

Examrace

English Idioms: From to Beggar Description to Take with a Grain or Pinch of Salt

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To Beggar Description

- Defy or outdo any possible description the stage set was so elaborate, it beggared description.
- This term, alluding to the idea that words are insufficient to do something justice, was already used by Shakespeare in Antony and Cleopatra (2:2): "For her own person it beggared all description."

The Teaming Meanings

The teaming meanings: Present a number of meanings example: During the lecture, the professor gave the teaming meanings on the topic.

To Kick the Bucket

When someone kicks the bucket, they die

To Push to the Walls

To place in a desperate or extreme position

To Read between the Lines

If you read between the lines, you find the real message in what you're reading or hearing, a meaning that is not available from a literal interpretation of the words.

To be at Daggers Drawn

If people are at daggers drawn, they are very angry and close to violence.

To Throw down the Gauntlet

- Declare or issue a challenge the senator threw down the gauntlet on the abortion issue.
- This expression alludes to the medieval practice of a knight throwing down his gauntlet, or metal glove, as a challenge to combat.
- Its figurative use dates from the second half of the 1700s, as does the less frequently heard take up the gauntlet, for accepting a challenge.

To be a Greek / It's All Greek to Me

- It is beyond my comprehension this new computer program is all Greek to me.
- This expression was coined by Shakespeare, who used it literally in Julius Caesar (1:2), where Casca says of a speech by Seneca, deliberately given in Greek so that some would not understand it: "For mine own part, it was Greek to me." It soon was transferred to anything unintelligible.

To Stand on Ceremony

Stand on ceremony, to behave in a formal or ceremonious manner.

Take Aback

- Surprise shock He was taken aback by her caustic remark.
- This idiom comes from nautical terminology of the mid-1700s, when be taken aback referred to the stalling of a ship caused by a wind shift that made the sails lay back against the masts. Its figurative use was first recorded in 1829.

Take After

Follow the example of; also, resemble in appearance, temperament, or character Bill took after his uncle and began working as a volunteer for the Red Cross. [Mid-1500s]

Take For

Take Ill (Sick)

- Become ill it's just my luck to get sick on vacation. When was she taken ill? [Ninth century]
- Become disgusted we got sick as we learned how much money was wasted. I get sick when I hear about his debts. [Early 1500s]
- Make one sick.
- Get sick to one's stomach
- Be sick, become nauseated, and vomit if you eat any more candy you'll get sick. Sick to her stomach every morning? She must be pregnant. [Early 1600s]

Take Off

- Remove Take off your coat and stay for a while. I took my foot off the brake. [c. 1300]
- Deduct, decrease He took 20 percent off the original price. I want you to trim my hair, but please don't take off too much. [c. 1700]
- Carry or take away the passengers were taken off one by one. [Late 1800s]
- Take oneself off
- Leave go away I'm taking off now. We take ourselves off for China next month

- As an imperative take yourself off right now! [First half of 1800s]
- Move forward quickly the dog took off after the car.
- Become well known or popular or achieve sudden growth that actor's career has really taken off. Sales took off around the holidays. [Mid-1900s]
- Rise in flight the air plane took off on time. [Mid-1800s]
- Discontinue the rail road took off the commuter special. [Mid-1700s]
- Imitate humorously or satirically He had a way of taking off the governor that made us howl with laughter. [Mid-1700s]
- Withhold service I'm taking off from work today because of the funeral. [First half of 1900s]

Take Over

Assume control, management, or possession of the pilot told his co-pilot to take over the controls. There's a secret bid to take over our company. [Late 1800s]

Take For

- To regard as do you take me for a fool.
- To consider mistakenly don't take silence for approval.

Take In

- To grant admittance to; receive as a guest or an employee
- To reduce in size; make smaller or shorter took in the waist on the pair of pants.
- To include or constitute.
- To understand couldn't take in the meaning of the word.
- To deceive or swindle was taken in by a confidence artist.
- To look at thoroughly; view took in the sights.
- To accept (work) to be done in one's house for pay took in typing.
- To convey (a prisoner) to a police station.

Take to Task

- Upbraid, scold; blame or censure the teacher took Doris to task for turning in such a sloppy report.
- This term, dating from the mid-1700s, at first meant either assigning or challenging someone to a task. Its current sense dates from the late 1800s.

Take to One's Heels

- Run away when the burglar alarm went off, they took to their heels.
- This expression alludes to the fact that the heels are all one sees of a fugitive running away fast.
- Although similar expressions turned up from Shakespeare's time on, the exact idiom dates only from the first half of the 1800s

Take with a Grain or Pinch of Salt

- Sceptically, with reservations I always take Sandy's stories about illnesses with a grain of salt —she tends to exaggerate.
- This expression is a translation of the Latin *cum grano salis*, which Pliny used in describing Pompey's discovery of an antidote for poison (to be taken with a grain of salt). It was soon adopted by English writers.

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