



English Idioms: From Fly in the Ointment to Gloom and Doom

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Fly in the Ointment

- A drawback or detrimental factor the new library is wonderful but there's a fly in the ointment. Their catalog isn't complete yet.
- This term probably alludes to a biblical proverb (Ecclesiastes 10:1): "Dead flies because the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savour."

Find One's Feet

To grow in confidence in a new situation as one gains experience. If you ask for help when you need it, you will soon find your feet.

From Pillar to Post

If something is going from pillar to post, it is moving around in a meaningless way, from one disaster to another.

Flash in the Pan

If something is a flash in the pan, it is very noticeable but doesn't last long, like most singers, who are very successful for a while, then forgotten

From the Horse's Mouth

If you hear something from the horse's mouth, you hear it directly from the person concerned or responsible.

Foot the Bill

- The person who foots the bill pays the bill for everybody, settle the accounts the bride's father was resigned to footing the bill for the wedding.
- This expression uses foot in the sense of "add up and put the total at the foot, or bottom, of an account." [Colloquial; early 1800s]

Flavour if the Mouth

- Something that is prominent in the public eye for a short time then fades out of interest.
- Originally a term of approval for something that was up to the minute and desirable. It has been used ironically from the late 20th century to pass disdainful comment on things which pass out of fashion quickly. For example, the "one hit wonders" of the music business.

Find One's Feet

To be confident, become adjusted; become established

From Pillar to Post

From one place or thing to another in rapid succession

Fall Back

- Give ground, retreat the troops fell back before the relentless enemy assault. He stuck to his argument, refusing to fall back. [c. 1600]
- Recede the waves fell back from the shore. [c. 1800]

Figure Out

- Discover or determine let's figure out a way to help. [Early 1900s]
- Solve or decipher Can you figure out this puzzle? [Early 1800s]
- To begin to comprehend someone or something; to come to understand someone or something better I just can't figure you out. I can't figure out quiet people readily.

Goes Without Saying

Be self-evident, a matter of course it goes without saying that success is the product of hard work. This expression is a translation of the French *cela va sans dire*. [Second half of 1800s]

Grey Matter

Grey/Gray matter is the human brain

Give Me Five

If someone says this, they want to hit your open hand against theirs as a way of congratulation or greeting.

Got up to Kill

- To have a finger in the pie Have an interest in or meddle in something When they nominated me for the board, I'm sure Bill had a finger in the pie.
- Another form of this idiom is have a finger in every pie to have an interest in or be involved in everything she does a great deal for the town; she has a finger in every pie.
- The precise origin of this metaphor, which presumably eludes either to tasting every pie or being involved in their concoction, has been lost. [Late 1500s]

Go Against the Grain

A person who does things in an unconventional manner, especially if their methods are not generally approved of, is said to go against the grain. Such an individual can be called a

maverick.

Go Public

Become a publicly held company, that is, issue ownership shares in the form of stock. As soon as the company grows a little bigger and begins to show a profit, we intend to go public. [Mid-1900s]

Give Someone the Bum'S Rush

To eject (or be ejected) forcibly

Gloom and Doom

The feeling that a situation is bad and is not likely to improve Come on, it's not all doom and gloom, and if we make a real effort we could still win.

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