

# Let's speak English (American)

Some Idioms & Some Slang



COLLECTED BY  
**FULL MARK**

## Dennis Oliver's Idioms



### A

**ace:** make an "A" on a test, homework assignment, project, etc.

"Somebody said you aced the test, Dave. That's great!"

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**all right** (1): expression of reluctant agreement.

A: "Come to the party with me. Please!"

B: "Oh, **all right**. I don't want to, but I will."

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**all right** (2): fair; not particularly good.

A: "How's your chemistry class?"

B: "It's **all right**, I guess, but it's not the best class I've ever had."

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**all right** (3): unharmed; in satisfactory condition.

A: "You don't look normal. Are you **all right**?"

B: "Yes, but I have a headache."

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**and then some:** and much more besides.

A: "I'd guess your new computer cost about \$2,000. "

B: "It cost that much **and then some** because I also bought extra RAM and VRAM."

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**antsy:** restless; impatient and tired of waiting.

"I hope Katy calls soon. Just sitting around and waiting is making me **antsy**."

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**as easy as pie:** very easy.

"I thought you said this was a difficult problem. It isn't. In fact, it's **as easy as pie**."

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**at the eleventh hour:** at the last minute; almost too late.

"Yes, I got the work done in time. I finished it **at the eleventh hour**, but I wasn't late.

## B

**bad-mouth:** say unkind, unflattering, embarrassing (and probably untrue) things about someone.

A: "I don't believe what Bob said. Why is he bad-mouthing me?"

B: "He's probably jealous of your success."

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**be a piece of cake:** be very easy.

A: "Bob said the test was difficult, but I thought it was **a piece of cake**."

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**be all ears:** be eager to hear what someone has to say.

A: "I just got an e-mail message from our old friend Sally."

B: "Tell me what she said. I'm **all ears**!"

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**be broke:** be without money.

"No, I can't lend you ten dollars. I'm completely **broke** until payday."

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**be fed up with** (with someone or something): be out of patience (with someone or something); be very tired of someone or something.

"Bill, you're too careless with your work. I'm **fed up with** apologizing for your mistakes!"

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**be in and out:** be at and away from a place during a particular time.

"Could we postpone our meeting until tomorrow? I expect to **be in and out** of the office most of the day today."

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**be on the go:** be very busy (going from one thing or project to another).

"I'm really tired. I've **been on the go** all week long."

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**be on the road:** be traveling.

"You won't be able to contact me tomorrow because I'll **be on the road.**"

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**be over:** be finished; end.

"I can't see you until around 4 o'clock. My meetings won't **be over** until then."

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**be up and running:** (for a technological process) be operational; be ready to use .

"Dave's ESL Cafe on the Web has **been up and running** since December 1995."

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**be used to** (+Ving/noun): be accustomed to; not uncomfortable with.

"It won't be hard to get up at 5:00 AM. I'm **used to** getting up early."

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**beat:** exhausted; very tired (adj.).

"This has been a long day. I'm **beat!**"

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**beat around the bush:** evade an issue; avoid giving a direct answer.

"Quit **beating around the bush!** If you don't want to go with me, just tell me!"

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**beat one's brains out:** try very hard to understand or do something.

"Can you help me with this problem? I've been **beating my brains out** with it, but I just can't solve it."

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**Beats me:** I have no idea.

A: "What time's the party?"

B: "**Beats me!**"

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**before long:** soon.

A: "I'm really tired of working."

B: "Just be patient. The weekend will be here **before long**."

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**bent out of shape:** needlessly worried about something.

"I know you're worried about your job interview, but don't get **bent out of shape**. You'll do just fine."

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**bite off more than one can chew:** take responsibility for more than one can manage.

"I'm really behind with my project. Can you help me? I'm afraid I **bit off more than I could chew!**"

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**blabbermouth:** a very talkative person--especially one who says things that should be kept secret.

"Don't say anything to Bob unless you want the whole office to know. Bob's quite a **blabbermouth**."

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**blow one's top:** become extremely angry.

A: "Was your father upset when you came home at 3 AM?"

B: "He was *more than* upset. He **blew his top!**"

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**boom box:** portable cassette/CD player.

"Don't forget to bring your **boom box** to the picnic!"

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**the bottom line:** the most essential information.

"The discussion lasted many hours. **The bottom line** was that the XYZ Company isn't for sale."

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**Break a leg!:** Good luck!

"I understand you have a job interview tomorrow. **Break a leg!**"

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**break someone's heart:** make someone feel very disappointed/discouraged/sad.

"Joe **broke his mother's heart** when he dropped out of school."

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**broke:** without money.

A: "Can you lend me 10 dollars?"

B: "I'm afraid not. I'm **broke**."

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**buck(s):** dollar(s).

"The cheapest tickets for the concert cost 25 **bucks**. Do you still want to go?"

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**bug:** annoy; bother.

"I'm trying to concentrate! Don't **bug** me!"

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**bull-headed:** stubborn; inflexible.

"Don't be so **bull-headed**. Why can't you admit that others' opinions are just as good as yours?"

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**a bundle:** a lot of money.

A: "Your new car is really nice."

B: "It should be. It cost me **a bundle**!"

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**burn the midnight oil:** study/work all night or until very, very late at night.

"I'm not ready for the test tomorrow. I guess I'll have to

**burn the the midnight oil**."

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**bushed:** very tired; exhausted.

"I'm going to lie down for a while. I'm really **bushed**."

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**by oneself:** alone and without help.

"I can't do this **by myself**. Can you help me?"

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**by the skin of one's teeth:** barely succeed in doing something.

"I'll have to start earlier the next time. This time I only finished **by the skin of my teeth.**"

## C

**call it a day:** stop work for the day.

"It's late and you've accomplished a lot. Why don't you **call it a day?**"

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**can't make heads or tails of something:** can't understand something at all; find something confusing and illogical.

"I **can't make heads or tails of** your e-mail. Were you having problems with your computer?"

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**catch one's eye:** attract one's attention/interest.

"This brochure about Tahiti **caught my eye** when I was at the travel agency."

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**catch some Zs:** sleep for a while; take a nap.

"You look tired, Dave. Why don't you **catch some Zs?**"

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**change one's mind:** decide to do something different from what had been decided earlier.

A: "Why are you working this week? I thought you were going to be on vacation."

B: "I changed my mind. I'm taking my vacation next month."

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**chicken** (adjective or noun): cowardly.

"Fred will never ask Lucy for a date. He's **chicken / a chicken.**"

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**chow:** food.

"How's the **chow** in the university cafeteria?"

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**chow down:** eat.

"It's almost 6:00. Are you ready to **chow down**?"

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**a cinch:** something that's very easy to do.

A: How was the test?

B: It was **a cinch**. I finished it quickly and I know that all my answers were correct."

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**cool** (also *kewl*): neat, special, wonderful.

"The ESL Cafe on the Web is really **cool**!"

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**Cool it!:** calm down.

"There's no need to be so upset. Just **cool it**!"

