

# The Idiom Book

Idiom List – Copyright © 2007 by Hal Niergarth

---

## *Numbers indicate lesson numbers*

- 'd (had) better 26  
'd (would) just as soon 11  
'd (would) rather 21  
a bit 65  
a bit much 3  
a bite to eat 84  
a call of nature 11  
a damn sight 3  
a friend in need 96  
a funk 1  
a good 8  
a good number of 44  
a good sort 79  
a hell of a note 35  
a leopard can't change  
its spots 85  
a matter of 53  
a nice piece of change 74  
a number of 44  
a nut case 79  
a piece of cake 29  
a pig in a poke 22  
a pretty penny 73  
a sight for sore eyes 101  
a straight face 94  
a tad 33  
a touch 9  
a world of 61  
act one's age 81  
add insult to injury 81  
after all 41  
again and again 81  
against my better judgment 80  
all at once 81  
all business 28  
all for 32  
all fun and games 34  
all in 80  
all in all 16  
all kinds of 59  
all manner of 67  
all of a sudden 81  
all over 23  
all set 40  
all sorts of 6  
all the same 74  
all there 23  
all things being equal 71  
all things considered 41  
along with 34  
an arm and a leg 1  
and so forth 41  
and so on 31  
and then some 8  
any day now 80  
any number 5  
anybody's guess 56  
anything but 44  
arrive at a decision 66  
around here 18  
as a last resort 20  
as it were 25  
as the crow flies 80  
as to 30  
as usual 90  
as well 15  
as well as 42  
as yet 56  
ASAP 70  
aside from 31  
ask for it 49  
at a loss 30  
at a premium 93  
at all 3  
at any rate 39  
at bay 61  
at death's door 15  
at every turn 81  
at fault 90  
at first 86  
at last 23  
at least 22  
at liberty 39  
at loggerheads 42  
at one's disposal 55  
at peace 82  
at present 54  
at that 4  
at the moment 1  
at times 81  
back and forth 82  
back on one's feet 75  
be about to 54  
be broke 1  
be known to 17  
be supposed to 10  
be to 29  
be up to 93  
be/get used to 100  
be willing to 5  
bear in mind 96  
bear with me 49  
beat something all to hell 60  
beat around the bush 89  
beat it 89  
before snow flies 51  
beg to differ 42  
behave yourself 90  
behind bars 82  
behind someone's back 82  
behind the times 40  
behind the wheel 12  
bend someone's ear 82  
bend over backwards 41  
beneath contempt 45  
better late than never 101  
better off 40  
between a rock and a hard place 70  
between you and me 20  
beyond question 84  
big cheese 55  
big deal 56

