

SR	IDIOM	MEANING	EXAMPLE	TOPIC
1	back-of-the-envelope calculation	This expression refers to a quick approximate calculation done informally as, for example, on the back of an envelope.	I don't need the exact amount. Just give me a back-of-the-envelope calculation.	Money - Finance - Wealth
2	ballpark figure	If someone gives a ballpark figure, they give an approximate number or a rough estimate of the cost of something.	I don't know exactly how much it will cost, but a ballpark figure would be around \$100 000.	Money - Finance - Wealth
3	bet your bottom dollar	If you bet your bottom dollar on something, you are absolutely certain of it.	Jack is very punctual. You can bet your bottom dollar he'll be here at 9 o'clock on the dot.	Money - Finance - Wealth
4	tighten your belt	If you need to tighten your belt, you must spend your money carefully because there is less available.	Another bill? I'll have to tighten my belt this month!	Money - Finance - Wealth
5	born with a silver spoon in your mouth	A person who is born with a silver spoon in their mouth is born into a very rich family.	Jessica never has to worry about money; she was born with a silver spoon in her mouth.	Money - Finance - Wealth
6	bread and butter	Your bread and butter is a job or activity that is your main source of income and provides you with enough to cover your basic needs.	I'm a writer but teaching is my bread and butter.	Money - Finance - Wealth
7	on the breadline	People who live on the breadline have a very low income or barely enough money to survive.	Due to the recent crisis, there are more people on the breadline than ever before.	Money - Finance - Wealth
8	break the bank	If you break the bank, you spend all of your money.	Buying a new car is going to break the bank, but we really need it.	Money - Finance - Wealth
9	burn your fingers / get your fingers burnt	If you burn your fingers (or get your fingers burnt), you suffer financially as a result of foolish behaviour.	Jack got his fingers burnt playing on the stock market.	Money - Finance - Wealth
10	(a) cash cow	A product or service which is a regular source of income for a company is called a cash cow.	Tony's latest invention turned out to be a real cash cow.	Money - Finance - Wealth
11	cash in your chips	If you cash in your chips, you sell something, especially shares, either because you need the money or because you think the value is going to fall.	Andy cashed in his chips as soon as business started to slow down.	Money - Finance - Wealth

12	chicken feed	An amount of money considered small or unimportant is called chicken feed.	I got a job during the holidays but the pay was chicken feed.	Money - Finance - Wealth
13	(the) other side of the coin	When you want to mention a different or contradictory aspect of a situation, you refer to the other side of the coin.	The house is lovely and spacious, but the other side of the coin is that it is far from shops and schools.	Money - Finance - Wealth
14	cook the books	A person who cooks the books is one who changes the facts or figures in the financial accounts, often in order to steal money.	The actor discovered after a while that his agent was cooking the books.	Money - Finance - Wealth
15	cost an arm and a leg	If something costs an arm and a leg, it is very expensive.	The house cost us an arm and a leg, but we have no regrets.	Money - Finance - Wealth
16	cost the earth	If something costs the earth, it is very expensive indeed.	Amanda wears designer clothes that must cost the earth!	Money - Finance - Wealth
17	at all costs	If you are determined to obtain or achieve something at all costs, you want it regardless of the expense, effort or sacrifice involved.	The journalist was determined at all costs to get a report from the war zone.	Money - Finance - Wealth
18	cut one's losses	If you end or withdraw from something that is already failing, in order to reduce the loss of money, time or effort invested in it, you cut your losses.	The project is heading for failure. Let's cut our losses before it's too late.	Money - Finance - Wealth
19	deep pockets	A person or organisation who has deep pockets has a lot of money.	Andy's business is not doing well at the moment. He says he needs a friend with deep pockets!	Money - Finance - Wealth
20	down payment	When someone makes a down payment, they pay part of the total amount agreed when signing a purchase deal or contract.	Emma and Paul are excited. They put a down payment on their first house yesterday.	Money - Finance - Wealth
21	get your money's worth	If you get your money's worth you get good value for the money you spend.	With the travel pass included, we really got our money's worth.	Money - Finance - Wealth
22	go Dutch	To go Dutch with somebody means to share the cost of something such as a meal or a concert.	Young people today tend to go Dutch when they go out together.	Money - Finance - Wealth
23	eat/dip into one's savings	If you eat or dip into your savings, you spend part of the money you have put aside for future use.	I had to dip into my savings to have the car repaired.	Money - Finance - Wealth

24	feather your nest	To say of someone that they are feathering their nest means that they are taking advantage of their position in order to obtain money and enjoy a comfortable life.	Some people think that government officials use their position to feather their own nest.	Money - Finance - Wealth
25	feed the kitty	If you feed the kitty, you contribute to a collection of money called a 'kitty' in order to help a good cause.	Come on! Every little helps. You should feed the kitty for a good cause!	Money - Finance - Wealth
26	(be) flat broke	If you are flat broke, you have absolutely no money at all.	I'd love to go to the match with you, but right now I'm flat broke - sorry!	Money - Finance - Wealth
27	get your money's worth	If you get your money's worth, you receive good value for the amount of money you spend.	We bought a travel pass to use the public transport system and we really got our money's worth.	Money - Finance - Wealth
28	give someone a run for their money	If you give someone a run for their money, you show that you can do something as well as them, or almost as well.	He didn't win but he gave some of the professional players a (good) run for their money.	Money - Finance - Wealth
29	gnomes of Zurich	This is a disparaging term for Swiss bankers who control a lot of money and are said to be uninterested in the provenance of funds and protect their clients' identity.	The gnomes of Zurich refuse to cooperate with the investigating officials.	Money - Finance - Wealth
30	golden handcuffs	The term golden handcuffs refers to a large sum of money or a generous financial arrangement granted to an executive as an incentive to stay in their job, or to ensure long-term cooperation after their departure.		Money - Finance - Wealth
31	golden handshake	A golden handshake is a generous sum of money given to a person when they leave a company or retire (sometimes given to encourage early retirement).	Since the village has become fashionable, he charges for every photograph taken of his house - he's on a gravy train!	Money - Finance - Wealth
32	gravy train	If someone is on the gravy train, they have found an easy way to make money, one that requires little effort and is without risk.	Since the village has become fashionable, he charges for every photograph taken of his house - he's on a gravy train!	Money - Finance - Wealth

33	hard up	If you are hard up, you have very little money.	We were so hard up that we had to sleep in the car.	Money - Finance - Wealth
34	hit pay dirt	If you hit (or strike) pay dirt, you are lucky and suddenly find yourself in a successful money-making situation.	Charlie finally hit pay dirt with his latent invention.	Money - Finance - Wealth
35	hush money	Money paid to keep information secret or avoid a scandal is called hush money.	The politician had an extra-marital affair and paid hush money to keep it secret.	Money - Finance - Wealth
36	on the house	Something which is on the house is offered free of charge, usually in a bar or restaurant.	The new owner of the pub offered us a drink on the house.	Money - Finance - Wealth
37	ill-gotten gains	Money, profit or benefits that are made in a dishonest, fraudulent or illegal manner are called ill-gotten gains.	He won money by cheating and deposited his ill-gotten gains in foreign banks.	Money - Finance - Wealth
38	in dire straits	If a person or organisation is in dire straits, they are in a very difficult situation, especially a financial one.	The loss of major contracts has put the company in dire straits.	Money - Finance - Wealth
39	in for a penny, in for a pound	This expression means that since you have started something or become involved in it, you might as well complete it or see it through to the end.	All right. I said I'd participate, but as you say: 'in for a penny, in for a pound'!	Money - Finance - Wealth
40	itchy/itching palm	Someone who has an itching palm is greedy for money, for example tips or commission (as if putting money in the palm of their hand would ease the itch).	He's said to have an itching palm - he does nothing without payment!	Money - Finance - Wealth
41	keep your head above water	To keep one's head above water means to try to survive by staying out of debt, for example a small business.	Business has been slow, but we've managed to keep our head above water.	Money - Finance - Wealth
42	keep the wolf from the door	In order to keep the wolf from the door, you need to have enough money to buy food and other essentials.	My grandparents earned barely enough money to keep the wolf from the door.	Money - Finance - Wealth
43	a kickback	This expression refers to money paid illegally for favourable treatment.	The property developers were accused of giving kickbacks to the local authorities.	Money - Finance - Wealth

