

PRACTICE **MOCK**Idioms① Come Hell or
High Water② Fuel to the
Fire③ Back Seat
Driver④ Cross Your
Fingers

Expected Idioms & Phrases



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The knowledge of idioms is important as you would find a considerable number Idiom based questions in major banking exams such IBPS, [SBI PO 2021](#) etc. Idioms forms a major part of the English language section for major banking, government and insurance exams. Aspirants can also expect direction questions from these idioms, however to prepare for these in a better way we are here giving you a list of important idioms for banking exams.

[SBI PO Prelims 2021 Free Mock](#)

The [SBI PO 2021](#) notification is not yet released, however one must keep on preparing for these major banking and government exams. Mentioned below are the tentative SBI PO 2020 exam dates.

[Take a free mock test of SBI PO 2021](#) and check the exam analysis to know your weak areas and the areas on which you need to improve upon. As far as Idioms are concerned, they form a major part of the RC. When it comes to English section it is categorized into three important aspects:

- Grammar
- Vocabulary
- Reading Comprehension

Important Topics in English for SBI PO 2020


Mentioned below are the important topics to be revised thoroughly:

- Cloze Test
- Error Spotting/Phrase Replacement
- Fill in the Blanks
- Idioms & Phrases
- Synonyms/Antonyms
- Para Jumbles
- Reading Comprehension
- Sentence Correction
- Sentence Rearrangement
- Subject-verb Agreement etc...

Expected Idioms & Phrases for SBI PO Prelims 2021

Idioms/Phrases	Meaning
1. An arm and a leg	A lot of money
2. The salt of the Earth	Very good & honest
3. Going places	Talented and successful
4. A penny for your thoughts	Way of asking what someone is thinking
5. Caught between two stools	When someone finds it difficult to choose between two alternatives
6. As daft as a brush	Extremely silly
7. Once in a blue moon	Something that happens rarely
8. Piece of cake	Something that is easy to understand or do
9. Cut the mustard	Perform satisfactorily; to succeed
10. Elvis has left the building	The show has come to an end It's all over
<div style="display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="text-align: left;"> <p>SBI PO Prelims</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>Compare Your Performance with that of the Topper</p> <p>Take a FREE Mock Test</p> </div> <div style="text-align: right;">  </div> </div>	
11. Blessing in disguise	Something good and useful that did not initially seem that way
12. Mean business	Being serious/dedicated
13. Don't put all your eggs in one basket	Don't focus all of your attention on one thing or one area
14. Hit the nail on the head	To do or say exactly the right thing
15. It takes two to tango	Both people involved in a bad situation are responsible for it
16. Golden Handshake	a usually large payment made to people when they leave their job

17. Part and Parcel	An essential or basic element
18. A cut above	Noticeably superior to others within the same category
19. Keep something at bay	Keep something away
20. Let the cat out of the bag	To reveal a secret
21. Apple of one's eye	a thing or person which someone loves above all others
22. Make a long story short	Come to the point – leave out the details
23. Balloon goes up	A situation turning unpleasant/serious
24. Point blank	Very definite and direct
25. Not a spark of decency	A person who has no manners
26. Old habits die hard	People find it difficult to change their accustomed behaviour
27. Pull someone up on something	To Criticize
28. To call it a day	To conclude proceedings
29. The best of both worlds	The benefits of widely different situations, enjoyed at the same time
30. Taste of your own medicine	When someone receives the same treatment, usually negative, that he or she gives to others
31. Not playing with the full deck	Someone who is mentally, psychologically or intellectually deficient
32. On the ball	When someone understands a situation well; attentive
33. Oldest trick in the book	A well-known and much used trick/method
34. Of no avail	Useless
35. Bone to pick	Cause of quarrel
36. Gate Crasher	Uninvited guest

37. Get the sack	Dismissed from
38. Off the cuff	Without preparation; spontaneous
39. Miss the boat	To miss out on something
40. Come hell or high water	Possible obstacles in your path (will not stop you)
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41. Cry over spilt milk	Complaining about a loss or failure from the past
42. Beating around the bush	Avoiding the main topic
43. Spill the beans	To disclose a secret
44. Method in the madness	A purpose in what one is doing, even though it seems to be crazy
45. Off the record	Not made as an official or attributable statement; unofficial; confidential
46. Icing on the cake	Something that turns good into great
47. Feeling a bit under the weather	Feeling slightly ill
48. Flies off at a tangent	Start discussing something irrelevant
49. Feel blue	In trouble/depressed
50. Out of the blue	Happen unexpectedly
51. Push one's luck	Trying to obtain more than what one has (risk spoiling the current situation)
52. A litmus test	A method that helps to know if something is correct
53. At the drop of a hat	Willingness to do something instantly
54. Afraid of one's own shadow	To become easily frightened
55. A house of cards	A poor plan