big gun 29  
 big mouth 78  
 big shot 6  
 big wheel 46  
 bite off more than one can chew 82  
 bite one's tongue 78  
 bite the bullet 97  
 black and blue 25  
 blood relative 86  
 blow off steam 91  
 blow it 7  
 blow someone away 72  
 blow to smithereens 46  
 bode well for 100  
 break a promise 77  
 break down 30  
 break even 20  
 break one's back 63  
 break the ice 33  
 break the news 72  
 bridge the gap 56  
 bring down the house 8  
 bring up short 44  
 bring up to date 29  
 bull 73  
 burn rubber 76  
 bury the hatchet 88  
 business end 65  
 buy the farm 95  
 by a mile 16  
 by accident 43  
 by all means 39  
 by chance 39  
 by hook or by crook 4  
 by oneself 47  
 by the way 27  
 by way of 54  
 cabin fever 83  
 call in sick 83  
 call it quits 40  
 can do with 57  
 can no more [verb phrase]  
     than .... 42  
 can't help *-ing* 15  
 catch in the act 73  
 chance it 84  
 chances are 36  
 change one's mind 55  
 chew the fat 36  
 clean bill of health 25  
 clean one's plate 87  
 clean someone's clock 50  
 come in handy 84  
 come on 62  
 come to a standstill 56  
 come to an end 56  
 come to grief 98  
 come to life 23  
 come to light 85  
 come to think of it 84  
 comes with the territory 22  
 coming up roses 52  
 could be 95  
 could do with 21  
 could do without 35  
 could stand 34  
 could use 14  
 couldn't care less 98  
 crap shoot 38  
 crash and burn 17  
 cream of the crop 84  
 cross you fingers 10  
 culture shock 43  
 cut corners 20  
 cut it 5  
 cut it out 86  
 cut someone some slack 16  
 damn it 12  
 dark horse 85  
 dead duck 85  
 death warmed over 11  
 deep pockets 85  
 dig in one's heels 66  
 dirty look 91  
 dish dirt 33  
 do a number (on) 23  
 do one's best 99  
 do one's bit 48  
 do one's damndest 75  
 do one's part 89  
 do the dishes 5  
 do time 85  
 do wonders 74  
 dog's life 43  
 don't you dare 86  
 down in the dumps 32  
 drink ( ) under the table 86  
 drive (s'one) over the edge 34  
 drive (s'one) up the wall 34  
 each and every 87  
 each other 88  
 early on 87  
 earn one's keep 99  
 easier said than done 7  
 easy does it 87  
 eat out 18  
 eat s'one alive 18  
 elbow grease 89  
 end up 12  
 even so 74  
 ever more 59  
 ever since 37  
 every bit 87  
 every now and then 24  
 every other day 26  
 every so often 57  
 every time I turn around 87  
 face the music 90  
 face to face 58  
 fair and square 69  
 fall asleep 71  
 far and wide 62  
 far be it from me 12  
 far from 78  
 fed up with 96  
 few and far between 2  
 fill somebody's shoes 13  
 fill the bill 13  
 first things first 27  
 fit to eat 60  
 flip out 72  
 fly off the handle 90

foot the bill 55  
 for a change 57  
 for all I care 65  
 for crying out loud 77  
 for good 36  
 for once 50  
 for one thing 5  
 for starters 31  
 for sure 14  
 for the life of me 4  
 for the time being 88  
 frame of reference 52  
 from here on out 96  
 from now on 47  
 from time to time 18  
 fun way 67  
 funny business 49  
 get a feel for 43  
 get a grip 28  
 get a handle on 37  
 get a rise out of 89  
 get around 9  
 get around to 13  
 get at it 30  
 get cold feet 83  
 get cracking 56  
 get even with 89  
 get going 76  
 get hold of 89  
 get in bad with 70  
 get in good with 14  
 get in on the ground floor 93  
 get it 37  
 get it 83  
 get it in the neck 88  
 get it over with 30  
 get lost 89  
 get on in years 19  
 get on someone 76  
 get on the good side of 71  
 get one's act together 50  
 get one's bearings 62  
 get one's mind off 1  
 get off someone's back 17  
 get off the ground 64  
 get rid of 13  
 get the axe 24  
 get the best of 78  
 get the boot 46  
 get the drift 58  
 get the feel of 34  
 get the hang of something 16  
 get the message 86  
 get the picture 24  
 get up one's courage 47  
 get up to speed 63  
 get with it 9  
 getting somewhere 75  
 give (someone) a buzz 47  
 give (someone) a hand 30  
 give and take 28  
 give it a whack 5  
 give notice 13  
 give someone fits 74  
 give or take 99  
 give someone a hard time 88  
 give someone a piece of  
     one's mind 91  
 give someone a lift 9  
 give someone their  
     walking papers 38  
 give someone the cold shoulder 33  
 give someone the heave-ho 38  
 give the word 64  
 give up the ghost 95  
 go a long way towards 61  
 go ahead 16  
 go all out 27  
 go and 38  
 go ape 77  
 go back a long way 29  
 go ballistic 77  
 go by the name of 36  
 go Dutch 69  
 go for it 97  
 go for someone's throat 75  
 go haywire 58  
 go it alone 58  
 go off half-cocked 46  
 go out of one's way 14  
 go overboard 83  
 go through the roof 57  
 go to 2  
 go to the mat 42  
 go to the trouble 42  
 go to town on 50  
 go to waste 6  
 God forbid 62  
 goes out the window 52  
 goes with the territory 52  
 goes without saying 52  
 good sort 79  
 goof off 63  
 grab a bite 10  
 greasy spoon 18  
 Grim Reaper 61  
 guess what 57  
 hack it 51  
 had it not been for 30  
 hair of the dog 92  
 hand it to someone 39  
 hang one on 92  
 hang out 76  
 happen to [be] 43  
 hard and fast 99  
 hard at it 65  
 hard pressed 93  
 hard put 93  
 hard up 96  
 hardly ever 92  
 have (got) another think coming 57  
 have (got) a screw loose 2  
 have (got) one's heart set on 72  
 have (got) a lock on 24  
 have (got) a lot on one's plate 12  
 have a ball 67  
 have a good opinion of 55  
 have a look at 9  
 have a thing about 73  
 have a way of 48  
 have designs on (someone) 38  
 have (got) it in one 76

