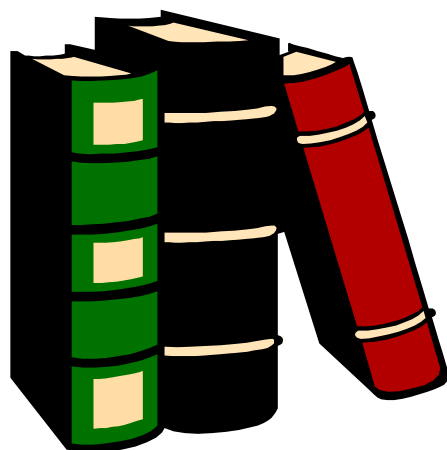


KUDRATBEK ATABAYEV

EASY ENGLISH

ESSENTIAL ENGLISH IDIOMS Elementary



NAMANGAN

Сўз боши

Ушбу қўлланма инглиз тилида оғзаки нуткни ривожлантириш ва билимларини мустахкамлаш учун қўшимча материал сифатида ёзилди. Ушбу қўлланма коллеж, лицейлар ва олий ўқув юрти талабалари ва барча инглиз тилини ўрганишга қизикувчилар учун мўлжалланган.

Қўлланмада ўқувчига идиомалар ва уларни тўғри қўллашни ўргатилади ўрганувчиларнинг ўзлари томонидан тузиладиган гапларда идиомаларни тўғри қўллашга ўргатишдир.

Талабалар идиомалар ва уларни тўғри ишлатишни қўлланмадаги мисоллар оркали мустақил равишда ишлаб ўрганадилар. Талабанинг ҳар бир бобдан кейинги бобга ўтганда идиомаларни қўллашдаги хатолари нисбатан камайиб бориши лозим.

Chapter 1

to get in/to get on: to enter or to board a vehicle

To get in is used for cars, to get on is used for all other forms of transportation.

- It's easiest to get in the car from the driver's side. The door on the other side doesn't work well.

- I always get on the bus to work at 34th Street.

to get out of/to get off : to leave or to descend from a vehicle

To get out of is used for cars, to get off is used for all other forms of transportation.

- Why don't we stop and get out of the car for a while?

- Helen got off the train at the 42nd Street terminal.

to put on: to place on oneself (usually said of clothes) (S)

- Mary put on her coat and left the room.

- Put your hat on before you leave the house.

to take off : to remove (usually said of clothes) (S)

- John took off his jacket as he entered the office.

- Take your sweater off. The room is very warm.

to call up : to telephone (also: to give someone a call) (S)

To call can be used instead of to call up, as in the first example below.

- I forgot to call up Mr. Jones yesterday I'd better call him now.

- Call me up tomorrow, Jane. We'll arrange a time to have lunch together.

- I promise to give you a call as soon as I arrive in New York.

to turn on: to start or cause to function (also: to switch on) (S)

- Please turn on the light; it's too dark in here.

- Do you know who turned the air conditioning on?

to turn off: to cause to stop functioning (also: to switch off, to shut off) (S)

Turn on and turn off, as well as their related forms, are used for things that flow, such as electricity, water, gas, etc.

- Please turn off the light when you leave the room.

- Are you really listening to the radio, or should I turn it off?

right away: very soon; immediately (also: at once)

- Dad says that dinner will be ready right away, so we'd better wash our hands and set the table.

- Tell Will to come to my office right away. I must see him immediately.

- Stop playing that loud music at once!

to pick up: to lift from the floor, table, etc., with one's fingers (S)

- Harry picked up the newspaper that was on the front doorstep.
- Could you pick your toy up before someone falls over it?

sooner or later: eventually, after a period of time

- If you study English seriously, sooner or later you'll become fluent.
- I'm too tired to do my homework now; I'm sure I'll do it sooner or later.

to get up: to arise, to rise from a bed

For the last definition a noun phrase must separate the verb and particle.

- Carlo gets up at seven o'clock every morning.
- At what time should we get the children up tomorrow?

at first: in the beginning, originally

- At first English was difficult for him, but later he made great progress.
- I thought at first that it was Sheila calling, but then I realized that it was Betty.

to dress up: to wear formal clothes, to dress very nicely

- We should definitely dress up to go to the theater.
- You don't have to dress up for Mike's party.

at last: finally, after a long time

- We waited for hours and then the train arrived at last.
- Now that I am sixteen, at last I can drive my parents' car.

as usual: as is the general case, as is typical

- George is late for class as usual. This seems to happen every day.
- As usual, Dora received first prize in the swimming contest. It's the third consecutive year that she has won.

to find out: get information about, to determine (S)

This idiom is separable only when a pronoun is used, as in the second example.

- Will you please try to find out what time the airplane arrives?
- I'll call right now to find it out.

to look at: give one's attention to; to watch

- The teacher told us to look at the blackboard and not at our books.
- I like to walk along a country road at night and look at the stars.

to look for: to try to find, to search for

An adverb phrase such as all over can be put between the verb and preposition, as in the second example.

However, the idiom cannot be separated by a noun or pronoun.

- He's spent over an hour looking for the pen that he lost.
- So there you are! We've looked all over for you.

all right : acceptable, fine; yes, okay

This idiom can also be spelled alright in informal usage.

- He said that it would be all right to wait in her office until she returned.
- Do you want me to turn off the TV? Alright, if you insist.

all along: all the time, from the beginning (without change)

- She knew all along that we'd never agree with his plan.
- You're smiling! Did you know all along that I'd give you a birthday present?

Chapter 2

little by little : gradually, slowly (also: step by step)

- Karen's health seems to be improving little by little.
- If you study regularly each day, step by step your vocabulary will increase.

to tire out: to make very weary due to difficult conditions or hard effort (also: to wear out) (S)

- The hot weather tired out the runners in the marathon.
- Does studying for final exams wear you out? It makes me feel worn out!

to call on : to ask for a response from; to visit (also: to drop in on)

- Jose didn't know the answer when the teacher called on him.
- Last night several friends called on us at our home.
- Why don't we drop in on Sally a little later?

never mind: don't be concerned about it; ignore what was just said

- When he spilled his drink on my coat, I said, "Never mind. It needs to be cleaned anyway."
- So you weren't listening to me again. Never mind; it wasn't important.

to pick out: to choose, to select (S)

- Ann picked out a good book to give to her brother as a graduation gift.
- Johnny, if you want me to buy you a toy, then pick one out now.
-

to take one's (my, his, your, etc.) time: to do without rush, not to hurry

This idiom is often used in the imperative form. (See the first example.)

- There's no need to hurry doing those exercises. Take your time.
- William never works rapidly. He always takes his time in everything that he does.

to talk over: to discuss or consider a situation with others (S)

- We talked over Carlo's plan to install an air conditioner in the room, but we couldn't reach a decision.
- Before I accepted the new job offer, I talked the matter over with my wife.

to lie down: to place oneself in a flat position, to recline

- If you are tired, why don't you lie down for an hour or so?
- The doctor says that Grace must lie down and rest for a short time every afternoon.

to stand up: to rise from a sitting or lying position (also: to get up)

- When the president entered the room, everyone stood up.
- Suzy, stop rolling around on the floor; get up now.

to sit down: to be seated (also: to take a seat)

- We sat down on the park bench and watched the children play.
- There aren't any more chairs, but you can take a seat on the floor.

all (day, week, month, year) long: the entire day, week, month, year

- I've been working on my income tax forms all day long. I've hardly had time to eat.
- It's been raining all week long. We haven't seen the sun since last Monday.

by oneself: alone, without assistance

- Francis translated that French novel by himself. No one helped him.
- Paula likes to walk through the woods by herself, but her brother prefers to walk with a companion.

on purpose: for a reason, deliberately

This idiom is usually used when someone does something wrong or unfair.

- Do you think that she didn't come to the meeting on purpose?
- It was no accident that he broke my glasses. He did it on purpose.

to get along with someone (something): to associate or work well with; to succeed or manage in

doing (also: to get on with someone or something)

- Terry isn't getting along with her new roommate; they argue constantly.
- How are you getting on with your studies?

to make a difference (to someone) : to be of importance (to), to affect

This idiom is often used with adjectives to show the degree of importance.

- It makes a big difference to me whether he likes the food I serve.
- Does it make any difference to you where we go for dinner?
- No, it doesn't make any difference.
- It makes no difference to Lisa either.

to take out : to remove, to extract (S); to go on a date with (S) (also: to go out with)

- Students, take out your books and open them to page twelve.
- Did you take Sue out last night?
- No, she couldn't go out with me.

to take part in: to be involved in, to participate in (also: to be in on)

- Martin was sick and could not take part in the meeting yesterday.

- I didn't want to be in on their argument, so I remained silent.

at all : to any degree (also: in the least)

This idiom is used with the negative to add emphasis to a statement.

- Larry isn't at all shy about expressing his opinions.
- When I asked Donna whether she was tired, she said, "Not in the least. I'm full of energy."

to look up: to locate information in a directory, dictionary, book, etc. (S)

- Ellen suggested that we look up Lee's telephone number in the directory.
- Students should try to understand the meaning of a new word from context before looking the word up in the dictionary.

to wait on someone: to serve in a store or restaurant

- A very pleasant young clerk waited on me in that shop.
- The restaurant waitress asked us, "Has anyone waited on you yet?"

at least : a minimum of, no fewer (or less) than

- I spend at least two hours every night on my studies.
- Mike claims that he drinks at least a quart of water every day.

so far: until now, until the present time (also: up to now, as of yet)

This idiom is usually used with the present perfect tense.

- So far, this year has been excellent for business. I hope that the good luck continues.
- How many idioms have we studied in this book up to now?
- As of yet, we have not had an answer from him.

Chapter 3

to take a walk, stroll, hike, etc.: to go for a walk, stroll, hike, etc

A stroll involves slow, easy walking; a hike involves serious, strenuous walking.

- Last evening we took a walk around the park.
- It's a fine day. Would you like to take a stroll along Mason Boulevard?
- Let's take a hike up Cowles Mountain this afternoon.

to take a trip (to) : to go on a journey, to travel

- I'm so busy at work that I have no time to take a trip.
- During the summer holidays, the Thompsons took a trip to Europe.

to try on: to wear clothes to check the style or fit before buying (S)

- He tried on several suits before he picked out a blue one.
- Why don't you try these shoes on next?

to think over: to consider carefully before deciding (S)

- I'd like to think over your offer first. Then can we talk it over tomorrow?
- You don't have to give me your decision now. Think it over for a while.

to take place: to occur, to happen according to plan

- The regular meetings of the committee take place in Constitution Hall.
- I thought that the celebration was taking place at John's house.

to put away: to remove from sight, to put in the proper place (S)

- Please put away your papers before you open the test booklet.
- John put the notepad away in his desk when he was finished with it.

to catch cold : to become sick with a cold of the nose or throat

- If you go out in this rain, you will surely catch cold.
- How did she ever catch cold in such warm weather?

to get over: to recover from an illness; to accept a loss or sorrow

- It took me over a month to get over my cold, but I'm finally well now.
- It seems that Mr. Mason will never get over the death of his wife.

to make up one's (my, his, your, etc.) mind: to reach a decision, to decide finally

- Sally is considering several colleges to attend, but she hasn't made up her mind yet.
- When are you going to make up your mind about your vacation plans?

to change one's (my, his, your, etc.) mind: to alter one's decision or opinion

- We have changed our minds and are going to Canada instead of California this summer.
- Matthew has changed his mind several times about buying a new car.

for the time being: temporarily (also: for now)

- For the time being, Janet is working as a waitress, but she really hopes to become an actress soon.
- We're living in an apartment for now, but soon we'll be looking for a house to buy.

for good: permanently, forever

- Ruth has returned to Canada for good. She won't ever live in the United States again.
- Are you finished with school for good, or will you continue your studies some day?

to call off : to cancel (S)

- The referee called off the soccer game because of the darkness.
- The president called the meeting off because she had to leave town.

to put off: to postpone (S)

- Many students put off doing their assignments until the last minute.
- Let's put the party off until next weekend, okay?

in a hurry: hurried, rushed (also: in a rush)

- Alex seems in a hurry; he must be late for his train again.
- She's always in a rush in the morning to get the kids to school.

under the weather: not feeling well, sick

- John stayed home from work because he was feeling under the weather.
- When you catch cold, you feel under the weather.

