

# WHAT ARE LEXICAL CHUNKS?

A lexical chunk is a group of words that are commonly found together.



Lexical chunks include **collocations** and **idioms** but these usually just involve content words, not grammar.

**Example:**

In this dialogue there are five possible chunks:

**A:** Did you **stay long at the party**?

**B:** No, I **got out of there as soon as** they **ran out of** food.

Learning chunks, rather than just individual words, helps us enhance fluency and produce more natural-sounding language.



# MORE EXAMPLES

## Collocations

I bought **a bunch of flowers** for you

Please **feel free** to take a seat and enjoy the show.

## Idioms

**No pain, no gain:**  
You have to work for what you want.

**It's raining cats and dogs:** It's raining hard

## Match the idioms

- a piece of cake
- break a leg
- call it a day
- break the ice
- once in a blue moon

- a. rarely
- b. stop working on something
- c. something easy to do
- d. good luck
- e. make people feel more comfortable

 **LIVE WORKSHEETS**

# Quiz time!



1. A collocation is two or more words that
  - a) often go together b) have similar meanings c) must be used together
2. Collocations sound "right" to native English speakers because they
  - a) sound unnatural b) are rarely used c) are often used
3. If you learn and use many collocations, your English will sound
  - a) more unusual b) more grammatical c) more natural
4. Which is a very common collocation?
  - a) quick food b) fast food c) rapid food
5. Complete the collocation: "I was running late so I only had time for a \_\_\_\_ shower."
  - a) short b) quick c) fast
6. It's best for learners to think of collocations as being single
  - a) parts of speech b) blocks of language c) rules of grammar

# COMMON IDIOMS IN ENGLISH

1. **'The best of both worlds'** – means you can enjoy two different opportunities at the same time.

"By working part-time and looking after her kids two days a week she managed to get the best of both worlds."

2. **'Speak of the devil'** – this means that the person you're just talking about actually appears at that moment.

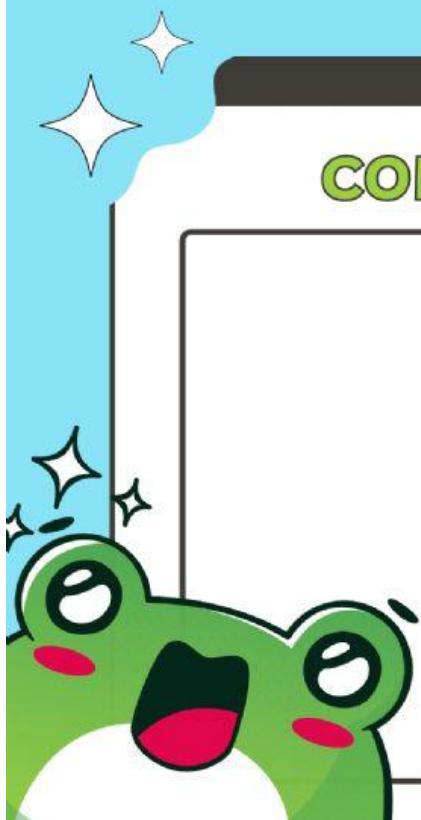
"Hi Tom, speak of the devil, I was just telling Sara about your new car."

3. **'See eye to eye'** – this means agreeing with someone.

"They finally saw eye to eye on the business deal."

4. **'Once in a blue moon'** – an event that happens infrequentity

 **LIVE WORKSHEETS**



# COMMON IDIOMS IN ENGLISH

5. 'When pigs fly' – something that will never happen.

"When pigs fly she'll tidy up her room."



6. 'To cost an arm and a leg' – something is very expensive.

"Fuel these days costs an arm and a leg."



7. 'A piece of cake' – something is very easy.

"The English test was a piece of cake."

8. 'Let the cat out of the bag' – to accidentally reveal a secret.

"I let the cat out of the bag about their wedding plans."

9. 'To feel under the weather' – to not feel well.

