

# *Verbal Idiomatic Phrases*

- **Bite the bullet:** To face a difficult situation with courage. Example: She had to bite the bullet and confess her mistake to the boss.
- **Break a leg:** A way to wish someone good luck, especially before a performance. Example: Before going on stage, the actor's friend said, "Break a leg!"
- **Hit the nail on the head:** To describe something exactly or do something correctly. Example: Her analysis of the problem hit the nail on the head.
- **Spill the beans:** To reveal a secret unintentionally. Example: He accidentally spilled the beans about the surprise party.
- **Keep an eye on the ball:** To stay focused on a task or goal. Example: When working on a project, it's important to keep an eye on the ball.
- **Jump on the bandwagon:** To join a popular trend or activity. Example: Many companies are jumping on the bandwagon of remote work.
- **Cut to the chase:** To get to the main point without unnecessary details. Example: Let's cut to the chase and discuss the key issues.

- **Take a rain check:** To decline an offer or invitation with the intention of accepting it later. Example: I can't go to the movie tonight, but can I take a rain check for next week?
- **Catch someone off guard:** To surprise or shock someone by doing something unexpected. Example: His question caught her off guard, and she didn't know how to respond.
- **Pull someone's leg:** To tease or joke with someone in a playful manner. Example: He was just pulling your leg when he claimed to have met a celebrity.
- **Read someone like a book:** To understand someone's thoughts or intentions easily. Example: She could read him like a book and knew he was hiding something.
- **Give someone the benefit of the doubt:** To believe someone's claim or explanation without being too skeptical. Example: She decided to give him the benefit of the doubt and trust his intentions.
- **Spit it out:** To encourage someone to say something quickly or reveal a secret. Example: I know you have something to say; just spit it out!
- **Take the bull by the horns:** To face a problem or challenge directly and confidently. Example: Instead of avoiding the issue, she decided to take the bull by the horns and resolve it.
- **Hit the ground running:** To start a task or project quickly and energetically. Example: The new employee hit the ground running and immediately contributed to the team.

- **Play it by ear:** To make decisions spontaneously, based on the circumstances. Example: We don't have a fixed plan; let's play it by ear and see how the day goes.
- **Let the cat out of the bag:** To accidentally reveal a secret. Example: She let the cat out of the bag about the surprise party.
- **Speak of the devil:** To mention someone just before they appear or arrive. Example: We were talking about John, and then, speak of the devil, he walked in.
- **Wrap your head around something:** To understand or comprehend something complex. Example: It took me a while to wrap my head around the new software.
- **Catch someone's drift:** To understand the general idea or intention of what someone is saying. Example: I didn't understand all the details, but I caught his drift.
- **Break the ice:** To start a conversation or social interaction in a relaxed and friendly manner. Example: He told a joke to break the ice at the networking event.
- **Throw in the towel:** To give up or surrender in the face of difficulty. Example: After hours of trying, she decided to throw in the towel and admit defeat.
- **Bend over backward:** To make an exceptional effort to accommodate someone or meet their needs. Example: The manager bent over backward to help the new employee adjust to the team.

- **Play your cards right:** To make the right choices and decisions to achieve success. Example: If you play your cards right, you can secure the promotion.
- **Lay your cards on the table:** To be honest and open about your intentions or feelings. Example: It's time to lay our cards on the table and discuss our future plans.
- **Put all your eggs in one basket:** To invest all your resources or efforts into a single plan or option. Example: Diversifying investments is important; don't put all your eggs in one basket.
- **Read the riot act:** To give a strong warning or reprimand to someone. Example: The teacher had to read the riot act to the unruly students.
- **Let the chips fall where they may:** To accept the consequences, whether they are good or bad. Example: We've done all we can; now, let the chips fall where they may.
- **Cry over spilled milk:** To waste time lamenting things that cannot be changed. Example: There's no use crying over spilled milk; let's find a solution.
- **Burn the midnight oil:** To work late into the night. Example: To meet the deadline, she had to burn the midnight oil.
- **Get off your high horse:** To stop acting arrogantly or self-important. Example: He needs to get off his high horse and listen to others' opinions.
- **Have a heart-to-heart:** To have a sincere and honest conversation with someone. Example: They had a heart-to-heart talk about their relationship issues.

