

The Hindu

IDIOMS & PHRASES (01-31DEC20)

1. **music to one's ears** (phrase) – something (an information, news, etc.) that is very pleasant to hear.
2. **a call to arms** (phrase) – an act of gathering forces (or people) together to take a particular course of action mobilization.
3. **put one's finger on something** (phrase) – identify or recognize something exactly.
4. **nuts and bolts** (phrase) – basic/practical details or aspects of something; fundamentals, basics.
5. **turn the spotlight on** (phrase) – to call attention to something.
6. **dead and buried** (phrase) – completely finished (& not going to be reconsidered); no longer used/accepted.
7. **a thing of the past** (phrase) – something that no longer happens; something that no longer exists.
8. **make a strong/good fist of** (phrase) – when you make a good/strong fist of something, you succeed in doing it. You do a good job and achieve a certain degree of success.
9. **pass muster** (phrase) – be acceptable, be practical, be justifiable, be convincing, make sense.
10. **apply one's mind** (phrase) – to give full attention to; to think hard about something.
11. **point the finger at** (phrase) – blame, denounce, inform against, accuse.
12. **to name a few** (phrase) – to give only a few examples, even though there are a lot of examples available.
13. **stroke of a pen** (phrase) – if something happens by/at the stroke of a pen, it happens very quickly by the authority.
14. **put to rest** (phrase) – to stop people from concerning/doubting about an issue by explaining/resolving it.
15. **run the risk** (phrase) – do something even if knowing something unpleasant/bad might happen.
16. **the new normal** (phrase) – an earlier unusual situation that becomes a standard now.
17. **act of god** (phrase) – a natural hazard outside human control; disaster, catastrophe, calamity, tragedy.
18. **keep/put pressure on** (phrase) – to try to influence/persuade someone to do something in a certain method.
19. **set the stage for** (phrase) – prepare the circumstances for beginning of something.
20. **at a crossroads** (phrase) – at a situation when an important decision ought to be made.

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21. **on the one hand** (phrase) – it is used to introduce the first of two contrasting different points, facts, or ways of looking at something. It is always followed later by on the other hand or ‘on the other’.
22. **gain force** (phrase) – to get stronger.
23. **seen in this light** (phrase) – it is used to give a different perspective to something.
24. **pave the way for** (phrase) – clear the way for, make preparations for, put things in order for.
25. **under the banner** (phrase) – claim to support a specified cause.
26. **put simply/simply put** (phrase) – used for saying that you are just giving the basic facts about a complicated situation.
27. **take note** (phrase) – pay attention, take into consideration, watch.
28. **in contrast to** (phrase) – in opposition to, be very different from.
29. **cause for concern** (phrase) – reason to worry (feel anxious).
30. **put into action** (phrase) – carry out, execute, perform.
31. **at times** (phrase) – sometimes, occasionally, now and then.
32. **draw attention to** (phrase) – emphasize, highlight, underscore; focus on.
33. **take someone too far** (phrase) – bring someone (much) success in life.
34. **in the public domain** (phrase) – if something (e.g. information) is in the public domain, people generally know about it since it is not secret.
35. **as long as** (phrase) – given that; when/while.
36. **bring someone to book** (phrase) – punish, take to task, bring to justice; reprimand, criticize.
37. **case in point** (phrase) – example, instance, case.
38. **go a long way** (phrase) – achieve great success; to be helpful for a significant amount of time.
39. **bring someone to justice** (phrase) – to try someone in a court and punish him/her for a crime. (try means to investigate and decide (a case) in a formal trial).
40. **shed light on** (phrase) – explain, elucidate, clarify.
41. **by all accounts** (phrase) – allegedly, apparently, seemingly, ostensibly.
42. **by no means** (phrase) – not at all, in no way, certainly not.
43. **on paper** (phrase) – in theory, theoretically, hypothetically, supposedly.
44. **keep pace with** (phrase) – progress at the same speed as.
45. **set alarm bells ringing** (phrase) – make someone feel worried about something.
46. **hand-in-hand** (phrase) – together, in partnership, closely.
47. **serve one’s purpose** (phrase) – to have a specific use of something.

