

KEEP/HAVE (ALL) YOUR WITS ABOUT YOU

BE READY TO THINK QUICKLY AND REACT SMARTLY

eg. The teacher **kept her wits about her** and was able to evacuate her students from the burning building.

**KEEP SOMEONE AT ARM'S LENGTH**

NOT TO ALLOW SOMEONE TO BECOME TOO FRIENDLY WITH YOU

eg. I always had the feelings she was **keeping me at arm's length**.

**KEEP/HOLD SOMEONE AT BAY**

PREVENT SOMEONE FROM MOVING CLOSER

eg. He **kept the police at bay** for several hours.
The fogs have a powerful poison that helps **keep** predators **at bay**.

**KEEP ONE'S TEMPER**

NOT TO LOSE ONE'S TEMPER

eg. It took all her patience to **keep her temper**.

**KEEP SOMEONE COMPANY**

ASSOCIATE WITH SOMEONE / SPEND TIME WITH ONE FOR THE SAKE OF COMPANIONSHIP or in order to keep them from being lonely

eg. At least, Trish will have her dog to **keep her company** on the trip.

**KEEP/PUT SOMEONE IN THE PICTURE**

MAKE SURE sb KNOWS ALL THE FACTS ABOUT A CHANGING SITUATION

eg. I use the radio to **keep me in the picture** about what's happening abroad.

**KEEP SOMETHING UNDER WRAPS/ONE'S HAT****♦ STAY UNDER ONE'S HAT**

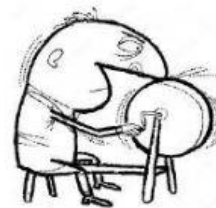
KEEP SOMETHING SECRET

eg. The project has been **kept under wraps** for ages.
In the interests of security, we are **keeping** the information **under our hats**.

Keep Under One's Hat

KEEP/PUT/HAVE ONE'S NOSE TO THE GRINDSTONE

WORD HARD AND DILIGENTLY ON SOMETHING

eg. I had to **keep my nose to the grindstone** if I could get the promotion.**KEEP A LOW PROFILE**

AVOID ATTRACTING ATTENTION TO YOURSELF

eg. He's trying to **keep a low profile** in the interests of safety.**KEEP A LOW PROFILE****KEEP A COOL/LEVEL HEAD**

STAY CALM IN A DIFFICULT SITUATION

eg. I don't know how to **keep a cool head** in a hectic, stressful office.**KEEP ONE'S HEAD DOWN**

AVOID TROUBLE

eg. He's in a bad mood today – I'm just **keeping my head down**.**KEEP ONE'S HEAD ABOVE WATER**

BE ABLE TO MANAGE ESPECIALLY WHEN HAVING FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES

eg. The business is in trouble but we are about **keeping our head above water**.**KEEP ONE'S HAND IN**

PRACTISE A SKILL OFTEN ENOUGH IN ORDER NOT TO LOSE THE SKILL

eg. I do a lot of teaching now and then just to **keep my hand in**.**KEEP ONE'S MOUTH SHUT**

NOT TALK ABOUT SOMETHING

eg. I don't know whether to tell him what I know or **keep my mouth shut**.**KEEP ONE'S NOSE CLEAN**

AVOID GETTING INTO TROUBLE, STAY OUT OF TROUBLE, BEHAVE PROPERLY

eg. You had better **keep your nose clean** or you're going to run into trouble.

KEEP ONE'S NOSE OUT OF SOMETHING

NOT BECOME INVOLVED IN SOMETHING

eg. She can't **keep her nose out of** other people's business**KEEP/LEAVE YOUR OPTIONS OPEN**

WAIT BEFORE MAKING A CHOICE

eg. I haven't signed a contract – I'm **keeping my options open**.

Keep
Your
Options
Open

KEEP YOUR POWDER DRY

WAIT BEFORE TAKING ACTION BUT BE READY TO TAKE ACTION IF NECESSARY

eg. I'm going to **keep my powder dry** and get as much information as I can before I commit to anything.**KEEP YOUR PROMISE / WORD**

DO WHAT YOU HAVE TOLD SOMEONE THAT YOU WOULD DO

eg. The chancellor insisted that he was **keeping his promise** not to raise taxes.**KEEP / HOLD YOUR CARDS CLOSE TO YOUR CHEST**

KEEP YOUR INTENDED ACTIONS SECRET

eg. He **keeps his card pretty close to his chest**, so I don't know if he will buy the house or not.**KEEP A STRAIGHT FACE**

NOT LAUGH OR SMILE EVEN THOUGH SOMETHING IS FUNNY

eg. She tried to **keep a straight face**, but in the end she couldn't help laughing.**KEEP FAITH WITH SOMETHING / SOMEONE**

CONTINUE TO SUPPORT SOMETHING/SOMEONE

eg. The company has not **kept faith with** its promise to invest in training.**KEEP A CIVIL TONGUE IN YOUR HEAD**

USED TO TELL SOMEONE TO STOP BEING RUDE; SPEAK KINDLY AND POLITELY

eg. Please try to **keep a civil tongue in your head** the next time you talk to Mary instead of arguing with her.

MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

1. During my college years, the only thing I had to _____ hunger **at bay** were beans and pasta.
A. KEEP B. HOLD C. MAKE D. A & B are correct
2. The new ambassador wanted to be _____ **in the picture** for every event, small or large.
A. PUT B. KEPT C. THROWN D. A & B are correct
3. Some companies are _____ **their options open** on retaining or dumping anachronistic names.
A. KEEPING B. LEAVING C. GIVING D. A & B are correct
4. You never know what he's going to do next because he _____ **his cards close to his chest**.
A. KEEP B. HOLD C. HAVE D. A & B are correct
5. If you just _____ **your nose to the grindstone**, you'll get the results you want.
A. HAVE B. PUT C. KEEP D. All are correct
6. Police officers are expected to _____ **their tempers** even when people say bad things to them.
A. MAKE B. TAKE C. KEEP D. HOLD
7. If Jane hadn't _____ **her wits about her** during the fire, things would have been much worse.
A. BROUGHT B. KEPT C. HELD D. TAKEN
8. The people you _____ **company with** reflect greatly on your character.
A. KEEP B. BRING C. GIVE D. HOLD
9. As long as it _____ **under his hat**, I don't mind giving John some insider tips.
A. KEEPS B. BRING C. HOLDS D. STAYS
10. It is advisable to _____ **a firm hand on** raising the children.
A. HAVE B. GET C. KEEP D. BRING
11. Making notes is the best way of _____ **your mind on** the task at hand.
A. KEEPING B. HAVING C. CALLING D. HOLDING
12. John always _____ his friends **at arm's length**, so that no one gets close enough to hurt him.
A. THROWS B. STAYS C. KEEPS D. HOLDS
13. Kendall _____ **a low profile**, refusing to grant on-the-record interviews with the news media.
A. TOOK B. KEPT C. BROUGHT D. THREW
14. To _____ intelligence agencies **on the rails** requires constant scrutiny.
A. MAKE B. TAKE C. KEEP D. HOLD
15. With a test every Friday, she _____ her students **on their toes**.
A. TOOK B. GOT C. MAKES D. KEEPS
16. Tesla's new range of e-cars is being _____ **under wraps** until the Shanghai auto show.
A. HELD B. KEPT C. COVERED D. PUT

17. We _____ **a cool/level head** during negotiations or end up getting the short end of the stick.
A. KEEP B. HOLD C. HAVE D. TAKE
18. I'm _____ **my head down** at work these days because I don't want to be among the layoffs.
A. TAKING B. HOLDING C. SHOWING D. KEEPING
19. Though he's been out of work for months, he's managed to _____ **his head above water**.
A. KEEP B. HAVE C. MAKE D. TAKE
20. Joe insists on _____ **his hand in** the company though he has no real authority at this point.
A. TAKING B. GETTING C. KEEPING D. PUTTING
21. The incoming administration has promised to _____ the current economic plan **on track**.
A. GIVE B. TAKE C. MAKE D. KEEP
22. I always remind myself to _____ **on the right side** of the road when I drive in America.
A. KEEP B. HAVE C. MAKE D. SEND
23. He needs to _____ **his mouth shut** and stop telling our family secrets to everyone in town.
A. THROW B. KEEP C. PUT D. FORCE
24. The superintendent is such a powerful woman that you should _____ **on the right side of her**.
A. MAKE B. TAKE C. KEEP D. HOLD
25. He's trying to _____ **his nose clean** by staying away from those rough guys.
A. KEEP B. HOLD C. GIVE D. GET
26. I wish he'd _____ **his nose out of** my business.
A. TAKE B. GIVE C. SEND D. KEEP
27. They have promised new jobs, but so far there's no sign that they're going to _____ **their word**.
A. HOLD B. GET C. KEEP D. PUT
28. The old trick of _____ **a straight face** was failing him those days.
A. KEEPING B. GETTING C. MAKING D. THROWING
29. They are well accustomed to _____ **a weather eye on** currency movements.
A. TAKING B. GETTING C. KEEPING D. PUTTING
30. The administration has intervened to _____ **a lid on** inflation.
A. KEEP B. HOLD C. GIVE D. GET
31. _____ **an eye out for** spyware programs that install themselves on your computer.
A. TAKE B. GIVE C. SEND D. KEEP
32. I try to _____ **my eyes open for** good recipes.
A. TAKE B. GIVE C. SEND D. KEEP
33. Despite the recession, the government has asked people to _____ **faith with** its reforms.
A. TAKE B. GIVE C. SEND D. KEEP