have (got) one's number 87  
have got to 39  
have had it 46  
have in common 45  
have in mind 19  
have it coming 7  
have it in for 48  
have it your way 65  
have no idea 72  
have no use for 92  
have one foot in the grave 95  
have second thoughts 28  
have (got) something against 69  
have the makings of 20  
have words 13  
have yet 17  
headed for 54  
Heaven forbid 41  
hell of a 8  
help oneself 92  
here to stay 53  
high off the hog 55  
high time 80  
hightail it 51  
hit it off 41  
hit the bottle 92  
hit the ceiling 72  
hit the fan 56  
hit the road 86  
hit the spot 21  
hold ( ) against (someone) 48  
hold in high esteem 45  
hold it 83  
hold it against 69  
hold sway 36  
home cooking 60  
home free 12  
honest to God 62  
hoof it 35  
horse around 63  
hot air 52  
hot stuff 3  
how about [it] 8  
how about 6

how come 24  
how goes it 13  
how so 35  
how the devil 39  
I stand corrected 60  
I suppose so 26  
I take it 71  
I tell you 73  
I wouldn't count on it 76  
I'm afraid 27  
I'm afraid so 27  
I'm with you there 84  
I've had it 77  
in a shambles 46  
in a way 74  
in advance 70  
in ages 8  
in any event 51  
in bulk 60  
in business 67  
in clover 97  
in demand 39  
in earnest 44  
in essence 58  
in fact 5  
in favor 93  
in flux 54  
in for it 17  
in force 23  
in good repair 14  
in good shape 61  
in good with 55  
in hot water 91  
in light of 82  
in my book 93  
in no mood 50  
in nothing flat 39  
in one piece 10  
in one's day 88  
in order to 25  
in order 45  
in order 64  
in particular 37  
in search of 56

in shape 44  
in short supply 70  
in sight 12  
in sight 82  
in so many words 6  
in someone's good graces 79  
in someone's shoes 52  
in spades 68  
in stock 64  
in sync 64  
in the back of one's mind 82  
in the bag 19  
in the ballpark 22  
in the bargain 43  
in the black 101  
in the doghouse 91  
in the long haul 92  
in the long run 32  
in the mood 21  
in the same boat 58  
in the throes of 65  
in the way of 71  
in the works 75  
in the world 54  
in these parts 23  
in this neck of the woods 9  
in time 40  
in touch 101  
in turn 59  
in working order 74  
ins and outs 93  
into the bargain 31  
isn't all fun and games 34  
it stands to reason 93  
it's about time 47  
it's about time 80  
it's just as well 94  
it's only a matter of time 26  
jump the gun 32  
jump through hoops 75  
just about 80  
just around the corner 46  
just as well 94  
just in case 51

