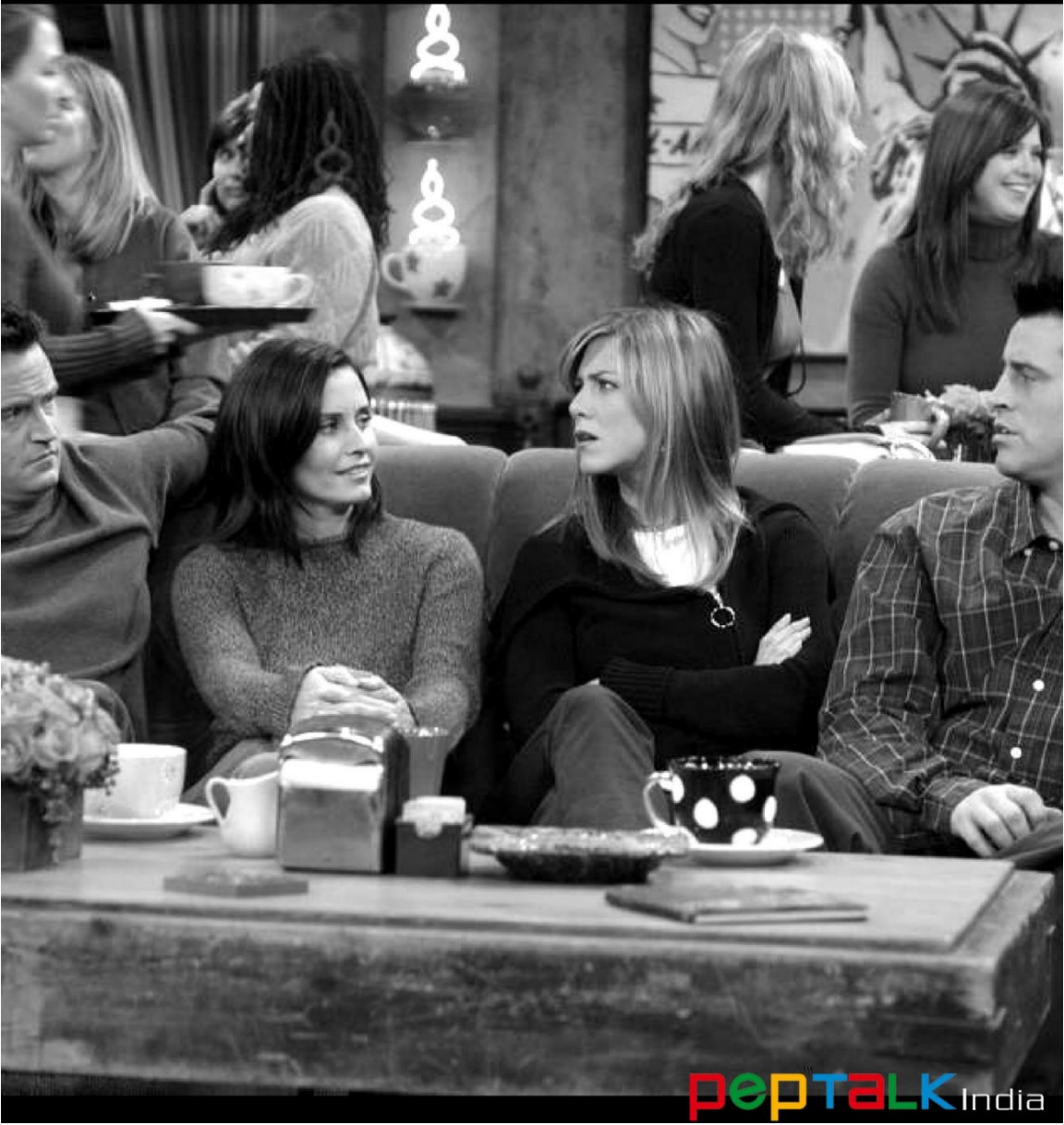


Everyday Idioms Made Easy!



Introduction

Any student of the English language eager to tread down the path of hard work and toil in order to attain proficiency similar to that of native speakers soon realizes that life is not a bed of roses, but a shambled road full of thorns and pickles. This has been stressed more often than not – but indeed, regular practice and a sense of curiosity is extremely essential to make yourself more skilled in this field.

From curiosity arises the desire to make your English sound more eloquent, through idiomatic expressions, popular phrases and proverbs. Using idioms in your daily English not only reflects a sound understanding of the language, but also enriches your verbal skills – written or oral with a distinctive panache.

Pep Talk India brings you the massive list of 400 immensely useful idioms and proverbs that you can use in daily life. This handy booklet contains a brief explanation of each idioms or proverb, followed by a lucid example to familiarize you with its usage.

1. A wolf in lamb's clothing

Meaning: Someone who is sweet from outside but evil from inside.

Usage: My ex-boyfriend was a complete example of a wolf in lamb's clothing.

2. All's well that ends well

Meaning: Every situation seems better which ends in a good way.

Usage: Hey! Forget about it now and move on. All's well that ends well.

3. The grass on the other side always looks greener

Meaning: Things that are far away from us always look better.

Usage: When I was a kid I would admire married people but now I have realized that the grass on the other side always looks greener.

4. A burnt child dreads the fire or once bitten twice shy

Meaning: A person once hurt or experienced an adverse situation always looks for caution.

Usage: I invested in Bitcoin once and suffered heavy losses. Investor optimism for the same has made me wary, a burnt child dreads the fire.

5. Piece of the pie

Meaning: A share of something like money or profit.

Usage: After giving her business idea, she demanded a piece of the pie from the eventual profits.

6. To sell towels to tourists

Meaning: To make a lot of money without too much work.

Usage: Agents sell towels to tourists

7. Once in a blue moon

Meaning: Something that happens very rarely.

Usage: Though I am a teetotaler, I do have a sip or two once in a blue moon.

8. Icing on the cake

Meaning: Something that makes a good situation even better.

Usage: Winning the Lord's test was a remarkable feat for the Indian U-19 cricket team; the icing on the cake was it came after a long period of 6 years.

9. To burn the candle at both ends

Meaning: To work more than your needs/ to work for long time without any rest.

Usage: To make sure the project was a resounding success, Ritu worked day and night, burning the candle at both ends.

10. To have your head in the clouds

Meaning: Exhibiting aloof and impractical behavior, akin to daydreaming and being unaware.

Usage: During maths classes, I always have my head in the clouds.

11. Spill the beans

Meaning: Disclose a secret inadvertently or unintentionally, usually in a premature manner.

Usage: We have a surprise birthday party planned for Rohit tomorrow. Request you all not to spill the beans if you meet him.

12. Get your wires crossed

Meaning: To misunderstand or misinterpret.

Usage: Me and Vandana got our wires crossed regarding the metro station; as a result, we both waited on the wrong platforms for the train.

13. Put your foot in your mouth

Meaning: To make a foolish remark (usually without meaning to) that offends or embarrasses someone else.

Usage: Indian politicians have a habit of putting their foot into their mouths, especially when they are asked to comment on women's rights issues.

14. Catch someone's eye

Meaning: Be noticed by someone, attract attention by making eye contact with a person.

Usage: The pretty young folk dancer caught the eye of the movie producer at a casting event.

15. Hold your horses

Meaning: An exclamation to ask a person to stop, when he or she is speaking or doing something in a rushed and thoughtless manner.

Usage: Whoa! Hold your horses Puneet! Think before making such a serious accusation on me.

16. Eyes bigger than one's stomach

Meaning: To take more food on one's plate than one can eat.

Usage: How will you reduce weight? You have eyes bigger than your stomach.

17. Under the weather

Meaning: Slightly unwell or in low spirits.

Usage: I won't be able to attend today's session because I am a bit under the weather.

18. Throw in the towel

Meaning: To give up; to quit.

Usage: Once the football team lost their star player to injury, they threw in the towel pretty soon during the match.

19. Between the devil and the deep blue sea

Meaning: To choose between two unpleasant situations.

Usage: In Indian politics, there is no clear choice. The voters always have to choose between the devil and the deep blue sea because all parties are morally corrupt.

20. As easy as pie

Meaning: Extremely simple, not requiring a lot of skill or effort.

Usage: If you prepare well for the IIT competition test, scoring good marks in board exams will be as easy as pie.

21. Absence makes the heart grow fonder

Meaning: Being away from someone or something for a period of time makes you appreciate that person or thing more when you see them again.

Usage: After the couple separated due to irreconcilable differences, they both realized that absence made the heart grow fonder.

22. Action speaks louder than words

Meaning: What you do is more important than what you say.

Usage: Politicians make tall promises during their campaigns, but they fail to show that action speaks louder than words.

23. A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step

Meaning: This quote stresses how great things have had humble beginnings.

Usage: Big companies like Apple had their inception in a garage. This shows how a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.

24. All good things must come to an end

Meaning: Everything ends; good times don't last forever

Usage: Most great rock bands eventually split up; this proves that all good things must come to an end.

25. A picture is worth a thousand words.

Meaning: An image can tell a story better than words.

Usage: No matter how much we read about natural disasters, the true scale of a calamity can only be felt through a photo or video, since a picture is worth a thousand words.

26. A watched pot never boils.

Meaning: If something takes time to do, it doesn't help to constantly check on it. You just have to give it time.

Usage: Shalini was nervous for her exam results and kept refreshing the website but her parents told her that the effort was futile because a watched pot never boils.

27. Beggars can't be choosers

Meaning: If you are in a bad situation and someone offers to help you, you have to take whatever they give you and shouldn't ask for more.

Usage: He was broke and wanted a job to make ends meet. The corporation offered him the job of a peon and he had to take it despite being a post-graduate, because beggars can't be choosers.

28. Beauty lies in the eyes of beholder

Meaning: What is "beautiful" is different for each person. (It depends upon an individual's personal opinion)

Usage: Despite her simple looks, Malini's kind nature attracted Abhishek towards her. After all, beauty lies in the eyes of the beholder.

29. Better late than never

Meaning: It's better to finish something late than to never do it at all.

Usage: My joining letter from TCS came two months after the scheduled date, but better late than never.

30. Birds of a feather flock together

Meaning: People who have similar interest, traits and characteristics tend to spend more time together.

Usage: Ahmed was interested in sci-fi literature and other nerdy things, so he got along well with Roshan; after all, birds of a feather flock together.