"I'm really feeling under the weather today; I have to cancel my plans."

 **LIVE WORKSHEETS**

# COMMON IDIOMS IN ENGLISH

10. 'To kill two birds with one stone' – to solve two problems at once.

"By taking my dad on holiday, I killed two birds with one stone. I got to go away but also spend time with him."

11. 'To cut corners' – to do something badly or cheaply.

"They really cut corners when they built this bathroom; the shower is leaking."

12. 'To add insult to injury' – to make a situation worse.

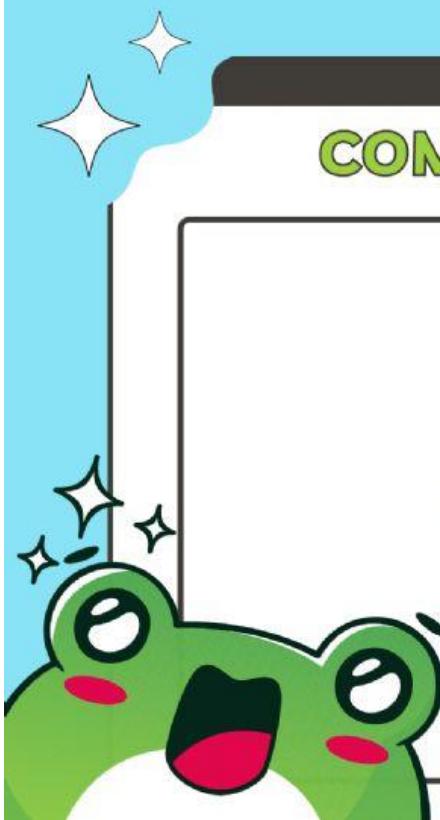
"To add insult to injury the car drove off without stopping after knocking me off my bike."

13. 'You can't judge a book by its cover' – to not judge someone or something based solely on appearance.

"I thought this no-brand bread would be horrible; turns out you can't judge a book by its cover."

14. 'Break a leg' – means 'good luck' (often said to actors before they go on stage).

"Break a leg Sam, I'm sure your performance will be great."



# COMMON IDIOMS IN ENGLISH

15. 'To hit the nail on the head' – to describe exactly what is causing a situation or problem.

"He hit the nail on the head when he said this company needs more HR support."



16. 'A blessing in disguise' – An misfortune that eventually results in something good happening later on.

17. 'Call it a day' – Stop working on something

18. 'Let someone off the hook' – To allow someone, who have been caught, to not be punished.

19. 'No pain no gain' – You have to work hard for something you want.

20. 'Bite the bullet' – Decide to do something unpleasant that you have avoiding doing.



# COMMON IDIOMS IN ENGLISH



- 21. 'Getting a taste of your own medicine' – Being treated the same unpleasant way you have treated others.
- 22. 'Giving someone the cold shoulder' – To ignore someone.
- 23. 'The last straw' – The final source of irritation for someone to finally lose patience.
- 24. 'The elephant in the room' – A matter or problem that is obvious of great importance but that is not discussed openly.
- 25. 'Stealing someones thunder' – Taking credit for someone else achievements.

# Write the number of the idiom that best completes the following sentences

A) I can't afford this purse! It \_\_\_\_\_. I won't be able to pay my rent!

B) His birthday was supposed to be a surprise! I can't believe you \_\_\_\_\_. Now he knows!

C) Ha! John has been promising to paint the house for five years.... Maybe when \_\_\_\_\_.

D) Yeah, it'll \_\_\_\_\_. I need to sign some papers at Jenny's school anyway so i'll pick her up for you too.

E) I don't really like going out to bars anymore. I only go \_\_\_\_\_.

F) I'm sorry I can't come into work today. I'm \_\_\_\_\_. I have a sore throat and runny nose.

G) They tried \_\_\_\_\_ when installing the pipes for the house and now we have leaks only one month after purchasing it!