



# 50 Must-know IDIOMS

**1. Piece of cake** : Something very easy.

Solving that maths problem was a piece of cake for her.

**2. Bite the bullet** : To force yourself to do something unpleasant or difficult.

I hate going to the dentist, but I'll just have to bite the bullet.

**3. Cry over spilled milk** : Regretting something that has already happened.

There's no use crying over spilled milk; let's find a solution.

**4. Let the cat out of the bag** : To reveal a secret.

John accidentally let the cat out of the bag about the surprise party.

**5. On the ball** : To be quick to understand and react to things.

She's always on the ball when it comes to completing tasks on time.

**6. Jump on the bandwagon** : To join a popular activity or trend.

Many companies are jumping on the bandwagon of sustainable practices.

**7. Cut to the chase** : To get to the point without wasting time.

Let's cut to the chase and discuss the main points of the proposal.

**8. Under the weather** : Feeling unwell or sick.

I won't be at work today; I'm feeling a bit under the weather.

**9. Pull someone's leg** : To tease or joke with someone.

Are you serious, or are you just pulling my leg?





## Quick Smart English

**10. Out of the blue :** Unexpectedly.

His invitation came out of the blue; I wasn't expecting it at all.

**11. Burn bridges :** Damaging relationships, making it difficult to rebuild or repair them in the future.

Be careful not to burn bridges with colleagues; you may need their support later.

**12. Cost a pretty penny :** Expensive.

That designer handbag must have cost a pretty penny.

**13. Give someone the benefit of the doubt :** To believe someone's statement without being critical.

I'll give her the benefit of the doubt and assume she didn't mean to offend.

**14. Bite off more than you can chew :** To take on a task that is way too big.

Taking on two projects at once, I might have bitten off more than I can chew.

**15. Spill the beans :** To reveal a secret.

Come on, spill the beans about the surprise; I can't wait any longer.

**16. Hold your horses :** To be patient.

Just hold your horses. Let's think about this for a moment.

**17. Put all your eggs in one basket :** To rely on a single plan or resource.

Diversify your investments; don't put all your eggs in one basket.

**18. Not my cup of tea :** Something not to one's liking or interest.

Horror movies are not my cup of tea; I prefer comedies.

**19. Cut corners :** Taking shortcuts or doing something in a hasty manner.

Cutting corners in your work might lead to mistakes; be thorough.





## Quick Smart English

**20. All ears :** Listening attentively.

I'm all ears – tell me about your exciting weekend plans.

**21. Fit as a fiddle :** In good health and physically fit.

After regular exercise, she feels fit as a fiddle.

**22. Let sleeping dogs lie :** To avoid stirring up old problems.

Don't bring up past issues; let sleeping dogs lie.

**23. In a nutshell :** Summarising something briefly.

In a nutshell, the project needs more time and resources.

**24. Out of the frying pan into the fire :** Moving from a bad situation to a worse one.

Great changes cannot be made in a minute, and we do not want to jump out of the frying pan into the fire.

**25. Spitting image :** Resembling someone closely in appearance.

The child is the spitting image of his grandfather.

**26. Stab someone in the back :** Betraying someone's trust.

I never expected her to stab me in the back like that.

**27. Cost the earth :** Extremely expensive.

They charge the earth just for a cup of tea.

**28. A penny for your thoughts :** A polite way of asking someone what they are thinking or feeling.

You seem lost in thought; a penny for your thoughts?





## Quick Smart English

**29.To play something by ear :** To do something without planning ahead.  
I don't have a plan yet; let's play it by ear and see how things unfold.

**30.Keep your chin up :** To stay positive in difficult situations.  
Things may be tough now, but chin up – it'll get better.

**31.My lips are sealed :** Said when you are promising to keep a secret.  
Please don't tell him you saw me here. – Don't worry. My lips are sealed.

**32.Two peas in a pod :** Very similar in appearance or character.  
They're best friends and practically two peas in a pod.

**33.Sell like hot cakes :** Being sold or accepted very quickly and in large quantities.  
The new smartphones are selling like hot cakes; everyone wants one.

**34.Barking up the wrong tree :** To be wrong about the reason for something or the way to achieve something.  
If you think I took your pen, you're barking up the wrong tree; check your bag.

**35.Put the cat among the pigeons :** To cause trouble or make a lot of people very angry.  
Announcing the layoffs really put the cat amongst the pigeons in the office.

**36.The lion's share :** The largest portion.  
He ate the lion's share of the cake. There wasn't enough for us.

**37.Kill two birds with one stone :** To accomplish two tasks with a single effort.  
I exercise in the morning, killing two birds with one stone by staying fit and starting my day energised.





## Quick Smart English

**38.Pigs might fly :** Something highly unlikely to happen.

I will have finished it by tomorrow. - And pigs might fly!

**39.Give someone the cold shoulder :** To deliberately ignore someone or show no interest in them.

She was so upset that she gave him the cold shoulder for the whole weekend.

**40.Beat around the bush :** To avoid talking about what is important.

Stop beating around the bush and tell me what you really think.

**41.A stone's throw away :** A very short distance.

The cafe is just a stone's throw away; we can walk there.

**42.Don't give up your day job :** Advice given to someone who is not good at something they are attempting.

What did you think of my singing ? - Er, don't give up the day job!

**43.A blessing in disguise :** Something that initially seems bad but turns out to be advantageous.

Losing my job turned out to be a blessing in disguise; I found a better opportunity.

**44.The ball is in your court :** It's your turn or responsibility to take action.

I've done my part; now the ball's in your court to make a decision.

**45.Speak of the Devil :** Mentioning someone who then appears unexpectedly.

Did you hear what happened to Emily yesterday - oh, speak of the devil, here she is.

**46.Add fuel to the fire :** To make a situation worse or more intense.

Bringing up that old argument will only add fuel to the fire.





## Quick Smart English

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**47. Don't judge a book by its cover :** Don't form an opinion based on appearances alone.

He may look tough, but don't judge a book by its cover; he's actually very kind.

**48. By the skin of one's teeth :** Just barely; very narrowly.

I passed the exam by the skin of my teeth.

**49. Call a spade a spade :** To speak bluntly or honestly.

Let's call a spade a spade – the project was a failure, and we need to learn from it.

**50. Be in the same boat :** To be in a similar or shared situation.

He is always complaining that he doesn't have enough money, but we're all in the same boat.