just plain 73  
 just the same 94  
 just what the doctor ordered 21  
 keep ( ) under your hat 72  
 keep an eye on 87  
 keep an eye out for 24  
 keep body and soul together 60  
 keep in mind 75  
 keep it up 75  
 keep one's cool 35  
 keep one's distance 94  
 keep one's eyes open 12  
 keep one's head 48  
 keep one's mouth shut 94  
 keep one's nose out of  
     another's business 94  
 keep one's nose to the  
     grindstone 99  
 keep one's word 77  
 keep one's shirt on 94  
 keep someone in the dark 72  
 keep something under wraps 92  
 keep tabs on 54  
 keep up with 31  
 keep your chin up 27  
 keep your distance 94  
 keep your fingers crossed 27  
 kick ass 50  
 kick the bucket 95  
 kid brother 86  
 kind of 4  
 kiss and make up 94  
 knock-down, drag-out 94  
 know better than 95  
 know for a fact 85  
 know one's own mind 78  
 know one's stuff 2  
 laid up 96  
 lay eyes on 8  
 lay hands on 96  
 lay waste to 96  
 lean over backwards 91  
 leave a lot to be desired 60  
 leave much to be desired 98  
 leave someone holding the bag 95  
 leave something to be desired 9  
 leave well enough alone 95  
 lend (someone) a hand 31  
 let drop 58  
 let in on 32  
 let me see 95  
 let slip 33  
 let the cat out of the bag 78  
 let's face it 5  
 let's have it 42  
 lie in wait 73  
 like hell 25  
 lock, stock, and barrel 96  
 long face 59  
 long on 47  
 long since 62  
 look someone/thing over 25  
 look the other way 79  
 lose it 35  
 lose one's shirt 18  
 lose one's temper 90  
 lose one's touch 99  
 lose track of 101  
 lots of 67  
 made to order 21  
 make a day of it 49  
 make a dent in 97  
 make a difference 61  
 make a go of 53  
 make a good pair 26  
 make a killing 97  
 make a living 27  
 make a mint 97  
 make a scene 97  
 make an entrance 15  
 make contact 47  
 make do 43  
 make ends meet 97  
 make every effort 59  
 make for 53  
 make good 101  
 make good on 74  
 make good time 10  
 make head or tail of 98  
 make it 25, 70  
 make mincemeat of 50  
 make money hand over fist 93  
 make nice 91  
 make no bones about 98  
 make one's mark 6  
 make oneself at home 99  
 make sense of 98  
 make short work of 21  
 make someone's day 33  
 make sure 14  
 make the grade 18  
 make tracks 51  
 make up one's mind 3  
 make use of 37  
 many a 98  
 many's the 58  
 mark my words 97  
 match wits 36  
 me too 84  
 mean business 20  
 meet one's maker 2  
 mend fences 54  
 mess up 23  
 mixed blessing 59  
 mob scene 8  
 more or less 19  
 mother tongue 98  
 move away 62  
 much ado about nothing 78  
 much as 80  
 much less 31  
 much obliged 25  
 my pleasure 19  
 needless to say 98  
 next door [to] 6  
 nice going 6  
 nine to five 63  
 no ifs, ands, or buts 93  
 no laughing matter 95  
 no matter 43  
 no pain, no gain 75  
 no picnic 40

