

# 120 Useful English Phrases

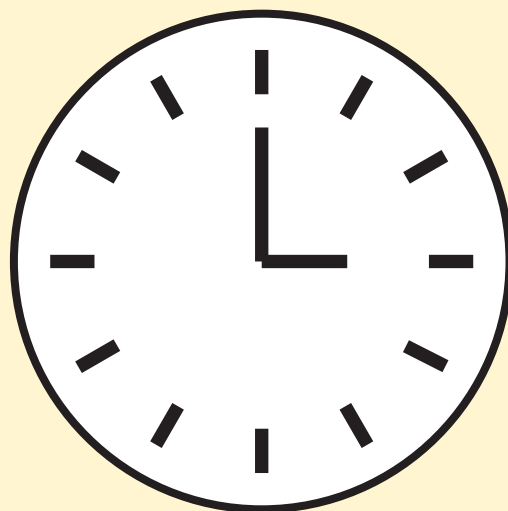
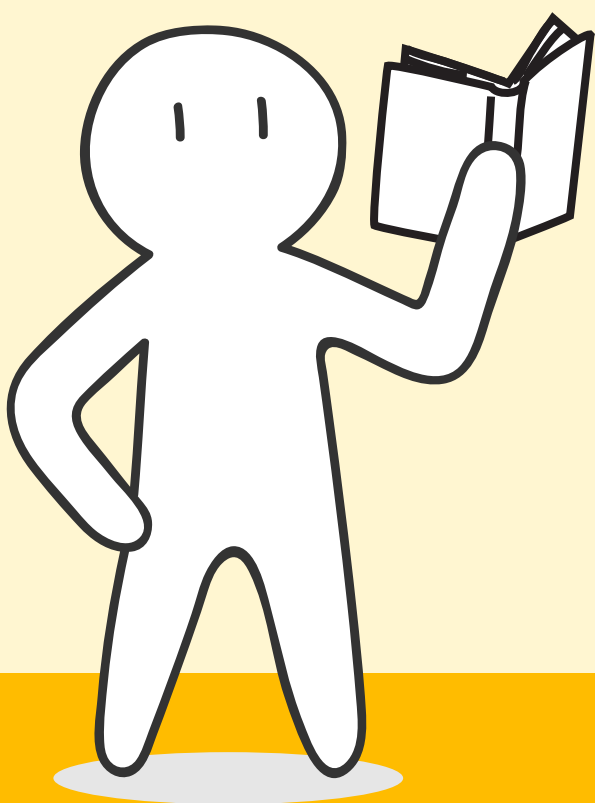
Helena®  
Daily English

## For Everyday Use

### **Point out (someone or something):**

to explain or call attention to someone or something

**Example:** My teacher was very kind when she pointed out the mistakes that I had made.



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**1. as easy as pie:** "very easy" (same as "a piece of cake")

**Example:** He said it is a difficult problem, but I don't agree. It seems as easy as pie to me!

**2. be sick and tired of:** "I hate" (also "can't stand")

**Example:** I'm sick and tired of doing nothing but work. Let's go out tonight and have fun.

**3. bend over backward:** "try very hard" (maybe too much!)

**Example:** He bent over backward to please his new wife, but she never seemed satisfied.

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

**Example:** John is so far behind in his studies. Besides classes, he plays sports and works at a part-time job. It seems he has bitten off more than he can chew.

