



# 25 VERY BRITISH PHRASES

## VOCABULARY LESSON



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Are you as keen as mustard about this lesson? Excellent, because in this lesson, you will learn 25 very British phrases that utilize similes to compare two things. A simile is used like an adverb or an adjective to describe a verb or a noun. We use the words "like" or "as" to make these comparisons. Adding similes to your writing and conversations will make you sound even more like a native English speaker.

### How to use a simile:

Let's start by looking at this sentence:

My **dog** **is** **slow**.

This is a fine sentence. It has a **noun**, a **verb** and an **adjective**. However, this sentence is a bit bland, and we can improve it by using a simile.

My **dog** **is as slow as a snail**.

The simile **as slow as a snail** allows us to describe how slow the dog is by comparing it to a snail. We know that snails move extremely slowly.

### Common format:

as + **adverb/adjective** + as + **an object**

as **slow** as **a snail**

as **big** as **a house**

as **keen** as **mustard**



## Food Similes

No.	Simile	Explanation	Example
1	As cool as a cucumber	a person who is relaxed and calm	She never reacts to stressful situations. She is always <u>as cool as a cucumber</u> .
2	As flat as a pancake	used to describe something that is totally and completely flat	I built a beautiful sandcastle, but a wave came and now it is <u>as flat as a pancake</u> .
3	As cold as ice	when someone acts in a very cold or disinterested way	Bob can be <u>as cold as ice</u> sometimes. It seems like he never smiles.
4	As keen as mustard	used to describe someone who is extremely enthusiastic or excited about something	Our new receptionist is <u>as keen as mustard</u> ! I saw her watering all of the plastic office plants, bless her!

## Animal Similes

No.	Simile	Explanation	Example
5	As blind as a bat	used to describe someone who has poor vision	Be careful when you play with my dog - she's <u>as blind as a bat</u> !
6	As bald as a coot	a person who has no hair	I used to have a fantastic mop of hair, but now I'm <u>as bald as a coot</u> !
7	Buzzing like a mosquito	used to describe someone who is talking a lot and might be a bit annoying	Did you speak with Maria at the party?  She was <u>buzzing like a mosquito</u> . I couldn't get two words in.
8	As happy as a dog with two tails	used to describe someone who is very happy	When she won the lottery, she was <u>as happy as a dog with two tails</u> !
9	As wise as an owl	used to describe someone who is exceptionally smart or in sound judgement	My grandpa always had the greatest advice. He was truly <u>as wise as an owl</u> .



# Object Similes

No.	Simile	Explanation	Example
10	To fit like a glove	used to describe something that fits really well	Wow! These are the best shoes I have ever worn. They <u>fit like a glove</u> !
11	As fit as a fiddle	someone who is very fit, or in good health	My grandmother may be in her eighties, but she's <u>as fit as a fiddle</u> !
12	As dead as a doornail	used to describe something that is dead	I tried to save the mouse from the cat, but it was <u>as dead as a doornail</u> .
13	As clean as a whistle	used to describe something that is very clean	I had the oven cleaned yesterday - now it's <u>as clean as a whistle</u> !
14	As clear as crystal	something is very easy to understand; obvious	Her intentions were <u>as clear as crystal</u> but he still missed all of the signs.
15	As clear as mud	a sarcastic way to describe something that is very unclear	Can you explain what we are meant to be doing? Her instructions were <u>as clear as mud</u> !
16	As pale as a ghost	looking uncharacteristically pale usually caused by fear or nausea	The turbulence on the aeroplane caused Sandy's face to turn <u>as pale as a ghost</u> .
17	Sleep like a log	used to describe a person who sleeps very soundly without being disturbed easily	It doesn't matter where he is, he will <u>sleep like a log</u> no matter what!
18	As useful as a chocolate teapot	used to describe someone or something that is useless	I love my window cleaner but he's about <u>as useful as a chocolate teapot</u> .  He's broken three of my windows!
19	As sharp as a knife/razor	used to describe something that is extremely sharp OR someone who is extremely quick or intelligent	Watch out! The broken glass on the floor is <u>as sharp as a razor</u> .  You won't fool him - he's <u>as sharp as a knife</u> !



20	As fresh as a daisy	used to describe someone who has woken up full of energy and enthusiasm	He is so annoying. He got so drunk last night but today he is <u>as fresh as a daisy</u> !
21	As happy as Larry	used to describe someone who is very happy	I saw him at the pub after he passed his driving test. He was <u>as happy as Larry</u> !
22	As hard as nails	used to describe someone who is very tough or strong	I wouldn't get on his wrong side - he's <u>as hard as nails</u> !

## Weather Similes

No.	Simile	Explanation	Example
23	As white as snow	used to describe something that is very white	Her skin was as black as ebony, and her skin was <u>as white as snow</u> .
24	As quick as lightning	used to describe someone or something is done very quickly	The taxi driver got us to our hotel <u>as quick as lightning</u> . We gave him a hefty tip!
25	As right as rain	used to describe someone who is in excellent health	You looked terrible yesterday, but now you look <u>as right as rain</u> !



### Try it for yourself!

Similes are also open to experimentation. You can easily create your own simile like:

This blanket is **as warm as a steaming cup of tea!**

Learning English should be fun and exciting, so let's play around with some similes! Try to create a few sentences using your own similes.



# Activity

**Choose the correct word from the box to complete each simile. Use each word once.**

snow	quick	glove	clear
blind	owl	nails	pancake

- 1) He is my favourite teacher because he is as wise as an \_\_\_\_\_.
- 2) These jeans fit like a \_\_\_\_\_. I will take them!
- 3) What happened to the cake? It is as flat as a \_\_\_\_\_.
- 4) She presented the information as \_\_\_\_\_ as crystal. We all knew what we needed to do.
- 5) Rachel came down the aisle in a dress as white as \_\_\_\_\_. She looked stunning!
- 6) How did you miss the ball? It was coming right toward you! You are as \_\_\_\_\_ as a bat!
- 7) The police car drove by as \_\_\_\_\_ as lightning while it was pursuing the criminal.
- 8) He took a lot of punches, but he was as tough as \_\_\_\_\_ and came back to win the fight!

**Which simile can replace the underlined portion of the sentence?**

- 9) Is she feeling okay today? She is acting very disinterested.
  - a. as cold as ice
  - b. as bald as a coot
  - c. as useful as a chocolate teapot
- 10) Are we really taking a trip to Japan? I am very happy!
  - a. buzzing like a mosquito
  - b. as fit as a fiddle
  - c. as happy as a dog with two tails

1) wise 2) glove 3) pancake 4) clear 5) snow 6) blind 7) quick 8) nails 9) a 10) c

# The End