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48. **to begin with** (phrase) – at first, at the outset, at the beginning.
49. **in reference to** (phrase) – in relation to something, about something.
50. **make a pitch** (phrase) – say/do something in support of someone or something.
51. **on the sidelines** (phrase) – it refers to a meeting/forum occurs at the same time as the scheduled meeting/forum, but is not itself an item on the agenda.
52. **leave much to be desired** (phrase) – to be very unsatisfactory/disappointing.
53. **lay the groundwork** (phrase) – arrange, organize, draw up, prepare (the foundation/basis for something).
54. **fly in the face of** (phrase) – disregard, ignore, defy/disobey.
55. **back and forth** (phrase) – from place to place, to and fro, hither and thither.
56. **born out of** (phrase) – has happened as the result of something.
57. **in response to** (phrase) – regarding, concerning.
58. **so far** (phrase) – until now, up to the present, up to this point.
59. **on the lines of** (phrase) – in conformity with.
60. **with the exception of** (phrase) – except, excluding, not including.
61. **after all** (phrase) – most importantly, above all, ultimately, essentially.
62. **thanks to** (phrase) – as a result of, owing to, due to, because of.
63. **too good to be true** (phrase) – if something seems too good to be true, it is hard to believe and so doubt that there may be something wrong.
64. **on account of** (phrase) – because of, owing to, due to, by virtue of.
65. **make up for** (phrase) – offset, balance, neutralize, even up.
66. **the balance of payment surplus** (phrase) – it means the country exports more than it imports.
67. **the balance of payment deficit** (phrase) – it means the country imports more than it exports.
68. **as a whole** (phrase) – in general, together.
69. **make up one's mind** (phrase) – decide, be decisive, make a decision.
70. **in addition** (phrase) – as well as, additionally, moreover.
71. **in line with** (phrase) – in alignment with, in accordance with.
72. **come to the table** (phrase) – to meet so as to discuss how to solve a specific issue.
73. **give another chance** (phrase) – to allow someone another opportunity to do something.
74. **at the mercy of** (phrase) – in the power of, under the control of, unprotected against, defenceless against.

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75. **contrary to** (phrase) – conflicting with, opposed to.
76. **with regard to** (phrase) – in respect of, concerning, with reference to.
77. **in time** (phrase) – eventually, ultimately, finally, in the end.
78. **lose ground** (phrase) – lose one's advantage.
79. **play a part/role** (phrase) – contribute to, be instrumental in, be a factor in.
80. **in the offing** (phrase) – coming soon, likely to happen, on the way, forthcoming.
81. **in sync** (phrase) – working well together, in agreement.
82. **put in place** (phrase) – initiate, usher in, bring in.
83. **have a bearing on** (phrase) – have a relevance/relation to something.
84. **leave alone** (phrase) – stop disturbing something, stop interfering with something.
85. **pay heed** (phrase) – pay attention to, take notice of, listen to.
86. **off the mark** (phrase) – inaccurate, incorrect, wrong; irrelevant, inapplicable, inappropriate.
87. **bear/keep in mind** (phrase) – take into account, consider.
88. **the die is cast** (phrase) – something (a decision, a course of action, the future) has been determined that cannot be changed.
89. **throw in one's lot with** (phrase) – combine with, join up with, form an alliance with, link up with.
90. **insofar as** (phrase) – to the extent/degree that.
91. **give a chance** (phrase) – to allow someone/something an opportunity to do something.
92. **as it happens** (phrase) – actually, certainly.
93. **by way of** (phrase) – as a form of.
94. **under the shadow of** (phrase) – in danger of something.
95. **be (on) anyone's case** (phrase) – to criticize someone constantly.
96. **off track** (phrase) – lost (direction), adrift, disoriented/confused.
97. **in this light** (phrase) – from this perspective; in connection with this.
98. **to start with** (phrase) – at first, at the start, at the outset, at the beginning.
99. **as is (or) as it is** (phrase) – in the existing situations.
100. **on the ground** (phrase) – in a situation/place where things are happening really/practically.
101. **hold someone responsible/accountable for** (phrase) – blame someone for something.
102. **needless to say** (phrase) – as you would expect, of course, obviously, clearly.