Chapter 4

to hang up: to place clothes on a hook or hanger (S), to replace the receiver on the phone at the end of a

conversation (S)

- Would you like me to hang up your coat for you in the closet?
- The operator told me to hang the phone up and call the number again.

to count on: to trust someone in time of need (also: to depend on)

- I can count on my parents to help me in an emergency.
- Don't depend on Frank to lend you any money; he doesn't have any.

to make friends (with): to become friendly with others

- Patricia is a shy girl and doesn't make friends easily.
- During the cruise Ronald made friends with almost everyone on the ship.

out of order: not in working condition

- The elevator was out of order, so we had to walk to the tenth floor of the building.
- We couldn't use the soft drink machine because it was out of order.

to get to: to be able to do something special; to arrive at a place, such as home, work, etc. For the second definition, do not use the preposition to with the words home or there.

- The children got to stay up late and watch a good movie for the family.
- I missed the bus and couldn't get to the office until ten o'clock.
- When are you planning to get home tonight?

few and far between: not frequent, unusual, rare

- The times that our children get to stay up late are few and far between.
- Airplane travel is very safe because accidents are few and far between.

to look over: to examine, to inspect closely (also: to go over, to read over, to check over) (S)

Go over is different from the other forms because it is not separable.

- I want to look my homework over again before I give it to the teacher.
- The politician went over his speech before the important presentation.
- You should never sign any legal paper without checking it over first.

to have (time) off: to have free time, not to have to work (also: to take time off (S))

The related form (S) to take time off is used when someone makes a decision to have free time, sometimes when others might not agree with the decision.

- Every morning the company workers have time off for a coffee break.
- Several workers took the afternoon off to go to a baseball game.

to go on: to happen; to resume, to continue (also: to keep on)

- Many people gathered near the accident to see what was going on.
- I didn't mean to interrupt you. Please go on.
- The speaker kept on talking even though most of the audience had left.

to put out: to extinguish, to cause to stop functioning (S)

To put out has the same meaning as to turn off (Lesson 1) for a light fixture.

- No smoking is allowed in here. Please put out your cigarette.
- The fire fighters worked hard to put the brush fire out.
- Please put out the light before you leave. Okay, I'll put it out.

all of a sudden : suddenly, without warning (also: all at once)

- All of a sudden Ed appeared at the door. We weren't expecting him to drop by.
- All at once Millie got up and left the house without any explanation.

to point out: to show, to indicate, to bring to one's attention (S)

- What important buildings did the tour guide point out to you?
- The teacher pointed out the mistakes in my composition.
- A friend pointed the famous actor out to me.

to be up: to expire, to be finished

This idiom is used only with the word time as the subject.

- "The time is up," the teacher said at the end of the test period.
- We have to leave the tennis court because our hour is up; some other people want to use it now.

to be over: to be finished, to end (also: to be through)

This idiom is used for activities and events.

- After the dance was over, we all went to a restaurant.
- The meeting was through ten minutes earlier than everyone expected.

on time: exactly at the correct time, punctually

- I thought that Margaret would arrive late, but she was right on time.
- Did you get to work on time this morning, or did rush hour traffic delay you?

in time to (do something): before the time necessary to do something

- We entered the theater just in time to see the beginning of the movie.
- The truck was not able to stop in time to prevent an accident.

to get better (worse, etc.) : to become better, worse, etc.

- Heather has been sick for a month, but now she is getting better.
- This medicine isn't helping me. Instead of getting better, I'm getting worse.

to get sick (well, tired, busy, wet, etc.) : to become sick, well, tired, busy, wet, etc.

This idiom consists of a combination of get and various adjectives.

- Gerald got sick last week and has been in bed since that time.
- Every afternoon I get very hungry, so I eat a snack.

Chapter 5

had better (do something): should, ought to, be advisable to

This idiom is most often used in contracted form (I'd better).

- I think you'd better speak to Mr. White right away about this matter.
- The doctor told the patient that he'd better go home and rest.

would rather (do something): prefer to (also: would just as soon (do something) as (do something else))

- Would you rather have the appointment this Friday or next Monday?
- I would just as soon go for a walk as watch TV right now.

to call it a day/night : to stop working for the rest of the day/ night

- Herb tried to repair his car engine all morning before he called it a day and went fishing.
- We've been working hard on this project all evening; let's call it a night.

to figure out: to solve, to find a solution (S); to understand (S)

- How long did it take you to figure out the answer to the math problem?
- I was never able to figure it out.

to think of: to have a (good or bad) opinion of

This idiom is often used in the negative or with adjectives such as much and highly.

- I don't think much of him as a baseball player; he's a slow runner and a poor hitter.
- James thinks highly of his new boss, who is a kind and helpful person.

to be about to do something: to be at the moment of doing something, to be ready

This idiom is often used with the adverb just.

- I was just about to leave when you telephoned.
- Oh, hi, John. We're just about to eat dinner.

to turn around: to move or face in the opposite direction (S); to completely change the condition of (S)

- The man turned his car around and drove back the way he came.
- The company has been very successful since the new business manager was able to turn it around.

to take turns (doing something): to alternate, to change people while doing something

- During the trip, Darlene and I took turns driving so that neither of us would tire out.
- I have to make sure that my two sons take turns playing the video game.

to pay attention (to): to look at and listen to someone while they are speaking, to concentrate

- Please pay attention to me while I'm speaking to you!
- You'll have to pay more attention in class if you want to get a good grade.

to brush up on something: to review something in order to refresh one's memory

- Before I traveled to Mexico, I brushed up on my Spanish; I haven't practiced it since high school.
- In order to take that advanced mathematics class, Sidney will have to brush up on his algebra.

over and over (again): repeatedly (also: time after time, time and again)

- The actress studied her lines in the movie over and over until she knew them well.
- Children have difficulty remembering rules, so it's often necessary to repeat them over and over again.
- Time and again I have to remind Bobby to put on his seatbelt in the car.

to wear out: to use something until it has no value or worth anymore, to make useless through wear (S)

- When I wear out these shoes, I'll have to buy some that last longer.
- What do you do with your clothes after you wear them out?

to throw away: to discard, to dispose of (S)

- I generally throw away my clothes when I wear them out.
- Don't throw the magazines away; I haven't read them yet.

to fall in love: to begin to love

This idiom is used with the expression at first sight to indicate a sudden interest in love.

- Ben and Sal fell in love in high school, and got married after graduation.
- Have you ever fallen in love at first sight?

to go out: to stop functioning; to stop burning; to leave home or work (also: to step out)

- The lights went out all over the city because of an electrical problem.
- The campers didn't have to put out the fire because it went out by itself.
- Gary isn't here right now; he went out to the store for a moment.
- I have to step out of the office briefly to pick up a newspaper.

out of the question : impossible, not feasible

- Stephen told Deborah that it was out of the question for her to borrow his new car.
- Don't expect me to do that again. It's absolutely out of the question.

to have to do with : to have some connection with or relationship to

- Ralph insisted that he had nothing to do with breaking the window.
- What does your suggestion have to do with our problem?

to wake up : to arise from sleep, to awaken (S)

Compare wake up and get up (Lesson 1) as used in the first example.

- Marge woke up this morning very early, but she did not get up until about ten o'clock.
- My alarm clock wakes me up at the same time every day.

to be in charge (of something): to manage, to have responsibility for

- Jane is in charge of the office while Mrs. Haig is on a business trip.
- Who is in charge of arrangements for the dance next week?

Chapter 6

as soon as: just after, when

- As soon as it started to snow, the children ran outside with big smiles on their faces.
- I'm busy now, but I'll meet you as soon as I've finished this work.

to get in touch with: to communicate with, to contact

- You can get in touch with him by calling the Burma Hotel.
- I've been trying all morning to get in touch with Miss Peters, but her phone is always busy.

to have a good time: to enjoy oneself

- We all had a good time at the class reunion last night.
- Did you have a good time at the park? I really enjoyed it

in no time: very quickly, rapidly

This idiom can be used with the idiom at all to add emphasis to the certainty of the statement.

- Mac said that he'd be ready to leave in no time.
- We thought that the meeting would take two hours, but it was over in no time at all.

to cut down on: to reduce, to lessen (also: to cut back on)

- In order to lose weight, you have to cut down on your intake of sugar.
- The doctor told me to cut back on exercise until my back injury heals.

quite a few : many

- Quite a few students were absent yesterday, in fact, more than half of them were not there.
- We did not expect many people to attend the affair, but quite a few of our friends actually came.

used to: formerly did, had the habit of

This idiom is used to indicate a past situation, action, or habit that does not exist in the present. The idiom is

always followed by a simple verb form.

- I used to live in New York, but I moved to California two years ago.
- Kim used to smoke cigarettes, but she stopped the habit last month.

to be used : to be accustomed to

This idiom refers to a situation, action, or habit that continues in the present. The idiom is always followed by a

noun or gerund phrase.

- He is used to this climate now, so the changes in temperature do not affect him much.
- I am used to studying in the library, so it's difficult for me to study at home now.

to get used (to something): to become used to, to become adjusted to

This idiom describes the process of change that allows some one to be used to a situation, action, or habit.

- It took Yoshiko a long time to get used to the food that her American host family served her.
- Mark can't seem to get used to wearing contact lenses, recently he's been wearing his glasses a lot.

back and forth : in a backward and forward motion

- The restless lion kept pacing back and forth along the front of its cage.
- Grandmother finds it relaxing to sit in her rocking chair and move back and forth.

to make sure: to be sure, to ascertain (also: to make certain (of))

- Please make sure that you turn off the radio before you go out.
- Could you make certain of the time? I don't want to miss that TV show.

now and then: occasionally, sometimes (also: now and again, at times, from time to time, off

and on, once in a while)

Both now and then and once in a while can be preceded by the adjective every. Another idiom with the same

meaning and form is every so often.

- I don't see him very often, but (every) now and then we arrange to have lunch together.
- Gary gets a cold (every) once in a while even though he takes good care of himself.
- Every so often my brother and I get together for a camping trip.
- I like to sleep late in the morning from time to time.

to get rid of: to eliminate, to remove; to discard, to throw away

- Jerry tried hard to get rid of the stain on his shirt, but he never succeeded.
- The stain was so bad that Jerry finally had to get rid of his shirt.

every other (one): every second (one), alternate (ones)

- I play tennis with my father every other Saturday, so I usually play twice a month.
- There were twenty problems in the exercise, but the teacher told us only to do every other one. Actually, doing ten problems was difficult enough.

to go with: to match, to compare well in color or design; to date, to accompany (also: to go out with)

For the first definition, adverbs such as well and poorly are often used.

- That striped shirt goes well with the gray pants, but the pants go poorly with those leather shoes.
- Eda went with Richard for about six months, but now she is going out with a new boyfriend.

first-rate: excellent, superb

- The food served in that four-star restaurant is truly first-rate.
- The Beverly Hills Hotel provides first-rate service to its guests.

to come from: to originate from

This idiom is commonly used in discussion of one's hometown, state, or country.

- What country in South America does she come from? She comes from Peru.
- I just learned that he really comes from Florida, not Texas.
- Where did this package come from? The mail carrier brought it.

to make good time: to travel a sufficient distance at a reasonable speed

The adjective excellent can also be used.

- On our last trip, it rained the entire time, so we didn't make good time.
- We made excellent time on our trip to Florida; it only took eighteen hours.

Chapter 7

to mix up: to stir or shake well (S); to confuse, to bewilder (S)

For the second definition, the passive forms to be mixed up or to get mixed up are often used.

- You should mix up the ingredients well before you put them in the pan.
- The teacher's poor explanation really mixed the students up.
- The students think it's their fault that they are mixed up so often.

to see about: to give attention or time to (also: to attend to, to see to)

- Who is going to see about getting us a larger room for the meeting?
- I'll see to arranging music for the wedding if you attend to the entertainment.

to make out: to do, to succeed, to progress

- Charlie didn't make out very well on his final examinations. He may have to repeat one or more classes.
- How did Rachelle make out on her acting audition in Hollywood yesterday?

by heart: by memorizing

- He knows many passages from Shakespeare by heart.
- Do you know all the idioms you have studied in this book by heart?

to keep out: not to enter, not allow to enter (S)

- There was a large sign outside the door that said, "Danger! Keep out!"
- I've told you to keep the dog out of the house.

to keep away (from): to stay at a distance (from) (S); to avoid use of (also: stay away from)

- Please be sure to keep the children away from the street!
- The signs on the burned-out house said, "Keep Away! Danger Zone."
- It's important for your health to stay away from dangerous drugs.

to find fault with : to criticize, to complain about something

- It is very easy to find fault with the work of others, but more difficult to accept criticism of one's own work.
- Mrs. Johnson is always finding fault with her children, but they really try to please their mother.

to be up to: to be responsible for deciding; to be doing as a regular activity

The second definition is most often used in a question as a form of greeting.

