| **Idiom** | **Meaning** | **Origin** |
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| To Bite the Bullet | To force yourself to do something unpleasant or difficult, or to be brave in a difficult situation. | Derived historically from the practice of having a patient clench a bullet in their teeth as a way to cope with the pain of a surgical procedure without anaesthetic. |
| A Piece of Cake | If you think something is very easy to do. | Comes from the fact that eating cake is pleasant. |
| Kill Two Birds With One Stone | To achieve two things by doing a single action. | Believed to have originated from the story of Daedalus and Icarus from Greek Mythology. |
| Let the Cat Out of the Bag | To disclose a secret, often by mistake. | Cats don’t like being in a bag. Once you let them out, it is very difficult to get them back in, just like secrets. |
| Don’t Put All Your Eggs in One Basket | To avoid concentrating all your resources or efforts in one area, as a way to minimize risk. | When gathering up your eggs from your chickens, if you put them all in one basket, you might break them. |
| Once in a Blue Moon | Happens very rarely. | The concept behind the origination of this idiom is the second but rare appearance of the full moon in the same month. |
| Burn the Midnight Oil | To work late into the night or to work hard on something. | Oil lamps were used to provide light. If you were burning oil at midnight, you were working on something. |
| Burn the Candle at Both Ends | To exhaust oneself by working too much, going to bed late and getting up early. | Originally meant to waste money. Meaning changed to doing too much. |
| At the Drop of a Hat | To do something immediately and without hesitation. | Originated sometime in the early 19th century when it was common for people to signal the start of a fight or a race by literally dropping a hat or waving it down through the air. |
| Cry Over Spilt Milk | To waste time feeling upset about something that has already happened and cannot be changed. | If you spill milk, you can’t use it. No point in crying over something that can’t be changed. |
| You Can’t Judge a Book by its Cover | You should not judge people or things based on their appearance. | You have to read a book to find out if it is good or not. |
| Don’t Count Your Chickens Before They Hatch | Don’t assume that something will happen or be successful before it actually occurs. | Inspired by the fable, “The Milkmaid and her Pail”. |
| Go the Extra Mile | To make more effort than is expected or required. | Reference to a line from the Bible (Matthew 5:41) in which Jesus tells his followers to go the extra mile if someone asks them to go one mile. |
| Raining Cats and Dogs | Raining very heavily. | Uncertain origin, possibly related to old myths or the way heavy rain can carry debris, including dead animals, through the streets. |
| Throw in the Towel | To admit defeat or give up. | Originates from boxing, where a trainer would throw a towel into the ring to signal that their fighter was giving up. |
| Cross That Bridge When You Come To It | Deal with a problem or situation when it actually happens, rather than worrying about it beforehand. | In the past, bridges were often dangerous to cross. |
| When in Rome | Follow the customs and behaviour of the people in the place where you are visiting or living. | Attributed to Saint Ambrose, advising people to adapt to local customs when travelling. |
| Rome Wasn’t Built in a Day | Important work takes time and should not be rushed. | It took hundreds of years to build the greatest city in the world. |