

Talk a Lot

Media

20 Common English Idioms

1. to get in touch with sby	to contact sby	2. to have sth on in the background	to listen to sth, e.g. the radio, while doing sth else
3. to be glued to sth	to watch sth attentively	4. you can't win 'em all	you can't be successful in every activity
5. to wash your dirty linen in public	to use the media to fight a dispute that should be private	6. to take advantage of sby	to gain benefit from sby without giving anything in return
7. to be economical with the truth	to say just enough to be truthful, without giving full details	8. to get square eyes	to strain your eyes by looking at a screen for too long
9. to be all the rage	to be in fashion	10. from the sublime to the ridiculous	from sth very good to sth very silly, e.g. music on the radio
11. to put the cat among the pigeons	to cause trouble, often deliberately	12. to be in sby's pocket	to be paid by sby to be biased towards them
13. to break new ground	to do sth totally original	14. to drive sby up the wall	to annoy sby very much
15. the best thing since sliced bread	the best thing to happen / appear for a long time	16. to get to the heart of the matter	to examine / discuss the most important part of sth
17. to take ages	to be a very long process	18. "I'd love to be a fly on the wall..."	"I'd love to be able to overhear sth without being seen"
19. to scrape [the bottom of] the barrel	to use an idea that is very unoriginal	20. to be [about] as much use as a chocolate teapot	to be useless

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English Idioms – Matching Game

Match each sentence below with one of the idioms from this unit. Change forms where necessary:



If you don't switch off that telly, you'll _____!
I like reading this paper, because the articles often really _____.
When Tim came last in the contest, the DJ told him: "Never mind. _____."
The role of a presenter on a late-night radio phone-in show is to _____.
"Janet's in there breaking up with Paul!" "Really? Wow! _____, right now!"
Have you got Jack's number? I need to _____ with him about the party.
Due to the dearth of new programme ideas, Channel 4 was accused by some parts of the media of _____.
The use of touchscreen technology in mobile phones has _____.
To follow Bohemian Rhapsody with Barbie Girl by Aqua is like going _____.
I like to _____ while I'm doing the accounts. It helps to pass the time.
We bought a new HDTV because high definition is _____ at the moment.
I don't think you can say that the politician lied, although he was _____.
Paul was getting cross because it was _____ to download the film to his PC.
My new smartphone loses its signal when I pick it up. It's _____!
Mark told me he thinks his new tablet computer is _____.
I hate it when these Z-list celebs _____. It's so degrading.
The newspaper editor was suspected of _____ of the media mogul.
Did you catch the final episode of 24 last night? I _____ to it!
Can you turn over to another channel, please? These adverts are _____!
Illegal file-sharers are _____ of publishers and content providers, by depriving them of remuneration for their hard work.

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Media – English Idioms Activities

Meaning and Context

1. Check for new vocabulary. Are there any idioms that you know already? Explain each meaning and give an example sentence or situation in which you could use it. Find the meaning of the rest by using a dictionary, then match the definition cards with the idiom cards.
2. Do any of the idioms exist in your first language? Translate each idiom.
3. Divide the idioms into four categories: **Radio**, **Television**, **Journalism**, and **New Media**.
4. Take some cards. Describe the idiom on a card without saying it.
5. How many idioms can you remember when they are all turned over?

Practice Activities

Choose a random idiom (or one that particularly interests you) and...

1. think of a time or situation in your life when you... a) could have said this idiom (past), and b) might say this idiom (future).
2. say the name of a person you know who would be the *most likely* to say this. In what kind of situation?
3. others guess while you act it out without speaking, although you can make sounds!
4. others guess while you draw a picture to represent both forms – idiomatic and literal.
5. analyse the words. Is it at all possible to guess the meaning from the words – or completely impossible? Research the origin and background of this idiom.
6. replace the idiom in a sentence with the literal (boring) meaning. Compare the two sentences. Which sounds better? Why?
7. think of another idiom or saying that has the same or a similar meaning.
8. tell a story or devise a dialogue/role play by linking one idiom to the next.

Topic Questions

1. Choose the correct idiom. 2. Make a sentence about... a) yourself, b) a friend.

1. I might do this while I'm doing something else – because I don't like silence.
2. This is what you do when you make somebody very frustrated or angry.
3. You could say this when you are desperate to find out what other people are doing.
4. This is what people do when they don't want you to know *everything*, e.g. politicians.
5. If you are completely absorbed in the TV show that you're watching, you are this idiom.
6. A corrupt public figure who has *too close* a relationship with the media could be this.
7. This is what the producers of innovative new media content do...
8. ...and this is what other producers do when they have run out of ideas.
9. This idiom describes the experience of listening to a really bad song straight after a great one.
10. You could use this idiom to describe a new purchase that you're really pleased with...
11. ...and this idiom to describe something that doesn't work or is a complete waste of time.
12. You do this when you *use* somebody, e.g. taking without any intention of paying them back.