31. Barking up the wrong tree

Meaning: To look for something at the wrong place/ to seek for the help from the wrong person

Usage: I asked my foodie friend about fitness. I was actually barking up the wrong tree.

32. Add insult to injury

Meaning: To hurt the feelings of a person who is already upset.

Usage: The employees who were protesting against low pay were further informed that they would have to forego their leaves, adding insult to injury.

33. Bitter pill to swallow

Meaning: An unpleasant situation that someone is forced to accept.

Usage: After they separated, he married her best friend. It was a bitter pill for her to swallow.

34. Roll out the red carpet

Meaning: To treat someone like royalty i.e. with great fanfare and hospitality.

Usage: The villagers rolled out the red carpet for the U.S.- returned Shankar; after all, it was the first time someone from the village had gone abroad.

35. Cry over spilled milk

Meaning: To be upset over things that cannot be fixed or undone.

Usage: Ronnie was upset over missing the penalty in the school football match. His friends and family asked him to forget it and not cry over spilled milk.

36. A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush

Meaning: Something certain is better than having another thing that may be worth more but is uncertain.

Usage: Rahul should have joined the clerk job he was selected for instead of waiting for the result of the officers' exam, because a bird in the hand is better than two in the bush.

37. Apple of one's eye

Meaning: Someone who is a special favorite or beloved object of a person's affection.

Usage: Though the entire class was teeming with talented students, Kirti was the apple of every teacher's eye owing to her all-round performance.

38. To be in the same boat

Meaning: To be in the same difficult situation as others.

Usage: After the leak of the Maths and Economics board papers, both Class X and XII students found themselves in the same boat.

39. Sail close to the wind

Meaning: To take a risk by doing something that is dangerous or illegal.

Usage: You are sailing close to the wind by using forged signatures on the cheques. The police might arrest you soon.

40. To cost an arm and a leg

Meaning: Be extremely expensive.

Usage: The Hermes Birkin bag cost me an arm and a leg, but it was worth it.

41. Lead a dog's life

Meaning: Lead a drab or boring life, filled with problems and unfair treatment.

Usage: After getting married, Shaili had to lead a dog's life because of the pressure from her in-laws.

42. A chip on shoulder

Meaning: An attitude that leads to a person getting easily angered.

Usage: Mohan has a chip on his shoulder when it comes to his marriage; he gets into really bad arguments.

43. Burn the midnight oil

Meaning: To read or work late into the night.

Usage: I need to burn the midnight oil in order to achieve success in this project.

44. Taste of your own medicine

Meaning: To get the same unpleasant treatment you have been dishing out to others.

Usage: Robert, who had a bullying nature, got a taste of his own medicine when some seniors roughed him up.

45. A penny for your thoughts

Meaning: Used to ask someone what they are thinking about.

Usage: You have not said anything for the entire day Kshitij- a penny for your thoughts?

46. Let sleeping dogs lie

Meaning: Avoid interfering in a situation if it might cause trouble.

Usage: Do not inform the boss of the error in the mail if he hasn't noticed. Let sleeping dogs lie.

47. At the drop of a hat

Meaning: Without any hesitation; instantly

Usage: Whenever Priya got into trouble, her brother was at her side at the drop of a hat.

48. The ball is in your court

Meaning: Used to say that it is up to you to make the next decision.

Usage: I have explained to her the consequences of taking a hasty decision, now the ball is in her court.

49. Beat around the bush

Meaning: To avoid the main topic; not speaking directly about the issue.

Usage: During the group discussion, most candidates were beating around the bush.

50. Best of both worlds

Meaning: To have all the advantages; a situation where one benefits from different opportunities.

Usage: We lived near the outskirts of the city, just adjacent to the village. That way, we had the best of both worlds.

51. Bite off more than you can chew

Meaning: To take on a task beyond your ability.

Usage: Despite the high attrition rate in the company, it agreed to deliver a high-value contract with a short turnaround time. Clearly, it was biting off more than it could chew.

52. Don't judge a book by its cover

Meaning: Don't judge something or someone primarily on appearance.

Usage: Harsh seems to be an uncouth fellow from the way he carries himself, but one should not judge a book by its cover.

53. Caught between two stools

Meaning: When you are caught between two things and unable to meet the needs of either.

Usage: Vandana started taking MBA coaching classes after work, but she was caught between two stools and was not able to focus on either.

54. Cross that bridge when you come to it

Meaning: Deal with a problem if and when it becomes necessary, not before.

Usage: Akhil: Let's set out tonight for Manali because I won't get any leaves the next month. Pooja: What if we don't get any hotels at such short notice? Akhil: We will cross that bridge when we come to it.

55. Curiosity killed the cat

Meaning: Being inquisitive can lead you into an unpleasant or dangerous situation.

Usage: Asking too many questions to a politician is fraught with risks. After all, curiosity killed the cat.

56. Don't count your chickens before they're hatched

Meaning: Don't make plans for something that might not happen.

Usage: Don't stop giving competitive exams till the result of IIT-JEE is declared because you should not count your chickens before they are hatched.

57. Don't put all your eggs in one basket

Meaning: Don't concentrate all your resources in one area as you could lose everything in case of failure.

Usage: It is important to diversify your financial portfolio so that you don't put all your eggs in one basket.

58. Cut the ground from underneath one's feet

Meaning: Cause sudden problems for someone.

Usage: The defense lawyer gave a stunning rebuttal to the prosecution, cutting the ground from beneath their feet.

59. Chase one's tail

Meaning: Taking action that is ineffectual and leads to no progress.

Usage: The scientific research team was chasing its tail on the project, because all their funding had not yielded a productive result till date.

60. Whole bag of tricks

Meaning: Every possible method, technique or argument.

Usage: Despite employing my whole bag of tricks for the problem, I could not figure out the answer to the quadratic equation.

61. Deliver the goods

Meaning: To do what is expected or promised.

Usage: The software developer had years of experience behind him, so the manager was confident he would deliver the goods.

62. Fine-tooth comb

Meaning: Examine or scrutinize something carefully to not miss out any details.

Usage: The forensic team went over all the evidence with a fine-tooth comb.

63. Explore all avenues

Meaning: Pursue every possibility to get a result.

Usage: The defense team explored all avenues to establish the innocence of the accused, but they failed to do so.

64. Get ducks in a row

Meaning: To get your things well organized.

Usage: The parents decided to get their ducks in a row before leaving for the weekend with their kids at home.

65. Get the show on the road

Meaning: Putting up a plan or idea into action.

Usage: The marketing team decided to get the show on the road because the deadline for the product was fast approaching.

66. Keep your fingers on the pulse

Meaning: Being constantly aware of the most recent developments.

Usage: You can ask Ashish about all the latest happenings in football, he keeps his fingers on the pulse.

67. Think on your feet

Meaning: Adjusting quickly to changes and making fast decisions.

Usage: Shekhar could handle any sort of crisis in the team because he was quick to think on his feet.

68. Sail through something

Meaning: Being successful in doing something without difficulty.

Usage: I sailed through my presentation today.

69. Tricks of the trade

Meaning: Clever or expert way of doing something.

Usage: Having garnered enough experience of seven years in accounting, Rishabh knew all the tricks of the trade to get the work done quickly.

70. Not let grass grow under feet

Meaning: Not stay in one place for a long time.

Usage: Mohan did not work in one company for more than a year, he never let grass grow under his feet.

71. Work like a charm

Meaning: Works very well, has the desired effect or outcome.

Usage: The new charger I purchased works like a charm; it charges my phone completely in 30 minutes flat.

72. Dead wood

Meaning: People or things which are no longer useful or necessary.

Usage: Our boss terminated all the non-performers from the team, stating he had no patience for dead wood.

73. Shape up or ship out

Meaning: This expression is used to warn someone that if they do not improve their ways, they will have to leave their job.

Usage: Our manager got so angry that he said to all his employees to shape up or ship out.

74. Separate the sheep from the goats

Meaning: Examine a group of people to separate the good ones from the bad, and the superior from the inferior.

Usage: Coaching institutes usually separate the sheep from the goats so that the weak students can attend enough remedial classes.

75. Waiting in the wings

Meaning: Waiting for an opportunity to take action, mostly to replace someone else in the job.

Usage: Sheetal was waiting in the wings for her boss to get transferred so that she could take over his position.

76. Blood, sweat and tears

Meaning: Something that requires a lot of effort and hard work.

Usage: We have given our blood, sweat and tears to establish this business.

77. Have something on the brain

Meaning: Thinking or talking about a particular thing all day long.

Usage: Stop talking about him all the time. Damn it! He is on your brain.

78. Get a grip on yourself

Meaning: Controlling your feelings to deal with a situation.

Usage: Stop crying over your stolen wallet and get a grip on yourself.

79. Pull out all the stops

Meaning: Doing everything you can to make something successful.

Usage: Shashank pulled out all the stops to crack the civil service exam in his first attempt.

80. First out of the gate

Meaning: Being the first one to make a start at something.

Usage: Nintendo was the first company out of the gate to bring an augmented-reality game for users.

81. Punch above one's weight

Meaning: Performing beyond your ability.

Usage: On the stage, she punches above her weight, leaving everyone mesmerized by her performance.

82. Cut to the quick

Meaning: Hurting someone deeply or offending them.

Usage: No one likes to talk to Vivek because he has a tendency to cut to the quick.

83. Beard the lion in his den

Meaning: Challenge someone in his or her own territory; confront danger head-on.

Usage: The drug-dealer was taking a grave risk by peddling his wares in the territory under control of the Mexican mafia. No one dared to beard the lion in his den.

84. Keep a stiff upper lip

Meaning: Refers to a person who doesn't show his emotions in the face of pain or adversity.

Usage: Despite being repeatedly humiliated by the senior manager, Asha managed to keep a stiff upper lip.

85. Lick one's wounds

Meaning: Trying to regain their confidence or boost up the spirits after a defeat.

Usage: The Australian team was licking its wounds after suffering a heavy defeat against South Africa.

86. Proud as a peacock

Meaning: Refers to an extremely proud person.

Usage: The Jarawa tribe in the Andaman Islands is proud as a peacock. They don't let others dictate terms to them.

87. Swallow one's pride

Meaning: Accepting something that might make you feel humiliated or embarrassed.

Usage: After leaving his old job in a huff, Sachin was forced to accept it again after he couldn't find employment anywhere.

