

# Vocabulary Idioms

## 20 English Idioms for New Year

Say whether each idiom concerns: **A: giving up a bad habit**, **B: celebrating**, **C: overindulgence**, or **D: change**:

1. **idiom:** To turn over a new leaf. **literal meaning:** To change your life completely.  
**example:** 'It looks like after that punishment from the principal, James has **turned over a new leaf**.'
2. **idiom:** Out with the old and in with the new. **literal meaning:** We're changing everything.  
**example:** 'Shall we get rid of these curtains too?' 'Yes. **Out with the old and in with the new**.'
3. **idiom:** To start [time] with a clean sheet. **literal meaning:** To forget the past and move forward.  
**example:** 'OK, let's **start this year with a clean sheet**.'
4. **idiom:** A change is as good as a rest. **literal meaning:** Doing something different can rejuvenate you.  
**example:** 'We won't have time for a proper holiday this year.' 'Well, they say **a change is as good as a rest**.'
5. **idiom:** To ring in the new year. **literal meaning:** To celebrate the moment when new year arrives.  
**example:** 'We were round at Harold's with his mum and dad and cousin **ringing in the new year**.'
6. **idiom:** To kick the habit. **literal meaning:** To give up something addictive.  
**example:** 'Your father tried **to kick the habit** last new year but he just loves his cigars.'
7. **idiom:** To go cold turkey. **literal meaning:** To give up a habit, e.g. smoking, by just stopping.  
**example:** 'Was it hard to give up smoking?' 'No. I **went cold turkey**. Just quit.'
8. **idiom:** To stick to [something]. **literal meaning:** To follow a plan of action without deviating from it.  
**example:** 'My mum started her new diet for the new year. I just hope she's gonna **stick to it**.'
9. **idiom:** No pain, no gain. **literal meaning:** If an action doesn't cost anything, you won't benefit.  
**example:** 'Going to the gym twice a week is so difficult for me.' 'Keep at it, mum! **No pain, no gain**.'
10. **idiom:** Mend your ways. **literal meaning:** Improve your behaviour.  
**example:** 'If you don't **mend your ways** you're going to end up in court with a driving ban.'
11. **idiom:** Shake things up a bit. **literal meaning:** Change long-held habits.  
**example:** 'We're just stuck in a rut, Albert, doing the same things. Let's **shake things up a bit** in the new year!'
12. **idiom:** To kick off the new year. **literal meaning:** To start the new year.  
**example:** 'Let's **kick off the new year** with a nice trip to the mountains!'
13. **idiom:** New year, new you! **literal meaning:** You can change your life in the new year!  
**example:** 'Have you seen this magazine? It says, "**New Year, New You**!"' 'Who are they kidding!'
14. **idiom:** To bury the hatchet. **literal meaning:** To forgive each other and make friends again.  
**example:** 'You really should **bury the hatchet** with your Auntie Joan in the new year.'
15. **idiom:** To tighten [one's] belt. **literal meaning:** To spend much less.  
**example:** 'After buying all those Christmas presents we're going to have to **tighten our belts** in the new year.'
16. **idiom:** To get back into the swing of things. **literal meaning:** To return to normal.  
**example:** 'After the long Christmas break it took me a while **to get back into the swing of things** at work.'
17. **idiom:** To give it my best shot. **literal meaning:** To try very hard to do something.  
**example:** 'This year I'm going to try to give up cheese. It won't be easy, but I'm gonna **give it my best shot**.'
18. **idiom:** If at first you don't succeed, try, try again. **literal meaning:** Keep trying until you succeed.  
**example:** 'I'm never going to win a match!' 'Remember: **if at first you don't succeed, try, try again**.'
19. **idiom:** To be off [one's] trolley. **literal meaning:** To be very drunk.  
**example:** 'Paul **was off his trolley** at the New Year's Eve party last night.'
20. **idiom:** Today is the first day of the rest of your life. **literal meaning:** You can start afresh from this moment.  
**example:** 'I've got negative thoughts about the past.' 'Remember: **today is the first day of the rest of your life**.'