



## **Government of Tamilnadu**

### **Department of Employment and Training**

Course : TNPSC Group II Exam  
Subject : General English  
Topic : **Idioms and Phrases**

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**Commissioner,  
Department of Employment and Training.**



# IDIOMS AND PHRASES

## IDIOMS:

Idioms may be defined as expressions peculiar to a language. They play an important part in all languages. Many verbs, when followed by various prepositions, or adverbs, acquire an idiomatic sense.

- |                               |   |                                                                                                    |
|-------------------------------|---|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. a chance in a million      | - | either no chance at all or a very slim chance                                                      |
| 2. two sides of the same coin | - | two contrasting characters in the same category                                                    |
| 3. a million dollar question  | - | a question with a much awaited and valuable answer                                                 |
| 4. as good as gold            | - | very well behaved                                                                                  |
| 5. to cash in on              | - | to take advantage                                                                                  |
| 6. thirty pieces of silver    | - | the money paid to Judas Iscariot for an act of betrayal.                                           |
| 7. child's play               | - | a simple task for anyone to accomplish                                                             |
| 8. a brain child              | - | one's original ideas                                                                               |
| 9. child-like                 | - | having the innocent and frank qualities of a child                                                 |
| 10. second childhood          | - | old age                                                                                            |
| 11. a Chip on Your Shoulder   | - | Being angry about something that happened in the past; a grudge                                    |
| 12. a Dime a Dozen            | - | When something is extremely common and simple to acquire.                                          |
| 13. a Piece of Cake           | - | A task that is simple to complete; similar to the common phrase "as easy as pie."                  |
| 14. all greek to me           | - | When something is incomprehensible due to complexity.                                              |
| 15. an arm and a leg          | - | Something that is extremely expensive; an idiom meaning the price paid was costly, excessively so. |
| 16. back to the drawing board | - | Similar to the phrase above, it means starting over again from a previously failed attempt.        |

## IDIOMS AND PHRASES

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- |                               |   |                                                                                                                                               |
|-------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 17. barking up the wrong tree | - | To make a wrong assumption about something.                                                                                                   |
| 18. beating around the bush   | - | Avoiding the main point; a common phrase meaning a person is failing to get to the bottom line.                                               |
| 19. beating a dead horse      | - | Something that is seen as futile; a popular saying used to describe how bringing up older issues that have already been resolved is pointless |
| 20. between a rock and a hard | - | Being faced with two difficult choices; a Place dilemma.                                                                                      |
| 21. break the ice             | - | Breaking down a social stiffness or awkwardness.                                                                                              |
| 22. burst your bubble         | - | To ruin someone's happy moment or mood, usually by telling them disappointing news or information.                                            |
| 23. close but no cigar        | - | Coming close to a successful outcome only to fall short at the end.                                                                           |
| 24. cry over spilt milk       | - | One shouldn't worry over things that have already happenend and that cannot be changed.                                                       |
| 25. cry wolf                  | - | Lying; a common phrase meaning someone is calling for help when it's not really needed.                                                       |
| 26. curiosity killed the cat  | - | An idiom meaning mind your own business, as too much poking and prodding could lead to harm.                                                  |
| 27. cut the mustard           | - | Meeting expectations; used as a way to describe how someone has met the required standards that were set.                                     |
| 28. cut to the chase          | - | To get to the point, leaving out all of the unnecessary details. Similar to popular sayings such as "beating around the bush."                |
| 29. don't count the chicken   | - | Don't rely on something you are not they before hatchsure of.                                                                                 |
| 30. down to the wire          | - | A tense situation where the outcome is decided only in the last few seconds.                                                                  |



### PHRASAL VERBS:

A phrase is a group of two or more words functioning as a meaningful unit within a sentence or clause. A phrase is commonly characterized as a **grammatical** unit at a level between a word and a clause.

takeover	–	assume charge
took off	–	left the ground
went about	–	did as a routine
went out	–	stopped, ended, or was not in existence
went on	–	continued without changing
act on	–	act according to an effect
act upto	–	act fully
act for	–	officiate
bear out	–	confirm
breakdown	–	fail lose composure health
break up	–	end
break in	–	enter illegally interrupt
back up	–	support
back out	–	quit
bring in	–	earn
bring on	–	produce
bring up	–	rear
call off	–	cancel
call for	–	require
call up	–	to calling
call down	–	reprimand
cut down	–	reduce
cut in	–	interrupt
cut off	–	stop
cut out	–	have talent
come in	–	arrive, be useful
come up	–	arise
come about	–	happen
come across	–	find by chance
come round	–	change
come under	–	included
die out	–	stop existing
die away	–	decrease sound

## IDIOMS AND PHRASES

do for	–	serve the purpose
do with	–	manage
do over	–	again
draw on	–	depend
draw up	–	write
draw back	–	retreat
drop in	–	informal visit
drop out	–	leave
fall in	–	collapse
fall out	–	quarrel
fall off	–	decrease
fall through	–	fail
fall to	–	begin
fall behind	–	make less progress
fall back on	–	depend
get up	–	rise from bed
get in	–	enter
get off	–	leave
get through	–	succeed
get away	–	escape
give up	–	abandon/discontinue something
give in	–	surrender/yield
give away	–	distribute
go into	–	examine
go for	–	attack
go at	–	attack
go off	–	leave/proceed/explode
go ahead	–	continue/make progress
go without	–	manage without
go through	–	pass through
go back on	–	fail to keep promise
go down	–	believe
go ahead of	–	pass/take over
go after	–	chase
go about	–	perform
go with	–	match
hand in	–	submit
hand on	–	transmit

## IDIOMS AND PHRASES

hand over	–	transfer
hand down	–	give
hang on	–	hold
hang out	–	frequent
hold on	–	wait
hold up	–	delay
hold over	–	postpone
keep up	–	to keep something
keep away	–	to avoid going near
keep on	–	to continue
keep off	–	to avoid
knock out	–	stop working
knock down	–	struck
see about	–	deal with
see to	–	attend to
set out	–	start
set in	–	begin
set up	–	establish something before you do something
set apart	–	keep away
stand against	–	oppose
stand up for	–	defend/support
stand for	–	represent
stand upon	–	depend
set on	–	determined
set back	–	check progress
take down	–	write
take to	–	to start liking
take up	–	to continue
take for	–	mistake for
turn up	–	to be found
turn off	–	return
turn over	–	attend
turn down	–	reject
wait on	–	wait for
wake up	–	awaken
watch out	–	be careful
work out	–	solve

## IDIOMS AND PHRASES

work off	–	dispose
write down	–	record
write up	–	compose
lay out	–	arrange
lay down	–	establish
let in	–	allow to enter
let out	–	release
let down	–	disappoint
look after	–	take care of
look ahead	–	plan for future
look around	–	search
look for	–	search
look into	–	make investigation
look on	–	regard as
make of	–	understand
make up	–	invent a story
make off	–	escape/steal
make up for	–	compensate
pass over	–	ignore
pass away	–	die
pass by	–	go by the side
pass on	–	give/die
pick up	–	increase/learn
pick out	–	select
pick on	–	single out
pull out	–	leave
pull up	–	criticize someone for doing
pull through	–	recover
put in	–	enter
put on	–	wear/add to
put up	–	erect/lodge
put off	–	postpone
put across	–	convey
run to	–	reach an amount
run for	–	contest election
run over	–	hit with
run after	–	follow