- I don't care whether we go to the reception or not. It is up to you.
- Hi, George. I haven't seen you in a while. What have you been up to?

ill at ease: uncomfortable or worried in a situation

- Speaking in front of a large audience makes many people feel ill at ease.
- My wife and I were ill at ease because our daughter was late coming home from a date.

to do over: to revise, to do again (S)

A noun or pronoun must separate the two parts of this idiom.

- You'd better do the letter over because it is written so poorly.
- Jose made so many mistakes in his homework that the teacher made him do it over.

to look into : to investigate, to examine carefully (also: to check into)

- The police are looking into the matter of the stolen computers.
- The congressional committee will check into the financial dealings of the government contractor.

to take hold of : to grasp, to grip with the hands

- You should take hold of the railing as you go down those steep stairs.
- The blind man took hold of my arm as I led him across the street.

to get through doing something, to get through with something : to finish, to complete

This idiom is followed either by the -ing form of a verb (a gerund) or by the preposition with.

- I didn't get through studying last night until almost eleven o'clock.

- At what time does your wife get through with work every day?

from now on: from this time into the future

- Mr. Lee's doctor told him to cut down on eating fatty foods from now on, or else he might suffer heart disease.

- I'm sorry that I dropped by at a bad time. From now on I'll call you first.

to keep track of: to keep or maintain a record of; to remember the location of

- Steve keeps track of all the long-distance telephone calls related to his business that he makes from his house.

- With seven small children, how do the Wilsons keep track of all of them?

to be carried away (by, with) : to be greatly affected by a strong feeling (S)

This idiom can also be used with get instead of be.

- Paula and Leanne were carried away by the sad movie that they saw together.

- James got carried away with anger when his roommate crashed his new car into a telephone pole.

up to date: modern, current, timely

Hyphens (-) separate the parts of this idiom when it precedes a noun form, as in the third example The verb to

update derives from this idiom.

- The president insisted that the company bring its aging equipment up to date.

- This catalog is not up to date. It was published several years ago.

- The news program gave an up-to-date account of the nuclear accident. The newscaster said that he would

update the news report every half hour.

out of date: not modern, not current, not timely; no longer available in published form

Again, hyphens separate the parts of this idiom when it precedes a noun form as in the second example. The

passive verb to be outdated derives from this idiom.

- Many people buy new cars when their old cars become out of date.

- I don't know why Gene likes to wear out-of-date clothing. His clothes are so outdated that even his girlfriend

hesitates to be seen with him.

- This book can't be ordered any more because it is out of date.

Chapter 8

to blow up: to inflate, to fill with air (S); to explode, to destroy (or be destroyed) by explosion (S)

- Daddy, could you please blow up this balloon for me?

- When the airplane crashed into the ground, it blew up immediately.

- The military had to blow the missile up in midair when it started to go the wrong way.

to catch fire: to begin to burn

- Don't stand too close to the gas stove. Your clothes may catch fire.
- No one seems to know how the old building caught fire.

to burn down: to burn slowly, but completely (usually said of candles); to destroy completely by fire (S)

- There was a large amount of wax on the table where the candles had burned down.
- The fire spread so quickly that the firefighters could not prevent the whole block of buildings from burning down.

to burn up: to destroy completely by fire (S); to make angry or very annoyed (S) (also - to tick off)

To burn up and to burn down (previous idiom) share the same definition but also have different definitions.

- She didn't want anyone to see the letter, so she burned it up and threw the ashes away.
- It really burns me up that he borrowed my car without asking me first.
- Mike got ticked off that his friends never offered to help him move to his new apartment. He had to do everything himself.

to burn out: to stop functioning because of overuse; to make tired from too much work (S)

- This light bulb has burned out. Could you get another one?
- Studying all day for my final exams has really burned me out.

to make good: to succeed

- He is a hard worker, and I'm sure that he will make good in that new job.
- Alma has always made good in everything that she has done.

stands to reason : to be clear and logical

This idiom is almost always used with the pronoun subject it and is followed by a that clause.

- It stands to reason that a person without experience cannot do the work as well as an experienced one.
- It stands to reason that he isn't going to pass the course if he never studies.

to break out : to become widespread suddenly

- An epidemic of measles broke out in Chicago this past week.
- If a nuclear war ever breaks out, it is unlikely that many people will survive.
- The news says that a large fire has broken out in a huge chemical plant.

as for: regarding, concerning (also: as to)

- As for the money, we will simply have to borrow some more from the bank.
- There is no doubt as to her intelligence, she's the smartest one in the class.

to feel sorry for: to pity, to feel compassion for (also: to take pity on)

- Don't you feel sorry for someone who has to work the night shift?
- I helped drive Pierre around when he broke his foot because I took pity on him

to break down: to stop functioning

Compare this idiom with to burn out in Lesson 12. To burn out means that electrical equipment becomes hot

from overuse and stops functioning. To break down means that something stops functioning mechanically, whether from overuse or not.

- I just bought my new car yesterday and already it has broken down.
- The elevator broke down, so we walked all the way up to the top floor.

to turn out: to become or result; to appear, to attend (also: to come out)

The noun form turnout derives from the second definition of the idiom.

- Most parents wonder how their children will turn out as adults.
- Hundreds of people came out for the demonstration against new taxes.
- What was the turnout for the public hearing on the education reforms?

Chapter 9

once in a blue moon: rarely, infrequently

- Snow falls on the city of San Diego, California, once in a blue moon.
- Once in a blue moon my wife and I eat at a very expensive restaurant.

to give up: to stop trying; to stop a bad habit (S); to surrender (S)

- I'm sure that you can accomplish this task. Don't give up yet!
- If you give up smoking now, you can certainly live a longer life.
- The soldiers gave themselves up in the face of stronger enemy forces.

to cross out : to cancel by marking with a horizontal line (S)

- The teacher crossed out several incorrect words in Tanya's composition.
- I crossed the last line out of my letter because it had the wrong tone to it.

to take for granted : not to appreciate fully (S); to assume to be true without giving much thought (S)

A noun or pronoun often follows the verb take.

- John took his wife for granted until once when he was very sick and needed her constant attention for a week.
- He spoke English so well that I took it for granted he was an American.
- He took for granted that I wasn't American because I spoke English so poorly!

to take something into account: to consider a fact while evaluating a situation (S)

Again, a noun or pronoun often follows the verb take.

- The judge took the prisoner's young age into account before sentencing him to three months in jail.

- Educators should take into account the cultural backgrounds of students when planning a school curriculum.

to make clear: to clarify, to explain (S)

- Please make clear that he should never act so impolitely again.
- The supervisor made it clear to the workers that they had to increase their productivity.

clear-cut: clearly stated, definite, apparent

- The president's message was clear-cut: the company had to reduce personnel immediately.
- Professor Larsen is well known for his interesting and clear-cut presentations.

to have on : to be wearing (S)

- How do you like the hat which Grace has on today?
- When Sally came into the room, I had nothing on except my shorts.

to come to: to regain consciousness; to equal, to amount to

- At first they thought that the man was dead, but soon he came to.
- The bill for groceries at the supermarket came to fifty dollars.

to call for: to require; to request, to urge

- This cake recipe calls for some baking soda, but we don't have any.
- The members of Congress called for new laws to regulate the banking industry.

Chapter 10

to eat in/to eat out: to eat at home/to eat in a restaurant

I feel too tired to go out for dinner. Let's eat in again tonight.

When you eat out, what restaurant do you generally go to?

cut and dried: predictable, known beforehand; boring

The results of the national election were rather cut and dried; the Republicans won easily.

A job on a factory assembly line is certainly cut and dried.

to look after: to watch, to supervise, to protect (also: to take care of, to keep an eye on)

Grandma will look after the baby while we go to the lecture.

Who is going to take care of your house plants while you are away?

I'd appreciate it if you'd keep an eye on my car while I'm in the store.

to feel like: to have the desire to, to want to consider

This idiom is usually followed by a gerund (the -ing form of a verb used as a noun).

I don't feel like studying tonight. Let's go to a basketball game.

I feel like taking a long walk. Would you like to go with me?

once and for all: finally, absolutely

My daughter told her boyfriend once and for all that she wouldn't date him anymore.
Once and for all, John has quit smoking cigarettes.

to hear from: to receive news or information from

To hear from is used for receiving a letter, telephone call, etc., from a person or organization.

I don't hear from my brother very often since he moved to Chicago.

Have you heard from the company about that new job?

to hear of: to know about, to be familiar with; to consider (The second definition is always used in the negative.)

When I asked for directions to Mill Street, the police officer said that she had never heard of it.

Byron strongly disagreed with my request by saying, "I won't hear of it!"

to make fun of: to laugh at, to joke about

They are making fun of Carlo's new hair style. Don't you think that it's really strange?

Don't make fun of Jose's English. He's doing the best he can.

to come true: to become reality, to prove to be correct

The weatherman's forecast for today's weather certainly came true.

Everything that the economists predicted about the increased cost of living has come true.

as a matter of fact: really, actually (also: in fact)

Hans thinks he knows English well but, as a matter of fact, he speaks very poorly.

I didn't say that. In fact I said quite the opposite.

to have one's way: to arrange matters the way one wants (especially when someone else doesn't want the

same way) (also: to get one's way)

My brother always wants to have his way, but this time our parents said that we could do what I wanted.

If Sheila doesn't get her way, she becomes very angry.

to look forward to: to expect or anticipate with pleasure

This idiom can be followed by a regular noun or a gerund.

We're greatly looking forward to our vacation in Mexico.

Margaret never looks forward to going to work.

inside out: with the inside facing the outside

Some one should tell little Bobby that his shirt is inside out.

The high winds ruined the umbrella by blowing it inside out.

upside down: with the upper side turned toward the lower side

The accident caused one car to turn upside down, its wheels spinning in the air.
One of the students was only pretending to read her textbook; the teacher could see that the book was actually upside down.

Chapter 11

to fill in: to write answers in (S); to inform, to tell (S)

For the second definition, the idiom can be followed by the preposition on and the information that someone is told.

You should be careful to fill in the blanks on the registration form correctly.

Barry was absent from the meeting, so I'd better fill him in.

Has anyone filled the boss in on the latest public relations disaster?

to fill out: to complete a form (S)

This idiom is very similar to the first definition above. To fill in refers to completing various parts of a form,

while to fill out refers to completing a form as one whole item.

Every prospective employee must fill out an application by giving name, address, previous jobs, etc.

The teenager had some trouble filling the forms out by himself, so his mother helped him.

to take advantage of: to use well, to profit from; to use another person's weaknesses to gain what one wants

I took advantage of my neighbor's superior skill at tennis to improve my own ability at the game.

Teddy is such a small, weak child that his friends take advantage of him all the time.

They take advantage

of him by demanding money and making him do things for them.

no matter: regardless of

This idiom is a shortened form of it doesn't matter. It is followed by a question word such as how, where, when,

who, etc.

No matter how much money he spends on his clothes, he never looks well dressed.

No matter where that escaped prisoner tries to hide, the police will find him sooner or later.

to take up: to begin to do or study, to undertake (S); to occupy space, time, or energy (S)

After today's exam, the class will be ready to take up the last chapter in the book.

The piano takes up too much space in our living room. However, it would take too much time up to move it

right now so we'd better wait until later.

to take up with: to consult someone about an important matter (S)

The important matter follows the verb take, while the person consulted follows with.
Can I take the problem up with you right now? It's quite urgent.
I can't help you with this matter. You'll have to take it up with the manager.

to take after: to resemble a parent or close relative (for physical appearance only, also: to look like)

Which of your parents do you take after the most?

Sam looks like his father, but he takes after his mother in personality.

in the long run: eventually, after a long period of time

This idiom is similar in meaning to sooner or later (Lesson 1). The difference is that in the long run refers to a more extended period of time.

In the long run, the synthetic weave in this carpet will wear better than the woolen one.

You won't have to

replace it so soon.

If you work hard at your marriage, you'll find out that, in the long run, your spouse can be your best friend in life.

Chapter 12

be in touch (with): having contact

James will be in touch with us soon to relay the details of the plan.

I certainly enjoyed seeing you again after all these years. Let's be sure to keep in touch.

out of touch with: not having contact; not having knowledge of

Marge and I had been out of touch for years, but then suddenly she called me up the other day.