**5. broke:** "to have no money"

**Example:** I have to borrow some money from my Dad. Right now, I'm broke.

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

**Example:** I was planning to work late tonight, but I changed my mind. I'll do extra work on the weekend instead.

**7. Cut it out!:** "stop doing something bad"

**Example:** That noise is really annoying. Cut it out!

**8. drop someone a line:** "send a letter or email to someone"

**Example:** It was good to meet you and I hope we can see each other again. Drop me a line when you have time.

**9. figure something out:** "come to understand a problem"

**Example:** I don't understand how to do this problem. Take a look at it. Maybe you can figure it out.

**10. fill in for someone:** "do their work while they are away"

**Example:** While I was away from the store, my brother filled in for me.

**11. in ages:** "for a very long time"

**Example:** Have you seen Joe recently? I haven't seen him in ages.

**12. give someone a hand:** "help"

**Example:** I want to move this desk to the next room. Can you give me a hand?

**13. hit the hay:** "go to bed" (also "hit the sack")

**Example:** It's after 12 o'clock. I think it's time to hit the hay.

**14. in the black:** "the business is making money, it is profitable"

**Example:** Our business is really improving. We've been in the black all year.

**15. in the red:** "the business is losing money, it is unprofitable"

**Example:** Business is really going poorly these days. We've been in the red for the past three months.

**16. in the nick of time:** "not too late, but very close!"

**Example:** I got to the drugstore just in the nick of time. It's a good thing because I really need this medicine!

**17. keep one's chin up:** "remain brave and keep on trying"

**Example:** I know things have been difficult for you recently, but keep your chin up. It will get better soon.

**18. know something like the back of your hand:** "know something very, very well"

**Example:** If you get lost, just ask me for directions. I know this part of town like the back of my hand

**19. once in a while:** "sometimes, not very often"

**Example:** Have you been to the new movie theater? No, only see movies once in a while. I usually stay at home and watch TV.

**20. sharp:** "exactly at that time"

**Example:** I'll meet you at 9 o'clock sharp. If you're late, we'll be in trouble!

**21. sleep on it:** "think about something before making a decision"

**Example:** That sounds like a good deal, but I'd like to sleep on it before I give you my final decision.

**22. take it easy:** "relax"

**Example:** I don't have any special plans for the summer. I think I'll just take it easy.

**23. to get the ball rolling:** "start something, especially something big"

**Example:** We need to get this project started as soon as possible. I'm hoping you will help me get the ball rolling.

**24. up to the minute:** "the most recent information"

**Example:** I wish I knew more about what is happening in the capital city. We need more up to the minute news.

**25. twenty-four/seven:** "every minute of every day, all the time"

**Example:** You can access our web site 24/7. It's very convenient!

**25. about to (do something):** to be on the point of doing something

**Example:** I was about to leave when the phone rang.

**26. according to (someone or something):** as said or told by someone, in agreement with something, in the order of something, in proportion to something

**Example:** According to our teacher, there will be no class next week. We did everything according to the terms of our agreement.

**27. account for (something):** to provide an explanation or answer for something

**Example:** The bad weather accounts for the fact that few people came to the meeting.

**28. after all:** considering the fact that something happened, something that is usually assumed "You don't need to phone him.

**Example:** After all, he never phones you."

**29. all of a sudden:** suddenly, without advance warning

**Example:** All of a sudden it became cloudy and began to rain.

**30. as a matter of fact:** actually

**Example:** "As a matter of fact, we have been to the history museum many times."

**31. as far as:** to the extent or degree of something

**Example:** As far as I know the movie will start in a few minutes.

**32. as for:** with regard to, concerning

**Example:** "As for me, I think that I will return home now."

**33. as if:** in the same way that something would be, that

**Example:** The drink tastes as if it were made with orange juice. It seemed as if the whole town came to the concert.

**34. as long as:** provided that, on condition that

**Example:** As long as you promise to be careful you can borrow my car.

**35. as soon as:** just after something

**Example:** when I phoned my friend as soon as I finished dinner.

**36. as to:** with regard to, according to

**Example:** "As to your question, I will answer it tomorrow." The players were put into groups as to their ability.

**37. as well:** in addition, also, too

**Example:** I plan to take a computer course this summer as well.

**38. as well as:** in addition to

**Example:** "Please bring your swimming suit as well as your towel."

**39. back and forth:** backwards and forwards, first one way and then the other way

**Example:** The argument went back and forth before the judge made a decision.

**40. better off:** to be in a better situation than before

**Example:** My friend would be better off if he sold his old car and bought a new one.

**41. break down (something):** to divide something into parts, to separate something into simpler substances

**Example:** We tried to break down the problem for further study. The sugar began to break down soon after it was swallowed.

**42. break up:** to separate, to divide into groups or pieces, to put an end to something

**Example:** Nobody wanted to break up their groups. We usually break up into small groups during our class.

**43. by the way:** incidentally

**Example:** By the way, could you please bring your laptop computer tomorrow

**44. carry out (something):** to put something into action, to accomplish something, to do something

**Example:** The scientist wanted to carry out several experiments before discussing the new medicine.

**45. come on:** please, hurry, go faster

**Example:** "Come on, I only have a few minutes before I must go." "Come on, stop doing that."

**46. come up:** to happen unexpectedly

**Example:** I will not be able to go to the party if something else comes up.

**47. come up with (something):** to produce or find a thought/idea/answer

**Example:** I tried to come up with a name for the new magazine.

**48. deal with (something):** to be concerned with something, to take action about something

**Example:** We will deal with the boxes tomorrow.

**49. end up (doing something or going somewhere):** to do something that one had not planned to do, to go somewhere one had not planned to go