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**cost (someone) an arm and a leg:** cost a lot; be very expensive.

A: "Your new car is really nice."

B: "It should be. It **cost (me) an arm and a leg**!"

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**couch potato:** someone who spends too much time watching TV.

"You're a real **couch potato**, Jay. You need to get more exercise!"

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**cram:** try to learn as much as possible in a very short time.

"Sidney did well on the test because he crammed for it. However, he probably won't remember any of the information a couple of days from now."

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**crash course:** short course designed to give a lot of knowledge/information in a very short time.

"Tom's company is sending him to a business meeting in Istanbul. Should he take a **crash course** in Turkish?"

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**Cut it out!:** stop doing something (that's annoying).

"You kids are making too much noise. **Cut it out**!"



## D

**Don't count your chickens until (before) they hatch (they've hatched).:** Don't assume that something will happen until it *has* happened.

A: I'm sure that I'm going to win a lot of money in Las Vegas."

B: "**Don't count your chickens until they hatch!**"

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**dicey:** uncertain; taking too much of a chance.

A: A friend of mine says I can make a lot of money if I buy stock in the XYZ company. Should I do it?

B: I wouldn't if I were you. The chances for success are too **dicey**."

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**ditch class:** skip class/play hookey.

"You shouldn't have **ditched class** yesterday. We had an unannounced test."

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**do a bang-up job:** do a very good job; do very well at something.

"Have you seen Frank's home page? He **did a bang-up job** with it."

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**down in the dumps:** depressed; "blue."

A: "Is something wrong?"

B: "Not really, but I feel kind of **down in the dumps**."

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**drop someone a line:** write to someone.

"I haven't written to my parents for a long time. I'd better **drop them a line** today or tomorrow."

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**drag one's feet:** delay; take longer than necessary to do something.

"Joe should have finished his project a week ago. Why is he **dragging his feet**?"

## E

**an eager beaver:** a person who is always willing to volunteer or do extra work.

"Jan is certainly **an eager beaver**. Any time there's work to be done, she's the first to say she'll help."

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**Easy does it!:** Be very careful! / Don't do anything too fast or too hard!

A: "I'm going to move the table just a little further from the window."

B: "**Easy does it!** If you move too fast, you might knock over the plant!"

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**an egghead:** a very intelligent person.

"Jake didn't make very good grades in school, but his sister was a real **egghead**."

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**elbow grease:** hard work; effort.

"Yes, the car is pretty dirty, but it'll look nice again with a little **elbow grease**."

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**every other \_\_\_\_\_ :** alternately; omitting the second one in each group of two.

"In your essays, please write on **every other line**. That will make the essays much easier to read."

## F

**far-fetched:** difficult to accept; difficult to believe.

"That story's pretty **far-fetched**. Nobody's going to believe it."

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**feel blue:** feel sad and depressed.

"I'm **feeling blue** because I haven't had any mail except bills for a long, long time."

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**fire someone:** dismiss someone from a job because of poor performance.

"If you continue to be late for work, the company will **fire you**."

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**feel puny:** feel unwell, ill.

"Ted was **feeling puny** yesterday, so he decided not to go to work."

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**fender-bender:** automobile accident.

"Traffic was really slow on the freeway this morning because of a **fender-bender** in one of the westbound lanes."

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**for ages:** for a very long time.

"Where's Marie? I haven't seen her **for ages**."

## G

**get going:** leave.

"Look at the time! I'd better **get going**!"

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**get it:** understand something (often negative).

"I don't **get it**. What do you mean?"

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**get a kick out of something:** find something amusing.

"I really **get a kick out of** listening to children talk. They say some very funny things."

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**get lost!:** go away

"I wish he'd **get lost** and stop bothering me. I don't want to talk to him!"

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**get on one's nerves:** irritate someone; make someone upset.

"I know you like that song, but it's **getting on my nerves**. Can you play something else?"

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**get a move on:** hurry

"If you don't want to be late, you'd better **get a move on**."

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**get one's wires crossed:** be confused or mistaken about something.

A: "Bill said there was a meeting this morning. Don't we have one?"

B: "No. The meeting's tomorrow. I guess Bill **got his wires crossed.**"

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**get out of hand:** become out of control; become badly managed.

"Your absences are **getting out of hand**, Bob. You'd better do something quickly to improve the situation if you want to keep your job."

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**Get real!:** Be realistic! / Don't be naive.

A: "I'm going to Las Vegas. I know I'll win a lot of money!"

B: "Get real! You'll probably *lose* a lot of money!"

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**get up and go:** energy.

"I'm really tired. I don't have any **get up and go.**"

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**give someone a hand** (1): help someone.

"I can't do this alone. Can you **give me a hand?**"

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**give someone a hand** (2): applaud (to show respect or appreciation for someone/something).

"Dave's done a wonderful job with The ESL Café on the Web.

Let's **give him a hand!**"

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**a (real) go-getter:** a (very) ambitious, hard-working person.

"I'm not surprised that Jean finished before anyone else. She's **a real go-getter.**"

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**go with the flow:** take things as they come.

"There's no need to worry. Everything will be OK if you just **go with the flow.**"

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**grab a bite:** get something to eat.

"I'm really hungry. Would you like to **grab a bite** with me?"

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**green:** inexperienced.

"I don't think you can depend on Jack to do that job by himself. He's too **green**."

## H

**had ('d) better:** be obliged to; should (strong).

"You'd **better** leave soon. If you don't, you'll miss your bus."

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**hassle** (noun): a troublesome situation; something troublesome that interrupts one's normal routine.

"I know it's a **hassle** to complete this form now, but Mr. Rogers needs it in his office by the end of the day."

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**hard feelings:** anger; animosity; bitter feelings.

A: "I'm sorry that Jim got the job instead of you."

B: "I have no **hard feelings** toward him; I know that he had stronger qualifications."

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**hard-headed:** stubborn; inflexible; unwilling to change.

"I don't think Julie will change her mind. She's pretty **hard-headed**."

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**hassle** (verb): annoy; bother; interrupt one's normal routine.

"If you'd stop **hassling** me, I might get this finished on time!"

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**have one's hands full:** be extremely busy.

A: "Will you be able to help us this afternoon?"

B: "I'm afraid not. I'll **have my hands full** trying to finish my research paper."

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**have/has ('ve/'s) got:** have/has.

"Dave's **got** a son whose name is Benjamin and a daughter whose name is Shannon."

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**have something down pat:** know/understand something completely and thoroughly.

"I know I did well on the test. I **had** all the material **down pat**."

**head honcho:** person in charge; top boss.

"Dave's the **head honcho** of the ESL Cafe on the Web."

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**hit the books:** study.

"I wish I could go to the movies, but I've got to **hit the books**."

◆ ◆ ◆

**hit the hay:** go to bed; go to sleep.

"It's late, so I guess I'll **hit the hay**."

◆ ◆ ◆

**hit the sack:** go to bed.

"I'm really tired. I think I'll **hit the sack**."

