

Idioms and phrases for NDA and CDS English

What Are Idioms and Phrases?

Idioms and phrases are expressions that have meanings different from their literal interpretation. They add creativity, color, and cultural depth to a language, making communication more engaging and expressive.

- **Idioms** are fixed expressions whose meanings cannot be understood from the individual words. For example, "*Break the ice*" doesn't literally mean breaking ice but refers to starting a conversation in a social setting.
- **Phrases** are groups of words that work together to create meaning but may not always be idiomatic. They can include common expressions like "*in a nutshell*" (meaning a brief summary).

Both idioms and phrases help make language more natural and interesting. They are commonly used in spoken and written English to express ideas in a more vivid and imaginative way.

Here are 20 idioms and phrases along with their meanings and usage examples:

1. **Break the ice**

Meaning: To initiate conversation in a social setting

Example: The teacher told a joke to break the ice on the first day of school.

2. **Hit the nail on the head**

Meaning: To describe exactly what is causing a situation or problem

Example: When John said the project failed due to lack of planning, he hit the nail on the head.

3. **Bite the bullet**

Meaning: To endure a painful or difficult situation bravely

Example: I hate injections, but I had to bite the bullet and get vaccinated.

4. **Burn the midnight oil**

Meaning: To work late into the night

Example: She burned the midnight oil to finish her thesis before the deadline.

5. **A blessing in disguise**

Meaning: Something that seems bad at first but turns out to be good

Example: Losing that job was a blessing in disguise because I found a better one.

6. **Throw in the towel**

Meaning: To give up or surrender

Example: After several failed attempts, he finally threw in the towel on his startup idea.

7. **The ball is in your court**
Meaning: It is now your decision or responsibility
Example: I have done my part of the project; now the ball is in your court.
8. **Let the cat out of the bag**
Meaning: To reveal a secret unintentionally
Example: Jane let the cat out of the bag about the surprise party.
9. **A piece of cake**
Meaning: Something very easy to do
Example: The test was a piece of cake; I finished it in 10 minutes.
10. **Under the weather**
Meaning: Feeling sick or unwell
Example: I won't be coming to work today because I'm feeling under the weather.
11. **Kill two birds with one stone**
Meaning: To accomplish two tasks with a single action
Example: By studying while commuting, she kills two birds with one stone.
12. **Go the extra mile**
Meaning: To make an extra effort to achieve something
Example: The customer service team went the extra mile to resolve my issue.
13. **Barking up the wrong tree**
Meaning: Pursuing a mistaken or misguided course of action
Example: If you think I took your book, you are barking up the wrong tree.
14. **Spill the beans**
Meaning: To reveal secret information
Example: Don't spill the beans about the surprise gift for Dad!
15. **Once in a blue moon**
Meaning: Something that happens very rarely
Example: He visits his hometown once in a blue moon.
16. **Cut to the chase**
Meaning: To get to the point without unnecessary details
Example: We don't have much time, so let's cut to the chase.
17. **Hit the sack**
Meaning: To go to bed
Example: I'm really tired, so I'm going to hit the sack now.
18. **Pull someone's leg**
Meaning: To tease or joke with someone
Example: I thought he was serious, but he was just pulling my leg.
19. **Face the music**

Meaning: To accept the consequences of one's actions

Example: He was caught cheating and had to face the music.

20. **Cry over spilled milk**

Meaning: To be upset over something that cannot be changed

Example: There's no use crying over spilled milk; let's find a solution.

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