44	laugh all the way to the bank	A person who makes a lot of money easily, especially through someone else's stupidity, is said to laugh all the way to the bank.	If we fail to renew the contract, our competitors will be laughing all the way to the bank.	Money - Finance - Wealth
45	(a) licence to print money	An officially authorized activity which enables people to make a lot of money without much effort is called a licence to print money.	The contract to supply computers to schools was a licence to print money.	Money - Finance - Wealth
46	live beyond your means	If someone lives beyond their means, they spend more money than they earn or can afford.	The cost of living was so much higher in New York that he was soon living beyond his means.	Money - Finance - Wealth
47	live (or be) on the breadline	People who live on the breadline have a very low income or barely enough money to survive.	Due to the recent crisis, there are more people living on the breadline than ever before.	Money - Finance - Wealth
48	live from hand to mouth	If you live from hand to mouth, you don't have any money to save because whatever you earn is spent on food and other essentials.	Most families in that area live from hand to mouth.	Money - Finance - Wealth
49	live in clover	Someone who lives in clover has enough money to lead a very comfortable life.	I dream of making an enormous amount of money and living in clover for the rest of my life!	Money - Finance - Wealth
50	live high off the hog	Someone who lives high off the hog has a lot of money and a very comfortable lifestyle.	Now he's wealthy and living high off the hog.	Money - Finance - Wealth
51	(a) loan shark	A loan shark is a person who lends money at extremely high interest rates to people who are unable to obtain a loan from the bank.	The young immigrant was beaten because he was late paying back money to a loan shark.	Money - Finance - Wealth
52	look (or feel) like a million dollars	If you look (or feel) like a million dollars, you look/feel extremely good or attractive.	With a tan and a new hairstyle Jane looked (like) a million dollars!	Money - Finance - Wealth
53	lose your shirt	If you lose your shirt, you lose all your money or possessions, especially as a result of speculation or gambling.	He lost his shirt when the bank went bankrupt.	Money - Finance - Wealth
54	make ends meet	If you find it difficult to pay for your everyday needs because you have very little money, it is hard for you to make ends meet.	Anne's salary is so low that she finds hard to make ends meet.	Money - Finance - Wealth

55	make a killing	If you say that someone has made a killing you mean that they have had great financial success.	He made a killing on the stock market.	Money - Finance - Wealth
56	make a mint	If someone makes a mint, they make a large amount of money.	They made a mint selling hamburgers outside the football stadium.	Money - Finance - Wealth
57	made of money	A person who is made of money is very rich and can buy whatever they want.	Hey! I can't afford that much. I'm not made of money!	Money - Finance - Wealth
58	make a killing	If you say that someone has made a killing you mean that they have had great financial success.	Tony made a killing on the stock market.	Money - Finance - Wealth
59	(have) money to burn	People who have money to burn have so much money that they can spend it on anything they want.	A leather jacket is no problem for Sarah. She's got money to burn!	Money - Finance - Wealth
60	money burns a hole in your pocket	To say that money burns a hole in somebody's pocket means that they are eager to spend money quickly or extravagantly.	As soon as Carla gets her salary she goes shopping. Money burns a hole in her pocket!	Money - Finance - Wealth
61	money can't buy happiness	This expression means that no amount of wealth can guarantee happiness	In spite of his fortune he was sad and lonely. Money can't buy happiness!	Money - Finance - Wealth
62	money doesn't grow on trees	To say that money doesn't grow on trees means that it is not plentiful or easily obtained.	Watch how you spend your money Alex. It doesn't grow on trees you know!	Money - Finance - Wealth
63	money for jam	A very easy way of earning money is called money for jam.	All you've got to do is hand out brochures. It's money for jam!	Money - Finance - Wealth
64	money is the root of all evil	This expression means that money incites people to do evil things.	The victim was murdered for money. As always, money is the root of all evil.	Money - Finance - Wealth
65	money for old rope	Money earned from a task that requires very little effort is called money for old rope.	Getting paid for watering the garden is money for old rope!	Money - Finance - Wealth
66	money laundering	When people launder money, they manage to conceal the source of illegally-obtained money so that it is believed to be legitimate.	Certain countries have been accused of facilitating money laundering.	Money - Finance - Wealth

67	money pit	A place, project or financial commitment that requires you to spend an increasingly large amount of money, more than was initially anticipated, is referred to as a 'money pit'.	The renovation of the charming old house turned out to be a money pit.	Money - Finance - Wealth
68	money makes the world go round	To say that money makes the world go round means that money motivates people to do things. Financial benefit serves as encouragement.	Things get done when people are paid. Money makes the world go round!	Money - Finance - Wealth
69	(a) money spinner	If an activity is a money spinner, it is a very successful way of making money.	Washing cars was quite a money spinner when I was a student.	Money - Finance - Wealth
70	money talks	Money talks means that people with a lot of money have power and influence.	The owner is a millionaire and he's influential - money talks!	Money - Finance - Wealth
71	more money than sense	If you have more money than sense, you have a lot of money which you waste by spending it in a foolish manner.	He celebrated the birth of the baby by buying a sports car. He's got more money than sense!	Money - Finance - Wealth
72	not (do something) for love or money	If you say that you cannot or will not do something for love or money, you mean that you will not do it under any circumstances.	I would not try bungee jumping for love or money!	Money - Finance - Wealth
73	put your money where your mouth is	If you put your money where your mouth is, not only do you express your interest, you give financial support to causes that you believe in.	If people are really interested in helping the underprivileged, they should put their money where their mouth is.	Money - Finance - Wealth
74	rake in the money	If you rake in the money, you make money in large quantities.	Bob's business is so successful, he's raking in the money.	Money - Finance - Wealth
75	rolling in money	Someone who is very wealthy or has access to great amounts of money is rolling in money.	Steve has no financial problems. His parents are rolling in money.	Money - Finance - Wealth
76	see the colour of someone's money	If you want to see the colour of somebody's money, you want to be sure that the person in question has enough money to pay you before you accept to do something.	We want to see the colour of his money before shipping the goods.	Money - Finance - Wealth

77	throw money at something	If you throw money at something, you try to solve a problem by spending money on it, without using any other methods.	The refugee problem cannot be solved just by throwing money at it.	Money - Finance - Wealth
78	throw good money after bad	Someone who spends additional money on something that was already considered a bad investment is said to throw good money after bad.	Buying a second-hand computer and then spending money to have it repaired is throwing good money after bad!	Money - Finance - Wealth
79	get your money's worth	If you get your money's worth, you receive good value for the amount of money you spend.	We bought a travel pass to use the public transport system and we really got our money's worth.	Money - Finance - Wealth
80	nest egg	If you have a nest egg, you have a reserve of money which you put aside for future needs.	Our parents consider the money from the sale of their house as a nest egg for their old age.	Money - Finance - Wealth
81	next to nothing	The term next to nothing means a very small amount of money, or almost nothing.	My boots didn't cost much. I bought them for next to nothing in the sales.	Money - Finance - Wealth
82	not for love or money	If you say that you cannot or will not do something for love or money, you mean that you will not do it under any circumstances.	I would not try bungee jumping for love or money!	Money - Finance - Wealth
83	out of your own pocket	If you pay for something out of your own pocket, you cover the cost with your own money.	Breakfast is included but you must pay for lunch out of your own pocket.	Money - Finance - Wealth
84	pay over the odds	If you pay over the odds, you pay too much or you pay more money for something than it is really worth.	She's willing to pay over the odds for an original Kelly handbag to add to her collection.	Money - Finance - Wealth
85	(be) paid peanuts	If you are paid peanuts, you have a very low salary or you earn very little.	Jenny has a very interesting job, but she's paid peanuts.	Money - Finance - Wealth
86	cost a pretty penny	If something costs a pretty penny it is very expensive.	His new yacht must have cost him a pretty penny!	Money - Finance - Wealth
87	(the) penny drops	When a person has difficulty understanding or realising something, and then the penny drops, they finally understand.	The teasing continued for some time until the penny dropped and the boy realised it was a joke!	Money - Finance - Wealth