**Example:** We ended up going to a restaurant after the movie last night.

**50. figure out (someone or something):** to try to understand someone or something, to solve something

**Example:** I finally figured out how to use the new DVD player.



**51. about to (do something):** to be on the point of doing something

**Example:** I was about to leave when the phone rang.

**52. fill in (something):** to write words in blank spaces

**Example:** Please fill in this form and give it to the receptionist.

**53. find out (something):** to learn or discover something

**Example:** My mother is angry at me because she found out that I had quit my French class.

**54. first of all:** the very first thing

**Example:** First of all we prepared the garden and then we planted the seeds.

**55. for good:** permanently

**Example:** The city will close the public swimming pool for good next week.

**56. for sure:** without a doubt, certainly, surely

**Example:** I will go to the movie with you for sure next week.

**57. get back to (something):** to return to something

**Example:** I was happy to get back to work after my holiday.

**58. get into (something):** to become interested or involved in something

**Example:** I do not want to get into an argument with my friend. We will get into the details of the plan tomorrow.

**59. get into (somewhere):** to enter somewhere

**Example:** My friend wants to get into a good university. I bumped my head as I was getting into the car.

**60. get out of (somewhere):** to leave somewhere, to escape from somewhere

**Example:** I want to hurry and get out of my house.

**61. get rid of (something):** to give or throw something away, to sell or destroy something, to make a cold or fever disappear

**Example:** I bought a new television set so I want to get rid of the old one.

**62. get through (something):** to complete something, to finish something

**Example:** My friend is having trouble getting through her final exams. I have much reading that I must get through before tomorrow.

**63. go ahead:** to begin to do something

**Example:** Let's go ahead and start now. We can't wait any longer.

**64. go on:** to continue

**Example:** The game will probably go on for an hour after we leave.

**65. go over (something):** to examine or review something

**Example:** The accountant will go over the books tomorrow. We plan to go over that question tomorrow.

**66. go through (something):** to discuss something, to look at something, to do something

**Example:** The teacher decided to go through the exercise before the test.

**67. go with (something):** to choose one thing rather than another

**Example:** We decided to go with the small rental car rather than the large one.

**68. hang out (somewhere/with someone):** to spend one's time with no great purpose, to spend leisure time with friends

**Example:** Recently my friend has been hanging out with a group of people who are not a good influence on him.

**69. have (something) to do with (something):** to be about something, to be on the subject of something, to be related to something

**Example:** The book has something to do with cooking but I am not sure if you will like it. That problem has nothing to do with me.