56. Reap the harvest	Benefit or suffer as a direct result of past actions
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57. Raining cats and dogs	Raining heavily
58. See eye to eye	To be in agreement with
59. Bone of contention	A subject or issue over which there is continuing disagreement
60. Give cold shoulder	To ignore
61. Sink your teeth into	Do something with a lot of energy and enthusiasm
62. Take with a grain/pinch of salt	To doubt the accuracy of information
63. Roll up one's sleeves	Get ready for hard work
64. Shot in the dark	A complete guess (may or may not be close to the truth)
65. Hand to mouth	live on only basic necessities
66. Make a face	To show dislike through facial expressions
67. Strike while the iron is hot	To act at the right time
68. Take the plunge	Venture into something of one's interest despite the risks involved
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center; background-color: #e0f0ff; padding: 10px;"> <div style="text-align: left;"> <p>RRB PO Prelims</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>Get Your All India Rank</p> <p>Take a FREE Mock Test</p> </div> <div style="text-align: right;">  </div> </div>	
69. Reap the harvest	Benefit or suffer as a direct result of past actions
70. Take with a grain/pinch of salt	To doubt the accuracy of information
71. To put in a nutshell	To say in a few words or to make something concise

72. To move heaven and earth	To exert all efforts
73. To pour oil on troubled waters	To make peace
74. Tight spot	A difficult situation
75. Take a back seat	Choose to be less important in a role
76. Water under the bridge	Something bad that happened in the past but is no longer important
77. To call a spade a spade	To be brutally frank, blunt in speech
78. Its Greek to me	Something that is not understandable
79. Weak in the knees	Barely able to stand because of emotion, fear or illness
80. Wide off the mark	Incorrect; Inadequate; Not what is expected
81. Over the top	Totally excessive and not suitable for the occasion
82. Open the floodgates	Release something that was previously under control
83. Open Pandora's Box	To find a source of great troubles and problems
84. Hit the bull's eye	To be exactly right about something or achieve the best result possible
85. Last straw	The final problem in a series of problems

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86. Let sleeping dogs lie	Leave something alone if it might cause trouble
87. In the heat of the moment	Overwhelmed by what's happening at the moment
88. Get a raw deal	To not be treated as well as other people
89. Eat humble pie	To apologize humbly


90. Hear through the grapevine	To hear news from someone who heard that news from someone else
91. Jump on the bandwagon	Join a popular trend or activity
92. Give the benefit of doubt	Believe someone's statement without proof
93. Every cloud has a silver lining	Be optimistic, even difficult times will lead to better days
94. Cut the mustard	Perform satisfactorily; to succeed
95. Zero in on something	Focus all attention onto one thing
96. A hot potato	Something that is difficult or dangerous to deal with
97. Be glad to see the back of	Be glad to see someone leave
98. Pen is mightier than the sword	Words and communication have a greater effect than war
99. Black and blue	Full of bruises


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100. A bird's eye view	A view from a very high place that allows you to see a very large area
101 At the drop of the hat	to do something easily and without any preparation
102 Against the clock	to be in a hurry to do something before a particular time
103 Blind leading the blind	someone who does not understand something but tries to explain it to other
104 Burn a hole in one's pocket	to spend money quickly
105 Carry coals to new castle	to take something to a place or a person that has a lot of that thing already
106 Cast a long shadow	Something or someone that casts a long

	shadow has considerable influence on other people or events.
107 Dragging its feet	delaying in decision, not showing enthusiasm
108 Don't wash your dirty laundry in public	People, especially couples, who argue in front of others or involve others in their personal problems and crises, are said to be washing their dirty laundry in public; making public things that are best left private
109 Eleventh hour decision	decision that is made at the last possible minute
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110 Eyes are bigger than one's stomach	Indicating they are greedy and take on more than they can consume or manage.
111 French leave	absent without permission, to take French leave is to leave a gathering without saying goodbye or without permission.
112 Finger in the pie	to show interest in something
113 Graveyard shift	to work very late at night, is called the graveyard shift
114 Give someone a piece of your mind	to you criticize someone strongly and angrily.
115 Heart in the right place	good natured
116 In black and white	to give in writing
117 If the shoe fits, wear it	This is used to suggest that something that has been said might apply to a person
118 Jungle out there	the situation is dangerous and there are no rules

119 Just for the record	the person is saying it so that people know but does not necessarily agree with or support it.
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120 Keep your eye on the ball	to stay alert and pay close attention to what is happening
121 Kangaroo court	When people take the law into their own hands and form courts that are not legal, these are known as kangaroo court
122 Let nature take its course	to allow someone to live or die naturally.
123 Make castles in the air	plans or hopes that have very little chances of happening.
124 Man of his word	a person who does what he says and keeps his Promises
125 No smoke without fire	there's always some reason for a rumour.
126 Nobody's fool	one who can take care of himself
127 On pins and needles	to be very worried about something
128 Poker face	Someone with a poker face doesn't show any emotion or reaction so that people are clueless about what they are feeling
129 Quiet as a cat	to make as little noise as possible and try to be unnoticeable
130 Queer fish	A strange person is a queer fish
131 Red herring	If something is a distraction from the real issues, it is a red herring