88. Look on the bright side

Meaning: View an unpleasant situation in a positive way.

Usage: John looked on the bright side of his eviction- at least he could renew his efforts in buying a permanent house in the city.

89. Makes one's flesh crawl

Meaning: Something that makes you feel disgusted, scared or nervous.

Usage: The idea of interviewing the rapist made my flesh crawl.

90. Cake's not worth the candle

Meaning: When the result as per the efforts will be way too less.

Usage: Meeta was unnecessarily working extra hours at office on a daily basis. The cake's not worth the candle because the management has already decided to promote Shekhar.

91. Cook someone's goose

Meaning: To spoil other person's chances of success.

Usage: The weightlifter thought he could get away with doping in the Olympics, but his goose was cooked when the anti-drug agency asked for a secondary sample.

92. Two wrongs don't make a right

Meaning: When someone has done something wrong to you, trying to get revenge will only make things worse

Usage: Responding to hatred with more hate only begets more hate. Two wrongs don't make a right.

93. The pen is mightier than the sword

Meaning: Trying to convince people with ideas and words is more effective than trying to force people to do what you want.

Usage: Instead of threatening people with violence if they don't vote for us, explain them our party's objectives by distributing pamphlets. The pen is mightier than the sword.

94. When in Rome, do as Romans do

Meaning: Act the way that the people around you are acting.

This phrase comes in handy when you're travelling abroad and people do things differently than you're used to.

Usage: I usually avoid eating non-veg but it became a thing of habit when I shifted to the UK. When in Rome, do as Romans do.

95. Cut one's own throat

Meaning: Doing something that will result in your own failure or downfall.

Usage: You should not cut your own throat by leaving your job in a haste.

96. Live on the breadline

Meaning: Having very little income, relying on food donations to survive.

Usage: During the period of the Great Depression, many people had to live on the breadline.

97. Hit the ground running

Meaning: To begin something immediately and in an energetic manner.

Usage: She joined the company and hit the ground running. Her enthusiasm was unmatched.

98. Jump the gun

Meaning: Act before the proper or appropriate time.

Usage: Mary was waiting for an appropriate time to announce her pregnancy, but her husband jumped the gun by blurting it out when he was out with his friends.

99. Walk on eggshells

Meaning: Being very careful not to offend someone or do anything wrong.

Usage: In the presence of the minister, the officers were walking on eggshells.

100. Get blood out of a stone

Meaning: To make someone give or tell you something, when it is extremely difficult because of the character or mood of the person.

Usage: Despite her stubbornness regarding her family, I was able to get blood out of a stone by sugarcoating my query.

101. Add fuel to the fire/flames

Meaning: To say or do something to make a problem or situation even worse.

Usage: His wife already suspected him of infidelity. Seeing him behave amorously with another woman only added fuel to the fire.

102. It takes two to tango

Meaning: In an argument or situation, both the parties are equally responsible.

Usage: His wife already suspected him of infidelity. Seeing him behave amorously with another woman only added fuel to the fire.

103. Stay on top of things

Meaning: To keep yourself well-informed about latest development

Usage: The coach needed to stay on top of things before leading his team into finals during World Cup.

104. In a pickle

Meaning: In troublesome or difficult situation.

Usage: I booked the movie tickets in advance and now I am in a pickle because an urgent meeting has come up with a client.

105. Fair and square

Meaning: Correctly, in an honest way, without cheating.

Usage: I am going to win this competition fair and square.

106. Let the chip falls where they may

Meaning: To let something happen, without worrying about its consequences.

Usage: I am going to state the truth during the court hearing, let the chips fall where they may.

107. Wild goose chase

Meaning: A futile and hopeless effort in pursuit of something that cannot be attained.

Usage: She had no talent for being a successful actor; her shifting to Mumbai in order to become a star was nothing but a wild goose chase.

108. Pull someone's leg

Meaning: Fool or deceive someone in a playful manner.

Usage: Are you seriously going to get married? You are pulling my leg, right?

109. Smell a rat

Meaning: Feel that something is wrong, suspect trickery or deception.

Usage: So many students have scored identical marks in the exam. I smell a rat that the paper was leaked.

110. Hit the nail on the head

Meaning: To do or say exactly the right thing.

Usage: Girish has remarkable insight in the internal matters of the company and he always hits the nail on the head during team meetings.

111. You are what you eat

Meaning: The notion that to be fit and healthy you need to eat good food.

Usage: Pulkit used to gorge on fast food daily and now he is facing obesity issues. You are what you eat.

112. You can't get blood out of a stone

Meaning: You can't extract what isn't there to begin with; you can't receive any help or money from a person who is uncharitable or penniless himself.

Usage: Asking Vishal to lend some money was futile since he was burdened with debts himself. You can't get blood out of a stone.

113. You can't teach an old dog new tricks

Meaning: It is difficult to teach someone who is set and comfortable in their own ways.

Usage: Teaching grandpa how to use the smartphone was an exercise in futility. He wouldn't use anything other than the landline. You can't teach an old dog new tricks.

114. Throw a spanner in the works

Meaning: To spoil or disrupt some plan, project, or activity.

Usage: The district administration threw a spanner in the works for the school cricket finale after they didn't give permission to use the stadium.

115. (A countenance) more in sorrow than in anger

Meaning: When a person's behavior is viewed more with sadness than with anger.

Usage: When Ricky shouted back at his mother, she had a countenance more in sorrow than in anger, as his father had been transferred yet again.

116. A Daniel come to judgment

Meaning: Someone who makes a wise judgment about something that has previously proven difficult to resolve.

Usage: The new mayor was a Daniel come to judgment, as he easily resolved the dispute between the two warring parties.

117. Diamond in the rough

Meaning: Someone who has exceptional qualities and traits that cannot be viewed from the outside.

Usage: The student seemed to be shy and introvert, but we realized he was a diamond in the rough after seeing his excellent sports skills.

118. Appearances are deceptive

Meaning: Internal truth of a person is usually different from what is visible outside.

Usage: Vipin looked like a rude and unreasonable person but he was actually very sweet. Appearances can be deceptive.

119. Art is long, life is short

Meaning: This expression emphasized the permanence of art and the brief nature of human life.

Usage: As I have grown older, I have learned to engage myself in more creative things, because art is long and life is short.

120. Don't throw the baby out with the bathwater

Meaning: Be careful to not throw away good things with the bad while disposing off something.

Usage: Is it really necessary to discard the entire project? Some aspects are really good, don't throw the baby out with the bathwater.

121. You scratch my back, I'll scratch yours

Meaning: If you help me, I'll help you.

Usage: If you put in a good word for me with the manager, I will make sure your files are cleared on a priority basis.

122. Go pear-shaped

Meaning: If something goes pear-shaped, it means it has failed.

Usage: We had plans to visit Mumbai this coming weekend, but the heavy rains made our trip go pear-shaped.

123. The bigger, the better

Meaning: How much you value or want something is determined by how big it is.

Usage: The child was enamored of large gift boxes. The bigger, the better.

124. Child is father of the man

Meaning: People's personalities form when they are a kid.

Usage: She has been a vivacious person since she was a kid. Child is father of the man, after all.

125. The cobbler always wears the worst shoes

Meaning: A saying used to indicate that professional workers don't apply their skills for themselves.

Usage: The chef always has a simple breakfast comprising only eggs and toast. Clearly, the cobbler always wears the worst shoes.

126. The darkest hour is just before the dawn

Meaning: The worst part of an experience usually happens just before things get better.

Usage: I was mentally at my lowest point when I failed the exam, before it was announced that all exams would be re-conducted. I was reminded that the darkest hour is just before the dawn.

127. The law is an ass

Meaning: If the legal system is wrong or not good enough, then it should be changed.

Usage: If Section 377 of the Indian penal code goes against human rights, then the law is an ass.

128. A bad penny always turns up

Meaning: A person who is unwanted or worthless always returns.

Usage: I was hoping that my habitual lying cousin Robin wouldn't show at the event, but as expected, a bad penny always turns up.

129. A barking dog never bites

Meaning: People who make threats all the time rarely act upon them.

Usage: Mr D'Souza always threatened he would go to the police if anyone trespassed his garden, but he never did so because a barking dog never bites.

130. A cat can look at a king

Meaning: Regardless of status, everyone has a right to know about important people.

Usage: Movie stars should not be so paranoid if fans seek a glimpse of them. After all, a cat can look at a king.

131. A chain is only as strong as its weakest link

Meaning: Usually applies to a personal or technical failure but may also have a literal meaning.

Usage: No matter how confident the relay race team, it is only as strong as its weakest link.

132. A drowning man will clutch at a straw

Meaning: Try to get out of a desperate situation using any means, no matter how unlikely it is to succeed.

Usage: Ashish hadn't prepared for the exams at all, and now he was clutching at a straw by visiting different shamans and healers.

133. A fish always rots from the head down

Meaning: When an organization or state fails, it is the leadership that is the root cause.

Usage: Yahoo was bound to fail due to the ineptitude of Marissa Mayer because a fish always rots from the head down.

134. A fool and his money are soon parted

Meaning: A foolish person who makes unnecessary purchases easily loses the money he makes.

Usage: Bob won the \$1 million jackpot but lost it all on gambling and casinos. A fool and his money are soon parted.

135. A friend in need is a friend indeed

Meaning: Someone who helps you when you are in need is a true friend.

Usage: Vijit always comes to my rescue whenever I am in trouble. A friend in need is a friend indeed.

136. A golden key can open any door

Meaning: Anything can be accomplished with enough money.

Usage: Despite his average looks, Vicky ended up with a supermodel as his wife. His booming business proved that a golden key can open any door.

137. A good beginning makes a good ending

Meaning: If you are well-prepared and focused for something from the start, it will lead to a successful end.

Usage: I knew it was important for me to win the wrestling match, so I started training hard, because a good beginning makes a good ending.

138. A good man is hard to find

Meaning: This literally means the difficulty of finding a suitable male partner, for marriage or for work.

Usage: I realized a good man is hard to find only after my parents started looking for prospective grooms for my marriage.

139. A leopard cannot change its spots

Meaning: One stays true to one's nature, even if trying to pretend or claim otherwise.

Usage: Despite being all nice and polite initially, the husband started beating his wife after marriage. After all, a leopard cannot change its spots.

140. A house divided against self cannot stand

Meaning: If the members of a group are always disagreeing with each other, then it will eventually cease to exist.

