

1. The convenience store on the corner is open **24/7**.

2. It was a **tough break** for us when Caroline quit. She was one of our top performers.

3. We're investing a lot of money in research and development so we can stay **ahead of the curve**.

4. If we want to stay **ahead of the pack**, we're going to have to work hard and continue to innovate.

5. I need to finish these reports. My boss needs them **ASAP**.

6. I'm a little nervous about giving this presentation. There's a **lot at stake**.

7. Our programmers identified what they thought the problem was with the software. After working for several hours, it turns out that the problem is something different. We're **back to square one**, unfortunately.

8. I think they got the government contract because of a **backroom deal**.

9. I'm not sure what a Super Bowl commercial costs, but to give you a **ballpark figure** I'd say about three million dollars.

10. They make it look so effortless, but they do a lot of hard work and planning **behind the scenes**.

- A. **As soon as possible**
- B. **Not visible**
- C. **Ahead of the competition**
- D. **A bad piece of luck**
- E. **A lot invested**
- F. **To the beginning**
- G. **A general figure**
- H. **All day all week**
- I. **Ahead of general knowledge or progress**
- J. **An illegal government deal**