Larry has been so busy that he seems out of touch with world events.

on one's toes: alert, cautious

This idiom is usually used with the verbs stay and keep.

It's important for all the players on a soccer team to stay on their toes.

We'd better keep on our toes while we're walking along the dark portions of this street.

to get along: to make progress; to manage to live in a certain state of health

Juan is getting along very well in his English studies.

How is Mr Richards getting along after his long illness?

hard of hearing: partially deaf, not able to hear well

You'll have to speak a little louder. Mrs Evans is hard of hearing.

Please don't shout. I'm not hard of hearing.

Listening to loud music too much can make you hard of hearing.

to see eye to eye; on something with somebody: to agree, to concur

I'm glad that we see eye to eye on the matter of the conference location.
A husband and wife don't always see eye to eye with each other, but a good marriage can survive small disagreements.

to have in mind: to be considering, to be thinking (S)
I don't want to see a movie now. I have in mind going to the park.
It's up to you what we eat tonight. Do you have anything in mind?

to keep in mind: to remember, not to forget (S) (also: to bear in mind)
Please keep in mind that you promised to call Stan around noon.
I didn't know that Paula doesn't like vegetables. We should bear that in mind next time we invite her for dinner.

for once: this one time, for only one time
For once I was able to win a game of golf against Steve, who is a much better player than I am.
Dad, for once would you please let me drive the new car?

to go off: to explode, to sound as an alarm; to leave suddenly without explanation
The accident happened when a box of firecrackers went off accidentally.
For what time did you set the alarm clock to go off tomorrow morning?
Vince went off without saying good-bye to anybody, I hope he wasn't angry.

to grow out of: to outgrow, to become too old for, to be a result of
He still bites his nails now and then, but soon he'll grow out of the habit.
The need for the salary committee grew out of worker dissatisfaction with the pay scale.

to make the best of: to do the best that one can in a poor situation
If we can't find a larger apartment soon, we'll just have to make the best of it right here.
Even though the Martinez family is having financial problems, they make the best of everything by enjoying the simple pleasures of life.

to cut off: to shorten by cutting the ends (S); to disconnect or stop suddenly (S)
The rope was two feet longer than we needed, so we cut off the extra length..
The operator cut our long-distance phone conversation off after two minutes.

to cut out: to remove by cutting (S); to stop doing something (S) (for the second definition, also: to knock it off)
For the second definition, the idiom is usually separated by the pronoun it.
The child likes to cut out pictures from the newspaper and to paste them in a notebook.
He kept bothering her, so finally she told him to cut it out. However, he wouldn't knock it off until her larger brother appeared.

to blow out: to explode, to go flat (for tires); to extinguish by blowing (S)

On our trip to Colorado, one of the car tires blew out when it hit a large hole in the road.
Little Joey wasn't able to blow all the candles out, so his big sister helped him.

to become of: to happen to (a missing object or person)

This idiom is always used in a clause beginning with what.

What has become of my pencil? I had it ten minutes ago, but now I can't find it.

I wondered what became of you. I looked around the shopping center for two hours, but I couldn't find you at all.

to shut up: to close for a period of time (S); to be quiet, to stop talking

The second definition of this idiom is impolite in formal situations.

During the hurricane, all the store owners shut their shops up.

Bob's sister told him to shut up and not say anything more about it.

The student got into big trouble for telling his teacher to shut up.

have got: to have, to possess

Curtis has got a bad cold. He's sneezing and coughing a lot.

How much money have you got with you right now?

Chapter 13

have got to: must (also: have to)

She has got to go to Chicago today to sign the contract papers.

I have to be back home by two o'clock or my wife will feel ill at ease.

to keep up with: to maintain the same speed or rate as

Frieda works so fast that no one in the office can keep up with her.

You'll have to walk more slowly. I can't keep up with you.

on the other hand: however, in contrast

Democracies provide people many freedoms and privileges. On the other hand, democracies suffer many

serious problems such as crime and unemployment.

My sister takes after my father in appearance. On the other hand, I take after my mother.

to turn down: to reduce in brightness or volume (S); to reject, to refuse (S)

Please turn down the radio for me. It's too loud while I'm studying.

Laverne wanted to join the military but the recruiting officer turned her application down because Laverne is

hard of hearing in one ear.

fifty-fifty: divided into two equal parts

Let's go fifty-fifty on the cost of a new rug for our apartment.

The political candidate has a fifty-fifty chance of winning the election.

to break in: gradually to prepare something for use that is new and stiff (S); to interrupt (for the second

definition, also: to cut in)

It is best to break a new car in by driving it slowly for the first few hundred miles.

While Carrie and I were talking Bill broke in to tell me about a telephone call.

Peter, it's very impolite to cut in like that while others are speaking.

a lost cause: a hopeless case, a person or situation having no hope of positive change

It seems that Charles will never listen to our advice. I suppose it's a lost cause.

The police searched for the missing girl for two weeks, but finally gave it up as a lost cause.

Children who have committed several crimes as teenagers and show no sorrow about their actions are

generally lost causes.

above all: mainly, especially

Above all, don't mention the matter to Gerard; he's the last person we should tell.

to do without: survive or exist without something (also: to go without)

With prices so high now, I'll have to do without a new suit this year.

As a traveling salesperson, Monica can't do without a car.

It's a shame that so many poor people in the world have to go without basic necessities of life such as

nutritious food and suitable shelter.

according to: in the order of; on the authority of

The students on the football team were ranked according to height, from shortest to tallest.

According to my dictionary, you are using that word in your essay incorrectly.

to be bound to do something: to be certain to do something, to be sure to do something

This idiom is used when the occurrence of an event seems inevitable or unavoidable.

We are bound to be late if you don't hurry up.

With the economy improving now, their business is bound to make more money this year.

for sure: without doubt (also: for certain)

In the dark, I couldn't tell for sure whether it was Polly or Sarah who drove by.

I know for certain that Gene will move back to Washington next month.

to take for: to perceive or understand as (S)

This idiom is usually used when someone is mistakenly perceived. A noun or pronoun must separate the idiom.

Because of his strong, muscular body, I took him for a professional athlete. As it turns out, he doesn't play

any professional sports.

What do you take me for - a fool? I don't believe what you're saying at all.

Chapter 14

to try out: to test, to use during a trial period (S)

You can try out the new car before you decide to buy it.

I can let you try the computer out for a few days before you make a decision.

to tear down: to destroy by making flat, to demolish (S)

The construction company had to tear down the old hotel in order to build a new office building.

The owners had to tear the house down after it burned down in a fire.

to tear up: to rip into small pieces (S)

Deidre tore up the letter angrily and threw all the pieces into the trash can.

He told the lawyer to tear the old contract up and then to prepare a new one.

go over: to be appreciated or accepted

This idiom is usually followed by the adverb well. (In Lesson 6 this idiom has the meaning to review, as in the

second sentence of the second example below.)

The teacher's organized lessons always go over well with her students.

The comedian's jokes weren't going over well, the audience wasn't laughing much at all. I think that the

comedian should go over his material more carefully before each act.

to run out of: to exhaust the supply of, not to have more of

We ran out of gas right in the middle of the main street in town.

It's dangerous to run out of water if you are in an isolated area.

at heart: basically, fundamentally

This idiom is used to describe the true character of a person.

James sometimes seems quite unfriendly but at heart he's a good person.

The Fares often don't see eye to eye, but at heart they both love each other very much.

be about to do smth: ready to, just going to

We were about to leave the house when the phone rang.

I'm sorry that I broke in. What were you about to say?

to bite off: to accept as a responsibility or task

This idiom is often used when one accepts more responsibility than one can handle alone.
It is usually used in the form to bite off more than one can chew.
When I accepted the position of chairman, I didn't realize how much I was biting off.
When James registered for 18 units in his last semester at college, he bit off more than he could chew.

to tell apart: to distinguish between (also: to pick apart, to tell from) (S)
The two brothers look so much alike that few people can tell them apart.
That copy machine is so good that I can't pick the photocopy and the original apart.
Most new cars are very similar in appearance. It's almost impossible to tell one from another.

all in all: considering everything
There were a few problems, but all in all it was a well-organized seminar.
Leonard got a low grade in one subject, but all in all he's a good student.

to pass out: to distribute (also: to hand out) (S); to lose consciousness
The verbal idiom to hand out can be made into the noun handout to refer to items that are distributed in a class or meeting.

Please help me pass out these test papers; there must be a hundred of them.
Alright, students, here are the class handouts for this week.
The weather was so hot in the soccer stadium that some of the fans in the stands passed out.

to go around: to be sufficient or adequate for everyone present, to circulate, to move from place to place

We thought that we had bought enough food and drink for the party, but actually there wasn't enough to go around.
There's a bad strain of influenza going around right now. Have you gotten your flu shots yet?
Mike has been going around telling people that he was accepted to Harvard University. Do you believe him?

to be in (the/one's) way: to block or obstruct; not to be helpful, to cause inconvenience (for both, also: to get in the/one's way)

Jocelyn couldn't drive through the busy intersection because a big truck was in the way.
Our small child tried to help us paint the house, but actually he just got in our way.

to put on: to gain (pounds or weight) (S); to present, to perform (S)
Bob has put on a lot of weight recently. He must have put at least fifteen pounds on.
The Youth Actor's Guild put on a wonderful version of Romeo and Juliet at the Globe Theater.

to put up: to construct, to erect (S); to lift, to raise upwards (S)

The construction company is tearing down that old office building in order to put up a new one.

Please put your hand up if you have never studied English grammar before.

to put up with: to tolerate to accept unwillingly

The employee was fired because his boss could not put up with his mistakes any longer.

While I'm studying, I can't put up with any noise or other distractions.

Chapter 15

in vain: useless, without the desired result

All the doctors' efforts to save the injured woman were in vain. She was declared dead three hours after

being admitted to the hospital.

We tried in vain to reach you last night. Is your phone out of order?

day in and day out: continuously, constantly (also: day after day; for longer periods of time, year in and year out and year after year)

During the month of April, it rained day in and day out.

Day after day I waited for a letter from him, but one never came.

Year in and year out, the weather in San Diego is the best in the nation.

to catch up with: to work with the purpose of fulfilling a requirement or being equal to others

The idiom is often followed by the preposition with and a noun phrase. It is similar in meaning to to keep up with

from Lesson 17.

The student was absent from class so long that it took her a long time to catch up.

If you are not equal to others, first you have to catch up with them before you can keep up with them.

to hold still: not to move (S)

Please hold still while I adjust your tie.

If you don't hold that camera still, you'll get a blurred picture.

to know by sight: to recognize (S)

This idiom is used when the person has been seen previously but is not known personally.

The person must be

used to separate the idiom.

I have never met our new neighbors; I simply know them by sight.

The woman said that she would know the thief by sight if she ever saw him again.

to be the matter: to be unsatisfactory, to be improper, to be wrong

In a question, this idiom is used with what or something. In an answer, something or nothing is usually used.

A: What is the matter, Betty? You look very upset.

B: Yes, something is the matter. I've lost my purse!

A: Is something the matter, Charles? You don't look well.

B: No, nothing is the matter. I'm just a little under the weather.

to bring up: to rear, to raise from childhood (S); to mention, to raise an issue, to introduce a topic (S)

Parents should bring up their children to be responsible members of society.

Sarah wanted to bring the scheduling problem up at the club meeting, but finally she decided against doing so.

One of the students brought up an interesting point related to the subject in our textbook.

to get lost: to become lost; to go away in order not to bother

The second definition provides a very informal, even rude, meaning that should be used only with close friends.

It is sometimes used in a joking manner.

While driving in Boston, we got lost and drove many miles in the wrong direction.

Todd kept bothering me while I was studying, so I told him to get lost.

Lisa joked that she wanted her sister to get lost forever.

to hold up: to delay, to make late (S); to remain high in quality

A big accident held up traffic on the highway for several hours.

Deidre is amazed at how well her car has held up over the years.

to run away: to leave without permission; to escape

The young couple ran away and got married because their parents wouldn't permit it.

That cat is just like a criminal - it runs away from anyone who tries to come near!

to rule out: to refuse to consider, to prohibit (S)

Ann ruled out applying to college in Texas because she would rather go to school in Canada.

I'd like to watch a good movie on TV tonight, but a ton of homework rules that out.

by far: by a great margin, clearly

Jacquie is by far the most intelligent student in our class.

This is by far the hottest, most humid summer we've had in years.

to see off: to say good-bye upon departure by train, airplane, bus, etc. (also: to send off) (S)

A noun or pronoun must divide the idiom.