Usage: The party speaker urged all the members to stay united because he understood that a house divided against self cannot stand.

141. A person is known by the company he keeps

Meaning: People tend to associate the personality and character of a person with the company (his friends, colleagues) he stays with.

Usage: Aman was a kind soul but people used to think he was a wicked person as he stayed with notorious characters in the colony. After all, a person is known by the company he keeps.

142. A house is not a home

Meaning: A house is just a physical structure, while a home is lived-in (often by a family) and full of memories.

Usage: Even though Shekhar moved to the city, his new house was not a home like his ancestral place in the village.

143. A little knowledge/ learning is a dangerous thing

Meaning: When people gain only partial knowledge of something, then it can have potentially harmful consequences.

Usage: People garner medical information from WebMD but it cannot substitute the services of a doctor as a little knowledge is a dangerous thing.

144. A little of what you fancy does you good

Meaning: It is a way of addressing the benefits that one derives out of something.

Usage: He was very happy to work the extra hours because it allowed him to take a leave on his birthday. A little of what you fancy does you good.

145. A man who is his own lawyer is a fool for his clients

Meaning: A man who tries to defend himself, rather than hiring a trained lawyer, is a fool.

Usage: Robert's decision to defend himself was similar to a man who is his own lawyer is a fool for his clients.

146. A nod's as good as a wink to a blind horse

Meaning: You cannot get people to take a hint if they are determined not to.

Usage: I keep giving hints to my manager for a promotion but I guess a nod's as good as a wink to a blind horse.

147. A penny saved is a penny earned

Meaning: Every small amount helps to build one's savings (i.e. by saving a penny, you have one more penny).

Usage: I am trying to save money these days, as a penny saved is a penny earned.

148. A place for everything and everything in its place

Meaning: The notion that everything should have a place to be stored and it should be returned there when not in use.

Usage: Rohan's mother always chided him to keep his things in order as there is a place for everything and everything in its place.

149. A problem shared is a problem halved

Meaning: Talking about a problem with someone else usually makes it seem less daunting or troubling.

Usage: When you talk about your troubles, it is a relief as a problem shared is a problem halved.

150. A rolling stone gathers no moss

Meaning: A person who does not settle down is not attached to anything or anyone.

Usage: I worry about Shalini as she keeps moving from job to job. A rolling stone gathers no moss.

151. A soft answer turneth away wrath

Meaning: A gentle reply to someone who is angry will pacify that person. This saying comes from the Book of Proverbs in the Bible.

Usage: In the tense situation during the basketball match, the referee spoke quietly to both players. This proves that a soft answer turned away wrath.

152. A stitch in time saves nine

Meaning: A timely effort prevents more work later.

Usage: I purchased a raincoat for the rainy season so that I don't have to waste time getting a new bag later on. A stitch in time saves nine!

153. A thing of beauty is a joy forever

Meaning: Something beautiful will give pleasure long after it ceases to exist.

Usage: The painting of the artist was so breathtakingly amazing that it was a thing of beauty that would provide joy forever.

154. A volunteer is worth twenty pressed men

Meaning: Used mostly in military terms, it means that someone who volunteers for a service is better than 20 people who are forced to do it.

Usage: Rahul's dedication to the initiative was remarkable mainly because he volunteered the work himself. A volunteer is indeed worth twenty pressed men.

155. A word to the wise is enough

Meaning: A phrase that emphasizes a statement as advice. It means that a wise or intelligent person can take a hint and does not need a long explanation

Usage: Stay away from the boss today, he is in a foul mood. Just a word to the wise.

156. Absolute power corrupts absolutely

Meaning: As your powers increase, your moral sense can diminish.

Usage: When the dictator came into power, he became even more corrupt. Absolute power corrupts absolutely.

157. After a storm comes a calm

Meaning: Things often improve after a difficult, chaotic, or stressful time.

Usage: Becoming a CA is a very stressful process, but after a storm comes a calm.

158. Grist to the mill

Meaning: Useful in a particular situation

Usage: If my rivals come to know of my mistake, it will be just grist to the mill

159. All publicity is good publicity

Meaning: Any kind of publicity (even the negative one) add to your fame and popularity

Usage: Despite being trolled for her online views, the celebrity laughed off the incident, stating that all publicity is good publicity.

160. Under thumb

Meaning: Under another's authoritarian control; continually forced to submit to another's will

Usage: The couple appeared happy outward, but the wife was actually under her husband's thumb at home

161. Keep it under your hat

Meaning: To not reveal or discuss something publicly.

Usage: Keep this under your hat, but there will be an increase in bonuses this year.

162. Under the auspices of

Meaning: Under the protection, sponsorship, or patronage of; under the oversight, supervision, control, or management of.

Usage: The new subsidiary was opened under the auspices of the Fortune 500 company.

163. Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown

Meaning: A person who has a lot of power and prestige also has a lot of responsibilities, and therefore worries more than other people.

Usage: Ashuta felt nervous after being promoted to deputy manager. Her peers teased her that uneasy lies the head that wears the crown.

164. The unkindest cut of all

Meaning: The most painful of insults, affronts, or offenses, often so painful because it comes from a trusted friend.

Usage: Piyush fell in a state of depression after he was wrongly accused of sexual harassment because the unkindest cut of all came from his wife.

165. The great unwashed

Meaning: The common people, the masses, the hoi polloi

Usage: In India, the great unwashed are a target of the nefarious machinations of political parties.

166. Up a blind alley

Meaning: At a dead end; on a route that leads nowhere.

Usage: The FBI were up a blind alley in their pursuit of the serial killer.

167. Up a gum tree

Meaning: In a challenging or troublesome situation.

Usage: I have hardly any savings left so if I leave this job then I will be up a gum tree.

168. Up shit creek without a paddle

Meaning: (rude slang) In a challenging or troublesome situation, especially one that cannot be easily resolved

Usage: We are going on a long drive so we better fill up the gas else we will be up shit creek without a paddle.

169. Up the apples and peers

Meaning: Going up the stairs.

Usage: 'Where's the room located? It's up the apples and peers'.

170. A sledge hammer to crack a nut

Meaning: To use excessive, overcomplicated, or extravagant means or force to accomplish something relatively minor or simple.

Usage: With the multiple departments opened to handle public affairs, the government used a sledge hammer to crack a nut.

171. Mind your Ps & Qs

Meaning: To be polite and display good manners.

Usage: Make sure you mind your Ps and Qs when you visit your grandmother over the weekend.

172. To the gunwales

Meaning: So as to be almost overflowing.

Usage: The car is stuffed to the gunwales with gifts.

173. Paddle your own canoe

Meaning: Act independently and decide your own fate.

Usage: Atul was at a career crossroad and wanted to paddle his own canoe now.

174. Paint the town red

Meaning: To go out into a city or town and have a good time, usually by drinking alcohol and going dancing

Usage: After our semester exams were over, the students dressed up and were ready to paint the town red.

175. Paper tiger

Meaning: If an institution, a country, or a person is a paper tiger, then that means although they seem powerful they do not really have any power.

Usage: The President of India is merely a paper tiger. He does not have any say in decision-making.

176. Catch-22

Meaning: A problem or a situation in which the desired outcome is impossible to achieve owing to contradictory or illogical rules, regulations, or conditions.

Usage: The company had a cost-cutting plan that was a Catch-22- they wanted to reduce the number of employees to keep it afloat but also would not have enough manpower to complete the projects.

177. Pass the buck

Meaning: To shift or reassign the blame or responsibility (for something) to another person, group, or thing.

Usage: Politicians have the habit of passing the buck to civil servants when it comes to actually doing something for their district.

178. Pearls before swine

Meaning: Items of quality offered to those who aren't cultured enough to appreciate them.

Usage: The Picasso painting was not appreciated by the small-town dweller. It was like presenting pearls before a swine.

179. Pears for your heirs

Meaning: This phrase encourages to look long-term and look after future generations.

Usage: The trees you plant today will be pears for your heirs.

180. Pennies from heaven

Meaning: Unexpected good fortune, windfall

Usage: I received my cheque for the money I invested in the failed project- pennies from heaven.

181. Penny dreadful

Meaning: A cheap paperback novel, typically characterized by melodrama, violence, and adventure.

Usage: There is no need to read penny-dreadfuls when you can read highbrow literature.

182. Penny pinching

Meaning: Unwilling to spend money, miserly

Usage: The businessman was a penny pinching person and calculated every last sum he spent on any small item.

183. Penny wise and pound foolish

Meaning: Be extremely careful about small amounts of money but not for large sums.

Usage: Sheila was careful about not spending an extra rupee on transport but used to splurge on expensive dinners. She was penny-wise and pound-foolish.

184. Piece of cake

Meaning: Something that is easy to accomplish.

Usage: I cleared the SSC exam with ease. It was a piece of cake for me.

185. Plague on both your houses

Meaning: This is a Shakespearean phrase meant as a curse said in frustration on both sides. Appeared in the play 'Romeo and Juliet'.

Usage: Exasperated by the ceaseless arguments by the two cricket teams, Harsh cursed them, saying 'plague on both your houses!'

186. Take with a (pinch of salt)

Meaning: To consider or evaluate something, such as a statement, while keeping in mind that it may not be completely true or accurate, typically due to the unreliability of the source.

Usage: Newspapers are really unreliable these days because of their penchant for fake news. Their information should be taken with a pinch of salt.

187. Play by ear

Meaning: To plan or schedule something in an improved or flexible way. In this usage, a noun or pronoun can be used between "play" and "by ear."

Usage: Are we meeting this Sunday for the movie? I have to go shopping so let's play by the ear.

188. Play second fiddle

Meaning: To have a subordinate, lesser, or smaller role, position, or part (in something).

Usage: Pankaj was tired of playing second fiddle to his inept manager, he wanted to be in charge instead.

189. Play the giddy goat

Meaning: Behave in an irresponsible, silly or playful manner.

Usage: Despite the solemn atmosphere at the funeral, Thomas was keen on playing the giddy goat.

190. Plug-ugly

Meaning: Someone extremely ugly; a gangster or a ruffian

Usage: Sarah had a habit of hanging around with the plug-uglies of the neighborhood.

191. Not worth a plugged nickel

Meaning: Worth little or nothing

Usage: This new laptop is not worth a plugged nickel as it keeps shutting down at arbitrary moments.