◆ ◆ ◆

**How come?:** Why? (statement word order).

"**How come** you weren't at the party?"

## I

**if I had my druthers:** if I could do what I wanted/preferred.

"**If I had my druthers**, I'd stay home from work today."

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**in over one's head:** in a situation that is too much / too difficult for one to manage.

"Do you have time to help me? I thought I could do this myself, but I'm afraid I'm **in over my head**. I just can't handle things alone."

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**inside out:** with the inner part on the outside and the outer part on the inside.

"Why are you wearing your tee shirt **inside out**?"

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**in stock:** in supply and available to buy / sell.

"I'm sorry, but we just sold our last pair of hiking boots. If you come back at the end of the week, however, we should have some more **in stock**."

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**in the black:** profitable; not showing a financial loss.

"What did you do to increase profit and eliminate losses?  
We've been **in the black** for two months in a row."

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**in the red:** unprofitable; showing a financial loss.

"We have to do something to increase profit and decrease losses.  
We've been **in the red** for two months in a row."

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**in time:** not late.

"I thought I was going to be late for my flight, but it was delayed, so I was still **in time**."

## J

**jump all over someone:** severely criticize / find fault with someone.

A: "What's wrong with Joe?"

B: "He's feeling bad because his boss **jumped all over him** this morning."

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**jump the gun:** do something before it's time to do it.

A: "How did Marsha know about the party? It was supposed to be a surprise."

B: "Chuck **jumped the gun**. Without thinking, he said, 'I'm bringing the cake at your party; I hope you like it!'"

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**jump to conclusions:** decide something too quickly and without thinking about it or considering all the facts.

A: "Angela just doesn't like me. She won't even say hello."

B: "You're **jumping to conclusions**. Actually, she's very shy."

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**junk mail:** unsolicited mail (usually advertisements for something you're not interested in).

"I didn't have any letters today--only **junk mail**."

## K

**keep an eye on:** check something regularly.

"You're busy, so you'll need to **keep an eye on** the time.  
Remember that we have to leave at 4:30."

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**keep an eye out for:** watch for.

"I'll **keep an eye out for** John. If I see him, I'll tell him you want to talk to him."

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**keep one's chin up:** remain brave and confident in a difficult situation;  
don't despair or worry too much.

"I know that things have been difficult for you recently,  
but **keep your chin up**. Everything will be better soon."

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**keep one's nose to the grindstone:** stay diligent; steadily work hard,  
without breaks or an uneven pace.

"If I **keep my nose to the grindstone**, I should be finished by the end of the day."

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**keep/stay in touch** (with someone): remain informed (about someone) / in contact (with someone) by writing,  
calling, sending e-mail, etc. on a regular basis.

"I haven't seen Frank for two or three years but we **keep (stay) in touch** by e-mail."

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**keep one's fingers crossed:** hope for the best.

A: "How did you do on the test?"

B: "I think I passed, but I won't know until tomorrow.  
I'm **keeping my fingers crossed!**"

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**kid** (noun): child.

A: "You have three **kids**, don't you?"

B: "That's right. I have two girls and a boy."

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**kid** (verb): playfully say something that isn't true.

"I was **kidding** when I said my teacher was a monster. She's strict, but she's actually a very nice person."

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**kind of**: rather; more or less; a little.

"I'm feeling **kind of** hungry. I think I'll make myself a sandwich."

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**a klutz**: an awkward, uncoordinated person.

"Don't ask Jeff to dance with you. He's a real **klutz** and will probably step on your feet!"

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**a know-it-all**: someone who acts as if he/she knows everything--as if no one can tell him/her anything that he/she doesn't already know.

"Don't try to make any suggestions to Bob. He's **a know-it-all** and won't pay attention to anything you say."

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**know something backwards and forwards**: know/understand something completely and thoroughly.

"If you have a question about html tags, ask Susan. She knows html **backwards and forwards**."

◆ ◆ ◆

**know something inside out**: know/understand something thoroughly.

"If you have a question about grammar, ask Dr. Martin. She **knows** grammar **inside out**."

## L

**lend someone a hand**: help someone.

"I can't do this alone. Can you **lend me a hand**?"

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**leave well enough alone:** do nothing (because doing something would make things worse).

"Don't tell Jim how to discipline his children. **Leave well enough alone.**"

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**a let-down:** a disappointment; something that's very disappointing.

"It must've been quite a **let-down** not to be chosen for that job.  
I know you really hoped you would get it."

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**Let sleeping dogs lie.:** Don't cause problems by doing something when it isn't necessary.

"I know that what Julie said made you angry, but **let sleeping dogs lie.**  
If you say or do anything, you'll only make things worse."

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**live from hand to mouth:** survive on very little money; have only enough money to pay for basic needs.

"Chuck and Alice are **living from hand to mouth** since Chuck lost his job."

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**live and let live:** don't unnecessarily make things difficult;  
do as you wish and let others do as they wish.

"I'm not going to criticize Alice's family just because their habits are a little strange. My motto is '**Live and let live.**'"

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**a low blow:** a big disappointment.

A: "Fred seems depressed. Is he OK?"

B: "He's OK, but not good. It was a **low blow** for him to be laid off from his job."

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**lousy:** terrible; very bad.

"Why did you speak so rudely to your grandmother? That was a **lousy** thing to do!"

## M

**macho:** super masculine / masculine to an extreme (in appearance and behavior).

"Her husband would never agree to help with the housework; he's too **macho** to do that."

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**make a mountain out of a molehill:** make something seem much more important than it really is.

"Calm down. There's really nothing to worry about. You're **making a mountain out of a molehill**."

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**make up one's mind:** decide what to do.

A: Where are you going on your vacation?

B: Maybe Canada, maybe Mexico. I can't **make up my mind**."

## N

**No way!:** Absolutely not! / Definitely not!

A: "You didn't open this letter addressed to me, did you?"

B: "**No way!** I'd *never* read look at else's mail!"

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**nosh:** snack.

"There's plenty in the refrigerator if you want something to **nosh** on."

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**Not on your life!:** Absolutely not! (a strong "no").

A: "Someone said you cheated on the test. Did you?"

B: "**Not on your life!**"

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**now and then:** occasionally; from time to time.

A: "Do you see Jennifer often?"

B: "No, not really. I see her **now and then**, but not regularly."

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**nuke:** heat in a microwave.

"If your coffee's cold, just **nuke** it for about a minute."

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**nuts:** crazy.

A: "Stuart says some really strange things sometimes."

B: "Sometimes? All the time! He's **nuts!**"

## O

**OK:** (1) yes (to show agreement--often reluctant agreement).

A: "Come on, Al. We really need your help!"

B: "Oh, **OK**; I may be crazy, but I'll help you."

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**OK:** (2) neither good nor bad; so-so.

A: "How was the movie?"

B: "**OK**, I guess, but I've seen better ones."

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**OK:** (3) in satisfactory condition; well.

A: "You look awfully pale. Are you **OK**?"

B: "Actually, I'm not. I have a terrible headache. "

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**OK:** (4) approve (verb).