We are going to the airport to see Peter off on his trip to Europe.

When I left for Cincinnati on a business trip, no one came to the train station to send me off.

to see out: to accompany a person out of a house, building, etc. (S)

A noun or pronoun must again divide the idiom.

The Johnsons were certain to see their guests off as each one left the party.

Would you please see me out to the car? It's very dark outside.

no wonder: it's no surprise that, not surprisingly

This idiom derives from reducing it is no wonder that...

No wonder the portable heater doesn't work. It's not plugged into the electrical outlet!

to go up: to increase (also: to drive up); to be constructed, to be erected

The second definition is the same as the one for to put up in Lesson 19, except that to go

up is not used with a

noun object.

Economists are predicting that consumer prices are going up. Inflation always has a tendency to drive up

the cost of products.

A new office is going up in the downtown area. A major construction company is putting it up.

Chapter16

to go up to: to approach (also: to come up to, to walk up to, to run up to, to drive up to, etc.)

The related forms have the same meaning, but the type of movement is different.

After the lecture, several people in the audience went up to the speaker to congratulate her.

The little girl came up to me and shook my hand as if she had known me for years.

Bill's friend didn't want to admit that they had gotten lost, but finally he agreed to drive up to a gas station

and inquire about the correct route.

to hand in: to submit or deliver something that is due (S)

Every student has to hand in an original composition each week of the semester.

All the salespeople hand their weekly reports in on Friday.

in case: in order to be prepared if

When the idiom occurs at the end of the sentence (the second example), then the meaning is in order to be

prepared if something happens. The "something" might be an accident, a delay, etc.

You'd better close the windows in case it rains.???We should be sure to leave for the airport early, just in case.

Cynthia, take one of your books in case you have some time to read on our trip.

to take apart: to disassemble, to separate the parts of something (S)

A noun or pronoun usually divides this idiom.

It is much easier to take a watch apart than it is to assemble it.

The engine had a serious problem, so the mechanic had to take it apart completely in order to fix it.

to put together: to assemble (S)

A noun or pronoun usually divides this idiom. The preposition back is used when something has been

disassembled and then is being reassembled, as in the second example.

Todd followed the directions on the box but he couldn't manage to put the bicycle together properly.

After the teenager took the broken video game apart and fixed it, he was unable to put it back together

again.

to be better off: to be in a more favorable condition or situation

The opposite of this idiom is to be worse off.

Jim would be better off staying at home because of his cold.

You'd be much better off working in an office than in a factory.

The economies of some nations are worse off than they were several decades ago.

to be well-off: to have enough money to enjoy a comfortable life, to be rich (also: to be well-to-do)

They live in the best section of town in a large home; they are very well-off.

By the time I reach the age of fifty-five, I hope to be well-to-do and to travel frequently.

to take by surprise: to surprise, to amaze, to astonish (S)

A noun or pronoun usually divides this idiom.

The offer of a high-paying position with another company took me by surprise.

The president's announcement that the university was in financial trouble didn't take anyone by surprise.

to keep in touch with: to maintain contact with (also: to stay in touch with)

This idiom should be compared with to get in touch with in Lesson 9.

You can telephone me every few days, and in that way we can keep in touch with each other.

He promised to stay in touch with us while he was abroad. However, we were very disappointed that he

never did get in touch with us.

to stop by: to visit or stop somewhere briefly in order to do something

James had to stop by the registrar's office to submit a transcript request form.

Let's stop by the supermarket and pick up a few grocery items.

to drop (someone) a line: to write a note to someone (S)

As soon as I get to Florida, I'll drop you a line and tell you about my new job.

If you have time, drop me a line now and then while you're traveling.

to come across: to meet or find unexpectedly (also: to run across); to be perceived or judged as (also: to come off)

While Cheryl was cleaning the attic, she came across some very old coins. It took her by surprise to run across something like that.

Jeff's boss comes across as a tough, unpleasant person, but actually Jeff says that he is a good employer.

Some people come off quite differently than they really are.

Chapter 17

to stand for: to represent, to signify; to tolerate

The second definition is usually used in a negative sense. The meaning is the same as to put up with in Lesson 19.

On the American flag, each star stands for one of the fifty states, and each stripe stands for one of the original thirteen colonies of the 1800s.

The citizens wouldn't stand for the increase in crime in their city, so they hired more police officers and built another jail.

to stand a chance: to have the possibility of accomplishing something

This idiom is often used with an adjective such as good or excellent. It also occurs in the negative, sometimes with the adjective much.

The New York baseball team stands a good chance of winning the World Series this year. Because John doesn't have any previous work experience, he doesn't stand a chance of getting that job.

The woman injured in the serious train accident doesn't stand much chance of surviving.

to take pains: to work carefully and conscientiously

She takes pains to do everything well; she's our best employee.

He took great pains with his last assignment because he needed to get an excellent grade to pass the class.

to look on: to watch as a spectator, to observe

Hundreds of people were looking on as the police and firefighters rescued the passengers in the wrecked train.

I stayed with my son at his first soccer practice and looked on as the coach worked with the boys.

to look up to: to admire, to respect greatly

Children will most certainly look up to their parents if the children are brought up well.

Everyone looks up to the director of our department because he is a kind and generous person.

to look down on: to feel superior to, to think of someone as less important
People who are in positions of power should be careful not to look down on those who work for them.

Why does Alma look down on Mario; just because his family is so poor?

to take off: to leave the ground (for airplanes); to leave, often in a hurry
The noun form takeoff derives from this idiom.
The plane took off over an hour late. The passengers had to buckle their seatbelts during takeoff.

Do you have to take off already? You just arrived an hour ago!

to pull off: to succeed in doing something difficult (S); to exit to the side of a highway
The group of investors pulled off a big deal by buying half the stock in that company. I wonder how they pulled it off before the company could prevent it.
The motorist pulled off when the police officer turned on the red lights and the siren.

to keep time: to operate accurately (for watches and clocks)
This idiom is usually used with adjectives such as good and perfect.
Although this is a cheap watch, it keeps good time.
The old clock keeps perfect time; it's never fast or slow.

to make do with: to manage, to cope
This idiom is used when a person must accept a substitute that is not the most suitable.
Pearl doesn't have a clean blouse so she has to make do with the one she wore yesterday.
During difficult economic times, many people have to make do with less.

to give birth to: to bear a human being or animal
Jane's mother has just given birth to twin girls.
The zoo's Siberian tiger just gave birth to a baby cub

close call: a situation involving a narrow escape from danger (also: close shave)
Bob, that car nearly hit us! What a close call.
We had a close call when a small fire in our kitchen almost spread to the rest of the house.

to get on one's nerves: to annoy or disturb (also: to bug)
Laura loves to talk to anyone. Sometimes her chatter really gets on my nerves.
Jack asked his neighbor to turn down the stereo because it was bugging him and he couldn't concentrate.

to put down: to suppress, to quell (S); to criticize unfairly (S)

The police arrived just in time to put down the disturbance before it got very serious.
Fred tries his best at playing tennis. You shouldn't put him down like that.

to go for: to be sold at a certain price; to seek or strive for
This dress probably goes for about \$50, don't you think?
Peter was going for first place in the swim meet, but he wasn't able to do better than third place.

to go in for: to have as an interest, such as a sport or hobby (also: to go for, to be into, to get into)

Hal goes in for tennis while his wife goes for painting and sculpture.

What sports are you into? I don't have any time to get into sports.

to stay up: to remain awake, not to go to bed

I want to stay up tonight and watch a late movie on TV.

He stays up every night until after one o'clock, preparing his homework.

to stay in: to remain at home, not to go out

An idiom with the opposite meaning is to stay out.

On a rainy day, I like to stay in and read.

Young people are able to stay out late at night and get very little sleep.

to take over: to assume control or responsibility for (S); to do or perform again (S)

The meaning of the second definition is almost the same as do over in Lesson 11. Also for the second

definition, a noun or pronoun must divide the idiom.

That large investment company specializes in taking over smaller businesses that are in financial trouble.

Most students didn't do well on the important test, so the instructor let them take it over.

Little Mikey didn't have much chance to hit the baseball during practice, so the coach let him take his turn

over.

to show up: to appear, to arrive; to be found or located (also for the second definition: to turn up)

It really gets on my nerves that Ursula shows up late for every meeting.

Willie hopes that the watch he lost last Sunday shows up soon.

We've looked everywhere for that book, but it hasn't turned up yet.

to clean out: to empty, to tidy by removing (S); to steal, to rob (S); to buy or purchase all of something (S)

It's time for you to clean out your closet so that you can store more things in there.

A burglar entered my apartment while I was gone and cleaned me out. He took over \$200 in cash and

jewelry.

Thousands of shoppers cleaned out the store that had gone bankrupt and was selling all its remaining

to knock out: to make unconscious (S); to impress or attract greatly (S)

This idiom can be made into the noun form knockout for both definitions.

The prizefighter knocked out his opponent with one punch in the first five seconds of the first round. It was

the fastest knockout in boxing history.

Linda's beautiful appearance and slender figure really knock me out. Isn't she a real knockout tonight?

to knock oneself out: to work very hard (sometimes too hard) to do something

A reflexive pronoun must divide the idiom.

She really knocked herself out trying to pass that difficult class.

Don't knock yourself out during practice. Save your strength for the competition later.

to carry out: to accomplish, to execute (S) (also: to go through with)

It's easy to write down a plan for losing weight, but much harder to carry it out.

Charles promised to go through with his plan to enroll in graduate school and get an advanced degree.

to run into: to meet someone unexpectedly; to crash or collide into (also: to bump into)

It was a shock to run into an old friend from high school recently.

The drunk driver was slightly injured when he ran into a telephone pole.

to set out: to start traveling toward a place (also: to set off, to head out); to arrange or display neatly (also:

to lay out) (S)

We set out for the top of the mountain at dawn. Unfortunately, as we set off, it started to snow heavily, so

we decided to head out again later.

The children tried to set out the dishes on the table, but their dad had to help to lay the dishes out properly.

to set out to do something: to intend to, to act purposefully to

We set out to paint the house in one day, but quickly realized that it would be impossible to do so.

Janet set out to compete for the large scholarship grant by writing a good essay.

to draw up: to create by drawing, such as a map (S); to prepare documents or legal papers (S)

Max asked me to draw up a map to the party so that he wouldn't get lost.

Our lawyer agreed to draw the contract up as soon as possible.

give and take: compromise, cooperation between people

Give and take is an important element of a successful marriage.

Most business negotiations involve give and take between the parties involved.

to drop out of: to stop attending; to withdraw from

This idiom can be made into the noun form dropout.

Some students drop out of secondary school early in order to get jobs. However, such dropouts often regret their decision later in life.

Two more baseball teams have dropped out of the youth league due to a lack of players.

to believe in: to accept as true, have faith in

Some people believe in being honest in all human affairs, while others accept the need to lie in order to get one's way.

Throughout the history of man, some cultures have believed in one god while others have believed in the existence of many gods.

to cheer up: to make happier, to feel less sad (S)

We all tried to cheer up the little boy when he started to cry.

After the death of Deanne's husband, it was difficult to cheer her up at all.

to make sense: to be sensible or reasonable

It makes sense to wait until a sunny day to visit the park together.

That Jimmy ran away from home suddenly doesn't make sense to any of us.

to burst out: to depart quickly (also: to storm out); to act suddenly

For the second definition, this idiom is usually followed by a gerund form such as laughing, crying, singing, etc.

Faye and Debbie were so angry at each other that one of them burst out the front door of the house and the

other stormed out the back door.

It was so funny to see a little baby in the audience burst out crying when the choir group burst out singing at the start of the recital.

to get away: to get free, to escape

We always try to get away from the noise and heat of the city for a month or two each summer.

No one knows how the suspected criminal got away from the police.

to get away with: to avoid punishment for

Jonathan tries to get away with coming late to work almost every day; someday he'll suffer the consequences.

Terence can't continue to put his friends down like that and expect to get away with it forever.

to serve (someone) right: to receive one's just punishment (S)

This idiom is usually used at the beginning of a sentence after the subject it. Compare the following examples

with those in the previous idiom above.

It serves Jonathan right to be fired from his job.

It serves Terence right that none of his friends are willing to help him move to a new apartment.

to keep up: to prevent from sleeping (S); to continue maintaining (speed, level of work, condition, etc.) (S)

Could you please turn down the TV volume? You're keeping up the children.

If we can keep up this speed, we should arrive there in about two hours.

James is so proud of his daughter for getting mostly A's in school. He's certain that she can keep up the

good work.