- **Make a long story short:** To summarize or provide a brief version of a lengthy narrative. Example: To make a long story short, they decided to move to a new city.
- **Throw someone under the bus:** To betray or sacrifice someone for personal gain. Example: He was quick to throw his colleague under the bus to avoid blame.
- **Keep something at bay:** To prevent or control something undesirable or threatening. Example: Regular exercise can help keep health problems at bay.
- **Take someone to the cleaners:** To extract a large amount of money from someone, often through deception. Example: The scam artist took the elderly woman to the cleaners.
- **Fish for compliments:** To seek praise or validation from others. Example: She's always fishing for compliments about her cooking.
- **Play hard to get:** To act uninterested or unavailable to make oneself more appealing. Example: He's playing hard to get, making it difficult to gauge his interest.
- **A piece of cake:** Something very easy to do. Example: Solving that math problem was a piece of cake for her.
- **In hot water:** In trouble or facing consequences for one's actions. Example: He found himself in hot water after missing an important deadline.
- **A blessing in disguise:** Something initially seen as negative but turns out to be advantageous. Example: Losing his job was a blessing in disguise as it led to a better opportunity.

- **The ball is in your court:** It's your turn to make a decision or take action.  
Example: I've given you all the information; now the ball is in your court.
- **Cry over spilled milk:** Worrying about something that has already happened and cannot be changed. Example: There's no use crying over spilled milk; let's find a solution.
- **Don't count your chickens before they hatch:** Don't assume success before it's certain. Example: Don't start celebrating your victory; don't count your chickens before they hatch.
- **Don't put all your eggs in one basket:** Diversify your resources to reduce risk. Example: Investing in various stocks is a good strategy; don't put all your eggs in one basket.
- **Every cloud has a silver lining:** There is something positive even in a difficult situation. Example: Losing the game taught them a valuable lesson; every cloud has a silver lining.
- **Go the extra mile:** Make additional effort or do more than required.  
Example: To succeed, you need to be willing to go the extra mile in your work.
- **Don't count your chickens before they hatch:** Don't assume success before it's certain. Example: Don't start celebrating your victory; don't count your chickens before they hatch.
- **Rub someone the wrong way:** To irritate or annoy someone. Example: His sarcastic comments always rub his coworkers the wrong way.
- **A penny for your thoughts:** Asking someone what they are thinking.  
Example: You seem lost in thought; a penny for your thoughts?



- **Let the cat out of the bag:** To accidentally reveal a secret. Example: She let the cat out of the bag about the surprise party.
- **Twist someone's arm:** To persuade or pressure someone to do something. Example: She had to twist his arm to convince him to attend the meeting.
- **Don't cry over spilled milk:** Don't waste time lamenting things that cannot be changed. Example: Instead of dwelling on the mistake, he remembered not to cry over spilled milk.
- **Cut corners:** To do something quickly and cheaply, often sacrificing quality. Example: They got into trouble for cutting corners in the construction project.
- **Catch someone's eye:** To attract someone's attention. Example: The colorful artwork in the gallery caught her eye.
- **Hit the jackpot:** To achieve a big success or win a substantial prize. Example: Winning the lottery was like hitting the jackpot for him.
- **Wrap one's head around something:** To understand or comprehend something complex. Example: It took me a while to wrap my head around the new technology.
- **Spill the beans:** To reveal a secret unintentionally. Example: He accidentally spilled the beans about the surprise party.
- **Turn a blind eye:** To ignore or pretend not to notice something wrong. Example: The manager chose to turn a blind eye to his employee's late arrivals.
- **Read someone the riot act:** To give a strong warning or reprimand. Example: The coach read the team the riot act after their poor performance.