192. Plates of meat

Meaning: Feet

Usage: Get your plates of meat moving! We have to reach the city by tonight.

193. Pleased as punch

Meaning: Extremely pleased

Usage: Arbaaz was pleased as punch when he purchased his new car.

194. Pound of flesh

Meaning: A debt or punishment, especially one that is cruel or unreasonable, that is harshly insisted upon. This is a phrase derived from the Shakespeare play 'The Merchant of Venice', where the moneylender Shylock literally demanded a pound of flesh as a collateral for a loan.

Usage: Banks are quick to demand their pound of flesh the moment you default on their loans.

195. Pour oil on troubled waters

Meaning: Try to settle a disagreement or dispute with words intended to placate or pacify those involved.

Usage: Seeing the siblings fight, Mom was quick to pour oil on troubled waters.

196. Put one's nose out of joint

Meaning: To upset someone, through your actions or words.

Usage: Himanshu had no idea why his father was upset. He wondered who put his nose out of joint.

197. Put your best foot forward

Meaning: To try to act as an ideal version of oneself, typically to try to impress others.

Usage: If you really want to get the job promotion, you need to put your best foot forward.

198. Put your back up

Meaning: Become angry, annoyed, defensive, hostile over something

Usage: Political discussions always put my back up.

199. Pull in your horns

Meaning: Behaving more carefully than before

Usage: Once the quarterly financial reports were released, the company started pulling in its horns to be more cost-effective.

200. Pull your finger out

Meaning: To tell someone (in a blunt manner) to stop procrastinating and get the work done.

Usage: The committee needs to pull their fingers out and get the renovation work done.

201. Proof of the pudding is in the eating

Meaning: One doesn't know the quality of something unless they have experienced it.

Usage: The new phone seems superior in appearance but the proof of the pudding is in the eating.

202. Pull out all the stops

Meaning: To do something to the utmost of one's ability; to use all of one's resources or efforts when doing something.

Usage: Aakriti pulled out all the stops to get her report completed.

203. Put the mockers on

Meaning: To disrupt, foil, or cause problems to someone's plan, activity, or project.

Usage: The tailor put the mockers on the wedding by cancelling at the last minute.

204. Pull the wool over your eyes

Meaning: To deceive, fool, or misdirect someone, especially to gain a personal advantage.

Usage: Gaurav pulled the wool over Shikhar's eyes when he asked him to invest in the suspect cryptocurrency.

205. Put the cart before the horse

Meaning: To do things out of the proper order.

Usage: Before starting the annual event we need to make sure we put the cart before the horse.

206. Prick up your ears

Meaning: To suddenly pay close attention to something.

Usage: We need to prick up our ears at the crucial conference call with the client.

207. Press in to service

Meaning: To force someone or something to serve or function.

Usage: I don't think the recruits should be pressed in to service. They are not prepared yet.

208. Pipe dream

Meaning: A dream or idea that is impossible to accomplish.

Usage: Attaining communal harmony will become a pipe dream in India if people keep letting themselves exploited by political parties.

209. Full of Piss and Vinegar

Meaning: To have an abundance or excessive amount of boisterous, youthful energy, enthusiasm, or rowdiness.

Usage: The U-19 team was full of piss and vinegar but they were not skilled enough to beat their top-ranked rivals.

210. Pure as the driven snow

Meaning: Pure and chaste.

Usage: The townfolk suspected the village belle of being promiscuous but she was actually pure as the driven snow.

211. Pomp and circumstance

Meaning: Celebration accompanied by traditional formalities and ceremony.

Usage: Indian marriages are characterized by a lot of pomp and circumstance that also results in a lot of wastage of resources.

212. Bow to the porcelain altar

Meaning: To vomit into the toilet, as a result of consuming lots of excessive alcohol.

Usage: Hemant has been drinking a lot of vodka today so he is likely to bow to the porcelain altar tonight.

213. Go to rack and ruin

Meaning: To fall into severe or total decay, degradation, or ruination, as from disuse or lack of upkeep.

Usage: Our ancestral home has been left to go to rack and ruin owing to total neglect.

214. Rack your brains

Meaning: To struggle or recall or think of something

Usage: I have been racking my brains but I can't seem to recall what the name of that lady was.

215. Rag—and bone man

Meaning: A man who sells or collects inexpensive secondhand items and previously worn clothing.

Usage: Ashish made a huge fortune by being a rag-and bone man as he sold items from AliBaba to Indian customers.

216. Raining star-rods

Meaning: Raining very heavily.

Usage: In Cherrapunji, it rains star-rods almost on a daily basis.

217. Raining cats and dogs

Meaning: Raining very heavily.

Usage: At the onset of the monsoon, it was raining cats and dogs in Delhi.

218. Raise Cain

Meaning: To cause or get into trouble; to engage in unrestrained and excessively disruptive behavior.

Usage: The homemaker raised cain after she came to know all her jewelry was stolen at the bank.

219. Raze to the ground

Meaning: To tear down something, usually a building, to ground level.

Usage: The committee decided that the dilapidated building should be razed to the ground.

220. Red in tooth and claw

Meaning: Having, involving, or employing merciless and possibly cruel tactics during conflict or competition.

Usage: During election time, politics tends to be red in tooth and claw, leading to increased polarization.

221. Revenge is a dish better served cold

Meaning: It is very satisfying to get revenge a long time after the event for which you want revenge.

Usage: He waited for nearly 10 years to get back at his strict instructor who had harassed him in school. Revenge was a dish better served cold.

222. Run the rings around

Meaning: To do something much better or more efficiently than someone else.

Usage: Lionel Messi can run the rings around most footballers in any match.

223. Run out of steam

Meaning: Lose impetus or enthusiasm

Usage: The election campaign ran out of steam once the party's leading candidate dropped out.

224. Rule of thumb

Meaning: A general principle developed through experiential rather than scientific means.

Usage: As a rule of thumb, I never have my breakfast without a warm water bath.

225. Jack of all trades, master of none

Meaning: Someone who has a working knowledge of several things but is not an expert of any.

Usage: If you want to get promoted quickly, you need to get out of this mindset of being a jack of all trades and master of none.

226. Jimmy riddle

Meaning: This is slang for 'urinate'

Usage: I need to Jimmy riddle on my way to the hotel

227. Jerry built

Meaning: Carelessly and awkwardly built.

Usage: The defense lawyer had a case that was jerry-built so the jury outright rejected it.

228. One swallow doesn't make a summer

Meaning: A single good outcome does not indicate an overall situation that is ideal or greatly improved.

Usage: The firm had a good quarter overall in terms of profit; however, one swallow doesn't make a summer.

229. A bit of a skirt

Meaning: A physically attractive woman (sometimes used as slang).

Usage: John had become quite pompous in his behavior as he was going out with a bit of a skirt.

230. Men in grey suits

Meaning: The businesspeople, officials or authorities that make the important decisions behind the scenes but are unseen and unknown by the public.

Usage: Though the party spokesperson attributed the unpopular policy decision to the governor, everyone knew who the men in grey suits were.

231. No man is an island

Meaning: Human beings necessarily depend on each other.

Usage: Ricky thinks he can cope with all the emotional issues but he actually needs support as no man is an island.

232. Best thing since sliced bread

Meaning: Used to praise in a humorous and hyperbolic way to something new and innovative.

Usage: The new shoes from Adidas are so comfortable they are the best thing since sliced bread.

233. Fortune favors the bold

Meaning: Courageous action is often rewarded.

Usage: The manager's risk-taking strategies paid off handsomely, proving that fortune favors the bold.

234. Far cry from

Meaning: Very different from.

Usage: The husband's aggressive behavior is a far cry from his soft-natured wife.

235. All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy

Meaning: Working all the time can make you a dull and boring person.

Usage: At Pep Talk India, there is a healthy mixture of study and fun so that no student says that all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy.

236. If you snooze, you lose

Meaning: If you wait too long for something, you might lose that opportunity.

Usage: Srikant waited too long for the job application and it went to some other applicant. If you snooze, you lose.

237. Necessity is the mother of invention

Meaning: When you are left with no option but to solve something by inventing a solution.

Usage: Albert Einstein sought different solutions to mathematical problems by inventing his own. After all, necessity is the mother of invention.

238. Method to one's madness

Meaning: A specific, rational purpose in what one is doing or planning, even though it may appear crazy or absurd to another person

Usage: The CEO's absurd decision to shut down three plants was deemed crazy by most but there was a method to his madness.

239. Misery loves company

Meaning: Miserable people like to be surrounded by those who are equally unhappy

Usage: Shekhar remained depressed and pessimistic and preferred the company of others who suffered the same malaise as him since misery loves company.

240. Familiarity breeds contempt

Meaning: When you get to know a person too much, then you start becoming contemptuous of them.

Usage: Hina was impressed by her husband's behavior but after marriage she started finding flaws in him. It was true that familiarity breeds contempt.

241. Two heads are better than one

Meaning: More people working together on a problem are better than a single individual resolving the same.

Usage: The manager asked his two subordinates to find a resolution to the software bug, as two heads are better than one.

242. Still water runs deep

Meaning: Though a person may not speak, it does not mean that they don't have interesting, profound, or complex thoughts.

Usage: Farah was one of the smartest people in the company, even though she didn't speak much. It proved that still water runs deep.

243. Strike while the iron is hot

Meaning: To make most of an opportunity or favorable conditions while one has the chance to do so.

Usage: I should accept the job offer while I can as I should strike while the iron is hot.

244. You can catch more flies with honey than with vinegar

Meaning: It is easier to get what you want by flattering people and being polite to them than by making demands.

Usage: Robin knew that he could catch more flies with honey than with vinegar if he pleaded with the politician.

245. As you make your bed, so you must lie in it too

Meaning: You must accept the consequences of your actions.

Usage: If you take bribery, then you must be ready to face the consequences. As you make your bed, so you must lie in it too.

246. Golden handshake

Meaning: A large severance package given to an executive who leaves a company due to termination, corporate restructuring, or retirement.

Usage: Vishal Sikka received an amazing golden handshake from Infosys after he was asked to resign.

247. Bee in one's bonnet

Meaning: To talk incessantly about something one thinks is important (often in spite of others' disinterest).

Usage: Shawn had a bee in his bonnet about climate change ever since the town experienced unseasonal showers.

248. Great minds think alike

Meaning: A phrase used when one has the same thought or idea as someone else.

Usage: When the two colleagues struck upon the same idea, one of them exclaimed 'great minds think alike!'