88	in for a penny, in for a pound	This expression means that once you start doing something, you might just as well do it wholeheartedly and not stop at half-measures.	Joe finally accepted to be on the committee, then he accepted to be the chairman. In for a penny, in for a pound'. he said!	Money - Finance - Wealth
89	a penny for your thoughts	This phrase is used to ask someone what they are thinking about.	You look pensive. A penny for your thoughts.	Money - Finance - Wealth
90	turn up like a bad penny	If someone turns up like a bad penny, they appear at a place or event where they are not welcome or not wanted.	I try to avoid Jessica, but wherever I go she turns up like a bad penny!	Money - Finance - Wealth
91	pick up the tab	If you pick up the tab, you pay the bill or pay the cost of something.	There was a celebration lunch for the team and Bill picked up the tab.	Money - Finance - Wealth
92	play the market	If you play the market, you buy stocks and shares in the hope of making a profit when you sell them.	It's always tempting to play the market, but it's more risky at the present time.	Money - Finance - Wealth
93	(have) deep pockets	A person or organisation who has a lot of money has deep pockets.	Andy's business is not doing well at the moment. He says he needs a friend with deep pockets!	Money - Finance - Wealth
94	price oneself out of the market	If you price yourself out of the market, you charge such a high price for your goods or services that nobody wants to buy them.	Danny was so eager to make money that he priced himself out of the market.	Money - Finance - Wealth
95	(go from) rags to riches	If a person goes from rags to riches, they start off being very poor and become very rich and successful.	By renovating old houses in the right places, he went from rags to riches.	Money - Finance - Wealth
96	rake in the money	If you rake in the money, you make money in large quantities.	Bob's business is so successful, he's raking in the money.	Money - Finance - Wealth
97	a rip-off	To say that something is a rip-off means that it costs much more than it should.	\$15 for an orange juice? That's a rip-off!	Money - Finance - Wealth
98	rob Peter to pay Paul	If someone robs Peter to pay Paul, they pay one debt with money borrowed from someone else, thus creating another debt.	David borrowed from a friend to pay his overdraft, a typical case of robbing Peter to pay Paul.	Money - Finance - Wealth
99	rolling in money	Someone who is very wealthy or has access to great amounts of money is rolling in money.	Steve has no financial problems. His parents are rolling in money.	Money - Finance - Wealth

100	saddled with debt	If you are saddled with debt, the amount of money that you owe is a financial burden.	Be careful. If you buy a house that is too expensive, you could be saddled with debt for many years.	Money - Finance - Wealth
101	scrimp and save / scrimp and scrape	If you scrimp and save, you spend as little as possible over a certain period of time in order to save money.	The parents scrimped and saved for years so that their children could have a college education.	Money - Finance - Wealth
102	set you back	The sum of money something sets you back is the amount it costs you.	Changing the heating system will set us back about \$5000.	Money - Finance - Wealth
103	on a shoestring	If you do something on a shoestring, you do it with very little money.	When I was a student I lived on a shoestring.	Money - Finance - Wealth
104	(born with a) silver spoon in your mouth	To say that someone is born with a silver spoon in their mouth means that their family is very rich and privileged.	Alice never has to worry about money; she was born with a silver spoon in her mouth.	Money - Finance - Wealth
105	(put) skin in the game	If you put skin in the game, you show your confidence in a company by making a considerable investment or a financial commitment.	I got good news today. Apparently a serious investor is willing to put skin in the game.	Money - Finance - Wealth
106	slice/share of the cake	When people feel entitled to a share of the profits or benefits, they want a (larger) slice of the cake.	Since profits are higher this year, the workers feel they deserve a bigger slice of the cake.	Money - Finance - Wealth
107	slush fund	A slush fund is an account or fund in politics or business where money is set aside for various unofficial purposes, often unethical or even illegal.	A large commission taken from the slush fund ensured the success of the negotiations.	Money - Finance - Wealth
108	splash out	If you splash out on something, you spend a lot of money on it.	Chloe's parents really splashed out on her wedding.	Money - Finance - Wealth
109	it's a steal	If you find something that you want for a very low price, much lower than what it is worth, you can say 'it's a steal!'	He's selling it for \$20? At that price it's a steal!	Money - Finance - Wealth
110	sting someone (for an amount of money)	If you sting someone for an amount of money, you make them pay for something, usually in a deceitful manner.	Not only was the lunch boring but I was stung for \$25!	Money - Finance - Wealth

111	strike pay dirt	If you strike pay dirt, you are lucky and suddenly find yourself in a successful money-making situation.	Charlie finally struck pay dirt with his latest invention.	Money - Finance - Wealth
112	suit every pocket	This term refers to the amount of money you are able to spend or the price you can afford.	The store offers a wide range of computers at prices to suit every pocket.	Money - Finance - Wealth
113	on one's uppers	Someone who is on their uppers has very little money or not enough to cover their needs.	Because he was clearly on his uppers when he was hired, he was given an advance in salary.	Money - Finance - Wealth
114	all that jazz	The expression 'and all that jazz' is used to mean other similar or related things, or everything of the kind you have been talking about.	Let's get out the tinsel, the fairy lights and all that jazz to decorate the Christmas tree.	Music
115	blow your own trumpet	Someone who blows their own trumpet boasts about their own abilities or achievements.	I don't like to blow my own trumpet but I really am a good cook.	Music
116	blow the whistle / be a whistle-blower	If you report an illegal or socially-harmful activity to the authorities, and give information about those responsible for it, you blow the whistle, or you are a whistle-blower.	He refused to blow the whistle on his boss for fear of losing his job.	Music
117	call the tune	The person who calls the tune is the one who makes all the important decisions or is in control of the situation.	Alex shows a lot of authority but in fact it's his wife who calls the tune.	Music
118	change your tune	If someone changes their tune, they change their attitude or give a different opinion about something from the one they had expressed before.	The boss says he's too young to be given responsibility but he'll change his tune when he sees him at work.	Music
119	chime in	If you chime in, you interrupt or join a conversation, especially to repeat or agree with something.	While I was explaining to the bus driver what had happened, the other passengers chimed in and gave their version.	Music
120	drum (something) into someone's head	If you teach something to someone through constant repetition, you drum it into their head.	When we were kids at school, multiplication tables were drummed into our heads.	Music

121	(as) fit as a fiddle	A person who is as fit as a fiddle is in an excellent state of health or physical condition.	My grandfather is nearly ninety but he's as fit as a fiddle.	Music
122	play second fiddle	If you play second fiddle to someone, you accept to be second in importance to that person, or have a lower position.	When Charles became chairman of the family business, his brother declared that he would rather leave than play second fiddle to him.	Music
123	fiddling while Rome burns	If you say that someone is fiddling while Rome burns, you mean that they are doing unimportant things while there are serious matters to be dealt with.	His visit to the trade fair was fiddling while Rome burns according to the strikers.	Music
124	jazz something up	If you jazz something up, you add something to try to improve it or make it more stylish or exciting.	The dress needs a scarf or a necklace to jazz it up. The chef decided to jazz up the fish with a spicy sauce.	Music
125	make a song and dance (about something)	If you become unnecessarily annoyed or excited, or make a fuss about something, you make a song and dance about it.	OK, you don't like carrots. Don't make a song and dance about it!	Music
126	music to your ears	To say that something is music to your ears means that the information you receive makes you feel very happy.	The manager's compliments were music to my ears.	Music
127	face the music	When a person has to face the music, they have to accept the unpleasant consequences of their actions.	The boy was caught stealing. Now he has to face the music.	Music
128	ring a bell	If something rings a bell, it sounds familiar, but you don't remember the exact details.	John Bentley? The name rings a bell but I don't remember him.	Music
129	sing a different tune	If somebody sings a different tune, they change their opinion about something, or their attitude towards something.	He had no sympathy for people out of work until he lost his own job; now he's singing a different tune.	Music
130	strike a false note	If you strike a false note, you do something wrong, unsuitable or inappropriate.	He struck a false note when he arrived at the cocktail party wearing old jeans.	Music
131	strike (or hit) the right note	If you strike (or hit) the right note, you do something suitable or appropriate.	He struck the right note with his future mother-in-law when he brought her a book on gardening - her favourite hobby!	Music

132	sound like a broken record	Someone who says the same thing again and again sounds like a broken record.	Dad! Stop telling me to be careful when I drive. You sound like a broken record!	Music
133	go for a song	If something goes for a song, it is sold at an unexpectedly low price or less than it is worth.	When the contents of the old man's house were sold at an auction, they went for a song.	Music
134	it takes two to tango	We say this when we think that a dispute or a difficult situation cannot be the fault of one person alone.	Okay, I've heard Fred's side of the story - but it takes two to tango!.	Music
135	tickle the ivories	This is a humorous way of talking about playing the piano.	My grandfather loves playing the piano. He tickles the ivories whenever he gets the chance.	Music
136	sing a different tune	If someone sings a different tune, they change their opinion about something or their attitude towards something.	He had no consideration for people out of work until he lost his own job; now he's singing a different tune.	Music
137	fine tuning	Small changes to something to improve it or make it work better are called fine-tuning.	We are still fine tuning our new website and appreciate your patience.	Music
138	as clean as a whistle	Something as clean as a whistle is extremely clean. This can also mean that a person's criminal record is clean.	Bob spent the afternoon washing and shining his car until it was as clean as a whistle.	Music
139	all told	All told means the final number, when everything has been counted.	The number of visitors to the exhibition, all told, was 2543.	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
140	ballpark figure	If someone gives a ballpark figure, they give an approximate number or a rough estimate of the cost of something.	I don't know exactly how much it will cost, but a ballpark figure would be around \$100 000.	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
141	in dribs and drabs	If something comes in dribs and drabs, it arrives little by little, in small amounts or numbers.	Instead of the big crowd we expected, people arrived in dribs and drabs.	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
142	over the eight	If a person has had one over the eight, they are slightly drunk.	Don't listen to him. Can't you see he's had one over the eight!	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
143	at the eleventh hour	If something happens at the eleventh hour, it happens when it is almost too late, or at the last possible moment when there is hardly any hope left.	Our team won after they scored a goal at the eleventh hour.	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts

144	fifth wheel	This expression refers to a person who find themselves in a situation where their presence is unnecessary and as a result they feel useless.	Everyone seemed to have a specific role except me. I felt like a fifth wheel.	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
145	first and foremost	The expression first and foremost is used to state what you consider to be more important than anything else.	First and foremost I want to thank our hosts for their wonderful reception.	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
146	first base	When you get to (or reach) first base, you make progress or begin to have success with someone or something.	If you go to the interview dressed like that, you won't get to first base!	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
147	first come first served	The expression first come first served means that there will be no favouritism or preferential treatment. People will be served strictly in the order they arrive.	Tickets for the match will be sold on a 'first come first served' basis.	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
148	(at) first hand	If you experience something yourself directly, without any intermediary, you experience it (at) first hand.	Getting to see the performance (at) first hand is much better than watching it on television.	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
149	first out of the gate	If you are first out of the gate, you are the first to make a start at something that others have also accepted to do.	Sandra was so enthusiastic about the project that she was first out of the gate.	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
150	in the first place	Something that is done in the first place is done at the beginning, before anything else.	Why didn't you tell me he was your boyfriend in the first place?	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
151	(of the) first water	Something that is of the first water is of the finest or most exceptional quality (like being compared to a diamond).	The violinist gave a performance that was of the first water.	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
152	five finger discount	If somebody gets a five-finger discount, they take something without paying. In other words, they steal.	How could he afford that watch? Who knows - perhaps with a five-finger discount!	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
153	five o'clock shadow	The expression five o'clock shadow refers to a patch of stubble on the face of a man who hasn't shaved for at least a day.	He looked tired and had a five o'clock shadow.	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts

154	forty winks	If you have forty winks, you have a short sleep or rest, generally during the day.	Dad likes to have forty winks after a game of golf.	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
155	on all fours	If you are on all fours, you are down on your hands and knees.	When his wife arrived he was on all fours playing with his grandchildren.	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
156	give or take (an amount or quantity)	This term is used when expressing an amount or estimate that is not exactly right. It means 'plus or minus', 'more or less', or 'approximately'.	The nearest town is about 100 miles away, give or take a few miles.	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
157	half the battle	This expression refers to a significant part of the effort or work needed to achieve something.	We've already obtained a loan for the project - that's half the battle!	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
158	half an eye	If you have or keep half an eye on something, you watch it without giving it your full attention.	She kept half an eye on the TV screen while she was preparing dinner.	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
159	half a mind	If you have half a mind to do something, you are thinking seriously about it but have not yet reached a decision.	I've half a mind to start up my own business, but first I need some advice.	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
160	(you don't know the) half of it	This expression is used to tell someone that they know some of the facts but they don't know how bad the situation is.	You don't know the half of it! He was beating her and terrifying the children. That's why she left him.	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
161	chance in a million	A is a very small chance, or no chance at all, that something will happen.	There's a chance in a million of finding the key I lost on the golf course.	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
162	look (or feel) like a million dollars	If you look (or feel) like a million dollars, you look/feel extremely good or attractive.	With a tan and a new hairstyle Jane looked (like) a million dollars!	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
163	never in a million years	This expression means 'absolutely never'.	I will never in a million years understand why Anne married Bob.	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
164	nine-day wonder	An event which is a nine-day wonder causes interest, surprise or excitement for a short time, but it doesn't last.	His sudden departure was a nine-day wonder but he was soon forgotten.	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
165	nine times out of ten	When something happens nine times out of ten, it is what usually happens.	The public transport system is very bad. Trains arrive late nine times out of ten.	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts

166	on cloud nine	A person who is on cloud nine is very happy because something wonderful has happened.	When the boss announced my promotion, I was on cloud nine!	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
167	dressed up to the nines	To describe someone as dressed up to the nines means that they are wearing very smart or glamorous clothes.	Caroline must be going to a party - she's dressed up to the nines.	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
168	(talk) nineteen to the dozen	Someone who talks nineteen to the dozen speaks very quickly.	He was talking nineteen to the dozen so I didn't catch the whole story.	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
169	number cruncher	This is a humorous way of referring to someone who is an accountant or who is very good at working with numbers and calculations.	She's a number cruncher who perfectly understands the organisation's financial situation.	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
170	safety in numbers	Th expression safety in numbers means that being part of a group makes people feel more secure and more confident when taking action.	None of the group went sightseeing alone, knowing there was safety in numbers.	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
171	one in the eye	If an event or development is an unexpected defeat or disappointment for someone, it is one in the eye for that person.	My promotion was one in the eye for my ambitious colleague.	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
172	at/in one fell swoop	If something is accomplished at (or in) one fell swoop, it is done in a single action, usually rapidly and ruthlessly.	The three houses were demolished at one fell swoop.	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
173	one foot in the grave	A person who is either very old or very ill and close to death has one foot in the grave.	It's no use talking to the owner. The poor man has one foot in the grave.	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
174	one good turn deserves another	If someone helps you, it is natural and right to help them in return.	We helped Alex and Sara when they moved into their new house, just as they helped us last year; one good turn deserves another.	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
175	one hand washes the other (and together they wash the face)	This expression means that when people cooperate and work well together, there is a better chance of a achieving results.		Numbers - Quantities 0 - Amounts



176	(a) one-horse town	A place referred to as a one horse town is a small, boring town where nothing much ever happens.	I wish my grandparents didn't live in that one-horse town. It's such a boring place!	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
177	one over the eight	If a person has had one over the eight, they are slightly drunk.	Don't listen to him! Can't you see he's had one over the eight!	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
178	one step ahead	When you are one step ahead of someone else, you achieve something faster than they do, or you have a slight advantage over them.	The company is successful because they're always one step ahead of their competitors.	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
179	(a) one-track mind	If you have a one-track mind, you have a tendency to think about only one subject.	The boy has a one-track mind; all he thinks about is football!	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
180	one too many	Someone who has had one too many has drunk too much alcohol.	I think Tony's had one too many - he's talking rubbish.	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
181	one's number is up	To say that one's number is up means that either a person is in serious difficulty and something bad is going to happen, or the time has come when they will die.	The police have located the escaped prisoner so it looks as if his number is up!	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
182	one's own undoing	If you do something that is the cause of your own failure, loss or downfall, it is your own undoing.	If he continues to gamble like that, it will be his own undoing.	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
183	one-upmanship	This term refers to the art of gaining and keeping an advantage over other people.	He's a successful man, but his one-upmanship has left him with few friends.	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
184	look out for number one	If you take care of yourself first, and look after your own interests rather than those of other people, you look out for number one.	Andy's father told him that looking out for number one should be his first priority.	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
185	play second fiddle	If you play second fiddle to someone, you accept to be second in importance to that person, or have a lower position.	When Charles became chairman of the family business, his brother declared that he would rather leave than play second fiddle to him.	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
186	second a motion	During a meeting, if you second a motion, you formally agree with a proposal.	She seconded the motion to introduce flexible working hours.	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts

