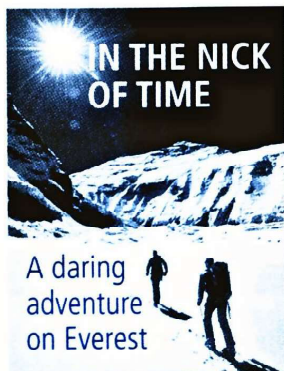
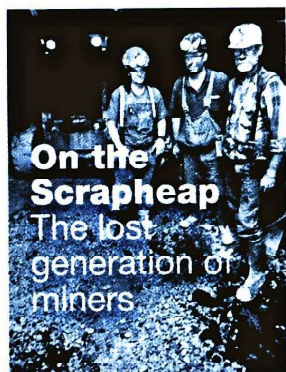


57 I can use prepositional idioms

A Book titles



Under One Roof

Families in the crowded inner city

Behind Closed Doors

How big business really works

From the Horse's Mouth

Testimonies of wartime courage

Out of the Ordinary

Children with special talents

Within your Rights

A guide to workplace legislation

Computing Essentials in Plain English

Good Health Guide

Answers **at your fingertips**

Strictly **by the Book**

A parent's guide to child-rearing

Glossary

on the scrapheap

in the nick of time

under one roof

behind closed doors

(straight) from the horse's mouth

out of the ordinary

(be) within your rights

in plain English

at your fingertips

by the book

INF If sb/sth is **on the scrapheap**, they are no longer wanted or useful.

INF just in time to prevent sth bad from happening.

in the same home. SYN **under the same roof**.

without the public knowing what is happening.

INF Information coming **from the horse's mouth** comes from sb who is directly involved.

unusual or different.

(have or) having the moral or legal authority to do sth.

simply and clearly expressed.

near you or available for you to use immediately.

If you do sth **by the book**, you follow rules and instructions in a strict way.

1 Is the meaning the same or different? Write S or D.

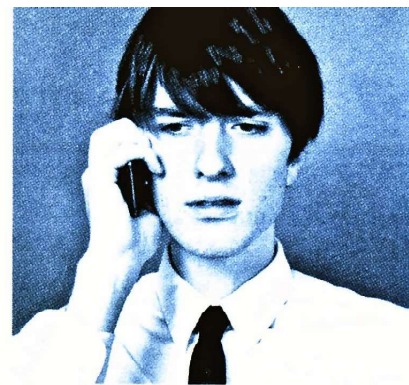
- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 He told me what happened himself. | I heard about it from the horse's mouth. |
| 2 Something unusual happened. | Nothing out of the ordinary happened. |
| 3 What happened in private? | What happened behind closed doors? |
| 4 She's within her rights to do that. | She's right to do that. |
| 5 It needs to be written in plain English. | It needs to be written in correct English. |
| 6 We got out in the nick of time. | We got out in no time at all. |

2 Rewrite the sentences using the word in capitals. Keep a similar meaning.

- The enquiry was held in private. DOORS *The enquiry was held behind closed doors.*
- I haven't got the facts readily available. FINGERTIPS
 - I didn't see anything unusual. ORDINARY
 - We do everything in the correct way. BOOK
 - We arrived at the very last minute. TIME
 - Twelve people are living together in the flat. ROOF
 - Hundreds of workers will lose their jobs. SCRAPHEAP
 - You have the authority to claim for this. RIGHTS
 - She expressed the ideas clearly and simply. PLAIN

B A conversation

- JO Has Helmut seen anything of Katrina recently?
- JIM Well, apparently she rang him **out of the blue** the other day, hoping he was free for dinner. And in fact, he was **at a loose end**, but he told her he was **up to his eyes in** work.
- JO Very wise. So did she want to meet up **for old times' sake**, do you think?
- JIM **In all probability**, yeah. But **between you and me**, I think he'd be **off his head** to go back to her.
- JO Too right. That relationship was a disaster **right from the outset**. And **in his heart of hearts**, he knows that.