249. Day in and day out

Meaning: Done or happening every day for a long period of time.

Usage: Day in and day out, I did the same boring, mechanical job at the company.

250. Cut a sorry figure

Meaning: To appear in such a way that causes oneself to be regarded unfavorably by others.

Usage: You will cut a sorry figure in the debate if you don't practice well.

251. Hand in glove

Meaning: Very closely with someone or something, especially by design

Usage: The marketing department works hand in glove with the content department to achieve success for the company.

252. Fair-weather friend

Meaning: A person who cannot be relied on in situations of hardship or difficulty.

Usage: Pankaj was a fair-weather friend to Ashish. He was never available when he was most needed.

253. Cause tongues to wag

Meaning: To be a source of gossip, slander, or idle speculation.

Usage: The appointment of the attractive secretary to the President caused tongues to wag in the political circles.

254. Without batting an eyelid

Meaning: Without showing alarm or response; without blinking an eye.

Usage: Without batting an eye, the speaker walked off the stage.

255. Shedding crocodile tears

Meaning: Fake, insincere display of emotion characteristic of a hypocrite.

Usage: The government spokesperson's empathy for the dying farmers was akin to shedding crocodile tears as the authorities had refused subsidies.

256. The final nail in the coffin

Meaning: A negative event or action that is mainly responsible for the downfall of something.

Usage: The rave reviews of the competitor's product was the final nail in the coffin for the startup that was trying to build a base in the market.

257. Pull an all-nighter

Meaning: Staying awake all night (for some project or studies).

Usage: Mohit pulled an all-nighter to complete his thesis.

258. Be like a red rag to a bull

Meaning: To be willfully infuriating or aggravating provocation; to be something that incites great anger or annoyance.

Usage: Shashank gloated about his success to his friend, who had failed, which was like being a red rag to a bull.

259. Sleep like a log

Meaning: Sleep undisturbed, very deep sleep.

Usage: After a tired day at work, Neha slept like a log at night.

260. You may lead a horse to water, but you cannot make him drink

Meaning: You can give someone an advantage or provide them with an opportunity, but you can't force them to do something if they don't want to

Usage: Despite providing Sachin with all the facilities and the best education, he could not make a successful career. This proves that you may lead a horse to water, but you cannot make him drink.

261. You can't run with the hare and hunt with the hounds

Meaning: To support or attempt to placate both sides of a conflict or dispute.

Usage: You can't run with the hare and run with the hounds if you speak against bribery but also take gifts from potential clients.

262. You can't make an omelette without breaking eggs

Meaning: Sometimes, you have to do unpleasant things in order to complete a task or meet a goal.

Usage: In order to make profits, you need to lay off some employees. You can't make an omelette without breaking eggs.

263. A word spoken is past recalling

Meaning: Once you have said something, you cannot undo the result of having said it.

Usage: Sumit apologized for commenting on Shikha's weight but she still felt offended. After all, a word spoken is past recalling.

264. The Seamy Side of Life

Meaning: The morally degraded, disagreeable, unpleasant aspects of life, such as crime and violence, poverty and hunger etc.

Usage: Living in Delhi-NCR has its perks and benefits, but the sexual harassment and lecherous looks that females endure daily are the seamy side of living in the national capital.

265. Dodged a bullet

Meaning: To narrowly avoid something or some situation that could be undesirable and have potentially disastrous consequences.

Usage: Shikha dodged a bullet when her engagement was called off, as she found out later that the prospective groom was arrested for domestic violence.

266. At Your Wits' End

Meaning: When someone has exhausted their ideas and mental resources, and they are extremely frustrated and annoyed that they don't know what to do next.

Usage: Firoz was at his wits' end trying to think of ways to amuse the kids.

267. The Crux of the Matter

Meaning: The basic, central, or critical point of an issue.

Usage: The crux of the matter in the murder case were the few strands of hair found near the carpet.

268. Grasping at Straws

Meaning: When you are totally desperate and pursue every hope or possibility even if the likelihood of working is nearly negligible.

Usage: After being soundly defeated in the argument, the conservative commentator started grasping at straws.

269. In Dire Straits

Meaning: In a very bad or serious situation

Usage: After being caught with drugs at school, Hemant was in dire straits over what awaited him at home.

270. Last Resort

Meaning: An option that you as a last chance when there are no other options available.

Usage: When the group of hitchhikers could not find any hotel for their stay, as a last resort they decided to pitch their tent in the woods.

271. You've got your work cut out for you

Meaning: When a very large and difficult task lies ahead of you.

Usage: Mohan planned to complete dual post-graduation courses in the same year. He had his work cut out for him.

272. A Vicious Cycle

Meaning: When one problem causes another problem, which leads to another problem, which in turn leads to the first problem.

Usage: The vicious cycle of poverty is an issue of great concern in India.

273. The tip of the iceberg

Meaning: Only a small part of the problem; the biggest part of the problem is hidden.

Usage: The accounting fraud was just the tip of the iceberg of a massive financial scandal in the company.

274. Made a pig of themselves

Meaning: When someone eats way too much, then this expression is used informally.

Usage: I made a real pig of myself at the party.

275. Eat like a horse

Meaning: Someone who eats a lot regularly.

Usage: Rohit is thin as a stick yet he eats like a horse.

276. Eat like a bird

Meaning: This means the opposite of 'eat like a horse'. It refers to someone who eats very less.

Usage: Pooja was very concerned about her figure so she always ate like a bird.

277. Wolf food down

Meaning: Eating a lot very quickly.

Usage: The kids wolfed the burgers down and then started on the pizza.

278. Work up an appetite

Meaning: To do something that results in a buildup of your appetite.

Usage: Let me go for a walk to work up an appetite

279. Spoils your appetite

Meaning: Something that no longer makes you feel hungry.

Usage: Looking at the gruesome video of the chickens being slaughtered at KFC made me lose my appetite.

280. Make your mouth water

Meaning: When you see something delicious or delectable and it makes you feel very hungry.

Usage: The smell of oven-fresh baked pizza made my mouth water.

281. Eat someone for breakfast

Meaning: This is to indicate that the first person will easily defeat the other in a particular competition they are involved in.

Usage: Roger Federer is expected to eat his unseeded opponent for breakfast in the match tomorrow.

282. Dog-eat-dog world

Meaning: An environment that is ruthlessly competitive.

Usage: You have to sacrifice your personal lives in the corporate sector to stay ahead, because it is a dog-eat-dog world there.

283. Eat your heart out!

Meaning: A taunt to a person noted for some skill or accomplishment to indicate that the speaker has outperformed that particular person in that field.

Usage: Eat your heart out!, said the novice to the veteran photographer when he won the annual photography contest.

284. Will eat my hat

Meaning: When this expression is said, the speaker is so confident of a certain thing not happening or coming true that he or she states exaggeratedly that they would eat their headgear.

Usage: I will eat my hat if Avengers: Infinity War crossed the global BO figures of Avatar.

285. Eat one's words

Meaning: This means to figuratively ingest your own words after having been proven wrong on something.

Usage: The psephologist had to eat his words after the party he suggested didn't win by a huge margin in the elections.

286. Eating crow/eating dirt/eating the humble pie

Meaning: These are all extreme figurative meanings when one has to undergo the humiliation of being proven wrong.

Usage: The analyst had to eat crow after the figures he anticipated turned out to be an exact opposite of the actual result.

287. Gnaw away

Meaning: When you are beset with an emotion such as guilt, and it eats you away, then the emotional distress you feel is akin to being gnawed away physically.

Usage: Shifali topped the exams, but the fact she cheated in a couple of them was gnawing away at the back of her mind.

288. Eating out of one's hand

Meaning: This is used to refer to a person who has been brought under control such that they are eating out of that person's hands.

Usage: Shikha knew her kid's weakness was PS4, so she soon had him eating out of her hands when she wanted some work done.

289. Won't eat you

Meaning: This is said to a person who is feeling apprehensive of meeting or approaching someone, because it seems that he or she is quite shy.

Usage: Go ahead and meet the captain, he won't eat you.

290. Up to (one's) neck in alligators

Meaning: This is a term that you will find being bandied around mainly in the business sector, where firms (especially startups) or individuals lose sight of their objectives while being too pre-occupied with tangential problems and worries.

Usage: "I have been dealing with so many funding and employee attrition problems that I have had no time to build the product this firm was intended for. I guess the start is always difficult, and when up to one's neck in alligators, we forget that the mission is to drain the swamp."

291. Turn Turtle

Meaning: If you are an avid reader of the news, then you must have come across this phrase several terms. It means to capsize or turn upside down, alluding to a helpless turtle lying on its back.

Usage: When the car collided with the truck, it turned turtle.

292. Snake oil/snake oil salesman

Meaning: A salesperson trying to deceive you with his or her spiel by selling shortcut solutions and remedies like- "lose weight in 6 hours!" or "learn English in 2 days!"

Usage: If you are not a naïve person, you will instantly identify a snake oil salesman trying to peddle his fake wares.

293. Snake in the grass

Meaning: Life is all about relationships and the bonds we make with people. But sometimes, a deceitful treacherous person feigning friendship enters our lives, when actually he or she only intend harm. Such a person is referred as a 'snake in the grass'.

Usage: Mayank entered the group like a snake in the grass as he intended to break them up.

294. Seeing snakes

Meaning: When someone has one drink too many and becomes totally inebriated, he or she starts hallucinating and seeing things. This is usually referred as 'seeing snakes'.

Usage: When Jatin had one too many at the rave party, he started seeing snakes.

295. See you later, alligator

Meaning: This is a humorous, jovial and rhyming way of bidding goodbye. The usual response to this is "After a while, crocodile".

Usage: On leaving for the tour, Robert waved his daughter adieu, saying 'see you later, alligator'.

296. Nurture a snake/viper in one's bosom

Meaning: This means to harbor or nurture a person who will harm you later on.

Usage: The Aggarwal family had taken in Dinesh when he was an orphan struggling with street crime. Little did they know they were nurturing a snake in their own bosom when he would run away with all their valuables.

297. Lounge lizard

Meaning: The term gold-digger is used a lot for pretty women who befriend a man (especially wealthy old men) to sexually or financially exploit them. Ever wondered what a similar term for such a man would be? It is 'lounge lizard' - a man who frequents bars and clubs to get all chummy with wealthy, older ladies, preying on their insecurities for personal gain.