no two ways about it 80  
 no way 60  
 no wonder 50  
 nobody's fool 29  
 not about to 66  
 not all it's cracked up to be 84  
 not give someone a second look 68  
 not give someone the time of day 66  
 not go there 85  
 not have a clue 61  
 not one's thing 16  
 not think much of 31  
 not to mention 4  
 nothing but 44  
 nothing short of 99  
 nothing to lose 47  
 nothing to write home about 16  
 now and again 23  
 of all people 94  
 of course 68  
 of one's own 3  
 of service 45  
 of use 39  
 off and on 11  
 off limits 91  
 off one's rocker 26  
 off to a good start 92  
 old flame 33  
 old stamping ground 62  
 on a roll 101  
 on board 99  
 on earth 77  
 on edge 32  
 on foot 70  
 on good terms with 71  
 on hand 92  
 on its last legs 22  
 on one's best behavior 35  
 on one's good side 83  
 on one's hands 64  
 on one's part 28  
 on one's way 49  
 on short notice 19  
 on someone's back 63  
 on someone's mind 31  
 on speaking terms 88  
 on the docket 29  
 on the fritz 14  
 on the go 31  
 on the ground 54  
 on the job 63  
 on the make 38  
 on the mark 56  
 on the other hand 68  
 on the outs 66  
 on the right track 9  
 on the road 40  
 on the road 57  
 on the same page 20  
 on the same stage 53  
 on the spot 34  
 on the table 28  
 on the up and up 22  
 on the way 51  
 on the way 76  
 on to something 92  
 on top of 13  
 on your toes 29  
 once in a blue moon 10  
 once in a while 33  
 one day 86  
 one for the books 50  
 one of a kind 15  
 one of these days 18  
 one thing led to another 79  
 one's eyes are bigger  
     than one's stomach 87  
 one's junior 15  
 one's lips are sealed 92  
 open up 18  
 or so 24  
 or thereabouts 53  
 out loud 79  
 out of control 26  
 out of it 9  
 out of luck 100  
 out of one's hands 61  
 out of sight 10  
 out of sorts 65  
 out of the loop 100  
 out of the question 27  
 out of the way 40  
 out to 28  
 over and done with 79  
 pack it in 15  
 pain in the ass 33  
 pain in the butt 3  
 part with 69  
 patch things up 69  
 pay (someone) back 68  
 pay through the nose 40  
 perish the thought 49  
 pick on someone 81  
 pick up after someone 76  
 pick up the pieces 96  
 pick up the tab 1  
 pick up where one left off 33  
 piece of work 79  
 pit stop 11  
 play a part 61  
 play a trick on someone 68  
 play it safe 83  
 play it straight 29  
 play the field 38  
 play the game 83  
 point of view 52  
 point taken 60  
 politics makes strange  
     bedfellows 45  
 pop the question 17  
 pretty much 70  
 provided that 32  
 pull a fast one 22  
 pull one's weight 14  
 pull up stakes 32  
 punch line 17  
 push one's luck 38  
 pushing up daisies 74  
 put a damper on 59  
 put down roots 32  
 put in a good word for 6  
 put in an appearance 19

put (something) on hold 19  
 put one's finger on 2  
 put one's foot in one's mouth 78  
 put one's money where  
     one's mouth is 20  
 put someone on 81  
 put something down to 79  
 put something on the  
     back burner 4  
 put something to use 49  
 put the pedal to the metal 73  
 put the screws to 57  
 putting it mildly 53  
 quite a 11  
 quite a bit 40  
 quite a few 70  
 quite a way 35  
 raise the roof 8  
 rather than 71  
 read ( ) the riot act 86  
 remains to be seen 16  
 right away 24  
 right now 41  
 risk life and limb 67  
 rolling in dough 97  
 rough it 35  
 rub someone's nose in it 64  
 rule the roost 3  
 run a light 12  
 run for office 45  
 run into 74  
 run off at the mouth 3  
 run out of 10  
 run short of 27  
 same here 83  
 same old, same old 101  
 scare to death 10  
 screw up 79  
 see eye to eye 88  
 see fit 70  
 see light at the end of the tunnel 1  
 see red 91  
 see that.... 90  
 see the glass as half empty 67  
 see the light 2  
 see to 21  
 see what one can do 76  
 see you 91  
 set aside 31  
 set fire to 2  
 set in motion 36  
 set in one's ways 66  
 set up shop 99  
 shaping up 15  
 shoot one's mouth off 79  
 show someone the ropes 16  
 sit back 71  
 six feet under 95  
 skeleton in one's closet 85  
 slim pickings 46  
 small talk 28  
 smart ass 49  
 snap someone's head off 101  
 snug as a bug in a rug 51  
 so as 20  
 so help me 5  
 so hot 7  
 so that 30  
 some doing 53  
 some time 36  
 something else 15  
 sooner or later 101  
 sort of 6  
 sound asleep 80  
 sounds like a plan 76  
 spare tire 21  
 spill the beans 78  
 spin yarns 62  
 square one 44  
 start off on the right foot 41  
 stay put 100  
 stay the course 75  
 step on toes 54  
 stick it to 55  
 stick one's neck out 47  
 still and all 100  
 stop on a dime 57  
 straight shooter 2  
 straight talk 9  
 straight through 11  
 strike up 8  
 strong suit 66  
 stuck with 5  
 suffice it to say 11  
 sure of oneself 100  
 sure thing 30  
 sweep someone off their feet 47  
 sweet on someone 68  
 swift on the uptake 48  
 table manners 69  
 take a back seat to 53  
 take a header 67  
 take a look at 7  
 take a spill 25  
 take a spin 17  
 take a whack at 37  
 take advantage of 43  
 take care 91  
 take into account 43  
 take issue with 60  
 take it 35  
 take it easy 7  
 take it for granted 71  
 take it from me 61  
 take it or leave it 28  
 take it out on 69  
 take my word for it 22  
 take offense 17  
 take pity on 65  
 take root 36  
 take shape 36  
 take someone by surprise 72  
 take someone seriously 81  
 take someone to the cleaners 28  
 take someone's place 19  
 take something by storm 100  
 take something in stride 32  
 take steps 26  
 take the wind out of one's sails 100  
 take up the slack 19  
 takes the cake 89  
 talk one's way 73