**70. hold on:** to wait a minute, to stop, to wait and not hang up the phone

**Example:** Please hold on for a minute while I lock the window.

**71. in a way:** to a certain extent, a little, somewhat

**Example:** In a way, I want to go to the new restaurant but in a way, I don't really care.

**72. in the case:** if, if something should happen

**Example:** I will take my umbrella in case it rains.

**73. in common:** shared together or equally, in use or ownership by all

**Example:** I had nothing in common with the other members of the class.

**74. in detail:** giving all the details, item by item

**Example:** The saleswoman explained about the new product in detail.

**75. in effect:** for practical purposes, basically

**Example:** The man's silence was in effect a way of disagreeing with the other people in the meeting.

**76. in fact:** actually, the truth is

**Example:** The man has been to China before. In fact, he has been there three times.

**77. in favor of (someone or something):** to approve or support someone or something

**Example:** Everybody is in favor of the new police chief. My company is not in favor of changing our holiday schedule.

**78. in general:** in most situations or circumstances

**Example:** In general, most of the people in our apartment are happy with the new

**79. in order to:** for the purpose of

**Example:** They have decided to close down the school for the summer in order to do some major repairs.

**80. in other words:** in a different (usually more direct) way

**Example:** In other words, if you do not finish the assignment by Wednesday you will not pass the course.

**81. in place:** in the proper place or location

**Example:** Everything in the room was in place when we arrived for the meeting.

**82. in some ways:** in some unspecified way or manner, by some unspecified means

**Example:** In some ways, I know what my friend means but in some ways I do not.

**83. in terms of (something):** with regard to something

**Example:** In terms of our agreement with the other company we were not allowed to sell the products online.

**84. in time:** early enough

**Example:** I did not come home in time to meet my cousin.

**85. keep (someone or something) in mind:** to remember and think about someone or something

**Example:** I told my co-workers to keep the new starting time for work in mind.

**86. kind of:** somewhat, more or less, moderately

**Example:** I was kind of tired when I arrived home last night.

**87. look for (something):** to try to find something, to hunt/search for something

**Example:** My friend has been looking for her credit card all morning but she can't find it.

**88. lookup (something):** to search for something in a dictionary or other book

**Example:** I will look up my friend's name in the telephone book. I looked up the word in the dictionary.

**89. make a difference:** to cause a change in a situation

**Example:** It does not make a difference whether our boss comes to the meeting or not.

**90. make sense:** to seem reasonable

**Example:** His new proposal really does make sense.

**91. make sure:** to make certain, to establish something without a doubt

**Example:** I want to make sure that my friend is going to meet me tomorrow.



**92. more or less:** somewhat, to some extent

**Example:** I more or less have decided to study business next year.

**93. no matter:** regardless

**Example:** No matter how hard I try, my piano teacher is never satisfied.

**94. not at all:** certainly not

**Example:** I am not at all happy with my new computer.

**95. of course:** certainly, definitely, naturally

**Example:** Of course you can use my car if you want to.

**96. on the other hand:** however, in contrast, looking at the opposite side of a matter

**Example:** He is very intelligent but on the other hand he is very lazy and always gets low marks at school.

**97. on time:** at the scheduled time, exactly at the correct time, punctually

**Example:** Our train arrived exactly on time.

**98. once again:** again, one more time, once more

**Example:** I tried once again to phone my boss at his home .

**99. open to (something):** to be agreeable to learn or hear about new ideas or suggestions

**Example:** Most members of the class were open to the teacher's ideas.

**100. pick up (something):** to get or receive something

**Example:** I will pick up my dry cleaning tomorrow. I picked up a copy of the newspaper at the station.

**112. stick with (something):** to continue doing something, to not quite something

**Example:** My brother has been able to stick with his trumpet lessons since he was a child.

**113. take advantage of (someone or something):** to use someone or something for one's own benefit

**Example:** We took advantage of the beautiful weather and went to the beach.

**114. take care of (someone or something):** to look after or give attention to someone or something

**Example:** You should take care of your health or you will become sick.

**115. take out (something):** to remove something from somewhere, to extract something

**Example:** The teacher told us to take out our books. I took out some onions from the refrigerator.

**116. take over (something):** to take control of something, to take command of something

**Example:** The large company wants to take over some of the small companies in our area.

**117. take place:** to happen, to occur

**Example:** The soccer game took place on the coldest day of the year.

**118. to the extent that:** to the degree that, in so far as

**Example:** I plan to provide information about the new company policy to the extent that I am familiar with it.

**119. turn in (something):** to give something to someone, to hand something to someone

**Example:** I arrived at school early so that I could turn in my essay.

**120. turn out:** to be found or known, to prove to be true

**Example:** It turned out that more people came to the party than we expected.

**101. point out (someone or something):** to explain or call attention to someone or something

**Example:** My teacher was very kind when she pointed out the mistakes that I had made.

**102. put out (something):** to produce or make something (a product/brochure/report/CD/movie/paper)

**Example:** The company puts out a newsletter every month for the employees.

**103. regardless of (something):** without considering or thinking about something, without regard to something

**Example:** Regardless of the weather we are going to go fishing tomorrow morning.

**104. right away:** immediately

**Example:** forgot to bring my book but I will go home and get it right away.

**105. rule out (someone or something):** to decide against or eliminate someone or something

**Example:** The police ruled out the man as a possible bank robber. We decided to rule out Monday as the day to have our meeting.

**106. run into (something – a fact/trouble/problems/difficulty):** to experience something, to encounter something

**Example:** The mechanic ran into trouble when he was fixing my car.  
I ran into some interesting facts when I was researching my essay.

**107. set up (something):** to establish something, to provide the money for something

**Example:** The newspaper company provided the money to set up the new travel magazine.  
The company set up a unique situation to test the new product.

**108. show up:** to appear, to arrive, to be present

**Example:** What time did your friend show up for the party?

**109. so far:** until now So far

**Example:** no one has entered the speech contest at the television station.

**110. so to speak:** as one might or could say, this is one way to say something

**Example:** We had a good time at the restaurant, so to speak, although the service was not very good.

**111. sort of (something):** to be almost something, to be similar to something, to be not quite something

**Example:** Did you finish cleaning the kitchen?" "Sort of, but not really.

**112. stick with (something):** to continue doing something, to not quite something

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