The Federal Reserve Bank hopes to keep the value of the dollar up at least through the rest of the year.

to keep up with: to have current knowledge of; to understand as an explanation

This idiom should be compared to the meaning of to keep up with in

Evan keeps up with world affairs by reading a news magazine each week.

I understand a lot of the Spanish language, but I can't keep up with the fast conversation in this Mexican film.

to stand out: to be easily visible or noticeable (also: to stick out)

This idiom is used for someone or something that is different from all others.

Her bright red hair makes her stand out from others in the group.

Brandon Styles is a tall, distinguished gentleman who sticks out in any crowd.

to let on: to reveal or tell what you know, to hint

We are going to the movies tonight and we don't want Doris to go. If you see her, make sure not to let on.

They asked me not to let on to Ted that we're planning the birthday party; it's supposed to be a big surprise.

to go wrong: to fail, to result badly

Something went wrong with the engine, so we had to have the car towed to a garage.

Shown should have been here over an hour ago; I'm certain that something went wrong.

to meet (someone) halfway: to compromise with someone

Steve wanted \$4,500 for his car, and Gwen offered \$4,000. They met each other halfway and agreed on

\$4,250.

After a long process of give and take, the owners of the company agreed to meet the workers halfway by

providing some additional health benefits but no wage increase.

to check up on: to examine with the purpose of determining condition (also: to check on)

This idiom has the related noun form checkup.

The government always checks up on the background of employees who are hired for sensitive military projects.

The doctor wants me to have a thorough medical checkup as part of a preventive medicine program.

to stick up: to point or place upwards (S); to rob (S)

You should put some water on your hair. It's sticking up in the back.

to come about: to happen

I didn't find any explanation in the newspaper about how the political coup came about.

The flood came about as a result of the heavy winter rains.

to bring about: to cause to happen

This idiom is used to indicate who or what caused something to come about.

John brought about the accident because of his carelessness.

The heavy rains we have each spring bring about serious flooding.

to build up: to increase slowly, to make stronger gradually (S)

built up their savings account so that they could buy a new house.

The professional athlete exercises regularly to build her strength up.

to die down: to decrease, to lessen in strength

The hurricane became a less serious tropical storm when its winds died down.

We let the fire in the fireplace die down and enjoyed watching the embers as they glowed in the dark.

to fade away: to diminish gradually in time or distance

The memory of that unpleasant experience has slowly faded away.

The music of the band gradually faded away as the parade passed down the street.

to die out: not to exist anymore; to be in the process of disappearing

Scientists still are not sure exactly why the dinosaurs died out.

That strange, new style of dancing is slowly dying out.

to make out: to read or see clearly (S); to prepare a legal document, such as a will, a check, etc. (S)

The letter was so poorly handwritten that I couldn't make out many of the words.

Harold, please make the check out to Acme Piano Company.

to live up to: to fulfill (a standard or promise)

It was clear that the lazy student would never live up to his family's expectations.

It surprised us that the car salesperson lived up to all the promises he made.

to stick to: to adhere to (a promise), to follow or obey (a set of rules, procedures, etc.)

He made a promise to his wife to quit smoking and drinking, and so far he has stuck to it.

All organizations expect their employees to stick to established work rules and procedures.

If you try hard to stick to your principles, then you'll be able to live up to them.

to stick it to somebody: to cheat, to take unfair advantage of (also: to rip off, the ripoff)
Be careful in doing business with that salesperson. He'll stick it to you at the first opportunity.

The car dealership certainly ripped me off when I bought this car. It has caused me trouble constantly.

You paid over \$400 for that jacket? What a ripoff!

to stand up for: to insist on, to demand; to defend, to support

If you don't stand up for your rights in court, the lawyers will try to stick it to you.

Frank stood up for his friend, who was being put down by other teenagers nearby.

to cut corners: to economize, to save money

Most students live on limited budgets and have to cut corners whenever possible.

The Livingstons have nine children, so it is essential that they cut corners at all times.

to take on: to employ, to hire (S), to accept responsibility for, to undertake

That factory is taking a lot of new employees on for its new production line.

Would you be willing to take on the task of organizing the next company picnic?

to take down: to remove from an elevated place (S), to write what is said, to note

We should take the pictures down from the wall and clean off the dust.

The secretary took down everything that was said at the meeting.

to fall through: to fail to materialize, not to succeed

This idiom is usually used with the noun plan or plans as the subject.

Our plan to travel to Europe last summer fell through when we were unable to save up enough money.

Felix made plans to have a party for everyone in his office, but they fell through at the last moment.

fall behind: to lag, to fail to keep up (also: to get behind)

Eve fell behind in her studies and finally had to drop out of school.

If you get behind in your car payments, the finance company may repossess it from you.

give in: to surrender, to stop resisting

Completely surrounded by our soldiers, the enemy finally gave in.

Management gave in to the strikers' demands and agreed to a shortened work week.

to give off: to release, to produce, to release

When water boils, it gives off steam.

The flowers in this garden give off a strange odor.

to give out: to distribute, to become exhausted or depleted (also: to run out)

The first definition has the same meaning as the second definition of to pass out in Lesson 19.

An usher stood at the door of the theater giving out programs.

I couldn't finish the ten mile race because my energy gave out.

Jeff plans to stay in Las Vegas and gamble until his money runs out.

to have it in for: to want revenge on, to feel hostile towards (also: to hold a grudge against)

Martina expects to lose her job because her boss has had it in for her for a long time.

The teacher has held a grudge against Al ever since the time that he insulted her in front of the class.

to have it out with: to quarrel with, to confront

I am going to have it out with Jack about all the times that he has told us lies.

Ben had it out with his roommate about coming back home so late and making a lot of noise.

to hold off: to delay, or to be delayed, in occurring (S)

This idiom has the same meaning as to put off in Lesson 5 when a noun or pronoun is used as an object, as in the second example.

If the rain holds off for a few more days, they can finish planting the rest of the crop.

The judge agreed to hold off making a decision until new evidence could be introduced into court.

to hold out: to endure to be sufficient, to survive by resisting, to persist in one's efforts

The first definition for to hold out has the opposite meaning of the second definition for to give out (seventh idiom, this lesson).

If our supply of food and water holds out, we plan to camp here for another week.

However, whenever it

gives out, we'll have to leave.

That nation's troops cannot hold out much longer against the superior forces of the enemy.

to hold over: to extend to keep for a longer time (S)

They are going to hold over that movie for another week because so many people are coming to see it.

Let's hold discussion of this problem over until our next meeting.

to let up: to slacken, to lessen in intensity; to relax or ease one's effort (also: related idiom: to take it easy),

- If the rain doesn't let up soon, we won't be able to have our picnic.
- When Jane is working, she never lets up for a moment.

- Jane should take it easy or she'll get exhausted.

to lay off: to abstain from, stop using as a habit; to release or discharge from a job (also: related idiom: to let go) (S)

- If you're trying to lose weight, you should lay off sweet things.
- If business continues to be slow, we will have to lay off some workers.
- It will be necessary to let the youngest employees go first.

to bring out: to show or introduce (to the public) (S); to make available (S)

- Most automobile companies bring out new models each year.
- My mother brought some snacks out for my friends and me to have.

to bring back: to return a bought or borrowed item (also: to take back) (S)

To bring back is used when you are speaking at the place that an item is bought or borrowed; to take back is used when speaking at another place.

- Ma'am, our store policy is that you can bring back the dress as long as you have your sales receipt.
- You can borrow my car if you promise to bring it back by six o'clock.
- I have to take this book back to the library today.

to wait up for: to wait until late at night without going to bed

- Don't wait up for me. I may be back after midnight.
- We waited up for our son until two o'clock in the morning before we called the police.

to leave (someone or something) alone: not to disturb, to stay away from (S) (also: to let alone)

- Leave the baby alone for a while and she may go to sleep.
- After the cat had scratched Peter twice, he let it alone.

let alone: and certainly not (also: not to mention, to say nothing of)

Let alone is used after negative forms. The example that follows let alone is much less possible than the example that precedes let alone.

- I'm too sick today to walk to the kitchen, let alone to go to the zoo with you.
- He doesn't even speak his own language well, let alone French.

to break off: to terminate, to discontinue (S)

- After war began, the two countries broke off diplomatic relations.
- Else and Bob were once engaged, but they have already broken it off.

to wear off: to disappear gradually

- My headache isn't serious. It will wear off after an hour or so.
- The effect of the painkilling drug didn't wear off for several hours.

to wear down: to become worn gradually through use (also: to wear away, to wear through) (S)

Compare with to wear out (to become useless from wear) in Lesson 8.

- If you drag your feet while you walk, you'll wear down your shoes quickly.
- The pounding of ocean waves against the coast gradually wears it away.
- Johnny has worn through the seat of his pants.
- Helga threw away that dress because she had worn it out.

on the whole: in general, in most ways (also: by and large)

- He is, on the whole, a good student.
- By and large, I agree with your suggestions.

touch and go: risky, uncertain until the end

- The complicated medical operation was touch and go for several hours.
- The outcome of the soccer final was touch and go for the entire match.

to work out: to exercise; to develop, to devise (a plan) (S)

- Jane works out at the fitness center every other morning before going to school.
- The advertising department worked out a plan to increase company sales.
- We couldn't come up with a good plan for solving the problem, but we agreed to work it out at a later date.

to back up: to drive or go backwards (S), to defend, to support (S); to return to a previous thought

- I couldn't back my car up because there was a bicycle in the driveway behind me.
- Ursula asked her friends to back her up when she went to court to fight a ticket for an illegal lane change on the highway.
- Wait a minute. Could you back up and say that again?

to back out: to drive a vehicle out of a parking space (S); to withdraw support, to fail to fulfill a promise or obligation

- The parking lot attendant had to back another car out before he could get to mine.
- We were all ready to sign the contracts when one of the parties to the agreement backed out.

to have one's heart set on: to desire greatly, to be determined to

- She has her heart set on taking a trip abroad. She's been thinking about it for months.
- Todd has his heart set on going to medical school and becoming a doctor.

to buy up: to buy the complete stock of (S) -

- Before the hurricane struck, residents bought up all the food and water in local stores.
- The government plans to buy up all surplus grain in order to stabilize the price.

to buy out: to purchase a business or company (S); to purchase all of a person's shares or stock (S)

This idiom is similar in meaning to to take over in Lesson 23.

- Larger companies often buy out smaller companies that are having financial difficulties.
- Mr. Lee has been trying for some time to buy his partner out so that he can control the company by himself.

to sell out: to sell all items (S); to arrange for the sale of a company or business (S)

- That store is closing its doors for good and is selling out everything this weekend.
- If my new business enterprise is successful, I'll sell it out for a few million dollars.

to catch on: to become popular or widespread; to understand, to appreciate a joke

This idiom is often used with the preposition to for the second definition.

- Fashions of the past often catch on again among young people.
- When the teacher speaks quickly like that, can you catch on easily?
- His joke was very funny at the time, but when I told it to others later, nobody seemed to catch on. I had to tell the joke again before anyone could catch on to it.

to be cut out for: to have the necessary skills or talent for

This idiom is most often used in the negative or in questions.

- John is certainly not cut out for the work of a trial lawyer.
- Are you certain that you are cut out for that kind of job?

to throw out: to discard (S); to remove by force (S); to refuse to consider, to reject (S)

- Instead of throwing out our paper waste in the office, we should recycle it.
- When a fight broke out between two people on the dance floor, the management threw them out.
- The judge threw the case out because there was insufficient evidence to try the defendant successfully.

to throw up: to erect or construct quickly (S); to vomit (S)

- The Red Cross threw up temporary shelters for the homeless victims of the earthquake.
- The ill patient is unable to digest her food properly, so she is throwing all of it up.

to clear up: to make understandable (also: to straighten out) (S); to become sunny

- The teacher tried to clear up our confusion about the meaning of the difficult paragraph in the reading.
- It's rather cloudy this morning. Do you think that it will clear up later?

to slow down: to go, or cause to go, more slowly (also: to slow up) (S)

This idiom can be used both with and without an object.

- The car was going so fast that the motorist couldn't slow it down enough to make the sharp curve.
- You're eating too fast to digest your food well. Slow down!