tear someone limb from limb 26  
 teed off 13  
 tell apart 37  
 tell you what 92  
 tempest in a teapot 78  
 thank goodness 30  
 thanks to 14  
 that is 49  
 that way 37  
 that's as it may be 59  
 the be-all and end-all 98  
 the benefit of the doubt 71  
 the better to 59  
 the bottom line 58  
 the end of one's rope 87  
 the fair-haired boy 100  
 the green light 64  
 the jury's still out 34  
 the main drag 97  
 the old days 62  
 the opposite sex 63  
 the other day 68  
 the other night 73  
 the pits 11  
 the real scoop 22  
 the soul of 90  
 the straight goods 52  
 the ticket 44  
 the whole shebang 64  
 then again 45  
 there's no question 55  
 these days 7  
 think a lot of someone 45  
 think highly of 55  
 think twice 68  
 throw a fit 72  
 throw one's hat in the ring 45  
 throw one's weight around 3  
 tickled to death 42  
 tie one on 38  
 time was 88  
 to a fault 69  
 to a man 93  
 to beat hell 11  
 to boot 20  
 to go 51  
 to make matters worse 48  
 to no avail 23  
 to say nothing of 67  
 to say the least 13  
 to spare 53  
 to speak of 18  
 too bad 38  
 top dog 50  
 tramp around 37  
 treat like dirt 48  
 trial and error 34  
 try one's hand 46  
 turn a deaf ear to 66  
 turn over a new leaf 77  
 twist someone's arm 21  
 under one's nose 42  
 up against 48  
 up for 7  
 up in the air 4  
 up on 65  
 up the creek 46  
 up to 7  
 up to 10  
 up to 93  
 up to one's neck 65  
 up to par 25  
 up to the mark 69  
 ups and downs 66  
 used to 2  
 walk on eggshells 66  
 watch it 12  
 watch your step 29  
 wear rose-colored glasses 67  
 weather the storm 57  
 welcome to the club 58  
 wet behind the ears 48  
 wet blanket 67  
 what about 4  
 what do you say 1  
 what gives with someone 77  
 what it takes 49  
 what one says goes 63  
 what the hell 1  
 what the hell 34  
 what with 4  
 what's going on 52  
 what's more 77  
 what's up 59  
 what's with 3  
 what's your take on .... 64  
 when it comes to 14  
 where do you get off 89  
 while you're at it 41  
 why don't 5  
 will do 24  
 wise guy 17  
 with a vengeance 68  
 with an eye to 26  
 within one's means 22  
 within reason 4  
 without question 82  
 won't lift a finger 24  
 work my butt off 7  
 would that 15  
 wouldn't mind 16  
 wrack one's brain 42  
 wrap things up 51  
 yet again 88  
 you bet 92  
 you can't beat 37  
 you can't teach an old  
     dog new tricks 85  
 you never can tell 41  
 you're telling me 92  
 you've got that right 84  
 your wish is my command 90