

What's  
the  
matter?

I got  
canned  
today!



## BOB RETURNS HOME WITH BAD NEWS

*Bob tells his wife Susan that he lost his job.  
Susan suggests that he start his own business*

*Susan:* **What's the matter**, dear?

*Bob:* Susan, I **got canned** today at work.

*Susan:* But Bob, you were Peter's **right-hand man!**

*Bob:* Yes, and he **stabbed me in the back.**

*Susan:* **Keep your chin up.** Maybe he'll **change his mind** and take you back.

*Bob:* **When pigs fly!** Once he **makes up his mind**, he never changes it. Besides, I **told him off.**

*Susan:* **Look on the bright side:** you won't have to **set eyes** on Peter ever again.

*Bob:* **Thank goodness** for that!

*Susan:* **Hang in there.** I'm sure you won't be **out of work** for long.

*Bob:* In the meantime, we'll have to **live from hand to mouth.**

*Susan:* Don't get too **stressed out**, Bob. We'll **make ends meet.**

*Bob:* I can always get a job at McDonald's as a **last resort**.

*Susan:* I don't think they're hiring right now.

*Bob:* If **worse comes to worst**, we can sell our home and move into a tent.

*Susan:* Let's **think big!** Maybe you can start your own business.

*Bob:* **Easier said than done!**



## IDIOMS - LESSON 2

**(to) change one's mind** - to change one's opinion or decision

EXAMPLE 1: Brandon wasn't going to take a vacation this year, but then he **changed his mind** and went to Bora Bora for two weeks.

EXAMPLE 2: Why aren't you applying to medical school this year? Did you **change your mind** about becoming a doctor?

**easier said than done** - more difficult than you think

EXAMPLE 1: You want to climb Mount Everest? **Easier said than done!**

EXAMPLE 2: Moving into a new home is **easier said than done**.

**(to) get canned** [slang] - to lose one's job; to get fired

EXAMPLE 1: After Chris **got canned**, it took him a year to find a new job.

EXAMPLE 2: Lisa is a lousy secretary. She deserves to **get canned!**

SYNONYMS: to get sacked; to be given the ax

**(to) hang in there** - to persevere; to not give up

EXAMPLE 1: I know you're four games behind, but you can still win the tennis match. Just **hang in there!**

EXAMPLE 2: **Hang in there**, Don! Your invention will soon be a success.

**if worse comes to worst** - in the worst case; if absolutely necessary

EXAMPLE 1: Ted's car isn't running well. **If worse comes to worst**, he can take the bus to school.

EXAMPLE 2: I know you're running out of money. **If worse comes to worst**, you can always sell some of your jewelry.

**(to) keep one's chin up** – to stay positive

EXAMPLE 1: Even when he was unemployed and homeless, Bill managed to **keep his chin up**.

EXAMPLE 2: **Keep your chin up!** You'll find your lost dog soon.

**last resort** – if there are no other alternatives left; the last solution for getting out of a difficulty

EXAMPLE 1: David was locked out of his house. He knew that as a **last resort**, he could always break a window.

EXAMPLE 2: I don't like taking medicine. I'll only take it as a **last resort**.

**(to) live from hand to mouth** – to barely have enough money to survive

EXAMPLE 1: Jenny was earning \$5 an hour working at the store. She was really **living from hand to mouth**.

EXAMPLE 2: George is really poor. He **lives from hand to mouth**.

**(to) look on the bright side** – to be optimistic; to think about the positive part or aspect of a situation

EXAMPLE 1: Leo was upset that his soccer game was canceled. His mother said, "**Look on the bright side**, now you can stay home and watch TV."

EXAMPLE 2: You lost your job? **Look on the bright side**, now you'll have more free time!

**(to) make ends meet** – to manage one's money so as to have enough to live on; to be okay financially

EXAMPLE 1: Kimberly wasn't able to **make ends meet** so she had to ask her parents to pay her rent.

EXAMPLE 2: If you can't **make ends meet**, you'll need to start spending less.

**(to) make up one's mind** – see *Lesson 1*

**out of work** – unemployed; not working

EXAMPLE 1: Gary was **out of work** for a year before finding a new job.

EXAMPLE 2: Bob is **out of work**. Do you know anybody who might want to hire him?

**right-hand man** – the most helpful assistant or employee

EXAMPLE 1: Juan's **right-hand man** helps him make all of his decisions.

EXAMPLE 2: When Jack Thompson retired as president of his company, his **right-hand man** took over.

**(to) set eyes on** - to look at; to see for the first time

EXAMPLE 1: Ted was in love from the moment he **set eyes on** Amber.

EXAMPLE 2: Susan knew from the moment she **set eyes on** Ted's friend Lucas that he would be trouble.

**(to) stab someone in the back** - to betray someone

EXAMPLE 1: Jill and Heather were friends, until Heather **stabbed Jill in the back** by stealing her boyfriend.

EXAMPLE 2: You're firing me after all I've done for this company? You're really **stabbing me in the back!**

**(to be) stressed out** - under severe strain; very anxious

EXAMPLE 1: Al is so **stressed out** about his job that he can't sleep at night.

EXAMPLE 2: You've been so **stressed out** lately. You really need to take a long vacation!

**(to) tell off** - to scold; to tell someone in strong words what one really thinks

EXAMPLE 1: When Ted showed up for chemistry class a half an hour late, his teacher really **told him off**.

EXAMPLE 2: Patty is going to **tell off** the plumber because the pipes he said he fixed are still leaking.

**thank goodness** - I'm grateful; I'm relieved

EXAMPLE 1: When Ted came home at 4 a.m. last Sunday, his mother said, "**Thank goodness** you're home! I was so worried about you."

EXAMPLE 2: **Thank goodness** you didn't go to California on Monday. It rained there every day this week.

**(to) think big** - to set high goals

EXAMPLE 1: Why run for Governor of New York? **Think big**: run for President of the United States!

EXAMPLE 2: Ken and Sandra hope to sell their house for \$3 million dollars. They always **think big**.

**What's the matter?** - What's the problem?

EXAMPLE 1: **What's the matter**, Bob? You don't look very happy.

EXAMPLE 2: Oscar looks very pale. **What's the matter** with him?

**When pigs fly!** [slang] - never

EXAMPLE 1: Will Ted teach Nicole how to play the guitar? **When pigs fly!**

EXAMPLE 2: Sure, I'll give you my new laptop. **When pigs fly!**

SYNONYMS: when hell freezes over, never in a million years



 PRACTICE THE IDIOMS

Fill in the blank with the missing word:

- 1) What's the \_\_\_\_\_? You look upset.  
a) situation      b) issue      c) matter
- 2) I know I can trust you. You would never stab me in the  
a) leg      b) back      c) arm
- 3) If Bob and Susan run out of money, they can always borrow money from Susan's sister as a \_\_\_\_\_ resort.  
a) final      b) first      c) last
- 4) You look really stressed \_\_\_\_\_. Why don't you sit down, relax, and have a cup of tea?  
a) about      b) in      c) out
- 5) Bob, everything will be fine. You just need to keep your chin \_\_\_\_\_ and remember that tomorrow is another day.  
a) up      b) down      c) above
- 6) I just can't make up my \_\_\_\_\_ whether to order chicken or fish.  
a) head      b) brain      c) mind
- 7) Nicole accidentally stepped on Ted's guitar. Ted got really angry and told her \_\_\_\_\_.  
a) off      b) out      c) away
- 8) Your husband left you for his psychologist? Hang \_\_\_\_\_ there! I'm sure he'll realize she's crazy and then come back to you.  
a) up      b) in      c) out

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