A: "Did your boss **OK** your vacation plans?"

B: "No, but he said that taking them two weeks later would be all right."

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**on the dot:** exactly at a given time.

"We're leaving at 9:00 **on the dot**. If you're late, we'll go without you."

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**on time:** at the scheduled time.

"It's getting late. You'd better hurry if you want to get to work **on time**."

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**(on the) cutting edge:** using the most recent technology.

"The university's computer lab is **(on the) cutting edge**. It has all the latest hardware and software."

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**once in a while:** occasionally; from time to time.

A: "Would you like coffee or tea?"

B: "Coffee, please. I drink tea **once in a while**, but I generally drink coffee."

◆ ◆ ◆

**over one's head:** too difficult or complicated for someone to understand.

"This explanation of cgi scripting is **over my head**.

Can you explain it in a less technical way?"

## P

**pay the piper:** face the consequences for something you've done.

"I stayed up too late tonight. Tomorrow I'll have to **pay the piper**."

◆ ◆ ◆

**plastic:** credit card(s).

"Oh, no! I forgot to get any cash! I hope this restaurant accepts **plastic**!"

◆ ◆ ◆

**pooped:** very tired; exhausted.

"I went to bed really early last night. I was **pooped**!"

◆ ◆ ◆

**pop quiz:** unannounced short test.

"You shouldn't have missed class yesterday. We had a **pop quiz**."

◆ ◆ ◆

**pretty** (adv.): rather; somewhat.

"That car's **pretty** expensive. Are you sure you can afford it?"

◆ ◆ ◆

**pull an all-nighter:** study or work all night without getting any sleep.

A: "You look really tired."

B: "I am. I **pulled an all-nighter** to get ready for the meeting this morning."

◆ ◆ ◆

**pull someone's leg:** tease someone by trying to make her/him believe something that's exaggerated or untrue.

A: "Wow! Carl has done some really amazing things!"

B: "Don't believe everything he tells you. He was probably **pulling your leg**."

## Q

**quite a few:** several; numerous.

"I don't think I can meet you after work. I have **quite a few** errands that I have to do."

◆ ◆ ◆

**a quick study:** someone who learns new things quickly and easily.

A: "Annie seems to be doing well at her new job."

B: "I'm not surprised. She's **a quick study**."

## R

**R and R:** rest and relaxation (a vacation).

"I think you're working too hard, Dave. You need some **R and R**."

◆ ◆ ◆

**rain or shine:** (describing something scheduled) no matter what the weather is.

"We're leaving tomorrow, **rain or shine**."

◆ ◆ ◆

**rain cats and dogs:** rain very hard.

"You can't leave just now! It's **raining cats and dogs** and you don't have an umbrella or raincoat!"

◆ ◆ ◆

**read someone's mind:** know what someone is thinking.

A: "I'll be you're thinking of what you're going to have for dinner."

B: "Hey, did you **read my mind**?"

A: "No. I just know that you're always hungry and lunch was several hours ago!"

◆ ◆ ◆

**rub someone the wrong way:** irritate someone; bother or annoy someone.

"All my little brother says is 'Why?' Usually I'm patient with him, but sometimes all his questions **rub me the wrong way.**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**run-down:** (1) not well; weak; fatigued.

"Are you eating regularly and getting enough sleep? You look **run-down.**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**run-down:** (2) in poor condition; needing repair.

"This must be a poor neighborhood. All the buildings look really **run-down.**"

## S

\_\_\_ **-savvy:** knowledgeable about \_\_\_ .

"If you're having problems with your hard disk, talk to Jim. He's very **computer-savvy.** "

◆ ◆ ◆

**schmooze:** make relaxed, casual conversation.

"No, we weren't talking about anything important. We were just **schmoozing.**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**shoot the breeze:** make relaxed, casual conversation.

"No, we weren't talking about anything important. We were just **shooting the breeze.**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**sleep on it:** take at least a day to think about something before making a decision.

"The job that you're offering me sounds really good, but I'd like to **sleep on it** before giving you my final decision."

◆ ◆ ◆

**a snap:** something that's very easy to do.

A: "Is your job difficult?"

B: "No, actually it's a **snap**. In fact, it's so easy that it's a little bit boring."

◆ ◆ ◆

**Someone's made his/her own bed; now let him/her lie in it.:** Someone has caused his/her own problems; he/she will have to solve them himself/herself.

A: Jim upset everyone when he got angry at the meeting. Can we do anything to make the situation better?

B: No. **He's made his own bed; now let him lie in it.**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**sooner or later:** eventually.

"You've been working too hard for too long. If you don't relax a little, **sooner or later** you're going to get sick."

◆ ◆ ◆

**sort of:** rather; somewhat.

"I think I'll lie down. I feel **sort of** dizzy."

◆ ◆ ◆

**so-so:** fair; not particularly good.

A: "How're you doing?"

B: "**So-so**. I've been better, but I've also been worse."

◆ ◆ ◆

**state of the art:** using the latest technology.

"The company is very proud of the equipment in its computer room. It's **state of the art**."

◆ ◆ ◆

**Step on it!:** Hurry up!

"**Step on it!** The taxi will be here at any time and you're not even dressed!"



## T

**take it easy:** relax.

"I don't have any special vacation plans. I'm just going to **take it easy**."

◆ ◆ ◆

**tell a white lie:** say something that isn't true in order not to hurt or offend someone.

"The cake that Susan made tasted terrible, but I knew that she made it because she wanted to please me, so when she asked if I liked it, I **told a white lie** and said it was good."

◆ ◆ ◆

**toss something:** throw something away; put something in the trash.

"These shoes are worn out. I guess I'll have to **toss them**."

◆ ◆ ◆

**tough:** difficult.

"Question number three is a **tough** one. Do you know the answer?"

◆ ◆ ◆

**There, there.:** expression of comfort.

"**There, there.** Everything's going to be OK."

◆ ◆ ◆

**tight-fisted:** very frugal; unwilling to spend money unnecessarily.

A: Do you think Charlie will donate any money to the activities fund?

B: No way! He's too **tight-fisted**!

◆ ◆ ◆

**a tightwad:** someone who is very frugal and unwilling to spend money unnecessarily.

A: Will Charlie donate any money to the activities fund?

B: Absolutely not! He's a real **tightwad**!"

◆ ◆ ◆

**tricky:** easily confused or misunderstood.

"This problem is **tricky**. I don't really understand it."

◆ ◆ ◆

**two-faced:** deceitful; disloyal; someone who pretends to be a friend but isn't.

"I thought he was my friend, but he's **two-faced**. He says nice things to me when we're together, but makes jokes about me when we aren't."

## U

**under the weather:** ill; sick; unwell.

"Ted was feeling **under the weather** yesterday, so he decided not to go to work."

◆ ◆ ◆

**until hell freezes over:** forever.

"Chris can practice the piano **until hell freezes over**, but he'll never play well because he's tone-deaf."

