

Grammar - Idioms with Sports

Drop the ball

To make a mistake or fail to do something important.

1. I really dropped the ball during the sales meeting—I brought the wrong files.
2. Don't drop the ball this time. We're counting on you.

You win some, you lose some

A way to say that sometimes things go well, and sometimes they don't. It's a part of life.

1. The presentation didn't go well, but you win some, you lose some.
2. I didn't get the job, but hey, you win some, you lose some.

Get your game face on

To mentally prepare and focus for a serious task, like a presentation or challenge.

1. The presentation starts in five minutes. Time to get my game face on.
2. He put his game face on before the big interview.

Hit it out of the park

To do something extremely well, like giving a great performance. From baseball.

1. I'm sure you'll hit it out of the park during your speech.
2. Her cooking was amazing—she hit it out of the park.

Off your game

To not be performing at your usual skill level.

1. I feel off my game today—I can't focus.
2. If I'm off my game, help me out during the meeting.

On the sidelines

To be nearby or watching, but not actively involved unless needed. Comes from sports.

1. I'll be on the sidelines if you need help.
2. He stayed on the sidelines during the discussion but stepped in when needed.

Up your game

To improve your performance or effort in order to succeed or compete better.

1. I'm trying to up my game for this date.
2. She upped her game to get the promotion.

Out of your league

Someone is "out of your league" if they seem much better or more attractive than you.

1. I hope it goes well. She's kind of out of my league.
2. He's a great guy, but he thinks I'm out of his league.

Win someone over

To get someone to like or support you through charm or effort.

1. I'm sure you'll win her over—just be yourself.
2. He won the team over with his positive attitude.

Quit while you're ahead

To stop doing something before a mistake happens, especially after success.

1. You made a great first impression—quit while you're ahead!
2. I'll quit while I'm ahead before I say something embarrassing.

Idioms with Sports

Watch videos using **idioms with sports** in four conversations.

Conversation 1 | [PDF Worksheet](#)

Woman: How did the sales meeting go?

Man: Not good. I really **dropped the ball**.

Woman: Why do you say that?

Man: I had the wrong slides and I **kept fumbling my words**.

Woman: Oh, well. **You win some and you lose some**.

Conversation 2 | [PDF Worksheet](#)

Woman: Are you ready to give the presentation?

Man: Yeah, I think so. Time to **get my game face on**.

Woman: Relax, I'm sure you'll **hit it out of the park**.

Man: I hope so. but if I'm **off my game** help me out.

Woman: Don't worry. You'll be fine.

Man: OK, thanks,

Woman: I'll be here **on the sidelines** though if you need any help.

Conversation 3 | [PDF Worksheet](#)

Woman: Hey, nice suit. Got a new job?

Man: No, I have a date tonight.

Woman: Very nice. You look great.

Man: Thanks. I'm trying to *up my game*.

Woman: So who is the hot date?

Man: A friend of a friend.

Woman: Well, I'm sure she will love you.

Man: I hope so. She's kind of *out of my league*.

Woman: I'm sure you will *win her over*. Have fun. Just remember to *quit while you're ahead*.

Quiz

Answer these questions about the interview.

1) How did the man drop the ball?

- a) **He spoke poorly.**
- b) He went to the wrong room.

2) What does 'hit it out of the park' most likely mean?

- a) **To do well**
- b) To not do well

3) How did the man up his game?

- a) He got a new job.
- b) **He wore nice clothes.**

More Corporate Idioms

That won't cut it

So, the question you might have is “Cut what?” Imagine a pair of scissors trying to cut through steel. It's not enough. It won't work. Whatever method you are using to solve your problem is simply insufficient.

Meaning: That will not be enough to do a task or cope with a situation.

“You can cram for the test, but that probably won’t cut it. You will need to study every day for several days in order to really understand the material.”

“They seem really upset. A simple apology won’t cut it.”

The ball is in your court

From the world of ships we go now to the world of sports. Whether it comes from tennis or from basketball, the idea is clear: it’s your turn to make a move.

Meaning: It’s your turn to make a decision or do something.

“I’ve done what I can. Now the ball is in your court.”

“Everybody in this company will support you if you decide to move to another country but the ball is in your court if you decide to change your mind at the last minute.”

Behind the scenes

The equator of our list takes us to the theatre. Behind the scenes was originally used to talk about those events in a play that happen off stage, where the audience cannot see.

Meaning: Done privately or secretly, rather than publicly.

“There is a lot of negotiation going on behind the scenes.”

“I can tell there is a lot of work behind the scenes.”

On the same page

It seems that the origin of this idiom is attributed to choral singing, when all singers had to be on the same page to be able to sing all together the same song.

Meaning: Understand each other and agree.

“Before we begin the discussion, I want to make sure that we are all on the same page.”

“I have a great connection with my manager, I always feel we are on the same page.”

Sleep on it

Meaning: Delay making a decision on something until the following day.

“Let me sleep on it and give you an answer tomorrow.”

Call it a day

Meaning: Decide to stop working or doing an activity.

“I think we should call it a day and go home.”

“We have been working on this all day, why don’t we call it a day?”

In a nutshell

Meaning: In summary, in a few words.

“She put the matter in a nutshell.”

“Our traffic is rising, customers are happy, and our revenue is still growing; in a nutshell, our business is a success.”

It’s a long shot

Unless you’re Michael Jordan, long shots tend to have a small chance of succeeding. This is basically the idea of this idiom. It is often followed by “but”, as we use it to indicate that despite the odds, we will try anyways.

Meaning: An attempt or guess with very small chance of succeeding or being accurate.

“I know it’s a long shot, because there are many candidates, but I’m going to apply for the manager’s job.”

“It’s a long shot, but well worth trying.”