- **Throw someone under the bus:** To betray or sacrifice someone for personal gain. Example: He tried to throw his colleague under the bus to avoid blame.
- **Have a chip on one's shoulder:** To be easily offended or have a hostile attitude. Example: He always has a chip on his shoulder, ready for an argument.
- **Put all one's eggs in one basket:** To rely heavily on a single plan or strategy. Example: Investing all your money in one stock is like putting all your eggs in one basket.
- **Break the ice:** To start a conversation or social interaction in a relaxed and friendly manner. Example: She told a funny story to break the ice at the party.
- **Steer clear of:** To avoid or stay away from something or someone. Example: It's best to steer clear of that area at night; it's not safe.
- **Go the extra mile:** To make additional effort or do more than is expected. Example: She always goes the extra mile to provide excellent customer service.
- **Kick the bucket:** To die or pass away. Example: Sadly, her pet cat kicked the bucket last night.
- **Push someone's buttons:** To irritate or provoke someone deliberately. Example: He knows exactly how to push her buttons to get a reaction.
- **Cry over spilled milk:** To lament something that has already happened and cannot be changed. Example: There's no use crying over spilled milk; let's find a solution.



- **Bark up the wrong tree:** To pursue a mistaken or misguided course of action. Example: Accusing him of stealing is barking up the wrong tree; he's innocent.
- **Play hard to get:** To act uninterested or aloof to make oneself more attractive to someone. Example: She decided to play hard to get to see if he was genuinely interested.
- **Keep your nose to the grindstone:** To work diligently and tirelessly. Example: In order to meet the deadline, he kept his nose to the grindstone all night.
- **Back to the drawing board:** To start over after a failed attempt. Example: The project didn't work out, so it's back to the drawing board.
- **Hit the ground running:** To start a task or project quickly and energetically. Example: The new employee hit the ground running and immediately contributed to the team.
- **Lend an ear:** To listen attentively to someone. Example: If you need to talk, I'm here to lend an ear.
- **Play it by ear:** To make decisions spontaneously, based on the circumstances. Example: We don't have a fixed plan; let's play it by ear and see how the day goes.
- **Give someone the cold shoulder:** To intentionally ignore or avoid someone. Example: She gave him the cold shoulder after their argument.
- **Drive someone up the wall:** To annoy or irritate someone significantly. Example: His constant tapping on the desk was driving her up the wall.

- **Have a finger in every pie:** To be involved in many different activities or projects. Example: He's a busy entrepreneur; he seems to have a finger in every pie.
- **Put the cart before the horse:** To do things in the wrong order. Example: Launching the marketing campaign before finalizing the product would be putting the cart before the horse.
- **Keep your chin up:** To stay positive and optimistic in difficult situations. Example: Even though times are tough, keep your chin up; things will get better.
- **Bury the hatchet:** To make peace and resolve a conflict. Example: After years of rivalry, they decided to bury the hatchet and become friends.
- **Let the chips fall where they may:** To accept the outcome, whether it's positive or negative. Example: We did our best, so let's present our findings and let the chips fall where they may.
- **Throw someone a bone:** To provide a small opportunity or favor to someone. Example: She threw him a bone by giving him a chance to prove himself.
- **Hold your horses:** To ask someone to be patient and wait. Example: Hold your horses; I'll be ready to leave in a moment.
- **Get the ball rolling:** To start a process or activity. Example: Let's get the ball rolling on the new project.
- **Bite off more than you can chew:** To take on more responsibilities than you can handle. Example: Joining three clubs and taking five classes may be biting off more than you can chew.