**Note:** This expression is used to describe something that will not change, no matter how long or how often it's done.

◆ ◆ ◆

**until you're blue in the face:** forever.

"You can talk **until you're blue in the face**, but I won't change my mind."

**Note:** This expression is used in the same way as "until hell freezes over."

◆ ◆ ◆

**update:** make current; add information to show what has happened recently.

"I need to **update** my résumé. It doesn't show what I've done during the last year."

◆ ◆ ◆

**upside down:** with the bottom part on top and the top part on bottom.

"Put the glasses **upside down** in the dishwasher. If you don't do that, they'll fill with water and you'll have to dry them by hand."

◆ ◆ ◆

**used to (+ V):** an action that was true in the past but is not true now.

"Jane **used to** live in Austin, Texas. She lives in San Francisco now."

**Was my face red!:** I was very embarrassed.

"When I got to the meeting I noticed that I was wearing one black sock and one brown one. **Was my face red!**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**wear out one's welcome:** make someone uncomfortable by visiting too long.

A: "Can't you stay two or three more days?"

B: "No. I don't want to **wear out my welcome.**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**wet behind the ears:** inexperienced and naive.

"Don't include Fred as part of the bargaining team. He's just started working here and is still too **wet behind the ears.**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**What for?:** Why?

A: "Come here for a minute. I need you."

B: "What for?"

**Note:** "What" and "for" can be separated--with "for" at the end of the question:

B: "What do you need me for?"

◆ ◆ ◆

**What's up?:** What's new? What's happening?

"Hi, Dave. **What's up?**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**a white lie:** a lie that is told to avoid offending someone or hurting his / her feelings.

"The cake that Susan made tasted terrible, but I knew that she made it because she wanted to please me, so when she asked if I liked it, I told a white lie and said it was good."

◆ ◆ ◆

**wishy-washy:** uncommitted; without an opinion of one's own.

"Don't be so **wishy-washy.** Tell us how you really feel."

◆ ◆ ◆

**with bells on:** very eagerly; with the feeling that one will have a very good time.

A: "Are you going to Sandra's party?"

B: "I'll be there **with bells on!**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**would ('d) just as soon:** would ('d) rather; prefer.

"I know we have a lot of work to do, but I'm tired. I'd **just as soon** leave and finish tomorrow. Is that OK with you?"

## Y

**a yes-man:** someone who tries to get approval by agreeing with everyone.

A: "Why does the boss think Arnold is so intelligent?"

B: "Because Arnold is **a yes-man**. He agrees with everything the boss says!"

◆ ◆ ◆

**You don't say!:** Really? / Is that really true?

A: "Have you heard the news? Jessica got married!"

B: "**You don't say!**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**You've got to be kidding!:** You can't be serious! (What you said can't be true. What you said is very surprising/hard to believe.) "

A: "Did you know that Bob quit his job?"

B: "**You've got to be kidding!**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**yucky:** terrible; distasteful; very unpleasant.

"Don't eat the soup at the cafeteria. It's **yucky!**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**yummy:** delicious.

"Have you tried the cookies that Jonathan baked? They're **yummy!**"

## Z

**zilch**: nothing.

A: "How much money do you have?"

B: "**Zilch**. I'm broke until payday."

◆ ◆ ◆

**Zip your lip!**: keep something secret; promise not to tell what has just been said.

"What I told you is really important, so **zip your lip!**"



Dave Sperling's  
**ESL SLANG PAGE**



A

**airhead:** stupid person.

"Believe it or not, Dave can sometimes act like an **airhead!**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**amigo:** friend (from Spanish).

"I met many **amigos** at Dave's ESL Cafe."

◆ ◆ ◆

**ammunition:** toilet paper.

"Help! We're completely out of **ammunition!**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**antifreeze:** alcohol.

"I'm going to need a lot of **antifreeze** tonight!"

◆ ◆ ◆

**armpit:** dirty, unappealing place.

"This cheap motel is an absolute **armpit!**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**ass [offensive] (1):** backside.

"I fell on my **ass** on the ski slopes."

◆ ◆ ◆

**ass (2):** an unworthy and hated person.

"I cannot be friends when you act like an **ass.**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**awesome:** great and impressive.

"Dave's ESL Cafe is truly **awesome!**"

## B

**baby boomer**: a person born from the end of the Second World War until the early 1960s.

"Dave Sperling was born in 1961, so he's considered a **baby boomer**."

◆ ◆ ◆

**ball (1)**: a fun time.

"I really had a **ball** in Dave's ESL class."

◆ ◆ ◆

**ball [offensive] (2)**: a testicle.

"After getting kicked in the **balls**, his voice seemed much higher."

◆ ◆ ◆

**bang (1)**: a very powerful thing.

"Disneyland is really a **bang!**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**bang (2)**: a powerful effect.

"Japanese sake really has a **bang!**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**barf (1)**: vomit.

"My dog **barfed** all over the carpet."

◆ ◆ ◆

**barf (2)**: vomit.

"Don't step on the **barf!**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**barf-out**: a displeasing person or affair.

"That restaurant was a real **barf-out**."

◆ ◆ ◆

**bazillion**: an infinite number of something.

"Has Dennis really taught a **bazillion** students?"

◆ ◆ ◆

**B-ball:** basketball.

"Do you wanna play **b-ball** with me?"

◆ ◆ ◆

**beans:** money.

"I've worked for this company for ten years, but I still don't have **beans**."

◆ ◆ ◆

**beat:** tired.

"I'm really **beat** because I was awake all night."

◆ ◆ ◆

**beemer:** a BMW.

"He wants to buy a **beemer** when he makes more money."

◆ ◆ ◆

**biggie:** something important.

"I was hoping to get my homework completed, but it's no **biggie**."

◆ ◆ ◆

**biker:** a motorcycle rider.

"Dave used to be a **biker** until he got into a serious motorcycle accident."

◆ ◆ ◆

**bitch [offensive] (1):** a very unpleasant woman.

"My boss can be such a **bitch** sometimes."

◆ ◆ ◆

**bitch [offensive] (2):** complain.

"Stop **bitching** and finish your homework!"

◆ ◆ ◆

**bitchy [offensive]:** moody.

"I like my friend Steve, even though he can be really **bitchy**."



◆ ◆ ◆

**bod:** body.

"Stalone has a great **bod!**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**bonkers; go bonkers:** crazy.

"If Dave works too hard, he sometimes goes slightly **bonkers!**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**booboo:** a mistake.

"I made a **booboo** on the last question of the exam."

◆ ◆ ◆

**boob tube:** television.

"Benjamin is always in front of the **boob tube.**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**booze:** alcohol.

"The ESL party was fun, even though there wasn't any **booze.**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**boss:** excellent; great.

"Dave's ESL Cafe is totally **boss!**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**bread:** money.

"Can I borrow some **bread?**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**brew (1):** coffee.

"Every morning Dave needs a fresh cup of **brew.**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**brew (2):** beer.

"Do you want another **brew**, dude?"

◆ ◆ ◆

**brewski**: beer.

"I love drinking **brewskies!**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**B.S.**: bullshit; lies.

