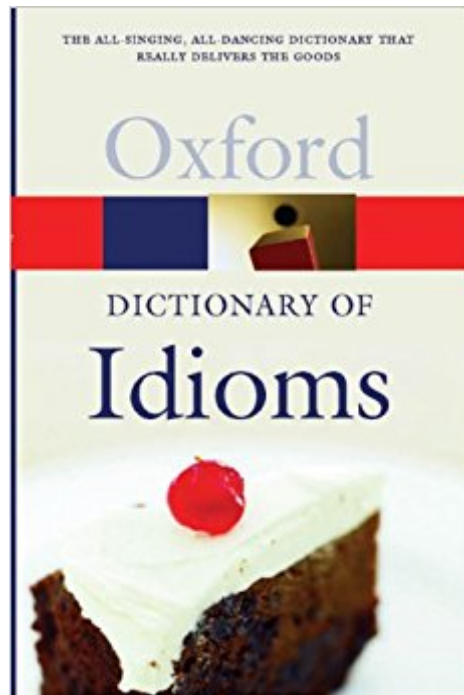




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The Oxford Dictionary Of Idioms (Oxford Quick Reference)



Synopsis

Did you know that 'flavour of the month' originated in a marketing campaign in American ice-cream parlours in the 1940s, when a particular flavour would be specially promoted for a month at a time? And did you know that 'off the cuff' refers to the rather messy practice of writing impromptu notes on one's shirt cuff before speaking in public? These and many more idioms are explained and put into context in this second edition of the Oxford Dictionary of Idioms. This vastly entertaining dictionary takes a fresh look at the idiomatic phrases and sayings that make English such a rich and intriguing language. A major new edition, it contains entries for over 5000 idioms, including 350 new entries and over 500 new quotations. The text has been updated to include many new idioms using the findings of the Oxford English Reading Programme, the biggest language research programme in the world. The entries are supported by a wealth of illustrative quotations from a wide range of sources and periods. For example: 'Rowling has not been asleep at the wheel in the three years since the last Potter novel, and I am pleased to report that she has not confused sheer length with inspiration.' - Guardian, 2003. 'I made the speech of a lifetime. I had them tearing up the seats and rolling in the aisles.' - P.G. Woodhouse, 1940. Many entries include boxed features which give more detailed background on the idiom in question. For example, did you know that 'taken aback' was adopted from nautical terminology, and described a ship unable to move forward because of a strong headwind pressing its sails back against the mast? The text has been entirely redesigned so that it is both elegant and easy to use. Anyone interested in the quirky side of the English language will have hours of fun browsing through this fascinating and informative volume.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I see that most of the negative/low rating reviews come from the wrong expectations people have when buying this book. So , if you are looking for the AMERICAN English language idioms - this is not the book. You could actually guess it as there is no 'American' in its title and Oxford University Press is a UK publisher, so unless explicitly specified all their books are about British English. My guess is that about 20-30% of the idioms are British only. For the American Idioms there is an excellent book calledÂ The American Heritage Dictionary of Idioms, Second EditionÂ that will answer all your needs. If, on the other hand, you are looking for the British and general idioms - it has a solid 4 star rating from me. I deduce 1 star for many times lack of examples/extensive explanations of usage. It is something I expect of Oxford University Press but this book is rather thin on that.

I'm not qualified to analyze whether this book is helpful to people who are learning English as a second language. But I have used many different idioms dictionaries, and this one, while not bad, is weak in the number of entries and in the shortness of the explanations of meaning, although I do find the little boxed features on origins very helpful. It's hard to know whether to rate this as 4 stars or 3. Ultimately I'd give it a 3.5 star rating if that were possible.

When I type in an idiom, even a common one, I am given dozens of locations to check out, and usually the idiom is not to be found in any of the offers. Apparently the system is not set up to dig up entries, but if the combination of words within the idiom are to be found in one or two adjacent sentences no matter the sequence, the location will be given as one I should check out. Given 6 at a time, it takes a considerable amount of time to go through 172 possibilities, only to find that none of them is the idiom, but merely a coincidental inclusion of all the words of the idiom within two adjacent, but disrelated sentences. Only once did the idiom I was looking for turn up, and it is a Canadian idiom I have not found in most other idioms dictionaries. That's what rated the two stars

instead of none!

Drawing on the reputation of Oxford, this authoritative dictionary surveys a English idioms with a British tilt, limiting its usefulness as an American English reference but offering many phrase origins. This idiom dictionary only lists 5,000-plus entries, a limited scope made smaller for Americans or those studying American English because of the book's emphasis on British English. The dictionary assumes a more convenient trade paperback size, but its shortness makes it less reliable as a reference. A smaller number of entries allows more room to share notes on the origins of idioms, however. This helps enhance the reader's understanding and retention of the idioms. The authority and brevity of this idiom dictionary make it more useful to those who already speak English and are looking for a handy reference to satisfy mild curiosity. Students of English as a second language and communications professionals looking for a more complete reference should look elsewhere.

If you are trying to learn the U.S. language, idioms, and slang, then there are better options out there for you. Try any of the other major dictionaries and they will work better for you. This one is written more for British-Americans and does not really teach you what you are looking for if you are buying for the purpose of learning about the English language. I hope that is helpful. Have Fun! Todd Hagopian President/CEO Hagopian Institute Author of the popular "Quote Junkie" book sereies and the brand new "Idiom Junkie" series

I think this title is a good starter for persons learning a new language. The English language is quite complex and this paperback may help to ease this pain.

I thought it would be larger, with more entries. sincerely, Helena Londres

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