Usage: Bobby was a total lounge lizard and depended upon it to sustain himself.

298. Lot lizard

Meaning: This one is a derogatory slang with sordid connotations. A lot lizard is usually a prostitute who frequents truck stops, but the term is also sometimes used to refer to a dumb or stupid person.

Usage: Due to her impoverished state, Riya had become a lot lizard.

299. A bad workman always blames his tools

Meaning: One tries to cover up one's lack of skill by putting the blame on the tool's at one's disposal.

Usage: Mohit tried to ascribe his failure in the driving test to a poor car, but the fact is that a bad workman always blames his tools.

300. Put on airs or give oneself airs

Meaning: To behave in manner that shows you are better than others

Usage: I hate the way she puts on airs. She thinks too much of herself. Nobody likes her.

301. Air one's dirty linen in public

Meaning: To discuss private or embarrassing matters in public

Usage: Why must you always air his dirty linen in public? You know he doesn't like to talk to anyone about his problems.

302. Ais and graces

Meaning: A way of behaving that shows that you are more important than everyone else

Usage: Even when he became a star he didn't have any airs and graces. In fact, he remained as humble as a dove despite getting a celebrity status in no time.

303. Float on air or walk on air

Meaning: To feel extremely happy.

Usage: Today is her birthday. Most people feel they are walking on air on their birthday but she has been uncharacteristically unhappy.

304. In the air

Meaning: If something is in the air, you feel that it is happening or about to happen

Usage: In the aftermath of terror attacks in the capital city, there's panic in the air.

305. On the air or off the air

Meaning: Broadcasting or not broadcasting on television or radio.

Usage: The much critically acclaimed sci-fi series will be back on air tomorrow morning at 9.

306. Up in the air

Meaning: Not yet decided

Usage: My travel plans to visit a new destination every year are still up in the air.

307. A breath of fresh air

Meaning: Refreshing, something that makes you feel better

Usage: I really love having such dynamic students in my class. During the lecture their positive attitude feels like a breath of fresh air.

308. Build castles in the air

Meaning: To have plans that are less likely to happen

Usage: As a child I used to dream about sports cars all the time, building castles in the air about owning a Ferrari one day. But that dream never came true.

309. Clear the air

Meaning: To improve difficult situation by talking about it; to remove the bad feelings between people.

Usage: He had a massive argument with his mother last night, but now at least he has been trying to clear the air.

310. With your nose in the air

Meaning: To behave in an arrogant manner

Usage: Since the day our next-door neighbor got a new car, he has been walking with his nose in the air.

311. Pluck something out of the air

Meaning: To say something quickly without thinking much like a number name etc.

Usage: During the presentation he was asked a question “Where did you get those figures from?” He replied “Oh, I just plucked them out of the air.”

312. Disappear, vanish, etc. into thin air

Meaning: To disappear suddenly in a mysterious way

Usage: Police were looking for the assailants but they seem to have disappeared into thin air.

313. Out of thin air

Meaning: To appear from nowhere

Usage: We direly need money to start a new business but unfortunately I can't get the money out of thin air.

314. A Smart cookie

Meaning: Someone who is intelligent and good at dealing with difficult situations.

Usage: If anyone can lead this organization successfully, it's Diana – she's one smart cookie.

315. Tough cookie

Meaning: A person who can endure physical or mental hardship.

Usage: She has got a reputation of being a tough cookie because her leadership style and the way she managed conflicts at workplace.

316. Couch Potato

Meaning: A person who watches a lot of television and does not have an active life.

Usage: It is no good if you sit at home like a couch potato and don't take your health seriously.

317. Hot Potato

Meaning: A controversial topic or situation that is difficult to deal with.

Usage: The new tax legislation has become a political hot potato and is attracting a lot of criticisms.

318. Top banana

Meaning: Leader, boss, the influential person in a group.

Usage: If you are really eager to learn about marketing, ask Jack, he's the top banana in this field.

319. Bad apple or rotten apple

Meaning: A bad or corrupt person who negatively influences an entire group.

Usage: The best way to deal with bad apples is to take them out of the group as quickly as possible.

320. Big cheese

Meaning: An important and influential person in an organization.

Usage: Recently I watched Owen's interview. He's a big cheese at the automobile company. He is going to launch new compact SUV next quarter.

321. Sour grapes

Meaning: Used to show that someone is jealous and is pretending that thing is not important because it's unattainable.

Usage: He said he didn't want the big job in big company anyway, but that's just sour grapes.

322. Egghead

Meaning: A person who is very intelligent and is only interested in studying.

Usage: The series “The Big Bang Theory” is about a bunch of eggheads living in Pasadena, Los Angeles.

323. Lemon

Meaning: It refers to a stupid person or thing.

Usage: Don't be a lemon. Pull yourself together and get over her. No point worrying about something that can't be changed.

324. Gravy train

Meaning: A situation where somebody seems to be making a lot of money without much effort.

Usage: Since 2014 many e-commerce entrepreneurs have been enjoying the gravy train because of tax benefits.

325. Go bananas

Meaning: To become angry, crazy.

Usage: The minister has gone bananas, proclaiming that gender discrimination is necessary for maintaining social order.

326. Nuts

Meaning: To become angry, crazy.

Usage: The constant nagging from his parents about buying new house is driving him nuts.

327. Peanuts

Meaning: A very small amount of money.

Usage: I met Arun yesterday, he said he's thinking of quitting his dead end job because he doesn't want to work for peanuts.

328. Apples and oranges

Meaning: Used to describe a situation in which two people or things are completely different.

Usage: Both Android and iOS are great but you can't compare apples and oranges here.

329. Bread and butter

Meaning: Only source of income or livelihood.

Usage: Pastry making is my bread and butter right now but I am thinking of diversifying my business interests.

330. Food for thought

Meaning: An idea that makes you think seriously.

Usage: The TV programme is quite informative and certainly provides plenty of food for thought.

331. Honesty is the best policy

Meaning: Being dishonest might bring you short-term profits but long-term gains can only be attained if you are honest.

Usage: Many businessmen in India indulge in unscrupulous hawala transactions but end up getting caught by the police after some years. They happen to miss the point "honesty is the best policy."

332. Forbidden fruit is sweetest

Meaning: The things which we cannot have are the things we want the most; forbidden things are the most attractive

Usage: Hemant was infatuated with his married neighbor living next doors, but he should know that forbidden fruit always seems the sweetest.

333. Full of beans

Meaning: Having a lot of energy.

Usage: I've never known anyone to be so full of beans after spending 8 hours in the office. You're awesome.

334. Spill the beans

Meaning: Reveal secret information accidentally.

Usage: I am not gossiping. I am just curious to know who spilled the beans about her affair with Jacob.

335. The cream of the crop

Meaning: The best among group of similar things or people.

Usage: The medical graduates are considered to be the cream of the crop and can get jobs with hefty pay check.

336. In the soup

Meaning: To be in an unpleasant or difficult situation.

Usage: Now I'm really in the soup. I made a lot of mistakes in the past, I am trying to start whole new career in advertising and it's all very confusing.

337. Sell like hot cakes

Meaning: To be sold quickly and in large numbers.

Usage: The new iPhone X is apparently selling like hot cakes despite its hefty price tag.

338. Not somebody's cup of tea

Meaning: If something is not your cup of tea, it's not what you like or what you're interested in.

Usage: Horror movies aren't really my cup of tea. I prefer action flicks and comedies, to be honest.

339. Put all your eggs in one basket

Meaning: Rely on one single thing.

Usage: Even though I'm majoring in marketing, I'm taking finance electives because my mentor says "you shouldn't put all of your eggs in one basket, you should have multiple options."

340. A hard nut to crack or a tough nut to crack

Meaning: Difficult to understand or deal with.

Usage: Sumit is a hard nut to crack when something is bothering him like this.

341. As cool as a cucumber

Meaning: To remain calm and composed.

Usage: Despite the big mishap in her department earlier today, Seema is as cool as cucumber.

342. To haul someone over the coals

Meaning: To scold or reprimand someone very severely for a wrongdoing

Usage: After making a blunder in the report, Chirag was hauled over the coals by his manager.

343. That's the way the cookie crumbles

Meaning: To accept the situation as it is, even though it is undesirable

Usage: I really studied hard for the exam, but failed to clear it in several attempts. I guess that's just the way the cookie crumbles.

344. To hold out the olive branch

Meaning: To show someone that one is willing to make peace or be friendly again after a quarrel.

Usage: Priyanka was the first one to hold out the olive branch after having a major disagreement with Kirti.

345. Take your mind off something

Meaning: To forget about something unpleasant for a short time.

Usage: Dancing really helps me take my mind off the troubles I am currently facing at the workplace.

346. Have a lot on your mind

Meaning: To have many things to worry about; to be preoccupied.

Usage: I'm sorry that I'm so cranky today. I have a lot on my mind these days, I can't even catch a break.

347. Take a load off your mind

Meaning: Relieves or eliminates your worries.

Usage: He was really glad to hear the good news. Now he can take a load off his mind and focus on the studies.

348. Give someone a piece of your mind

Meaning: Rebuke someone.

Usage: Some rowdy teenagers were making a nuisance at the mall and she went out to give them a piece of her mind.

349. Be bored out of mind

Meaning: Extremely bored.

Usage: After doing the corporate job for three years, he was bored out of mind and made up his mind to start his own business.

350. A fish out of water

Meaning: A person who is uncomfortable in a particular situation.

Usage: Having led most of his life in the blissful surroundings of his village, Rohit felt like a fish out of water in New Delhi.

351. Be as/like oil and water

Meaning: This idiom refers to the natural tendency of oil and water to separate. So, it is used to describe people, factors or forces that are unable or unwilling to mix easily.

Usage: The more you read about politics in India, the more you get convinced that political thoughts and common sense are like oil and water – they simply don't get along.

352. Be in deep water

Meaning: To be in a dangerous or perilous situation where the hope of a resolution seems bleak.

Usage: Due to his addiction to gambling, Rakesh was in deep water with his creditors. He had been warned to pay off his debts within a month or his personal assets would be seized by them.

353. Blood is thicker than water

Meaning: Family is more important than anything else! Your obligations and priorities should be towards your family members.

Usage: The adage blood is thicker than water seems to have been taken most seriously by the Bollywood fraternity, where nepotism is rampant.