"I'm tired of listening to your **B.S.**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**bull**: bullshit; lie.

"That's a bunch of **bull!**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**bullshit [offensive]**: lie; dishonesty.

"I don't like people that **bullshit** me"

◆ ◆ ◆

**buns [possibly offensive]**: the rear end; buttocks.

"Don't stare at my **buns!**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**bushed**: extremely tired.

"I'm completely **bushed.**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**butt**: the buttocks.

"Stop sitting on your **butt** and help me wash the dishes!"

C

**catch some rays**: get some sunshine.

"Let's go to the beach and catch some **rays.**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**cheesy**: cheap; outmoded.

"Why are you wearing such **cheesy** clothes?"

◆ ◆ ◆

**chicken**: coward.

"Don't be such a **chicken!**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**cool**: excellent; superb.

"Dave's ESL Cafe is totally **cool!**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**cooler, the**: jail.

"If you drink and drive, you'll end up spending time in the **cooler.**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**couch potato**: a person who watches too much television.

"Why did I have to marry such a **couch potato?**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**crap [offensive] (1)**: something worthless.

"My furniture is a bunch of cheap **crap.**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**crap [offensive] (2)**: excrement.

"Yuck! I stepped on dog **crap!**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**crap [offensive] (3)**: falsehoods and lies.

"I've had enough of your **crap.**"

## D

**deck:** to hit someone.

"His wife almost **decked** him when he returned home with lipstick on his shirt."

◆ ◆ ◆

**dicey:** unpredictable; risky.

"Gambling is a **dicey** occupation."

◆ ◆ ◆

**dinero:** money (from Spanish).

"I wish I had more **dinero!**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**dirt:** extremely bad person.

"My ex-boyfriend was **dirt.**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**dirty:** offensive; pornographic.

"Stop looking at the pictures in that **dirty** magazine!"

◆ ◆ ◆

**dorky:** strange; peculiar.

"If you keep acting so **dorky**, you'll never get a girlfriend!"

◆ ◆ ◆

**dude:** a male.

"That's really cool, **dude!**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**dynamite:** powerful; excellent.

"Dave gave a **dynamite** presentation."

◆ ◆ ◆

**dinosaur:** something old fashioned or out of date.

"I'd love to surf the Net, but unfortunately my computer is a **dinosaur.**"

## E

**el cheapo**: something cheap.

"Since I don't make much money, I always purchase the **el cheapo** brand."

◆ ◆ ◆

**evil**: great; excellent.

"Your car is really **evil!**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**eyeball**: to stare long and hard at someone or something.

"Dave **eyeballed** his daughter's new boyfriend."

◆ ◆ ◆

**eyepopper**: something or someone visibly astounding.

"Wow, that girl is truly an **eyepopper!**"

## F

**fab**: fabulous.

"Dave's ESL Cafe is really **fab!**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**face-off**: confrontation.

"I think it's time we had a **face-off.**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**fart [offensive]**: to expel intestinal gas.

"It's embarrassing to **fart** on the first date."

◆ ◆ ◆

**fender-bender**: small accident.

"This morning I had a **fender-bender** on the Ventura Freeway."

◆ ◆ ◆

**flaky**: unpredictable.

"I waited four hours for my **flaky** friend to show up."

◆ ◆ ◆

**flashback**: sudden memory.

"In Little Tokyo I had a **flashback** to my days living in Japan."

◆ ◆ ◆

**flick**: movie.

"Let's go out tonight and watch a **flick**."

◆ ◆ ◆

**fox**: attractive, alluring person.

"Is it true that Dave is a **fox**?"

◆ ◆ ◆

**freebie**: something that does not cost money.

"My trip to New York was a **freebie**."

◆ ◆ ◆

**French kiss [possibly offensive]**: kissing with the tongue.

"Dave's dog is always trying to **French kiss** him!"

## G

**geek**: someone who works too hard, is more intelligent than usual, and is slightly unattractive.

"Bill Gates is kind of a **geek**."

◆ ◆ ◆

**get it**: to understand something.

"Sorry, but I just don't **get it**."

◆ ◆ ◆

**get naked [possibly offensive]**: to completely relax and have a good time.

"Let's **get naked** tonight!"

◆ ◆ ◆

**glitch**: flaw.

"There must be a glitch in this **software**."

◆ ◆ ◆

**go bananas**: go slightly mad.

"This project is causing me to **go bananas**!"

◆ ◆ ◆

**gomer**: a dumb person.

"Stop acting like a **gomer**!"

◆ ◆ ◆

**goof (1)**: a silly and foolish person.

"What a **goof** you are!"

◆ ◆ ◆

**goof (2)**: make a mistake.

I really **goofed** on the test today."

◆ ◆ ◆

**goof off (1)**: waste time.

"Stop **goofing off** and help me clean the house!"

◆ ◆ ◆

**goof-off (2)**: someone who wastes time and isn't serious.

"A **goof-off** never does well in school"

◆ ◆ ◆

**goof up**: make a mistake.

"Oh no! I really **goofed up**!"

◆ ◆ ◆

**goofy**: silly.

"Kids always make me feel **goofy**!"

◆ ◆ ◆

**grabbers:** hands.

"Have you washed your **grabbers**, Benjamin?"

◆ ◆ ◆

**grand:** one thousand dollars.

"He's making over a hundred **grand** a year!"

◆ ◆ ◆

**grass:** marijuana.

"Have you ever smoked **grass**?"

◆ ◆ ◆

**grub:** food.

"Where's the **grub**?!"

◆ ◆ ◆

**grubby:** not clean.

"I always feel **grubby** in the morning."

◆ ◆ ◆

**grungy:** unclean and stinky.

"**Grungy** people are not allowed in Dave's house!"

◆ ◆ ◆

**gut:** a person's stomach; belly.

"Dave is getting a big **gut** because he loves chocolate ice cream and beer!"

◆ ◆ ◆

**guts (1):** courage.

"It took a lot of **guts** to ask his boss for a raise."

◆ ◆ ◆

**guts (2):** the nature of something.

"Let's get to the **guts** of Dave Sperling!"



## H

**hairy**: difficult; dangerous.

"The steep and windy road was really **hairy**."

◆ ◆ ◆

**hang a left**: make a left turn.

"**Hang a left** at the next corner."

◆ ◆ ◆

**hang a right**: make a right turn.

"**Hang a right** at the next corner."

◆ ◆ ◆

**head**: toilet.

"I really need to use the **head**!"

◆ ◆ ◆

**hep**: sensible; informed.

"She's a really **hep** student."

◆ ◆ ◆

**hickey**: a love bite on the skin.

"Wow! Is that a **hickey** on your neck?"

◆ ◆ ◆

**hip**: sensible; informed.

"He really tries hard to be **hip**."

◆ ◆ ◆

**hooker [possibly offensive]**: prostitute.

"You'll find a lot of **hookers** in the red light district."

◆ ◆ ◆

**horny [possibly offensive]**: sexually stimulated; in the mood for sex.

"Red wine seems to make my boyfriend **horny**."