187	second nature	If something you do is second nature to you, it is something that you do easily or automatically because you have done it so often or for so long.	Skiing is second nature to Harry. He grew up in a ski resort.	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
188	second to none	Something that is second to none is excellent or much better than any other.	The service was perfect and the food was second to none.	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
189	on second thoughts	'On second thoughts' means that after giving the matter more thought, you have changed your mind.	My idea was to move to an apartment, but on second thoughts, I'd rather have a garden.	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
190	in seventh heaven	If you are in seventh heaven, you are extremely happy.	Every time she wins a match, she's in seventh heaven!	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
191	six of one and half a dozen of the other	This expression means that there is no real difference between two choices; both are equally good or equally bad.	I didn't know who to vote for. It was six of one and half a dozen of the other!	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
192	at sixes and sevens	If someone is at sixes and sevens, they are in a state of confusion or not very well organised.	The managers were at sixes and sevens when they were informed of the Chairman's visit.	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
193	third time lucky	This expression is used to express the hope that after twice failing to achieve something, the third attempt will be successful.	Our team has been defeated twice in the final. This is our third attempt, and let's hope it'll be a case of third time lucky !	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
194	three cheers	When people give three cheers (for someone or something), they give three shouts to show joy, appreciation or congratulations. One person in the group says 'hip, hip' and the others then shout 'hooray'.	What a team! Three cheers for the captain!. Hip hip hooray! (or 'hip, hip, hurray!).	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
195	a thousand times	This expresses exasperation at having constantly to repeat the same thing.	I've told you a thousand times to wipe your feet before coming in!	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
196	catch twenty-two	A catch 22 situation refers to a frustrating situation where you cannot do one thing without doing a second, and you cannot do the second before doing the first.	I can't get a job without a work permit, and I can't get a work permit without a job. It's a catch 22 situation!	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts

197	twenty-four-seven	This term refers to something which is available or happens twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.	The tourist office provided a list of 24-7 supermarkets in the area.	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
198	two of a kind	People who are two of a kind are similar in character, attitude or tastes.	Pete and Ben are two of a kind; they enjoy sports and are very competitive.	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
199	two can play at that game	You say this to tell someone that you can behave towards them in the same unpleasant way that they have behaved towards you.	He refuses to take my call? Tell him two can play at that game!	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
200	two-faced	Someone who is two-faced is deceitful or insincere; they will say one thing to your face and something else when you are not there.	I don't trust Billy. I find him two-faced.	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
201	two left feet	If you have two left feet, you are clumsy or awkward in your movements.	I'm afraid I'm a bad dancer. I've got two left feet!	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
202	kill two birds with one stone	If you kill two birds with one stone, you succeed in doing two things at the same time.	By studying on the train on the way home, Claire kills two birds with one stone.	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
203	in two minds	If you are in two minds about something, you have difficulty deciding what to do.	I'm in two minds about whether or not to accept the offer.	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
204	it takes two to tango	You say this when you think that a difficult situation cannot be the fault of one person alone.	We've heard only Fred's side of the story - but it takes two to tango!	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
205	(like) two peas in a pod	Two people who are like two peas in a pod are very similar in appearance.	The two brothers are very alike - they're like two peas in a pod!	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
206	in two shakes of a lamb's tail	To do something in two shakes of a lamb's tail means to do it very quickly.	Wait for me. I'll be ready in two shakes (of a lamb's tail).	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
207	two-time someone	If one person two-times another, they cheat on their partner by having a romantic relationship with another person at the same time.	Sally left Harry when she discovered he was two-timing her.	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts

208	two's company, three's a crowd	This is said of two people, particularly lovers, who would prefer to be alone together rather than to have someone else with them.	I'd rather not come to the cinema with you, thanks. Two's company ...!	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
209	the lesser of two evils	If you choose the lesser of two evils, you opt for the less unpleasant of two poor options.	I didn't want to go. Choosing the train instead of driving was the lesser of two evils; at least I could relax on the way.	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
210	no two ways about it	To say that there are no two ways about it means that there is only one suitable way of dealing with something.	There are no two ways about it. You can't accept the money, so you must give it back.	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
211	that makes two of us	This expression indicates agreement with what has just been said.	I found his speech rather boring. That makes two of us!	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
212	put two and two together	To put two and two together means to reach the right conclusion based on what you see or the information you receive.	When she saw Jill and Ben holding hands, it wasn't hard to put two and two together!	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
213	think twice	If you think twice about whether or not to do something, you give it some more thought.	I'd think twice about leaving a job like that if I were you !	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
214	zero in on something	If you zero in on something, you focus all your attention on that particular thing.	The boss immediately zeroed in on the sales figures.	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
215	zero tolerance	If an activity or a certain type of behaviour is given zero tolerance, it will not be accepted, not even once.	The authorities have announced zero tolerance for smoking in public buildings.	Numbers - Quantities - Amounts
216	nip (something) in the bud	If you nip a problem or an unacceptable situation in the bud, you stop it at an early stage, before it develops or becomes worse.	He wanted to be a clown, but his parents soon nipped that idea in the bud.	Plants, Flowers And Trees
217	beat around the bush	The expression beat around the bush is used to tell someone to say what they have to say, clearly and directly, even if it is unpleasant.	Stop beating around the bush. Just tell me what has been decided!	Plants, Flowers And Trees
218	old chestnut	A story, joke or an idea that has been repeated so often that it has lost its novelty is referred to as an 'old chestnut'.	The story about his boat capsizing has become an old chestnut!	Plants, Flowers And Trees

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220	pushing up the daisies	To say that someone is pushing up the daisies means that they are dead.	Old Johnny Barnes? He's been pushing up the daisies for over 10 years!	Plants, Flowers And Trees
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222	hit the hay	When you hit the hay (or hit the sack), you go to bed.	The boys were so exhausted that they hit the hay as soon as they reached the campsite.	Plants, Flowers And Trees
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227	shake like a leaf	If you shake like a leaf, you tremble with fear or nervousness.	At the beginning of the interview the candidate was shaking like a leaf.	Plants, Flowers And Trees
228	turn over a new leaf	If a person turns over a new leaf, they decide to change their behaviour and lead a better life.	When Ted left prison, he was determined to turn over a new leaf.	Plants, Flowers And Trees
229	root and branch	If an action is performed thoroughly or completely, it is done 'root and branch'.	The causes of the disease must be eliminated root and branch.	Plants, Flowers And Trees
230	come up roses	If things come up roses, the end result is successful or positive, even if there were difficult times.	After several disappointments, everything seems to be coming up roses for the tennis player this year.	Plants, Flowers And Trees
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284	small dog, tall weeds	This expression is used to refer to someone who does not have the ability or the resources necessary to perform a task.	It may be too difficult for the trainee - small dog, tall weeds!	Plants, Flowers And Trees
285	black tie event	A black tie event is a formal event at which men are required to wear a dinner jacket, or tuxedo, and a black bow tie.	I need to know if it's going to be a casual get-together or a black tie event.	Politeness - Manners
286	bow and scrape	To say that someone is bowing and scraping means that they are being excessively polite or servile.	The President was greeted with much bowing and scraping.	Politeness - Manners
287	the done thing	The correct way to behave in a particular social situation is called the done thing.	Wearing jeans to play golf is not the done thing in this club.	Politeness - Manners

288	excuse/pardon my French	The expression excuse/pardon my French is used as an apology for using crude or offensive language.	He's a bloody nuisance, if you'll excuse my French.	Politeness - Manners
289	gatecrash	If someone gatecrashes, they attend a private social event without being invited.	We need volunteers to keep an eye out for gatecrashers tonight.	Politeness - Manners
290	mind/watch your language	The expression mind/watch your language is used to warn someone to be careful what they say so as not to upset or offend anyone.	Your grandfather won't tolerate rudeness, so mind your language when we go to visit him!	Politeness - Manners
291	mind your Ps and Qs	If you tell someone to mind their Ps and Qs, you are advising them to be careful about how they behave and what they say.	Politeness is very important to my grandparents, so mind your Ps and Qs.	Politeness - Manners
292	overstep the mark	If you overstep the mark, you go too far and upset someone by saying something or behaving in a way that is unacceptable.	Jenny is angry with her son. He overstepped the mark when he called his grandfather an 'old fool'.	Politeness - Manners
293	speak out of turn	If someone speaks out of turn, either they intervene at the wrong moment or they say something tactless or inappropriate.	At the first meeting I was afraid of speaking out of turn.	Politeness - Manners
294	stand on ceremony	When people stand on ceremony, they behave in a very formal way.	We'd be delighted to come and see you but please don't stand on ceremony.	Politeness - Manners
295	strike a false note	If you strike a false note, you do something wrong, unsuitable or inappropriate.	He struck a false note when he arrived at the cocktail party wearing old jeans.	Politeness - Manners
296	take French leave	If you leave an official or social event without notifying the person who invited you, you take French leave.	Is Bill coming back for the closing speech or has he taken French leave?	Politeness - Manners
297	time-honoured practice	A custom that is universally respected, or a traditional way of doing something, is called a time-honoured practice.	Guests were greeted according to a time-honored practice.	Politeness - Manners