354. Blow someone out of the water

Meaning: To totally destroy or obliterate someone

Usage: With his whirlwind century, Hardik Pandya totally blew the Sri Lankan bowlers out of the water.

355. By hell or high water

Meaning: By any means necessary, regardless of the difficulty or obstacles faced.

Usage: By hell or high water, I am going to make sure I vote in the next elections!

356. Cast (one's) bread upon the waters

Meaning: Do good deeds without having any motivation for a potential award.

Usage: Ravi left his well-paid corporate job to devote his life to serving the underprivileged.

357. Dull as dishwater

Meaning: Boring, tedious, uninteresting

Usage: Shyam was ineffective as a leader because his speeches were as dull as a dishwater.

358. Go through fire and water

Meaning: Undergo many difficulties and dangers in order to attain your goal.

Usage: Security personnel go through fire and water every Independence Day to ensure the Prime Minister's safety.

359. Like water off a duck's back

Meaning: Easily without any apparent effect.

Usage: Insults and criticism seem to roll off Sajid Khan like water off a duck's back. He just can't stop making awful movies.

360. Muddy the waters

Meaning: To make a situation more confusing and complex than it was already, confusing the issue.

Usage: By making ad hominem remarks on his panelists, Arnab Goswami muddies the waters on important discussions.

361. Navigable waters

Meaning: Bodies or stretch of water that can be easily traversed by ships.

Usage: Many Syrian refugees were able to make it to safer pastures after their boats made it through navigable waters.

362. Pour oil on troubled waters

Meaning: To calm someone or something down

Usage: When Paul was going through a difficult phase in life following the car accident, his wife poured oil on troubled waters by getting him to calm down.

363. Troubled waters

Meaning: A situation or experience that is engulfed by disorder, distress and difficulties.

Usage: Many newly-married couples in North India are going through troubled waters, which has led to divorce rates rising sky high.

364. You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make it drink

Meaning: You can present or provide an opportunity to a person, but you cannot force them to benefit from it.

Usage: Despite being informed of the various job openings, Arjun did not apply in any, making the exasperated consultant remark 'You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make it drink'.

365. Be water under the bridge

Meaning: If some unpleasant issue or situation happened long time in the past and no one is upset about it now, then it is considered to be water under the bridge.

Usage: Political parties criticize each other a lot during election campaigning, but when the issue of alliance-making arises, everything becomes water under the bridge.

366. To hit the nail on the head

Meaning: To do exactly the right thing; to do something in the most effective and efficient way; to describe exactly what is causing the problem.

Usage: Meenakshi hit the nail on the head when she found out the bug in the program code.

367. Leave no stone unturned

Meaning: to make every possible effort; to do everything possible in order to achieve or find something.

Usage: The oil company vowed to leave no stone unturned to boost their research and exploration project.

368. Cut somebody some slack

Meaning: Allow someone some leeway in their conduct; go easy on someone to allow them something usually not permissible under standard conditions.

Usage: The government officials were asked to cut the poor people some slack in submitting their income tax documents.

369. By the skin of your teeth

Meaning: Barely, by a very narrow margin

Usage: I passed the board exams just by the skin of my teeth.

370. Tar someone with the same brush

Meaning: To incorrectly believe that someone or something possesses the same negative qualities as someone or something that is similar.

Usage: It is unfair to tar an entire community with the same brush, because of the misdeeds of some miscreants.

371. Shoot from the hip

Meaning: Speak bluntly in a frank manner without careful consideration of the possible effects; react to a situation very quickly and with a lot of force, without thinking about the repercussions.

Usage: Divya was angry with the nonchalant attitude in the office and started shooting from the hip in a discussion with her superior.

372. A stone's throw- a very short distance

Meaning: A very short distance.

Usage: Rohit's apartment was just a stone's throw away from the metro station.

373. Hear on/through the grapevine

Meaning: To hear news from someone who heard the news from someone else.

Usage: I heard through the grapevine that Ananya was leaving the organization, but I can't confirm it.

374. Cost an arm and a leg

Meaning: To be very expensive

Usage: The new iPhone cost me an arm and a leg, but it was well worth it.

375. Bite off more than you can chew

Meaning: Attempt to do something which is way too difficult for you

Usage: Shyam bit off more than he could chew when he attempted to appear for the CAT and Civil Services exam simultaneously.

376. When pigs fly/pigs might fly

Meaning: Usually used as a sarcastic/dismissive remark to indicate how unlikely an event is or to mock others credulity.

Usage: I think that Salman Khan and Vivek Oberoi will become best friends by the end of 2016.

377. Scrape the bottom of the barrel

Meaning: To use the worst or last set of things or people available.

Usage: When Parthiv Patel was included in the national team, it was evident the selectors were scraping at the bottom of the barrel to include have-beens.

378. Jump on the bandwagon

Meaning: To support something that is popular.

Usage: Celebrities are usually a vacuous lot. They jump on the bandwagon wherever they think the trend is favorable.

379. The devil is in the detail

Meaning: Used to indicate small aspects of grand plans which when overlooked can lead to serious, unforeseen problems later on.

Usage: Pooja double checked her software code for any errors, as her boss told her that the devil is in the detail.

380. Burn your bridges

Meaning: To act in an unpleasant manner that will permanently remove the possibility of any return; make decisions which cannot be changed in the future.

Usage: Timothy had burned his bridges so badly with his company that he was on a permanent black list with them.

381. My two cents worth

Meaning: A spoken opinion, usually unsolicited and unwelcome.

Usage: Despite no one asking him to speak, Robert anyway gave his two cents worth on the topic.

382. Take the bull by the horns

Meaning: To confront a difficult problem head-on in a determined manner.

Usage: Sandhya was fed up of her husband's drinking and decided to take the bull by the horns.

383. Through thick and thin

Meaning: Through good times and bad times.

Usage: Rishi had a very dedicated support structure at home, with both his family and friends sticking with him through thick and thin.

384. Till the cows come home

Meaning: For a very long time

Usage: Those two media anchors can go on and on about politics till the cows come home.

385. The lowest common denominator

Meaning: Something of very small intellect and the lowest sophisticated level of taste, sensibility, or opinion among a group of people; a group having such taste, sensibility, or opinion

Usage: Donald Trump's demagoguery appealed to the lowest common denominator in the U.S.

386. A Fabian Policy

Meaning: A slow and cautious strategy intended to wear down and delay the opposition; avoiding direct confrontation. This phrase comes from the policy adopted by Roman politician and general Fabius Maximus, who through a careful ploy of delaying tactics avoided a decisive contest with Carthage military commander Hannibal's army and foiled their plans to conquer them.

Usage: Virat Kohli employed Fabian tactics in the run chase against Australia, taking singles and doubles to frustrate Aussie bowlers, instead of going for aggressive shots.

387. A Curtain Lecture

Meaning: This is an amusing one, especially for husbands. A curtain lecture is the scolding of a husband by his wife in private. There are many instances when a couple goes to social occasions and the husband makes a total fool of himself. His wife doesn't say anything to him in order to avoid embarrassing him, but reprimands him in private for his behavior.

Usage: Rohit got a curtain lecture from his wife after his drunken behavior at her in-laws party.

388. A Freudian Slip

Meaning: An unintentional mistake or slip-up from a speaker that (according to Sigmund Freud) results from the operation of unconscious wishes or conflicts and can reveal the individual's true thoughts.

Usage: Shazia's Freudian slip during a conversation with the HR executive revealed her animosity for her manager, who had been harassing her for quite some time.

389. A Jaundiced Eye

Meaning: The prejudice of someone who is bent on finding fault with notions of envy, distaste or hostility.

Usage: While evaluating candidates for the analyst job, a senior manager must ensure that he or she never looks at any shortlisted profiles with a jaundiced eye.

390. A Latchkey Kid

Meaning: A child who returns from school to an empty house without adult supervision for part of the day, because both of his/her parents are working.

Usage: There is a general perception that the lack of parental attention to latchkey kids may result in them demonstrating anti-social behavior in their teenage years.

391. A Left-Handed Compliment

Meaning: It essentially means a remark which comes across as pleasant but has doubtful sincerity and could be construed as an insult.

Usage: Rohan's constant praise of Shalini despite her inexperience came across as a left-handed compliment to her.

392. The Primrose Path

Meaning: A life of ease and pleasure, or a course of action that seems easy and appropriate but can actually end in disaster.

Usage: In the lower strata of the society, children are especially vulnerable to leading the primrose path fraught with crime and danger.

393. A Pyrrhic Victory

Meaning: A victory in which the victor incurs such devastating damage that it is tantamount to defeat.

Usage: The battle of Aleppo turned out to be a pyrrhic victory for Bashar Al-Assad's government, since many citizens of the city perished as collateral damage.

394. A Quixotic Project

Meaning: A project which is considered foolish and extravagantly romantic, totally unrealistic.

Usage: U.S. President Donald Trump's proposal to build a wall at the US-Mexico border is nothing but a quixotic project of his whimsical mind.

395. One's Salad Days

Meaning: The time when one is young and inexperienced.

Usage: During one's salad days, a person has very few responsibilities as compared to the later years of life.

396. Sanguinary Language

Meaning: A language that uses many cuss or swear words.

Usage: On social media sites, the scope for respectful and constructive debates and discussions is reducing by the day, as supporters of different political parties indulge in sanguinary language to run down each other.

397. Fools rush in where angels fear to tread

Meaning: People without good sense or judgement will have no hesitation in tackling a situation that even the wisest would avoid.

Usage: LGBT issues are treated by the media in such a way that people term them as fools rushing in where angels fear to tread.

398. A Square Peg (in a round hole)

Meaning: A person who is not suited to his position or work, surrounding etc, doesn't fit in.

Usage: Vivek was adept in technical knowledge, but lacked English proficiency, so joining a managerial job would make him a square peg in a round hole. To gain sufficient confidence and English skills, he joined Pep Talk after seeing an ad on the internet.

399. A Wet Blanket

Meaning: A person who spoils a jolly atmosphere or who does not join the fun of others.

Usage: Rohan acted like a wet blanket every time his office team planned an outing – he would make one excuse or the other to not partake in any team-building exercise.

400. A Cog in the Machine

Meaning: An unimportant, insignificant person in a large, complex organization.

Usage: Anurag's opinions mostly fell on deaf ears in the multinational he worked in the USA. It was almost like he was a cog in the machine where only the senior managers had their say.

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