◆ ◆ ◆

**hot (1):** popular.

"Brad Pitt is really **hot** now."

◆ ◆ ◆

**hot (2):** sexy.

"Wow! Cindy Crawford is really **hot!**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**humungous:** really big.

"American supermarkets are **humungous.**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**hungries, to have:** be hungry.

"I don't know about you, but I've got the **hungries.**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**hyper:** overly excited.

"Children often get **hyper** when they are tired."

## I

**icky:** unpleasant.

"The food is really **icky** in the school cafeteria."

◆ ◆ ◆

**I.D.:** identification.

"If you want to order a beer, you'll need your **I.D.**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**I'm outta here:** I'm leaving; I'm departing.

"Sorry, but **I'm outta here**, dude."

◆ ◆ ◆

**in:** fashionable.

"Ray-Ban sunglasses are really **in** now."

◆ ◆ ◆

**ivories**: teeth.

"Tom Cruise has really beautiful **ivories**."

## J

**jack around [possibly offensive]**: waste time.

"Will you please stop **jacking around**?"

◆ ◆ ◆

**jam, in a (1)**: trouble.

"If you're in a **jam**, I promise to help you."

◆ ◆ ◆

**jam (2)**: improvise (musically).

"I'd love to **jam** with Bon Jovi!"

◆ ◆ ◆

**jamming, to be** : going well.

"Dave's ESL Cafe is really **jamming**!"

◆ ◆ ◆

**jerk**: stupid or annoying person.

"How could you go out with such a **jerk**?"

◆ ◆ ◆

**jillion**: an immense number.

"Do you really have a **jillion** problems?"

◆ ◆ ◆

**jock**: someone good at sports.

"I've never been much of a **jock**."

◆ ◆ ◆

**john:** toilet.

"Where's the **john**?"

## K

**K (k):** a thousand.

"I could retire with 100 **K (k)**!"

◆ ◆ ◆

**kick back:** relax and enjoy.

"I wish I could **kick back** at the beach today."

◆ ◆ ◆

**kick off:** die.

"My dog finally **kicked off**."

◆ ◆ ◆

**killer:** something exceptional or great.

"Wow, your boyfriend is **killer**!"

◆ ◆ ◆

**knock:** condemn.

"Don't **knock** it unless you've tried it."

◆ ◆ ◆

**knockout:** beautiful woman; handsome man.

"Benjamin is already a **knockout**!"

◆ ◆ ◆

**kook:** peculiar person.

"Stop acting like a **kook**!"

## L

**laid back**: relaxed; calm.

"I always feel **laid back** at the beach."

◆ ◆ ◆

**lame**: incompetent.

"Dave is really **lame** when is comes to fixing his car."

◆ ◆ ◆

**lip**: cheeky talk.

"My students are always giving me **lip!**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**loser**: a bungling and worthless person.

"Why are you dating such a **loser?**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**love handles**: excess fat around the waist.

"Is it possible for Dave to lose his **love handles?**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**luck out**: to be lucky or fortunate.

"You really **luck out** by visiting Dave's ESL Cafe!"

## M

**make waves**: cause problems.

"Teachers don't like students to **make waves.**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**max, to the** : maximum.

"I'm happy to the **max.**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**mega**: big.

"American restaurants serve **mega** portions of food."

◆ ◆ ◆

**megabucks**: a large amount of money.

"It takes megabucks to live in Japan."

◆ ◆ ◆

**mellow**: relaxed.

"I'm feeling very **mellow** this evening."

◆ ◆ ◆

**mickey-mouse**: unimportant; time-wasting.

"I'm sick of this **mickey-mouse** job."

◆ ◆ ◆

**monkey bite**: a kiss that leaves a mark on the skin.

"I don't want any **monkey bites** tonight, okay?"

◆ ◆ ◆

**munch out**: to eat voraciously.

"Let's **munch out** on a large pizza!"

## N

**nada**: nothing (from Spanish).

"I know **nada** about politics."

◆ ◆ ◆

**neat**: cool; great.

"Isn't my new car **neat**?"

◆ ◆ ◆

**noid**: someone that's paranoid.

"Why are you so **noid**?"

◆ ◆ ◆

**nuke (1):** nuclear weapon.

"This world had too many **nukes**."

◆ ◆ ◆

**nuke (2):** destroy; delete.

"Sorry, but I accidentally **nuked** your e-mail message."

◆ ◆ ◆

**nuke (3):** cook something in the microwave oven.

"Can you **nuke** this frozen pizza for me?"

◆ ◆ ◆

**nut (1):** odd or crazy person.

"Why are you always acting like a **nut**?"

◆ ◆ ◆

**nut (2):** someone passionate about something.

"I'm a nut about **computers**."

◆ ◆ ◆

**nuts [offensive]:** testicles.

"Don't ever kick me in the **nuts**."

O

**okay:** decent.

"My boss is an **okay** person."

◆ ◆ ◆

**OK:** decent.

"Dave is an **okay** person."

**pad**: someone's home.

"Can I sleep at your **pad** tonight?"

◆ ◆ ◆

**party**: celebrate.

"Let's **party** tonight!"

◆ ◆ ◆

**party animal**: someone that loves parties.

"Dave has been known to sometimes be a **party animal**."

◆ ◆ ◆

**paws**: hands.

"Get your **paws** off me!"

◆ ◆ ◆

**peanuts**: very little money.

"I love my job, but the pay is **peanuts**."

◆ ◆ ◆

**pee**: to urinate.

"I always have to **pee** after drinking beer."

◆ ◆ ◆

**pickled**: drunk.

"He got **pickled** on vodka."

◆ ◆ ◆

**pig out**: eat too much.

"Dave is famous for **pigging out** on chocolate ice cream."

◆ ◆ ◆

**piss**: to urinate.

"My dog **pissed** on me!"



◆ ◆ ◆

**pissed (off)**: angry; upset.

"I'm really **pissed (off)** at you."

◆ ◆ ◆

**plastered**: drunk.

"Why does he always get **plastered**?"

◆ ◆ ◆

**pad**: someone's home.

"Can I sleep at your **pad** tonight?"

◆ ◆ ◆

**poop, the (1)**: knowledge; information.

"What's the **poop** on Michael Jackson?"

◆ ◆ ◆

**poop [offensive] (2)**: defecation; shit.

"Be careful not to step on dog **poop**."

◆ ◆ ◆

**poop out**: get tired and quit.

"I got **pooped out** after spending eight hours at Disneyland."

◆ ◆ ◆

**pot (1)**: toilet.

"Who's on the **pot**?"

◆ ◆ ◆

**pot (2)**: marijuana.

"It's easy to buy **pot** in the big city."

◆ ◆ ◆

**pro**: someone who's good at something; professional.

"She's really a **pro** at golf."

◆ ◆ ◆

**psycho**: crazy person.

"Stay away from that **psycho**!"

◆ ◆ ◆

**puke**: vomit.

"Alcohol makes some people **puke**."