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324	Achilles heel	The term Achilles heel refers to a vulnerable area or a weak spot in a person or system that can cause harm or lack of success.	He's extremely intelligent, but his inability to speak in public is his Achilles heel.	Problems And Difficulties
325	(set) alarm bells ringing / alarm bells start to ring	If something sets the alarm bells ringing, it makes you begin to worry, because it shows that there may be a problem.	Alarm bells started to ring when my old neighbour didn't open his shutters all day and didn't answer his phone.	Problems And Difficulties
326	Asking for trouble	Someone who is asking for trouble is behaving so stupidly that he/she is likely to have problems.	Driving fast on these roads is really asking for trouble!	Problems And Difficulties
327	Back to the wall	If you have your back to the wall, you are in serious difficulty.	With his back to the wall, the supplier had to accept the deal.	Problems And Difficulties
328	Ball and chain	The term ball and chain refers to a burden or problem that ties you down and prevents you from doing what you want. (It can also refer to one's spouse.)	Our holiday home has become a ball and chain - it's too much work!	Problems And Difficulties
329	Bane of one's life	To say that something is the bane of your life means that it is the cause of your problems or your unhappiness.	The heating system is always breaking down. It's the bane of my life!	Problems And Difficulties

330	bite off more than you can chew	If you bite off more than you can chew, you try to do something that is too difficult for you, or more than you can manage.	As soon as I started to translate the report, I realized that I had bitten off more than I could chew.	Problems And Difficulties
331	on the blink	If a machine is on the blink, a light flickering on and off shows that it is not working properly and needs servicing or repair.	What a nuisance! The photocopier is on the blink again.	Problems And Difficulties
332	break the back of the beast	If someone breaks the back of the beast, they succeed in overcoming a major difficulty.	After hours of effort, the technicians finally broke the back of the beast and turned the electricity back on again.	Problems And Difficulties
333	can of worms	To describe a situation as a can of worms means that it is complicated, unpleasant and difficult to deal with.	The discovery of the transfer of funds turned out to be a real can of worms.	Problems And Difficulties
334	can't make head or tail of	If you can't make head or tail of something, you can't understand it at all.	The instructions were so confusing. I couldn't make head or tail of them!	Problems And Difficulties
335	carry the can	If you carry the can for another person, you accept blame or take responsibility for something that goes wrong, even if it is not your fault or only partly.	The author didn't turn up for the interview and his agent had to carry the can.	Problems And Difficulties
336	set ( put) the cat among the pigeons	If someone sets the cat among the pigeons, they cause trouble or make a lot of people angry.	If Joe is the only one to get a pay increase, that will set the cat among the pigeons.	Problems And Difficulties
337	catch 22	A catch 22 situation refers to a frustrating situation where you cannot do one thing without doing a second, and you cannot do the second before doing the first.	I can't get a job without a work permit, and I can't get a work permit without a job. It's a catch 22 situation!	Problems And Difficulties
338	chill wind	If you face or feel the chill wind of something, you are beginning to encounter the problems or the trouble it causes.	Many building companies are facing the chill wind of the recession.	Problems And Difficulties
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369	birds of a feather flock together	If two people are birds of a feather, they are very similar in many ways, so they naturally spend time together.	No wonder they get on well. They're birds of a feather!	Relationships
370	build bridges	If a person builds bridges between opposing groups, they help them to cooperate and understand each other better.	A mediator is trying to build bridges between the local community and the owners of the new plant.	Relationships

371	cut loose	If someone cuts loose or is cut loose, they stop being influenced or controlled by another person or group.	He's thirty years old and still hasn't cut loose from his family.	Relationships
372	see eye to eye with someone	If you see eye to eye with somebody, you agree with them.	I'm glad we see eye to eye on the choice of colour scheme.	Relationships
373	fair-weather friend	Someone who acts as a friend when times are good, and is not there when you are in trouble, is called a fair-weather friend.	I thought I could count on Bill, but I've discovered he's just a fair-weather friend.	Relationships
374	get on like a house on fire	Two people who get on like a house on fire have similar interests and quickly become good friends.	As soon as Sarah met her brother's girlfriend, they got on like a house on fire.	Relationships
375	get a raw deal	If you say that some has got a raw deal, you think they have been treated unfairly or badly.	Lisa got a raw deal in that company. After working so hard, she got neither a pay increase nor a promotion.	Relationships
376	go with the flow	If you go with the flow, you follow the general tendency and go along with whatever happens.	When my colleagues organise an office party, I just go with the flow.	Relationships
377	good walls make good neighbours	This expression means that respecting one another's privacy helps create a good relationship between neighbours.	We try not to disturb the people next door. Good walls make good neighbours!	Relationships
378	(like) herding cats	This expression refers to the difficulty of coordinating a situation which involves people who all want to act independently.	Trying to manage a group of people from different countries is like herding cats!	Relationships
379	be an item	To say that two people are an item means that they are involved in a romantic relationship.	So Sally and Harry are an item, are they?	Relationships
380	keep at arm's length	If you keep someone at arm's length, you do not allow yourself to become too friendly with them.	It's not easy to become friends with Sophie; she tends to keep everyone at arm's length.	Relationships
381	kindred spirit	People who have a lot in common and share the same beliefs, attitudes and feelings are kindred spirits.	The immediately felt they were kindred spirits and became close friends.	Relationships
382	know someone inside out	If you know someone inside out, you know them very well.	Sue and Anne have been friends since childhood. They know each other inside out.	Relationships

383	kowtow to others	If you are very respectful and submissive, giving way to the wishes of a person or organisation in authority in order to please them, you kowtow to them.	Mark refused to kowtow to the committee and decided to work as a consultant.	Relationships
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386	at loggerheads	If you are at loggerheads with a person or organisation, you disagree very strongly with them.	The management and the trade unions are at loggerheads over the decision to close down the plant.	Relationships
387	move in the same circles	When people move in the same circles, they socialize with others who have a similar background, interests or lifestyle.	I've never met the Duchess personally. We don't move in the same circles!	Relationships
388	on nodding terms	If you are on nodding terms with someone, you don't know them very well, just well enough to say 'hello' when you meet them.	We haven't made any friends yet but we're on nodding terms with our neighbours.	Relationships
389	play gooseberry	If you play gooseberry, you join or accompany two people who have a romantic relationship and want to be alone.	They invited me to join them but I didn't want to play gooseberry.	Relationships
390	play hard to get	When someone plays hard to get, they deliberately pretend to be uninterested in another person in order to appear more attractive, interesting or seductive.	Kelly decided to play hard to get in the hope that her uninterested attitude would attract Alex.	Relationships
391	rob the cradle	If you rob the cradle, you have a romantic relationship with someone who is much younger than yourself.	My uncle Ted is dating a twenty-year-old girl. That's really robbing the cradle!	Relationships

392	rub shoulders	If you rub shoulders with someone, you have an opportunity to meet and talk to that person, especially someone wealthy, famous or distinguished.	In her job in public relations, Carla sometimes rubs shoulders with famous people.	Relationships
393	run with the hare and hunt with the hounds	If you run with the hare and hunt with the hounds, you want to stay on friendly terms with both sides in a quarrel.	Bob always wants to keep everyone happy, but he can't run with the hare and hunt with the hounds this time - the issue is too important.	Relationships
394	on the same page / on the same wavelength	If you are on the same page or the same wavelength as someone else, you have the same understanding or think in a similar way.	We rarely argue. We're generally on the same wavelength.	Relationships
395	significant other	The term 'significant other' refers to a person, such as a spouse, partner or lover, with whom you have a long-term relationship.	Harry says he makes no decisions without consulting his significant other.	Relationships
396	speak same language	If two or more people speak the same language, they have similar opinions or ideas, so they understand each other very well.	We work well together because we speak the same language.	Relationships
397	speed networking	This term refers to a relatively recent urban trend which consists in making a potential business contact by briefly talking to a series of people at an organised event and exchanging contact details.	0	Relationships
398	starter marriage	A starter marriage is a short-lived first marriage that ends in divorce with no kids, no property and no regrets.	0	Relationships
399	stormy relationship	If you have a stormy relationship with someone, you have a lot of arguments and disagreements.	After a very stormy relationship, they decided to separate.	Relationships

