that if you do bad things to people, bad things will happen to you, or good things if you do good things. It is normally used when someone has done something bad.

**You** **said** **it!-** Used to say you agree completely with something just said.

You scratch my back and I'll scratch yours - This idiom means that if you do something for me, I'll return the favour.

**You** **what?** **-** This is a very colloquial way of expressing surprise or disbelief at something you have heard. It can also be used to ask someone to say something again.

**You're** **toast** **-** If someone tells you that you are toast, you are in a lot of trouble.

**You've** **got** **rocks** **in** **your** **head** **-** Someone who has acted with a lack of intelligence has rocks in their head.

**You've** **made** **your** **bed-** you'll have to lie in it - This means that someone will have to live with the consequences of their own actions.

**Young** **blood** **-** Young people with new ideas and fresh approaches are young blood.

**Young** **Turk** **-** A Young Turk is a young person who is rebellious and difficult to control in a company, team or organisation.

**Your** **belly** **button** **is** **bigger** **than** **your** **stomach** **-** If your belly button is bigger than your stomach, you take on more responsibilities than you can handle.

**Your** **call** - If something is your call, it is up to you to make a decision on the matter.

**Your** **name** **is** **mud** **-** If someone's name is mud, then they have a bad reputation.

**Your** **sins** **will** **find** **you** **out** **-** This idiom means that things you do wrong will become known. **Z** **idioms**

**Zero** **hour-** The time when something important is to begin is zero hour.

**Zero** **tolerance** **-** If the police have a zero tolerance policy, they will not overlook any crime, no matter how small or trivial.

**Zigged** **before** **you** **zagged** - If you did things in the wrong order, you zigged before you zagged.

**Zip** **it** **-** This is used to tell someone to be quiet.

**Zip** **your** **lip** **-** If someone tells you to zip your lip, they want to to shut up or keep quiet about something. ('Zip it' is also used.)