

2 Using your dictionary

EXERCISES



2.1 Look up the idioms in these sentences in your dictionary. What word is each idiom listed under?

- It's the person in the street who **picks up the bill** for the government's mistakes.
- She had a wonderful trip to Australia, but now she's **come back down to earth with a bump**.
- John had a furious argument with his supervisor, but he managed to **stand his ground**.
- He's feeling very miserable, so there's no need for you to **stick the knife in** too.
- You're **banging your head against a brick wall** trying to get him to help you.
- You **scared the living daylights out of** me by creeping up behind me like that.

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2.2 Which word(s) could be left out of the idioms in these sentences?

- ✚ It's always hard when you have to **come back down to earth with a bump** after a holiday.
- ✚ No one thought she could climb the mountain without oxygen, but she **succeeded against all the odds**.
- ✚ She **hit him where it hurt most** by telling him that he had always been a disappointment to his parents.
- ✚ The way he reacted **scared the living daylights out of me!**

2.3 Which word in each idiom could be changed for another word?

- Don't worry about a thing - I'm sure the company will **pick up the bill**.
- I **came back down to earth with a bump** when I saw the pile of post waiting for me after the weekend.
- The army had lost many of its men, but it managed to **stand its ground**.
- Why do critics seem to enjoy **sticking the knife into** untalented actors and writers?
- I feel as if **I'm banging my head against a brick wall** with him at the moment.
- It's a terrifying film - it **scared the living daylights out of me!**

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2.4 What grammatical information does your dictionary give about these idioms? Read the information and then write a sentence with each idiom.

- ❖ look a gift horse in the mouth
- ❖ be banging your head against a brick wall
- ❖ be on the brink of
- ❖ tie yourself up in knots
- ❖ be man enough

2.5 Match the register labels in the box with the idiom in the sentences below.

formal	humorous	informal	old-fashioned
	literary		very informal



- ✓ I really don't like him - he's such a **slime ball**.
- ✓ OK. I'll do the washing-up. **There's no peace for the wicked!**
- ✓ Her family has lived in that village **from time immemorial**.
- ✓ My grandma always used to say that **an apple a day keeps the doctor away**.
- ✓ The food was so delicious - we **stuffed our faces**.
- ✓ I hope that what I have said will **give you pause for thought**.