400	a storm (is) brewing	If you say that a storm is brewing, you mean that the atmosphere indicates that there is going to be trouble between two or more people, probably with outbursts of anger or emotion.	As soon as we saw Pete's face, we knew there was a storm brewing.	Relationships
401	strange bedfellows	This expression refers to the unusual or unlikely association of two or more people, companies or states.	A car manufacturer and a bakery - strange bedfellows don't you think?	Relationships
402	strictly business	An appointment, event or relationship that is entirely devoted to business, and does not involve any personal issues, is called strictly business.	Yes we had lunch together but it was strictly business.	Relationships
403	string someone along	If you string someone along, you deliberately mislead them about your intentions.	Bob finally understood that Mary had just been stringing him along; she had no intention of marrying him.	Relationships
404	no strings attached	An offer 'with no strings attached' is an offer made without conditions or that requires nothing in return.	I'll drive you home - no strings attached.	Relationships
405	as thick as thieves	To say that two people are as thick as thieves means that they are very close friends who are very loyal to each other.	Chris always takes Danny's side. They're as thick as thieves.	Relationships
406	think the sun rises and sets on someone	If you consider someone to be the most wonderful person in the world, you think the sun rises and sets on them.	She adores her husband - she thinks the sun rises and sets on him!	Relationships
407	think the world of someone	If you think the world of someone, you like or admire them very much.	She's a wonderful grandmother - the children think the world of her.	Relationships
408	(through) thick and thin	A relationship or friendship that continues through thick and thin, is a longlasting one that remains whatever the circumstances may be, good or bad.	Bob is famous today, but Tom is still his best friend, the one who supported him through thick and thin.	Relationships
409	tied to someone's apron strings	If one person is tied to another's apron strings, they remain dependent at an age when they should be independent.	All his decisions are influenced by his mother. He's still tied to her apron strings.	Relationships

410	two's company ... three's a crowd	This is said of two people, particularly lovers, who would prefer to be alone together rather than to have a third person with them.	I'd rather not come to the cinema with you, thanks. Two's company ...!	Relationships
411	two-time somebody	If one person two-times another, they cheat on their partner by having a romantic relationship with another person at the same time.	Sally left Harry when she discovered he was two-timing her.	Relationships
412	walking papers	If you are given your walking papers, your contract or a relationship has ended.	After causing a diplomatic incident, Carter got his walking papers.	Relationships
413	batten down the hatches	When you batten down the hatches, you prepare yourself for danger or a forthcoming difficult period, like a ship preparing for a storm.	Here comes that trouble-making guy. Batten down the hatches!	Safety And Danger
414	calculated risk	A calculated risk is a risk taken with full knowledge of the dangers involved.	The company took a calculated risk when they hired Sean straight out of college.	Safety And Danger
415	throw caution to the wind	If you throw caution to the wind, you start taking risks and stop worrying about the danger involved.	I decided to throw caution to the wind and invest in my best friend's new company.	Safety And Danger
416	(a) close shave	The term a close shave is used to describe a situation where an accident or a disaster nearly happened.	I almost hit the child who ran out in front of my car. It was a close shave	Safety And Danger
417	(the) coast is clear	To say that the coast is clear means that there is no danger in sight or that nobody can see you.	OK. The dog has gone inside. The coast is clear.	Safety And Danger
418	cry wolf	To cry wolf is to call for help when you are not really in danger. As a result, nobody believes you when you really need help.	There's Mary screaming again! Does she really have a problem or is she just crying wolf again?	Safety And Danger
419	dice with death	If you put your life at risk by doing something very dangerous, you dice with death.	Going mountain-climbing alone is dicing with death.	Safety And Danger
420	dicey situation	Any situation that is potentially risky or dangerous is called a dicey situation.	The politician put himself in a dicey situation by getting involved with an intern.	Safety And Danger

421	dodge a bullet	If you dodge a bullet, you narrowly avoid a very serious problem or a disaster.	I dodged a bullet when I missed the plane. It crashed just after take-off.	Safety And Danger
422	false move	In a dangerous or risky situation, if you make a false move, you do something which may have unpleasant consequences.	He is under close surveillance. If he makes one false move he'll be arrested.	Safety And Danger
423	fraught with danger	An activity or situation that is fraught with danger is full of risks or serious difficulties.	His journey across the mountains was fraught with danger.	Safety And Danger
424	by a hair's breadth	If you avoid or miss something by a hair's breadth, you manage to escape from a danger by the smallest possible distance or margin.	A slate fell off the roof and missed the child by a hair's breadth.	Safety And Danger
425	hang on for dear life	If you hang (or hold) on for dear life, you are in a dangerous situation and grip something firmly so as not to fall.	Andy took his mother on the back of his motorbike where she hung on for dear life!	Safety And Danger
426	live to tell the tale	Someone who lives to tell the tale survives a terrible experience.	Only two members of the expedition lived to tell the tale.	Safety And Danger
427	look before you leap	This is something you say when advising someone to think carefully about the possible dangers before doing something.	Don't decide too quickly. Look before you leap!	Safety And Danger
428	(a) no-go area	A no-go area is an area, particularly in a city, where it is dangerous to go.	Tourists have been advised to avoid parts of the city which have become no-go areas.	Safety And Danger
429	(be) on the lookout	If you are on the lookout, you are particularly vigilant and keep watching for something to appear, either because you don't want to miss it or because it is dangerous and must be avoided.	Please be on the lookout for small things that the baby might swallow, and put them out of reach.	Safety And Danger
430	out of harm's way	If you put something out of harm's way, you put it in a safe place where it won't be damaged.	I'm going to put this glass bowl out of harm's way so that it doesn't get broken.	Safety And Danger
431	play with fire	People who take unnecessary risks or behave in a dangerous way are playing with fire.	Driving alone on isolated roads in this weather is playing with fire.	Safety And Danger



432	put your head on the block	If you put yourself in a dangerous situation where you risk losing your job or your reputation if things go wrong, you put your head on the block.	Jenny asked me to recommend her son for the job, but I'm not putting my head on the block for someone I hardly know.	Safety And Danger
433	ride it out / ride out the storm	If you manage to survive a dangerous or very unpleasant situation, like a ship sailing through a storm, you ride it out.	His business was hit by the recession but he managed to ride it out.	Safety And Danger
434	risk life and limb	If you risk life and limb, you are in danger of death or serious injury.	The roads are icy today; you'll risk life and limb if you go by car.	Safety And Danger
435	in safe hands	If something is in safe hands, it is being looked after by a reliable person or organisation, and is therefore at no risk.	I'll look after Jamie while you go shopping. Don't worry - he'll be in safe hands.	Safety And Danger
436	on the safe side	If you do something to be on the safe side, you do it as a precaution, to avoid any risks.	I think I locked the door but I'll check again to be on the safe side.	Safety And Danger
437	safety in numbers	This expression means that being part of a group makes people feel more secure and more confident when taking action.	None of the group went sightseeing alone, knowing there was safety in numbers.	Safety And Danger
438	sail close to the wind	If you sail close to the wind, you do something dangerous or act just within the limits of what is legal or acceptable.	He seems to invest his money well although he often sails close to the wind.	Safety And Danger
439	save one's neck/skin	If you manage to escape from serious danger or trouble, you save your skin (or neck).	He saved his neck by reversing off the bridge just before it collapsed	Safety And Danger
440	skating on thin ice	If you are skating on thin ice, you are doing or saying something risky, or something that could cause trouble.	Don't mention that subject during the negotiations or you could be skating on thin ice.	Safety And Danger
441	spell danger/disaster	If something spells danger or disaster, it signifies a serious risk.	The avalanche risk is high and spells danger for imprudent skiers.	Safety And Danger
442	(a lot) at stake	Someone who has a lot at stake is in a risky situation, with a lot to be won or lost.	He was nervous about signing the agreement because there was a lot at stake.	Safety And Danger

