

PRACTICAL ENGLISH FOR PROFESSIONALS

LESSON 1. IDIOMS

1. Choose the correct underlined word to complete each of the idioms.

1. You shouldn't try to **burn the match / lighter / candle** at both ends; you'll exhaust yourself.
2. Once he started looking into the details, he realized what a **can of worms / beans / beer** he was opening.
3. It was a difficult decision, but he decided to **take the goat / cow / bull by the horns** and tell his boss that he wanted to leave the company.
4. Some insurance companies make their customers **pay through the ears / nose / mouth** for their services.
5. He knew that what they were doing was wrong, but he **turned a blind / closed / cold eye** to it.
6. Many people like to get **off the beaten road / path / track** when they take a vacation.
7. If you're **pressed / crushed / squeezed for time**, we can talk later.
8. I've been **feeling a bit under the thumb / weather / table** recently, but I'm feeling better now.
9. He's a rather boring person, but **once in a blue / red / green moon**, he'll come out with something really amazing.
10. I'm afraid your request is **out of the answer / statement / question**.
11. He gave us some information that was strictly **off the books / record / list**.
12. We don't want to **lose land / ground / place** in the baseball competition.
13. Let's have a party at the beginning of the year. It will help to **break the ice / mould / air**.
14. Everybody should say exactly what they feel. That should **clear the room / air / feelings**.
15. It's very rude to **talk shop / work / jobs** when you're out with other people.
16. Don't let him stop you; **stand your land / place / ground** and tell him you won't change your mind.
17. I only just passed my exam. It was a very **far / close / exact thing**.
18. What's happened? **Put me in the picture / story / scene**.

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2. Match the idioms 1 – 18 with their meanings A – R

	Idiom no.
A. To become less successful than the others.	
B. Busy, in a hurry.	
C. Somewhere quiet, where not a lot of people go.	
D. Something almost did or didn't happen.	
E. A difficult and complicated situation.	
F. To make people feel more friendly and willing to talk to each other.	
G. To let somebody know what has happened, usually when other people already know.	
H. Very rarely.	
I. To discuss your job with a co-worker, usually in a social situation where there are others present.	
J. To refuse to change your mind about something, even when people oppose you.	
K. To deal bravely or confidently with a difficult situation.	
L. To get up early in the morning and go to bed late at night on a regular basis.	
M. Unofficial, to be kept secret.	
N. Not possible, unacceptable.	
O. Slightly sick.	
P. To pay a lot of money.	
Q. To pretend not to notice, to ignore.	
R. To help end an argument or disagreement.	