- Slow up a bit! You're talking so quickly that I can't catch on well.

to dry up: to lose, or cause to lose, all moisture (S); to be depleted

- Every summer the extreme heat in this valley dries the stream up.
- All funds for the project dried up when the local government faced a budget crisis.

to dry out: to lose, or cause to lose, moisture gradually (S); to stop drinking alcohol in excess (also: to sober up)

- Martha hung the towel outside on the clothesline in order to dry it out.
- Some people go to alcohol recovery centers in order to dry out.

to be up to (something): to be doing something; to be planning or plotting something, scheming

The first definition usually takes the form of a question.

- Hi, Jake. I haven't seen you in a long time. What have you been up to?
- Those boys hiding behind the building must be up to something bad.

to beat around the bush: to avoid discussing directly, to evade the issue

Our boss beats around the bush so much that no one in the office knows exactly what he wants us to do.

Instead of beating around the bush, Melinda explained her objection in very clear terms.

to come to an end: to end, to stop

This idiom is used with finally and never when some activity lasts too long.

- The meeting finally came to an end at ten o'clock in the evening.
- Even though my friend seemed to enjoy the movie, I thought that it would never come to an end.

to put an end to: to cause to end, to terminate in a definite manner (also: to do away with)

- The dictatorial government put an end to organized opposition in the country by making it illegal to form a political party.
- It may never be possible to do away with all forms of prejudice and discrimination in the world.

to get even with: to seek revenge, to retaliate

This idiom is similar in meaning to to have it in for in Lesson 27.

- Bill has had it in for his boss for a long time. He told me he's planning to get even with his boss by giving some company secrets to a competitor.
- I want to get even with Steve for beating me so badly in tennis last time. The scores were 6-1 and 6-2.

to fool around: to waste time; to joke, not to be serious

- The teacher got angry because her students were fooling around and couldn't finish their work before the end of class.
- Sometimes I wish that Pat would stop fooling around so much and talk about something more interesting to others.

to look out on: to face, to overlook

- We really enjoy our new apartment that looks out on a river.
- Their rear window looks out on a lovely garden.

to go through: to undergo, to experience; to consume, to use (also: to use up)

The first definition is used when someone is having some hardship or difficulty.

- I can't believe what she went through to get that job. She had four interviews with the hiring committee in one week!
- Frank said that they had gone through all the toilet paper in the house, but Steve couldn't believe that they had used it all up.

to go without saying: to be known without the need to mention

This idiom occurs with a that-clause, often with the pronoun it as the subject.

- It goes without saying that you shouldn't drive quickly in bad weather.
- That he will gain weight if he continues to eat and drink so much goes without saying.

to put (someone) on: to mislead by joking or tricking (S)

This idiom is usually used in a continuous tense form. A noun object must divide the idiom.

- Don't worry. I wouldn't expect you do all that work by yourself. I'm just putting you on.
- Jack can't be serious about what he said. He must be putting us on.

to keep one's head: to remain calm during an emergency

- When the heater caused a fire, Gloria kept her head and phoned for assistance right away; otherwise, the whole house might have burned down.
- When the boat started sinking in heavy seas, the crew members kept their heads and led the passengers to the lifeboats.

to lose one's head: not to think clearly, to lose one's self-control

- When Mel saw a dog in the street right in front of his car, he lost his head and drove onto the sidewalk and into a tree.
- If the politician hadn't gotten stirred up and lost his head, he never would have criticized his opponent unfairly.

narrow-minded: not willing to accept the ideas of others (the opposite of narrow minded is broad-minded)

- Narrow-minded people tend to discriminate against groups of people with which they have nothing in common.
- Ted is so broad-minded that he has almost no standards by which he judges others.

to stand up: to withstand use or wear; to fail to appear for a date or social engagement (S)

- My old car has stood up well over the years. I haven't had any major problems at all.
- Janet was very angry because her new boyfriend stood her up on their second date. She waited over an hour for him before returning home.

to step in: to become involved or concerned with something; to enter a place for a brief time (also: to step into)

- When the children started fighting on the playground, a teacher had to step in and stop the fight.
- The supervisor asked one of the employees to step in her office for a moment.
- Would you step into the hallway so that I can show you the information posted on the bulletin board?

to step down: to retire or leave a top position, to resign

- Next May the principal will step down after thirty-five years of service to the school.
- The angry shareholders wanted the company president to step down because of the stock scandal.

to step on: to treat severely, to discipline; to go faster, to work more quickly

For the second definition, the idiom is followed by the pronoun if.

- Sometimes it's necessary to step on children when they do something dangerous.
- We're going to be late for the movies. You'd better step on it!

a steal: very inexpensive, a bargain

This idiom is often used in an exclamation using what.

- I can't believe that I paid only \$2,000 for this three-year-old car. What a steal!
- Scott considered it a steal when he bought a complete bedroom set for only \$99.

to play up to: to behave so as to gain favor with someone

- The other students in the class resent Jim because he plays up to the teacher in order to get better grades.
- When my children asked me to go shopping for a new video game, I knew why they had been playing up to me all morning.

more or less: approximately, almost; somewhat, to a certain degree

- Although your bedroom feels smaller, it's more or less the same size as mine.

- Ted more or less agreed with our decision to put off the meeting until more members could show up. At least he didn't object strongly.

to goof up: to perform badly, to make a mistake (also: to mess up, to slip up)

- I really goofed up on the exam today; did you mess up, too?
- Karen slipped up when she forgot to deposit money into her checking account.

to go off the deep end: to get very angry and do something hastily

- Just because you had a serious argument with your supervisor, you didn't have to go off the deep end and resign, did you?
- When Dan's wife demanded a divorce, he went off the deep end again. This time he was shouting so that the whole neighborhood could hear.

to lose one's touch: to fail at what one used to do well

- Milton used to be the best salesman at the car dealership, but recently he seems to have lost his touch.
 - I used to play tennis very well, but today you beat me easily. I must be losing my touch.
- in hand: under firm control, well managed
- The copilot asked the pilot if he had the plane in hand or whether he needed any help navigating through the severe thunderstorm.
 - The police officer radioed to the station that she had the emergency situation in hand and didn't require any assistance.

on hand: available, nearby

This idiom is often followed by in case.

- I always keep some extra money on hand in case I forget to get cash from the bank.
- The concert organizers arranged to have some security guards on hand in case there were any problems during the performance.

to cover up: to conceal, to hide (S)

This idiom is used for events which are potentially embarrassing to one's reputation, as well as against the law. The noun coverup can be formed.

- The office worker tried to cover up his crimes, but everyone knew that he had been stealing office supplies all along.
- The political coverup of the bribery scandal failed and was reported by all the major media.

to drop off: to fall asleep; to take to a certain location (S); to decrease (for the third definition, also: to fall off)

- My mother dropped off during the boring television show; her head was nodding up and down.
- I don't mind dropping you off at the store on my way to work.
- Business has been dropping off rapidly recently, but fortunately it hasn't been falling off as quickly as for our competitors.

to turn over: to place upside down (S); to flip, to turn upside down; to pass or give control to someone (S)

- The teacher asked the students to turn the answer sheet over and to write a short essay on the back.
- The car was going too fast around the corner and turned over twice.
- Mr. Collins has decided to turn over his jewelry store to his son at the end of the year.

to go through channels: to send a request through the normal way

This idiom can be used with the adjective proper.

- If you go through proper channels in this company, it's sometimes impossible to get anything done quickly.
- The police told the important civic leader that even she had to go through channels in reporting the burglary of her house.

the last straw: the final event in a series of unacceptable actions (It is the last straw that breaks the camel's back.)

This idiom is always used with the definite article the.

- When John asked to borrow money from me for the fourth time, it was the last straw. I finally told him that I couldn't lend him any more.
- I can't believe that my roommate left the door to our apartment unlocked again. It's the last straw; I'm moving out.

to get cold feet: to become unable or afraid to do something

This idiom is usually used in the case of an important or dangerous action

- Karl was supposed to marry Elaine this weekend, but at the last moment he got cold feet.
- Only one of the rock climbers got cold feet when the group reached the base of the hundred-meter cliff.

to trade in: to receive credit for the value of an old item towards the purchase of a new item (S)

This idiom is used to form the noun trade-in.

- The car dealership offered me \$1,000 for my old car if I traded it in for a new model.
- The appliance company was offering a \$50 trade-in during the special promotion for its new line of refrigerators.

face-to-face: direct, personal; directly, personally (written without hyphens)

This idiom can be used both as an adjective (the first definition) and as an adverb (the second definition).

- The workers' representatives had a face-to-face meeting with management to resolve the salary issue.
- The stepmother and her teenage son talked face to face about his troubles in school.

to be with (someone): to support, to back (also: to go along with); to understand or follow what someone is saying

- Although others thought that we shouldn't go along with Jerry, I told Jerry that I was with him on his proposal for reorganizing the staff.
- After turning left at the traffic light, go two blocks and turn right on Madison. After three more blocks, turn right again. Are you still with me?

to be with it: to be able to focus or concentrate on (also: to get with it)

To be with it in the negative has the same meaning as to feel out of it. The related form to get with it is used in commands.

- Jack's really with it today. I've never seen him play such good soccer.
- You've done only a small amount of work in two hours. You're not with it today, are you?
- It's no excuse to say that you feel out of it. We need everyone's help on this, so get with it!

to fill (someone) in: to inform, to give background information to (also: to clue in) (S)

This idiom is often followed by the preposition on and a noun phrase containing the pertinent information.

- Could you fill me in on what is going to be discussed at tomorrow's meeting?
- Not having been to the convention, my associate asked me to clue him in on the proceedings.

to make (someone) tick: to motivate to behave or act in a certain way (S)

This idiom is used within a what-clause.

- If a salesperson knows what makes a customer tick, he will be able to sell a lot of merchandise.
- It's been impossible for us to figure out what makes our new boss tick. One moment she seems pleasant and then the next moment she's upset.

to cover for: to take someone's place temporarily, to substitute for; to protect someone by lying or deceiving

- Go ahead and take your coffee break. I'll cover for you until you return.

- The criminal made his wife cover for him when the police asked if the man had been home all day. She swore that he had been there.

to give (someone) a break: to provide a person with another opportunity or chance (S); not to expect too much work

from (S); not to expect someone to believe (S)

Command forms are most common with this idiom. For the third definition, the pronoun *me* must be used.

- The driver pleaded with the police officer to give him a break and not issue him a ticket for speeding.
- When the students heard how much homework the teacher wanted them to do over the holiday, they begged, "Give us a break, Professor Doyle!"
- Oh, Jim, give me a break! That's a terrible excuse for being late.

to bow out: to stop doing as a regular activity, to remove oneself from a situation

The related idiom to want out indicates that someone desires to bow out.

- She bowed out as the school's registrar after sixteen years of service.
- One of the two partners wanted out of the deal because they couldn't agree on the terms of the contract

to pin on: to find guilty of a crime or offense (S) (also: to hang on)

This idiom is divided by a noun phrase containing the crime or offense. The accused person is mentioned after the preposition *on*.

- The prosecuting attorney tried to pin the murder on the victim's husband, but the jury returned a verdict of "not guilty."
- I wasn't anywhere near the window when it got broken. You can't pin that on me.

to get a rise out of: to provoke a response from

This idiom is usually used when someone is teased into responding in anger or annoyance.

- You can kid me all day about my mistake, but you won't get a rise out of me.
- I got a rise out of Marvin when I teased him about his weight. Marvin weighs over two-hundred pounds.

to stick around: to stay or remain where one is, to wait

This idiom is used when someone is waiting for something to happen or for someone to arrive.

- Todd had to stick around the house all day until the new furniture was finally delivered in the late afternoon.
- Why don't you stick around for a while and see if Sarah eventually shows up?

to pick up the tab: to pay the cost or bill

This idiom applies when someone pays for the cost of another person's meal, tickets, etc.

- The advertising manager is flying to Puerto Rico for a conference, and her firm is picking up the tab.
- The government picked up the tab for the visiting dignitary. It paid for all of the lodging and meals, as well as transportation, during his stay.

by the way: incidentally

This idiom is used when someone thinks of something further in the course of a conversation.

- Movies are my favorite form of entertainment. Oh, by the way, have you seen the new picture that's playing at the Bijou?
- Vera's been divorced for three years now. She told me, by the way, that she never plans to remarry.

to go to town: to do something with enthusiasm and thoroughness

- Our interior decorator really went to town in remodeling our living room. I'm afraid to ask how much it's going to cost.
- Charlie really went to town on his research project. He consulted over forty reference works and wrote a ninety-page report.

to let slide: to neglect a duty (S); to ignore a situation (S)

- Terry knew that she should have paid the electric bill on time instead of letting it slide. Now the utility company has turned off her service.
- When he tried to get a rise out of me by mentioning my failure to receive a promotion at work, I just let it slide.

search me: I don't know (also: beats me) This idiom is used informally, usually as a command form.