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132 Reduce to ashes	destroyed or made useless. His infidelities reduced their relationship to ashes
133 Sail under false colours	Someone who sails under false colours is hypocritical or Pretends to be something they aren't in order to deceive people
134 Tables are turned	the situation has changed giving the advantage to the party who had previously been at a disadvantage
135 Take someone under your wing	to look after someone while they are learning something
136 Under your nose	something that occurs right in front of you, especially if it is surprising or audacious, it happens under your nose
137 Up to the neck	to be very involved in it, especially when it's something wrong
138 Voice in the wilderness	Someone who expresses an opinion that no one believes or listens to is a voice in the wilderness, especially if proved right later.
139 Vicar of Bray	A person who changes their beliefs and principles to stay popular with people above them is a Vicar of Bray
140 Whale of a time	If you have a whale of a time, you really enjoy yourself

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141 Wait for a raindrop in the drought	to wait or hope for something that is extremely unlikely to happen
142 X factor	The dangers for people in the military that civilians do not face, for which they receive payment, are known as the X factor.
143 You reap what you sow	if you do bad things to people, bad things will happen to you, or good things if you do good things. It is normally used when someone has done something bad.
144 Young Turk	a young person who is rebellious and difficult to control in a company, team or organisation.
145 Your sins will find you out	things you do wrong will become known.
146 Zero hour	The time at which a planned operation, typically a military one, is set to begin.
147 Zigged before you zagged	If you did things in the wrong order, you zigged before you zagged.

SBI PO Prelims - Idioms Practice Questions

Prelims Level Type 1

Directions (Qs. 1-2): In the question below, a sentence is given which has a blank, meaning something has been omitted. From the options below, choose the correct combination of idioms that can fit in the blanks to make the sentence grammatically and meaningfully correct.

Question 1

Level - 1

Many ministers of the government are _____ with the Prime Minister over public spending.

1. At sea
2. At loggerheads

3. At odds

- a) Only 1
- b) Only 1 and 2
- c) Only 2 and 3
- d) Only 1 and 3
- e) All 1,2 and 3

Ans: C

Solution: C is the right answer. Both 2 and 3 are correct.

AT LOGGERHEADS- If two people or groups are at loggerheads, they disagree strongly about something

AT ODDS- To not agree with someone or something.

Both idioms can fit in the blank. The sentence seeks to convey that the ministers of the government did not agree with the Prime Minister on the issue of public spending.

1 is correct. AT SEA means CONFUSED.

Question 2

Level - 1

Tom told her it was a delicate situation but she went into the meeting like

_____.

- 1. a fish out of water
- 2. a cat on a hot tin roof
- 3. a bull in a China shop

- a) Only 1
- b) Only 2
- c) Only 3
- d) Only 1 and 3
- e) All 1,2 and 3

Ans: C

Solution: C is the right answer. Only 3 is correct.

A bull in a China shop- If someone is like a bull in a china shop, they are very careless in the way that they move or behave. The sentence states that the Tom tried to warn someone about the situation at hand but she did not handle it carefully.

A cat on a hot tin roof- used to describe someone who is in a state of extreme worry

A fish out of water--to feel awkward because you are in a situation that you have not experienced before or because you are very different from the people around you.

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Prelims Level Type 2

Directions (Qs. 3-4): In the following question, three statements are given with a phrase or idiom highlighted in bold. You have to select the answer choice that states the combination of statements in which the idiom or phrase has been correctly used.

Question 3

Level - 1

1. It came in the newspaper that the thieves were caught **red-handed** by the police.
2. He would often smash things in a bad temper, which was the biggest **red flag**.
3. He cut off relations with his parents after **running out of steam** over the issue of his marriage.

- a) Only 1
- b) Only 1 and 2
- c) Only 1 and 3
- d) Only 2 and 3
- e) All 1, 2 and 3

Ans: B

Solution: RED HANDED means to be caught in the middle of committing a crime or a wrongdoing. 1 uses this idiom correctly to convey how the thieves were caught at the scene of the crime.

RED FLAG means a sign of danger. 2 uses the idiom correctly to convey how his lack of self-control in a bad temper was a sign of danger. Thus, B is the right answer.

RUN OUT OF STEAM means to lose energy or enthusiasm. 3 talks about an argument or a falling out between the main character and his parents over an issue.

Question 4

Level - 1

1. The police scanned his house and confiscated his **ill-gotten gains**.
2. I think Jane and I are **on the same wavelength** so it is a good idea to work on this project together.
3. The culprit is still **on the run** despite the security measures having being toughened.

- a) Only 3
- b) Only 1 and 2

- c) Only 1 and 3
- d) Only 2 and 3
- e) All 1, 2 and 3

Ans: E

Solution: ILL-GOTTEN GAINS means benefits or possessions obtained by wrongful means. 1 uses the idiom correctly to convey how the police confiscated his possessions which had been obtained by wrongful means.

ON THE SAME WAVELENGTH means to get along due to similar mindset or opinions. 2 uses the idiom correctly to convey how Jane and the author get along so their working together on a project would be favourable.

ON THE RUN means to be escaping from the law; 3 uses the idiom correctly to convey how the culprit was escaping from the law. Thus, E is the right answer.

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