

ENGLISH IDIOMS TO SPEAK LIKE A NATIVE SPEAKER

1. Action speaks louder than words - actions are more important than words

Ex: You always speak of the importance of learning, but you never do anything. **Actions speak louder than words!**

2. To add fuel to the fire – to make the bad situation much worse

Ex: Please don't talk to me when I'm in a bad mood. It just adds fuel to the fire.

3. The ball is in your court- it's your chance to make the next decision/steps

Ex: I did everything to make it up to you and now, the ball is in your court.

4. To bend over backwards – do whatever it takes to achieve something or help someone

Ex: The school is bending over backwards just to please the students

5. To bite off more than you can chew - trying to do more than what you are able to do

Ex: When he accepted two part-time jobs, he is clearly biting off more than he can chew.

6. By the skin of one's teeth – manage to do something by the smallest margin or narrowly succeed in doing something.

Ex: I think he will pass the bar exam by the skin of his teeth.

7. To cry wolf - to keep asking for help, even when you don't need it, and when you really need help, no one believes in you.

Ex: The little boy had **cried wolf** so many times that when he was really sick no one believed him.



8. To cut somebody some slack – to give someone a break

Ex: You need to cut the trainees some slack, they are barely new and still learning.

9. To cut to the chase – to come to the point/ get direct to the point

Ex: I haven't got all day for this discussion. Let's cut to the chase.

10. To get one's head around something – to understand something

Ex: I'm going to try to get my head into this new law on immigration.

11. To hear on the grapevine – to hear an unconfirmed rumor or story.

Ex: I heard on the grapevine that the new receptionist is leaving us soon.

12. It takes two to Tango - certain actions or activities done by two people to participate.

Ex: I don't blame only the woman for the affair, it takes two to tango.

13. To miss the boat – to miss the opportunity or chance

Ex: I believe I missed the boat on that job, they have already hired someone for the position.

14. A piece of cake – an easy task

Ex: That surprised quiz was a piece of cake

15. Pull yourself together - to calm down and behave normally in an upsetting situation

Ex: I know that losing the one you love so dear can be devastating, but you need to pull yourself together and try to move on with your life.

16. To sit/be on the fence – to be neutral or not to take sides

Ex: I don't want to offend anyone here, so I'm sitting on the fence



17. To step up one's game – to start performing better

Ex: If you really want high grades, you need to step up your game.

18. To sell someone out – let someone's secret or information out

Ex: I put so much trust in you, and I can't believe you sold me out by leaking my secret to others just like that.

19. Your guess is as good as mine – I have no idea

Ex: Well, we don't have enough evidence here. Your guess is as good as mine.

20. Spur of the moment – impulsive decision done without a plan

Ex: It was a spur of the moment decision.

21. When it rains, it pours - difficult situations tend to follow each other in succession or to arrive all at the same time.

Ex: No one in my family had been sick for many years, but everyone caught the flu last week at the same time. When it rains, it pours.

22. You can say that again – I totally agree, used to agree with another person.

Ex: Regina: This movie is so wonderful, do you think so?

Leslie: You can say that again!

23. In a nut shell – to be brief and straight to the point.

Ex: In a nutshell, all the new mayor was saying is that the fight against crime will be taken much more seriously.



24. **You know the drill** – when the task is always the same or you know what to do.

Ex: She **knows the drill** because she has worked there for many years.

25. **When pigs fly** – it means never!

Ex: He just keeps on making promises to me. This time I will never believe in him. When pigs fly!