- When Elmer asked his wife if she knew why the new neighbors left their garage door open all night, she responded, "Search me."
- When I asked Derek why his girlfriend wasn't at the party yet, he said, "Beats me. I expected her an hour ago."

to get off one's chest to express one's true feelings (S)

This idiom is used when someone has long waited to express themselves.

- Ellen felt a lot better when she finally talked to a counselor and got the problem off her chest.
- Faye hasn't shared her concern about her marriage with her husband yet. I think that she should get it off her chest soon.

to live it up: to spend money freely, to live luxuriously

- Kyle and Eric saved up money for two years so that they could travel to Europe and live it up.
- After receiving a large inheritance from a rich aunt, I was able to live it up for years.

to liven up: to energize, to make more active (also: to pick up) (S)

- The teacher occasionally took the class on field trips just to liven things up a bit.
- The animals in the zoo began to liven up when evening came and the temperatures dropped.
- Many people have to drink coffee every morning just to pick themselves up.

to have a voice in: to share involvement in

- The new vice-president was promised that she would have a voice in developing the company's international expansion.
- The students are trying to have a voice in college affairs by gaining representation on administrative committees.

to check in: to register at a hotel or motel; to leave or deposit for transporting or safekeeping (S)

The adjective form check-in derives from this idiom.

- Courtney arrived in town at mid-day and promptly checked in at the Plaza Hotel. The hotel permitted an early check-in time.
- There were dozens of people at the airline counters waiting to check their bags in for their flights.

to check out: to pay the bill at a hotel or motel and then leave; to investigate, to examine (S)

The adjective form check-out derives from this idiom.

- The latest you should check out of the hotel is 12 noon. However, in your case, we can set a special check-out time of 2:00 P.M.
- The police received a call from someone claiming to have witnessed a murder. The police sent two detectives to check the call out right away.

to take somebody at one's word: to accept what one says as true, to believe

- When he offered to be responsible for the fund raiser, I took him at his word. Now he's saying that he's not available to do it.
- You should be careful about taking her at her word. She's been known to say one thing but to do another.

to serve (the/one's) purpose: to be useful, to suit one's needs or requirements

- I don't have a screwdriver to open this, but I think that a knife will serve the purpose.

- Jane prefers working to studying, so it served her purpose to drop out of school and take that job.

in the worst way: very much, greatly

- Jim and Claudia want to have children in the worst way.
- Because Umer has relatives in Turkey, he wants to visit there in the worst way.

to cop out: to avoid one's responsibility, to quit

This idiom is an informal version of the second definition to back out (Lesson 29). The noun form copout means an excuse for avoiding responsibility.

- Evelyn had agreed to help us with arrangements for the party, but she copped out at the last minute.
- I can't believe that Cindy offered such an explanation for falling to show up. What a poor copout!

to line up: to form a line; to arrange to have, to manage to obtain (S)

- The moviegoers lined up in front of the theater showing the most popular film of the summer.
- Rob is going to schedule the famous author to speak at the convention if he can line her up in time.

to lose one's cool: to get excited, angry, or flustered

- Despite the boos from some in the audience, the actors on stage never lost their cool.
- Although the group of skiers were in danger from an apparent avalanche, their ski guide never lost his cool.

to leave open: to delay making a decision on (S)

- In making up the job announcement, the firm decided to leave the salary open until a qualified candidate was found.
- Going to a bar and having silly conversation with strangers really turns me off. In fact, most bar scenes are really turnoffs to me.

to miss the boat: to lose an opportunity, to fail in some undertaking

- The precious metals market was looking up several months ago, but unfortunately most investors missed the boat.
- Mr. Vlasic's new business went bankrupt within a short time. He really missed the boat by opening a tanning salon near the beach.

to think up: to invent, to create (also: to dream up)

This idiom is often used for an unusual or foolish thought.

- Who thought up the idea of painting the living room walls bright red?

- When asked by the teacher why she was late, the student dreamed up a plausible excuse.

to throw (someone) a curve: to introduce an unexpected topic, causing embarrassment (S)

- The first week of class was going very well until a student threw the teacher a curve by suggesting that the textbook was too difficult.
- The director asked us in advance to stick to the meeting agenda and not to throw him any curves.

to make waves: to create a disturbance, usually by complaining

This idiom is similar in meaning to the previous idiom, but the emphasis is on the aspect of complaining rather than causing embarrassment.

- In most companies, an employee who makes waves is not appreciated.
- The meeting was going smoothly until one of the participants made waves about the newly revised compensation package.

to carry on: to continue as before; to conduct, to engage in; to behave in an immature manner - ; , ; ;

Even in the face of disaster, the inhabitants carried on as though nothing had happened.

- The business associates decided to carry on their discussion in the hotel bar instead of the conference room.
- I can't believe that John carried on so much just because his dog died. He looked depressed and cried for weeks after it happened.

not on your life: absolutely not (also: no way) This idiom is used as a kind of exclamation by itself.

- You're asking me to invest in that poorly rated company just because you know the son of the president? Not on your life!
- When a friend tried to get Mark to jump out of a plane with a parachute, he immediately responded, "No way!"

to cover ground: to be extensive, to discuss much material

Forms such as a lot of, too much, too little are used before the noun ground.

- That national commission's report on urban ghettos covers a lot of ground. Many of the recommendations are too costly to implement.
- In his first lecture on Greek philosophers, I thought that our professor covered too little ground.

to mind the store: to be responsible for an office while others are gone

- It seems that all of our employees are taking a lunch break at the same time. I wonder who's minding the store.

- Lynne agreed to mind the store while the others went outside to watch the parade passing by.

to throw the book at: to punish with full penalty, to be harsh on

- Because the criminal was a repeat offender, the judge threw the book at him with heavy fines and a long prison term.

- My boss threw the book at me when he discovered that I had been using company time for personal business. I

was severely reprimanded and forced to make up the lost time.

to put one's foot in: to say or do the wrong thing

This idiom is used with the noun phrase one's mouth or the pronoun it.

- Fred really put his foot in his mouth when he called his supervisor by the wrong name.
- I really put my foot in it when I forgot my girlfriend's birthday and didn't buy her anything. She almost lost her cool.

to be up for grabs: to become available to others

This idiom is used when something is highly desirable to many other people.

- When one of the full-time contract instructors stepped down, her nice office overlooking the river was up for grabs.

- Did you know that Senator Stone is retiring and that her Senate seat is up for grabs?

to show off: to display one's ability in order to attract attention (S), to let others see, to expose to public view (S)

This idiom can form the noun showoff for the first definition.

- Elizabeth is an excellent swimmer, but I don't like the way she shows off in front of everyone. It's very obvious that she enjoys being a showoff.
- Mary showed her large wedding ring off to all her friends.

to learn the ropes: to become familiar with routine procedures at work or school

- The job applicant didn't have much previous experience or knowledge, but she seemed intelligent enough to learn the ropes quickly.
- It took the new schoolteacher a year to learn the ropes regarding administrative and curricular matters.

to land on one's feet: to recover safely from an unpleasant or dangerous situation

- After a series of personal and professional difficulties, it's amazing that George has landed on his feet so quickly.
- Some young adults get into so much trouble at school that they are never able to land on their feet again. They drop out before graduating.

to dish out: to distribute in large quantity (S), to speak of others in a critical manner (S)

- Mary's mom dished out two or three scoops of ice cream for each child at the birthday party.
- Larry can't seem to take any criticism of his actions but he certainly likes to dish it out.

to get through to: to communicate with, to make someone understand (also: to break through to)

This idiom has the meaning of to make someone "catch on" (Lesson 29, eighth idiom, the first definition)

- Some of the students in my reading class understand English so poorly that it is difficult to get through to them.
- The doctors have never succeeded in breaking through to Mr. Ames, who is a silent and secretive patient.

to keep one's word: to fulfill a promise, to be responsible

An idiom with the opposite meaning is to break one's word.

- Suzanne kept her word to me not to let on to others that I intend to step down next month.
- Thomas always intends to keep his word, but invariably the end result is that he breaks his word. He just isn't capable of being a responsible person.

to be over one's head: to be very busy, to have too much to do (also: to be up to one's ears); to be beyond one's ability to understand

- I'd love to take a week off for a hiking trip, but at the moment I am over my head in work. Maybe next week when I'm only up to my ears!
- It was impossible for the tutor to get through to Bill about the physics problem because the subject matter was over Bill's head.

to ask for: to deserve, to receive a just punishment (also: to bring upon)

- If you drink alcohol and then drive a car, you're only asking for trouble.
- Don't complain about your cut in salary. You asked for it by refusing to heed our repeated warnings not to be late and inefficient.

to be a far cry from: to be very different from

- I enjoyed visiting Seattle, but it was a far cry from the ideal vacation spot I expected.
- Ned is enjoying his new job, but his responsibilities are a far cry from what he was told they would be.

by all means: certainly, definitely, naturally (also: of course); using any possible way or method

- If the Johnsons invite us for dinner, then by all means we have to return the invitation. Of course, we don't have to invite their children, too.
- In order to ensure its survival, the ailing company has to obtain an infusion of cash by all means.

to get out from under: to restore one's financial security, to resolve a difficult financial obligation

- After years of struggling to get ahead, the young couple finally got out from under their debts.
- The ailing company, succeeding in obtaining the necessary cash, was able to get out from under its financial burdens.

to take the bull by the horns: to handle a difficult situation with determination

This idiom is usually used when someone has been postponing an action for some time and finally wants or needs to resolve it.

- After three years of faithful service, Jake decided to take the bull by the horns and ask his boss for a raise.
- Vic has been engaged to Laura for a long time now, and I know that he loves her. He should take the bull by the horns and ask her to marry him.

to give (someone) a hand: to assist, to aid, to help (also: to lend someone a hand) (S)

- Would you give me a hand lifting this heavy box?
- When Terry's car broke down at night on the highway, no one would stop to lend her a hand.

to give (someone) a big hand: to clap one's hands in applause, to applaud (S)

- After the talented new vocalist had sung her number, the audience gave her a big hand.
- Should we give a big hand to each beauty contestant as she is introduced, or should we wait until all the introductions are finished?

to goof off: to waste time, to be idle

- Some of the workers in our office always goof off when the boss is out.
- On Saturday afternoons, I like to go to a movie or just goof off at home.

to be in: to be popular or fashionable, to be available at one's work or home

- Most young people tend to want anything that is in at the time, but a few don't care about current trends.
- Could you please tell me when Mrs. Zachary will be in? I'd like to talk to her soon.

to be out: to be unpopular or no longer in fashion; to be away from one's work or home

- These days, designer jeans are in and long skirts are out.

- I'm sorry, Mr. Jensen is out at the moment. Could I take a message?

to draw the line at: to determine to be unacceptable, to refuse to consider

- I don't mind helping him with his homework, but I draw the line at writing a term paper for him.
- The conference organizers tried to accommodate the needs of the various interest groups, but they drew the line at extending the conference by two days.

to get out of line: to disobey or ignore normal procedures or rules (also: to step out of line)

- When a child gets out of line in that teacher's class, she uses the old-fashioned method of making the child sit in the corner of the room.
- Any employee who steps out of line by coming to work in an unacceptable condition will be fired.

dry run: rehearsal, practice session

- The college president requested a dry run of the graduation ceremony in order to ensure that all aspects went smoothly.
- Before the manager presented the reorganizational plans to the board of directors, he did several dry runs of his presentation.

to play by ear: to play music that one has heard but never read (S); to proceed without plan, to do spontaneously (S)

The pronoun it is often used with the second definition.

- That pianist can play most popular music by ear. She never needs to read sheet music.
- My husband wanted to plan our trip carefully, but I argued that it was more fun if we played it by ear.

to be in (someone's) shoes: to be in another person's position, to face the same situation as another person

- If I were in your shoes, I wouldn't take too many classes this semester.
- When his boss finds out about that accounting error, I wouldn't want to be in his shoes.

to keep after: to remind constantly, to nag

- Lynn always has to keep after her children about cleaning up their rooms and doing chores around the house.
- Lon is so forgetful that it's necessary to keep after him about every little thing.

to fix up: to repair or put back in good condition (S); to arrange a date or an engagement for another person (S)

- Instead of buying an expensive new home, we decided to buy an older home and fix it up ourselves.

- Since my visiting friend didn't have a date for dinner, I fixed her up with a male friend of mine. They got along very well together.