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103. **in favour of** (phrase) – in support of, on the side of.
104. **line of reasoning** (phrase) – a set of reasons.
105. **leave open** (phrase) – keep undecided; keep unscheduled.
106. **in advance** (phrase) – ahead in time, earlier, beforehand.
107. **come into play** (phrase) – become effective/active.
108. **at one's best** (phrase) – on top form, in the pink, in great shape.
109. **for now** (phrase) – for the time being, for the present, for the moment.
110. **explain away** (phrase) – get rid of, escape from (a bad situation by explaining that it is not their fault).
111. **make known** (phrase) – disclose, reveal, unveil, make public.
112. **on the surface** (phrase) – at first glance, outwardly, apparently, ostensibly.
113. **between Scylla and Charybdis** (phrase) – (from Greek mythology) to choose the lesser of two evils/dangers.
114. **in the wake of** (phrase) – as a result of some event, especially an unpleasant one; in the aftermath of, as a consequence of, on account of, because of, owing to.
115. **sort of** (phrase) – kind of, somewhat, somehow.
116. **in the course of** (phrase) – during (the particular period/activity).
117. **at any cost** (phrase) – no matter how much effort or money needed.
118. **at a discount** (phrase) – not valuable; not in worth.
119. **come at a cost/phrase** (phrase) – to have a negative or unpleasant or serious consequence (because of some action).
120. **on the pretext** (phrase) – providing false excuse/reason for one's justification.
121. **come to light** (phrase) – to become known publicly, to be revealed; reveal, disclose, expose.
122. **let the genie out of the bottle** (phrase) – let something (which cannot be changed or stopped later) to happen in order to have a permanent change in people's lives, especially a bad change.
123. **in haste** (phrase) – quickly, rapidly, fast, speedily.
124. **on hold** (phrase) – postpone, put off, hold off, defer, delay.
125. **true to one's name** (phrase) – keeping one's name (reputation).
126. **all the time** (phrase) – constantly, continuously, permanently.
127. **in the face of** (phrase) – despite, notwithstanding, regardless of; when confronted with.
128. **better off** (phrase) – in an advantageous position.
129. **the way forward** (phrase) – something (a plan/action) that leads to success in the future.

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130. **on the run** (phrase) – in a rush, in a hurry.
131. **on offer** (phrase) – available.
132. **for instance** (phrase) – as an example.
133. **at home** (phrase) – in one's own country.
134. **tighten your grip** (phrase) – to start to control someone/something more stringently.
135. **join hands** (phrase) – work together with.
136. **in effect** (phrase) – in reality, in actual fact, effectively.
137. **in practice** (phrase) – in reality, actually, realistically, practically, effectively.
138. **in terms of** (phrase) – with regard to, regarding/concerning, in connection with.
139. **in a hurry** (phrase) – rushed; (willing to do something) more quickly, easily, without delay.
140. **(well) on one's way** (phrase) – if you are on your way or well on your way to something, you have made so much progress that you are almost certain to achieve that thing.
141. **set the record straight** (phrase) – correct a misunderstanding/mistake/misinterpretation.
142. **bone of contention** (phrase) – a main subject/topic of an argument or disagreement; point at issue, matter in question.
143. **take a turn for the worse** (phrase) – deteriorate, worsen, get worse, decline.
144. **make ends meet** (phrase) – to earn/have just enough money to buy essentials; survive, manage, cope.
145. **back to the drawing board** (phrase) – used to point out that a new idea/plan has to be formed as the old one is not working well.
146. **the penny dropped** (phrase) – it means that someone suddenly understood or realized something.
147. **at someone's beck and call** (phrase) – always ready to do something for someone (as a servant/attendant).
148. **fire a (warning) shot across somebody's bows** (phrase) – to say/do something as a warning to someone to change their conduct/behaviour and to stop what they are doing.
149. **day of reckoning** (phrase) – judgement day, day of judgement, final settlement.
150. **the scheme of things** (phrase) – in the way things normally/generally happen or arranged to happen (when compared with/related to other things) in a particular situation; a general view of the situation as a whole.

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151. **in any case** (phrase) – moreover.
152. **neck and neck** (phrase) – equal, tied, close together.
153. **turn of a new page** (phrase) – a new start after a period of difficulties.
154. **knock on the door** (phrase) – approach.
155. **a light-touch** (phrase) – a careful way of handling/doing something.
156. **gain/get (someone's) attention** (phrase) – attract someone's attention/interest, catch someone's eye.
157. **come undone** (phrase) – to become disintegrated, to break into parts or pieces; to come to fail.
158. **beg the question** (phrase) – raise a point; invite question.
159. **make clear** (phrase) – explain, clarify, elucidate.
160. **draw a parallel** (phrase) – to compare two people or things.
161. **far more** (phrase) – a lot more, much more.
162. **play by the rules** (phrase) – follow the rules, conform, abide by the rules.
163. **one way and another** (phrase) – by some means.
164. **not to mention** (phrase) – in addition to, as well as.
165. **run deep** (phrase) – (of beliefs/emotions) be strongly felt.
166. **in the absence of** (phrase) – without.
167. **on track** (phrase) – on course, on target.
168. **make inroads (into)** (phrase) – progress/advance into (a new area/territory).
169. **set eyes on** (phrase) – see, observe, notice, spot.
170. **above the fray** (phrase) – uninvolved in a contest/conflict/dispute.
171. **regardless of** (phrase) – irrespective of, without consideration of, notwithstanding, in spite of.
172. **come to an end** (phrase) – finish, stop, to reach an end.
173. **a long time coming** (phrase) – something that's long overdue; happening after awaited/delayed for a period of time.
174. **so as to do something** (phrase) – in order to do something.
175. **in one's tracks** (phrase) – (to stop) suddenly.
176. **down to** (phrase) – be the responsibility of (a particular person).
177. **on the face of it** (phrase) – apparently, seemingly, evidently/ostensibly; at first glance.
178. **look beyond** (phrase) – to look forward to a time in the future after some situation.
179. **it is no surprise** (phrase) – as expected, as anticipated, as predicted.
180. **business as usual** (phrase) – routine, regularity, normal pattern.
181. **at variance with** (phrase) – completely different from.