443	swim with sharks	If you swim with sharks, you take a major risk by becoming involved with devious, possibly dangerous people.	Charlie shouldn't have associated with those people. He obviously didn't realize he was swimming with sharks!	Safety And Danger
444	take cover	When someone takes cover, they hide from a danger, or bad weather, in a place where they find protection.	As soon as the explosion was heard, people ran to take cover. When the storm broke out, the players all hurried off to take cover.	Safety And Danger
445	taking your life in your hands	To say that someone is taking their life in their hands means that they are taking the risk of being killed.	If you drive home on this icy road, you'll be taking your life in your hands.	Safety And Danger
446	watch your step	If you tell someone to watch their step, you are advising them to be careful how they behave in order to avoid danger.	There is zero tolerance in this school for bad behaviour, so watch your step!	Safety And Danger
447	wrapped up in cotton wool	Someone who is wrapped up in cotton wool is over-protected from dangers and risks.	Their children are kept wrapped up in cotton wool.	Safety And Danger
448	behind closed doors	If something takes place behind closed doors, it is done privately or in secret, with no observers or intruders.	The matter was discussed behind closed doors.	Secrets And Discretion
449	bite your tongue	If you bite your tongue, you try not to say what you really think or feel.	It was difficult for me not to react; I had to bite my tongue.	Secrets And Discretion
450	come to light	If details or facts come to light, they are revealed, exposed or become known.	The police say that no new evidence has come to light to help with the enquiry.	Secrets And Discretion
451	cover your tracks	If you cover your tracks, you conceal or destroy evidence of what you have been doing or where you have been.	Charlie was sorry he hadn't covered his tracks better when his wife discovered he had been unfaithful.	Secrets And Discretion
452	(a) dark horse	If you refer to someone as a dark horse you mean that they are secretive or that little is known about them.	I can't say I know my neighbour. He's a bit of a dark horse.	Secrets And Discretion
453	in the dark	If someone is kept or left in the dark about something, they are not informed about it.	The personnel was kept in the dark about the merger until the last minute.	Secrets And Discretion

454	(as) dumb/close as an oyster	Someone who is as dumb or as close as an oyster will never reveal something told in confidence or betray a secret.	Sophie will never repeat what you tell her. She's as dumb as an oyster.	Secrets And Discretion
455	fishing expedition	If someone is on a fishing expedition, they are trying to obtain information or discover facts in any way possible, often using secretive or improper methods.	The lunch invitation was clearly a fishing expedition to obtain information about his private life.	Secrets And Discretion
456	(a) fly on the wall	A person who discretely watches a situation without being noticed is called a fly on the wall.	I'd like to be a fly on the wall when the management discusses my project.	Secrets And Discretion
457	give the game away	If you give the game away, you reveal a secret, a plan, or someone's identity, often unintentionally.	The actor hoped nobody in the hotel would recognize him, but the amazement on face of the receptionist gave the game away	Secrets And Discretion
458	good walls make good neighbours	This expression means that respecting one another's privacy helps create a good relationship between neighbours.	We try not to disturb the people next door. Good walls make good neighbours!	Secrets And Discretion
459	keep the lid on	If you keep the lid on something, you hide it or control it to prevent people from finding out about it.	The company tried to keep a lid on the negotiations but word got out to the press.	Secrets And Discretion
460	hold your tongue	If you hold your tongue, you stay silent and say nothing.	Harry was of a different opinion but he decided to hold his tongue.	Secrets And Discretion
461	keep a low profile	A person who keeps a low profile tries not to attract public attention.	The inventor is a discreet man who keeps a low profile.	Secrets And Discretion
462	keep under your hat	To keep something under one's hat means to keep a secret.	My boss has promised me a promotion, but it's not official yet, so keep it under your hat.	Secrets And Discretion
463	keep under wraps	If something is kept under wraps, it is held secret and not revealed to anyone.	The plan was kept under wraps until the contract as officially signed.	Secrets And Discretion
464	let cat out of the bag	If you let the cat out of the bag, you reveal a secret, often unintentionally.	When the child told her grandmother about the plans for her birthday, she let the cat out of the bag.	Secrets And Discretion
465	like a thief in the night	Someone who acts like a thief in the night does something secretly or in an unexpected manner.	He left the company like a thief in the night, without telling his colleagues or saying goodbye.	Secrets And Discretion

466	lips are sealed	If you say that your lips are sealed, you promise not to reveal a secret.	I promise I won't tell anyone. My lips are sealed.	Secrets And Discretion
467	mum's the word	To say 'mum's the word' means that the subject or plan is a secret and must not be revealed.	We're organizing a surprise birthday party, so mum's the word - OK?	Secrets And Discretion
468	off the record	If you say something off the record, you do not want anyone to repeat it publicly.	His comment was made off the record, and shouldn't have been published.	Secrets And Discretion
469	on the QT	Something that is done on the QT (shortened form of 'quiet') is done quietly or discreetly.	They got married on the QT last summer and told nobody.	Secrets And Discretion
470	on the sly	If you do something on the sly, you do it secretly or furtively.	He made such quick progress that the others suspected him of having private lessons on the sly.	Secrets And Discretion
471	off the record	Information given off the record is not yet official or public.	It's not official yet but off the record John Brown is going to be appointed head of our department.	Secrets And Discretion
472	(an) open secret	A fact that is supposed to be a secret but is actually widely known is called an open secret.	It's an open secret that Paul and Emily are living together.	Secrets And Discretion
473	play your cards close to your chest	If you play your cards close to your chest, you keep your plans, intended actions or tactics secret from other people.	He's a very cautious businessman who plays his cards close to his chest.	Secrets And Discretion
474	(as) quiet as a mouse	When someone is as quiet as a mouse, they make no noise at all.	The burglar was as quiet as a mouse as he moved around the house.	Secrets And Discretion
475	(a) skeleton in your closet	A skeleton in the closet is an embarrassing or shameful secret that is kept hidden because it would cause problems if it were revealed.	The candidate seems perfect. Let's hope he doesn't have any skeletons in the closet.	Secrets And Discretion
476	spill the beans	If you spill the beans, you reveal a secret or talk about something private.	Come on! Spill the beans! What did he say?	Secrets And Discretion
477	in strict confidence	If you say something in strict confidence, you tell it as a secret not to be revealed.	Please don't repeat this. I'm telling it to you in strict confidence.	Secrets And Discretion
478	sweep under the rug	If you sweep something under the rug (or carpet), you try to hide it or keep it secret because it is embarrassing.	They tried unsuccessfully to sweep the scandal under the rug.	Secrets And Discretion

479	(a) trade secret	The term 'a trade secret' refers to the secrecy of a company's production methods but is often used teasingly.	Can you give me the recipe for your lemon meringue pie? No way - that's a trade secret!	Secrets And Discretion
480	the truth will out	The expression 'truth will out' means that despite efforts to conceal the facts, the truth cannot be hidden forever.	I don't know if the police gave the full details, but inevitably truth will out.	Secrets And Discretion
481	bargain hunting	If you spend time in the shops looking for items to buy at the lowest price, you go bargain hunting.	During the sales I go bargain hunting with my friends!	Shopping
482	it's a bargain	Said when an article is well below the usual price.	That handbag goes beautifully with the dress, and at that price it's a bargain!	Shopping
483	buy a lemon	If buy something, especially a car, that is defective, unsatisfactory, constantly gives trouble or stops running after a short time, you buy a lemon.	The car I bought was a real lemon. It broke down two weeks later.	Shopping
484	I can't afford it	If you can't afford something you don't have enough money to buy it.	I'd love that jacket but I can't afford it!	Shopping
485	it costs an arm and a leg	If an article or service costs an arm and a leg, it is very expensive indeed.	The diamond engagement ring cost an arm and a leg!	Shopping
486	it costs a fortune	Something that costs a fortune is very expensive.	Look at the price of that bag - it costs a fortune!	Shopping
487	it's a steal	The expression 'it's a steal' means that something is so cheap that it's almost as if you haven't paid anything for it.	At that price it's a steal. You won't find it cheaper in any other shop.	Shopping
488	it's good value for money	Something that is good value for money is worth the money spent on it.	The quality is excellent so it's good value for money.	Shopping
489	it's a bit pricey	The expression a bit pricey means that something is a bit expensive.	Their clothes are a bit pricey but they have a wonderful selection	Shopping
490	it's a rip-off	Something that costs much more than it should is called a rip-off.	\$10 for an orange juice? That's a rip-off!	Shopping
491	shop around	If you shop around, you visit a number of shops selling similar articles in order to compare the prices.	You can usually save money by shopping around.	Shopping

492	shop till you drop	If you shop till you drop, you go shopping for a very long time, until you are exhausted.	If you go to London with Ashley, you'll shop till you drop, so take comfortable shoes!	Shopping
493	shopping spree	If you go on a shopping spree, you enjoy a lively outing, usually with much spending of money.	Liza is planning to go on a shopping spree as soon as she gets her bonus.	Shopping
494	shopping therapy	The term shopping therapy refers to the idea that buying things can make you feel better.	A little shopping therapy can usually cheer up bored teenagers.	Shopping
495	splash out	If you splash out on something, you buy it even though it costs a lot of money.	When he got a promotion Andy splashed out on a brand new car.	Shopping
496	window shopping	When people go window shopping, they look at things in shop windows, without actually purchasing anything.	I haven't been paid yet, so I can only go window shopping.	Shopping
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