◆ ◆ ◆

**pumped (up)**: excited.

"I'm really **pumped (up)** about Dave's ESL Cafe!"

◆ ◆ ◆

**puss**: the face.

"My girlfriend slapped me right on the **puss**."

## Q

**quarterback**: leader.

"Dave is the **quarterback** of Dave's ESL Cafe."

◆ ◆ ◆

**quick and dirty**: done fast, but not well.

"The mechanic did a **quick and dirty** repair on my car."

## R

**racket (1)**: noise.

"Small kids can make a lot of **racket**."

◆ ◆ ◆

**racket (2)**: something that's dishonest or deceptive.

"The Tobacco Industry is quite a **racket**."

◆ ◆ ◆

**racket (3)**: an occupation.

"I've been in the ESL **racket** for fourteen years."

◆ ◆ ◆

**rank**: give someone a difficult time.

"She's always **ranking** her teacher."

◆ ◆ ◆

**rat**: a despicable person.

"I thought I loved you, but now I know you're really a **rat**."

◆ ◆ ◆

**razz**: annoy someone.

"Will you please stop **razzing** me?"

◆ ◆ ◆

**rear (end)**: buttocks.

"Dave fell on his **rear (end)**."

◆ ◆ ◆

**riot, a** : something or someone very funny.

"Jim Carrey is a **riot!**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**rip off (1)**: stealing.

"Someone **ripped off** my car."

◆ ◆ ◆

**rip off (2)**: fraud.

"I paid \$10,000 for my computer. What a **rip off!**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**rocking**: great; excellent.

"Dave's ESL class is really **rocking!**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**rubbish:** nonsense; not true.

"That rumor is a bunch of **rubbish.**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**rug rat:** a child.

"Dave has a couple of **rug rats** at home."

◆ ◆ ◆

**runs, the:** diarrhea.

"Oh no! I've got **the runs!**"

## S

**scarf:** to eat.

"I can easily **scarf** an entire banana split."

◆ ◆ ◆

**screw up:** to make a mistake.

"I **screwed up** on the driving test, so I didn't pass."

◆ ◆ ◆

**screw-up:** a person who makes a mistake.

"Why are you such a **screw-up?**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**scum:** a despicable individual.

"Don't hang around with that kind of **scum.**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**shades:** sunglasses.

"Those are really cool **shades!**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**shoot some hoops:** play basketball.

"Let's shoot some **hoops!**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**silks**: clothing.

"Those are really awesome **silks**!"

◆ ◆ ◆

**smarts**: intelligence.

"It takes a lot of **smarts** to become a doctor."

◆ ◆ ◆

**smurfbrain**: a dumb or stupid person.

"Stop acting like a **smurfbrain**!"

◆ ◆ ◆

**snookered**: cheated.

"I got **snookered** into buying swamp land in Florida."

◆ ◆ ◆

**sofa spud**: a person who watches too much television.

"I'm usually a **sofa spud** on Sunday."

◆ ◆ ◆

**solid (1)**: really good; cool.

"Dave's ESL Cafe is totally **solid**!"

◆ ◆ ◆

**solid (2)**: consecutive.

"It's been raining for seven **solid** days."

◆ ◆ ◆

**specs**: eyeglasses.

"I didn't know that you wore **specs**."

◆ ◆ ◆

**split**: to leave.

"Let's **split** from here now."

◆ ◆ ◆

**spunk**: spirit.

"She might be small, but she's got a lot of **spunk**."

◆ ◆ ◆

**stoned (out)**: drunk from drugs or alcohol.

"I'm really **stoned (out)**, dude!"

◆ ◆ ◆

**street smart**: knowledgeable about city life.

"Since Dave is from Los Angeles, he's very **street smart**."

◆ ◆ ◆

**suck**: to be bad and unacceptable.

"That song really **sucks**!"

## T

**technicolor yawn, to do a** : vomit.

"My dog just did a **technicolor yawn** all over the carpet!"

◆ ◆ ◆

**thou**: thousand.

"I need to borrow a hundred **thou**."

◆ ◆ ◆

**threads**: clothing.

"My wife spent \$900 on new **threads**."

◆ ◆ ◆

**ticker (1)**: the heart.

"My grandfather has a bad **ticker**."

◆ ◆ ◆

**ticker (2)**: a watch.

"Wow! That's a really cool **ticker!**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**tints**: sunglasses.

"You have to wear **tints** in California."

◆ ◆ ◆

**totally**: really; completely.

"That's **totally** awesome, dude!"

◆ ◆ ◆

**to the max**: maximum.

"I studied **to the max.**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**turkey (1)**: failure; flop.

"Thank goodness that Dave's ESL Cafe is not a **turkey!**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**turkey (2)**: dumb person.

"**Turkeys** are not allowed to work for this company."

◆ ◆ ◆

**turn-off**: something that repulses a person.

"Bad breath is a real **turn-off.**"

## U

**umpteen**: many; countless.

"I've asked you **umpteen** times to show me the money!"

◆ ◆ ◆

**unlax**: relax.

"Dave needs to definitely **unlax** with his family."

◆ ◆ ◆

**upchuck**: vomit.

"She got sick and **upchucked** three times."

◆ ◆ ◆

**uptight**: nervous; anxious.

"Why are you so **uptight**?"

## V

**vanilla (1)**: plain.

"She drives a **vanilla** car."

◆ ◆ ◆

**vanilla (2)**: Caucasian.

"The Midwest is too **vanilla** for me."

## W

**wad**: roll of money.

"It's dangerous to carry a big **wad** in your pocket."

◆ ◆ ◆

**wasted**: killed.

"A lot of people get **wasted** in the streets of New York."

◆ ◆ ◆

**wheels**: car; motorcycle.

"If you want to live in Los Angeles, you've got to get some **wheels**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**whitebread**: plain; boring.

"Dave's ESL Cafe is definitely not **whitebread**!"

◆ ◆ ◆

**whiz (1)**: someone who shows a special talent for something.



"Einstein was a **whiz** in Physics."

◆ ◆ ◆

**whiz** [offensive] (2): to urinate.

"I really have to take a **whiz**."

◆ ◆ ◆

**wimpy**: weak.

"Don't be so **wimpy**!"

◆ ◆ ◆

**winks, get some**: sleep.

"I really need to get some **winks**"

◆ ◆ ◆

**wrongo**: wrong.

"That is totally **wrongo**!"

## Y

**yank (1)**: bother; harass.

"Stop **yanking** me, okay?"

◆ ◆ ◆

**Yank (2)**: a Yankee; an American.

"Dave is a **Yank**."

## Z

**zero**: an unimportant person.

"If you don't work hard, you'll end up a **zero**."

◆ ◆ ◆

**zip (1)**: nothing.

"I don't know **zip** about you."

◆◆◆

**zip (2):** energy; vigor.

"I need something that will give me more **zip**."

◆◆◆

**zit:** pimple; acne.

"Teens often have a lot of **zits**."



BEST WISHES  
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