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182. **make sense of** (phrase) – understand, comprehend, fathom out.
183. **see for yourself** (phrase) – look at something with one's own eyes.
184. **prepare the way for** (phrase) – to do things that make it possible/easier for something to happen; to pave the way for something.
185. **on a mission** (phrase) – undertaking an important task.
186. **in place** (phrase) – ready, set up, established, arranged.
187. **up to** (phrase) – the responsible of someone.
188. **into the hands of** (phrase) – under the control of.
189. **war of words** (phrase) – disagreement, difference of opinion, argument.
190. **take a view (of)** (phrase) – have a opinion (of).
191. **under way** (phrase) – in progress, happening, occurring, taking place.
192. **in the long run** (phrase) – eventually, in the end, ultimately.
193. **come/get in the way** (phrase) – prevent something from happening.
194. **all told** (phrase) – in all, in sum.
195. **make the headlines** (phrase) – to (suddenly) get a lot of attention (through news reports).
196. **take into account** (phrase) – consider, take into consideration, have regard to, reckon with.
197. **in earnest** (phrase) – purposefully, determinedly, resolutely.
198. **in a big way** (phrase) – to a great extent; to a high degree.
199. **put the cart before the horse** (phrase) – do things in the wrong order; reverse/change the method of doing something.
200. **the devil's in the detail** (phrase) – something may seem simple at a first look generally, but problematic & complex things are always hidden in the details of it.
201. **window of opportunity** (phrase) – a short period of time in which one has a chance to do/achieve something; lucky chance, good time, golden opportunity, suitable time/moment, opportune occasion.
202. **light at the end of the tunnel** (phrase) – a hopeful sign/indication that a bad or unpleasant situation will end soon.
203. **have the last laugh** (phrase) – to finally achieve success (after facing difficult situation or doubt/scepticism from others).
204. **bury one's head in the sand** (phrase) – ignore problems.
205. **keep/hold something in abeyance** (phrase) – suspend, put off, discontinue, dissolve, terminate.
206. **kick the can down the road** (phrase) – to avoid dealing with a difficult situation or making a hard decision until later; delay, defer, put off, postpone.
207. **strike a blow for** (phrase) – do something to support for.

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208. **cut a sorry figure** (phrase) – make a poor impression; present oneself poorly.
209. **fall/run foul of** (phrase) – get into trouble, come into conflict with, go against (by not following rules/standards).
210. **few and far between** (phrase) – scarce, meagre, insufficient, negligible, in short supply.
211. **(step) up one's game** (phrase) – to improve one's performance, or the quality of one's work.
212. **on the cusp of** (phrase) – a point where something will change from one state to another.
213. **a shot in the arm** (phrase) – (figuratively) boost, fillip, stimulus, impetus, encouragement; (literally) an injection of drugs.
214. **find/come up against a wall** (phrase) – to reach point/situation where problems seem impossible to solve.
215. **stand one's ground** (phrase) – stand firm, be firm, be resolute, insist, be determined.
216. **at a stroke** (phrase) – immediately, at once, straight away, instantaneously.
217. **bring something into effect** (phrase) – put into action, execute, enact.
218. **suo motu** (phrase) – Latin term means “on its own motion”. It is used where a government agency acts on its own knowledge.
219. **put an end to** (phrase) – stop, terminate, abolish.
220. **come to pass** (phrase) – happen, come about, occur, transpire.
221. **bring something to a halt** (phrase) – stop, conclude, terminate.
222. **of course** (phrase) – certainly, definitely, absolutely; obviously, clearly.
223. **on the whole** (phrase) – overall, all things considered, altogether.
224. **all around** (phrase) – In all aspects.
225. **in conjunction** (phrase) – together.
226. **on one's own** (phrase) – alone, all alone, by oneself, all by oneself.
227. **put something over/across** (phrase) – communicate, make clear, express, spell out, clarify.
228. **follow suit** (phrase) – emulate, copy, follow, take (another's actions as an example).
229. **due to** (phrase) – because of, owing to, on account of, as a result of.
230. **far fewer** (phrase) – much less (with a large difference).
231. **build bridges** (phrase) – to establish relationships between different & contrasting people who do not like each other.
232. **by comparison** (phrase) – when compared with another (thing).
233. **at best** (phrase) – only, merely.