- **Poke the bear:** To provoke or anger someone intentionally. Example: If you keep criticizing his work, you're going to poke the bear.
- **Cast in stone:** To be unchangeable or fixed. Example: The decision to relocate the office isn't cast in stone yet; there's room for discussion.
- **Feather in your cap:** An accomplishment or achievement to be proud of. Example: Completing the marathon was a feather in her cap.
- **Hold all the cards:** To have all the advantages or power in a situation. Example: With her experience, she holds all the cards in the negotiation.
- **Throw cold water on something:** To discourage or dampen enthusiasm for an idea or plan. Example: His negative comments threw cold water on our excitement about the project.
- **Have a heart-to-heart:** To have an open and sincere conversation, usually about personal feelings. Example: After their argument, they had a heart-to-heart talk to resolve their issues.
- **Read the room:** To assess the atmosphere or mood of a situation. Example: Before making a joke, it's essential to read the room and see if it's appropriate.
- **See eye to eye:** To agree or have the same opinion as someone. Example: They didn't always see eye to eye, but they respected each other's viewpoints.
- **Batten down the hatches:** To prepare for a challenging or difficult situation. Example: With the storm approaching, it's time to batten down the hatches.
- **Make a mountain out of a molehill:** To exaggerate or overreact to a minor issue. Example: She tends to make a mountain out of a molehill, getting upset over small details.

- **Pass the buck:** To shift responsibility or blame to someone else. Example: He always tries to pass the buck when there's a problem at work.
- **Pull someone's leg:** To tease or joke with someone in a playful manner. Example: He was just pulling your leg when he claimed to have met a celebrity.
- **Beat around the bush:** To avoid addressing a topic directly. Example: Stop beating around the bush and tell us what you really think.
- **Speak of the devil:** To mention someone just before they appear or arrive. Example: We were talking about John, and then, speak of the devil, he walked in.
- **Read the riot act:** To give a strong warning or reprimand. Example: The coach read the team the riot act after their poor performance.
- **Jump through hoops:** To go to great lengths or make significant efforts to accomplish something. Example: She had to jump through hoops to secure the contract.
- **Back to square one:** To return to the starting point or beginning of a task. Example: After the setback, we had to go back to square one in our project.
- **Catch someone's drift:** To understand the general idea or intention of what someone is saying. Example: I didn't understand all the details, but I caught his drift.
- **Bite off more than you can chew:** To take on more responsibilities or tasks than you can handle. Example: Joining three clubs and taking five classes may be biting off more than you can chew.
- **Cut the mustard:** To perform well or meet expectations. Example: She proved that she could cut the mustard by delivering outstanding results.

- **Cry wolf:** To raise a false alarm or give a false warning. Example: If you keep crying wolf, people won't take you seriously when there's a real problem.
- **Go down in flames:** To fail spectacularly or experience a significant setback. Example: Their business venture went down in flames after just a few months.
- **Hit the nail on the head:** To describe something exactly or do something correctly. Example: Her analysis of the problem hit the nail on the head.
- **In hot water:** In trouble or facing consequences. Example: He found himself in hot water after missing an important deadline.
- **Play hardball:** To be tough, uncompromising, or aggressive in negotiations or actions. Example: During the contract negotiation, they decided to play hardball.
- **Save face:** To avoid embarrassment or preserve one's dignity in a difficult situation. Example: She tried to save face after the public speaking mishap.
- **Steer clear of:** To avoid or stay away from something or someone. Example: It's best to steer clear of that area at night; it's not safe.
- **Take it with a grain of salt:** To be skeptical or not fully believe something. Example: His tall tales should be taken with a grain of salt.
- **Talk the talk and walk the walk:** To both speak confidently about something and take action to support it. Example: She talks the talk and walks the walk when it comes to environmental conservation.
- **Walk on eggshells:** To be cautious and sensitive in dealing with a delicate or difficult situation. Example: After their argument, they had to walk on eggshells around each other.

- **Win hands down:** To win easily or without much effort. Example: Their team won the championship hands down.
- **The proof is in the pudding:** The true value or quality of something is demonstrated by the results. Example: You can talk about your skills, but the proof is in the pudding when you deliver the project.
- **Turn the tables:** To reverse a situation or change the roles or circumstances. Example: She turned the tables on her rival by outperforming him in the competition.
- **Up in arms:** Extremely angry or outraged about something. Example: The community was up in arms over the proposed construction project.
- **Wear your heart on your sleeve:** To show one's emotions openly and without reservation. Example: He wears his heart on his sleeve, and everyone knows how he feels about the issue.



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