Glossary

out of the blue	unexpectedly; without warning.
at a loose end	having nothing particular to do.
up to your eyes in sth	INF having a lot of sth to do or deal with.
for old times' sake	so that you can remember a happy time in the past.
in all probability	= it is very likely.
between you and me	used when you are telling sb sth that you do not want anyone else to know. SYN between ourselves .
(right) from/at the outset	from/at the very beginning. SYN (right) from/at the word go INF.
in your heart (of hearts)	used for talking about true or secret feelings.

spotlight Phrases with head

You must be off your head. INF = crazy. SYN **out of your mind** INF.
The talk went over my head. = was too difficult for me to understand.
I was covered from head to toe in dust. = all over my body.

3 Complete the phrases with the correct prepositions.

- | | | | |
|---|-----------------|-------------|-------------|
| 1 | all probability | | |
| 2 | you and me / | | ourselves |
| 3 | | your mind / | your head |
| 4 | head | toe | |
| 5 | a loose end | | |
| 6 | the outset / | | the word go |

4 Complete the sentences using the phrases from Exercise 3.

- You paid €100 for that shirt? You must be _____ !
- I got caught in a thunderstorm and I was completely soaked _____ .
- Why don't you come over this evening, if you're _____ .
- I would say that _____ , we should be home before the weekend.
- He thinks he's got the job, but _____ , his chances are slim.
- It was clear _____ that the idea wasn't going to work.

5 ABOUT YOU Complete the questions. Then write your answers to the questions in your notebook, or talk to another student.

- When did you last get a call from an old friend out of the _____ ? Who was it?
- Are you at a loose _____ this weekend? If so, what might you do?
- Are you up to your _____ in work at the moment?
- Have you watched a TV programme recently that went over your _____ ?
- Do you ever listen to pieces of music for old times' _____ ?
- Did you enjoy studying English right from the word _____ ? Why?/Why not?

C States

I want it **off my hands**.

The lights are **on the blink**.



It's **on its last legs**.

The interior's not **in very good nick**.

I can't keep it **on the road**.

My temper sometimes **gets me into hot water**.



I'm **in the doghouse** at home.

I feel **on edge** the whole time.

I'm **in a rut** at work.

I'm **at a crossroads**. What next?

Glossary

on the blink

INF (of electrical equipment) not working properly.

in good/excellent/bad nick

INF in good/excellent/bad condition.

on the road

(of a car) in good condition so that it can be legally driven. OPP **off the road**.

on its last legs

INF If sth is **on its last legs** it is going to stop functioning very soon.

in the doghouse

INF, often HUMOROUS If you are **in the doghouse**, sb is annoyed with you because you have done sth wrong.

on edge

tense, nervous, or irritable. (If you are **on tenterhooks**, you are anxious because you are waiting to find out about sth.)

in a rut

living or working in a situation that never changes. (👁 See page 162.)

at a/the crossroads

at a point in your life when you must make an important decision.

be in/get (sb) into hot water INF be in or get (sb) into trouble.

spotlight hands

The children are **off my hands**. = no longer my responsibility.

Inflation is getting **out of hand**. = difficult or impossible to control.

A nurse will be **on hand** at the event. = available to help.

6 Tick the phrases which are informal.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 No one was on hand to help. | 5 The project will be off my hands soon. |
| 2 My son's in hot water at work. | 6 I'm on tenterhooks about the results. |
| 3 The car's off the road at the moment. | 7 The TV's on the blink again. |
| 4 The flat's in very bad nick. | 8 This old radio is really on its last legs. |

7 Circle the correct preposition.

- My life is at | on a crossroads at the moment.
- I once went to a party which got out of | off hand.
- I don't feel I'm on | in a rut at the moment.
- My computer is on | in its last legs.
- My car/bike is in | on excellent nick.
- My TV/MP3 player is on | in the blink.
- I'm in | on edge at the moment, waiting for news of something.
- I wish someone was constantly on | in hand to help me with my English.

8 ABOUT YOU Are the sentences in Exercise 7 true for you? If not, change them so that they are true. Write your answers in your notebook or tell a partner.