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234. **commit oneself to** (phrase) – pledge to, promise to, bind yourself to (do something).
235. **what is more** (phrase) – moreover.
236. **at large** (phrase) – as a whole, generally, extensively.
237. **point in time** (phrase) – a particular moment.
238. **for one** (phrase) – used for highlighting that someone is thinking in a particular way, even if other people are not.
239. **at the cost of** (phrase) – by sacrificing/losing/giving up something.
240. **put differently** (phrase) – express differently, put/express in other words.
241. **get/set someone's pulse racing** (phrase) – to make someone feel excited.
242. **out-of-sight** (phrase) – not visible, unseen, invisible, obscured, hidden.
243. **come in the way of** (phrase) – prevent, oppose, defy.
244. **in check** (phrase) – to keep someone under control; stifle, restrain, hold back.
245. **pay attention** (phrase) – heed, attend, be attentive, concentrate on.
246. **as much as** (phrase) – almost, nearly the same as.
247. **let go** (phrase) – give up, relinquish, surrender.
248. **not in the least** (phrase) – by no means, not at all, in no way.
249. **score a self-goal** (phrase) – (figuratively) do something that has the unintentional effect of hurting your own interests.
250. **at one's helm** (phrase) – in charge; in leader's position.
251. **to the tune of** (phrase) – amounting to.
252. **from the time** (phrase) – from a point in the past until now.
253. **there is no escaping** (phrase) – used to say that something is definitely true and cannot be rejected.
254. **the eleventh hour** (phrase) – last-minute, last moment.
255. **in the name of** (phrase) – for the sake of, at the behest of.
256. **in respect of** (phrase) – concerning, regarding, relating to, with reference to.
257. **as well as** (phrase) – and in addition; and also.
258. **all the more** (phrase) – even more or even better than before.
259. **caught in a crossfire** (phrase) – get involved in an (argumentative &) unpleasant/difficult situation.
260. **rise from the ashes** (phrase) – emerge as new after destruction.
261. **come to a close** (phrase) – come to an end; come to a climax; to end.
262. **take a (long) hard look at** (phrase) – to think about something (a problem or issue) carefully.

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263. **no end in sight** (phrase) – no predictable end or conclusion to something.
264. **plumb the depths** (phrase) – reach the lowest possible level/point, experience the worst extremes, reach rock bottom.
265. **in all honesty** (phrase) – talking frankly.
266. **make or break** (phrase) – to bring success or ruin.
267. **as far as** (phrase) – to the degree/extent that.
268. **draw to a close** (phrase) – to come to an end.
269. **head/go south** (phrase) – reduce in number/value.
270. **come as a surprise** (phrase) – to make someone feel surprised.
271. **shoot dead** (phrase) – to kill (someone) using gun like weapon.
272. **cut a deal** (phrase) – reach/make a deal (or an agreement).
273. **stand the test of time** (phrase) – continue to be successful/popular for long time.
274. **strike a balance** (phrase) – find a fair & reasonable line of action between two contrasting things.
275. **a long way to go** (phrase) – a lot of work to be done before achieving success.
276. **seize the opportunity** (phrase) – take advantage of, benefit, gain.
277. **any time now** (phrase) – very soon, shortly, in a short time.
278. **pay the price/cost** (phrase) – experience the bad/unpleasant result of something; sacrifice, loss.
279. **give way to** (phrase) – yield, give in; be replaced by, be succeeded by, be superseded by.
280. **lose face** (phrase) – be extremely embarrassed, be humiliated.
281. **in contrast** (phrase) – when compared to another.
282. **on a platter** (phrase) – used to mention that someone receives something with no effort.
283. **in this regard** (phrase) – in connection with the aspect/consideration/point referred earlier.
284. **complete the circle** (phrase) – it means that after a long series of events/changes the same situation that you started with still exists.
285. **in the same vein** (phrase) – in the same style; of similar kind.