

Alphabetical Listing of Idioms

A

all's well that ends well (a successful outcome is worth the effort)

all thumbs (clumsy)

at the end of one's rope (at the limit of one's ability to cope)

B

bark worse than one's bite (not as bad-tempered as one appears)

bend over backwards (try very hard)

bite the bullet (endure a difficult situation)

bite **the dust** (go down in defeat)

blow it (fail at something)

bury the hatchet (make peace)

C

cat got your tongue (can't talk?)

come alive (brighten up and become active)

cough up (give unwillingly)

D

different strokes for different folks

(everyone has different interests and tastes)

dressed to kill (wear one's finest clothing)

dressed to the teeth (dressed elegantly)

drive someone up a wall (annoy someone greatly)

duck soup (easy, effortless)

E

early bird catches the worm (arriving early gives one an advantage)

eating someone (bothering or worrying someone)

eyes are bigger than one's stomach (take more food than one can eat)

F

face the music (accept the consequences)

feed someone a line (deceive someone)

feel like a million dollars (feel wonderful)

fishy (strange and suspicious)

for a song (for very little money)

for the birds (uninteresting and meaningless)

fork over (hand over)

G

get away clean (escape punishment)

get in someone's hair (bother someone)

get off someone's back (stop bothering someone)

get the axe (be dismissed)

get the ball rolling (initiate action)

get the jump on someone (get the advantage over someone)

get up on the wrong side of the bed (wake up in a bad mood)

give it one's best shot (try hard)

give someone the slip (make a getaway)

go fly a kite (go away)

go to bat for someone (help out and support someone)

go to the dogs (become run-down)

H

hang on (persevere)

have the world by the tail (be successful and happy)

hit the ceiling (become very angry)

hit the hay (go to bed)

horse around (play around)

horse of a different color (quite a different matter)

hot under the collar (extremely angry)

I

if the shoe fits (admit the truth)

in stitches (laughing very hard)

in the hole (in debt)

J

jump down someone's throat (become angry with someone)

jump the gun (to be hasty)

K

keep under one's hat (keep something a secret)

kick the bucket (die)

kick up one's heels (celebrate)

knock someone's socks off (enthuse and excite)

L

leave someone high and dry (abandon someone)

lemon (something defective)

let sleeping dogs lie (do not agitate a potential source of trouble)

let the cat out of the bag (inform beforehand)

lose one's shirt (lose a great deal of money)

M

make a splash (be successful and attract attention)

make ends meet (pay one's bills)

mind one's P's and Q's (take care in speech and action)

money talks (money can influence people)

N

not have a leg to stand on (to have no good defense for one's opinion or actions)

O

on ice (set aside for future use)

on one's last legs (sick and failing)

on the line (in danger of being lost)

out of the woods (out of danger)

out on a limb (in a risky position)

P

paint the town red (carouse and have a good time)

pay through the nose (pay too high a price)

people who live in glass houses

shouldn't throw stones (one should not criticize when one is equally at fault)

play it by ear (improvise as one goes along)

pull someone's leg (fool someone)

pull strings (exert influence)

put one's money where one's mouth is (follow through with a stated intention)

R

raise a stink (protest strongly)

S

scratch someone's back (return a favor)

sell someone down the river (betray someone)

sell someone short (underestimate someone)

shake a leg (hurry)

shape up or ship out (behave properly or leave!)

shoot off one's mouth (express one's opinions loudly)

shoot the breeze (chat informally)

sitting pretty (in a fortunate position)

smell a rat (feel that something is wrong)

snow job (insincere talk)

spill the beans (reveal a secret)

spread oneself too thin (become involved in too many activities)

stick out one's neck (take a risk)

stick to one's guns (maintain one's position)

straight from the horse's mouth (from a reliable source)

string someone along (lead someone on dishonestly)

T

take it on the lamb (flee in a hurry) talk

through one's hat (make foolish statements)

tongue-in-cheek (not serious)

toot one's own horn (boast)

turn someone off (disgust someone)

U

up one's sleeve (concealed)

W

wet blanket (dull or boring person who spoils the happiness of others)