



VOICEOVER MASTERCLASS

USEFUL ENGLISH PHRASES

Extremely useful colloquial phrases and idioms to help your communication with native British and North American people

Also includes ACRONYMS

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www.voiceovermasterclass.com

USEFUL ENGLISH PHRASES

This PDF is not to be sold separately and is part of the course

[How to Speak English Better in Only 30 Days!](#)

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Introduction

It helps not just to be clear in your speech, but to also understand and learn some special traditional phrases that British or American people have in their everyday language.

If you pepper some of these phrases into your conversation, you will endear people to you enormously, they will love you! Using one of these phrases or idioms now and again, many of which are quite amusing will make your listeners appreciate that you have taken the trouble to learn the culture and you will make friends far easier that way.

In the UK we have a famous German stand-up comedian and TV panel show star called Henning Wenn. His whole comedy character is of a German coming to Britain and making fun of us, and he is proud of his German accent - yet is extremely clear in his speech, and throughout his comedy performance, he often puts in little phrases some of which we would consider to be out of date, but that makes it all the funnier.

I remember seeing Henning Wenn at a live performance talking about how difficult it was to get a bus ticket in Britain, and stating that it was all “a bit of a palaver”, which is a quaint old British phrase that got the audience to really relate to him!



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So here are some idioms and colloquial phrases that are common in the United Kingdom and North America. Our list is no means the final full list, there are thousands of these types of phrases out there, but we have picked these as we feel they could be most useful to you. We have included an example with each one to strengthen the understanding.

“To go the extra mile” – To do more than is expected of you.

“Well John, you could have finished work an hour ago, but you’re still here. Thanks very much for going the extra mile!”

“You’re gilding the lily!” - Doing too much work that isn’t needed.

“Your painting is perfect as it is, you don’t need to work any more on it, you’re gilding the lily!”

“Water under the bridge” – to forgive and to forget

“That argument between us is in the past, that’s all water under the bridge now”

“In the blink of the eye” – very fast, or instantly

“Time goes so fast doesn’t it. The kids become adults in the blink of an eye”

“Let the cat out of the bag” – to reveal a secret by mistake

“The boss was trying to keep the takeover a secret, but over that meeting, he really let the cat out of the bag!”

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“To weather the storm” – doing the best to get through a bad situation

“It’s going to be chaotic over the next few weeks, we’ve all got to weather the storm”

“To keep one’s chin up” – staying happy during bad times

“I think we’re going to be OK in the end, I’ve got my chin up.”

“To bury one’s head in the sand” – ignoring problems that need attention

“I really don’t want to think about what happens after I lose my job. I’m just burying my head in the sand”

“Step up to the plate” – accepting responsibility

“The government needs to step up to the plate and actually do what they promised at the election”

“Gift of the gab” – describing someone who can talk fluently

“She kept on chatting for over 20 minutes, he really has the gift of the gab”

“Burning the midnight oil” – working on something later than usual

“Still studying for your exam tomorrow? You’ll be burning the midnight oil”

“Under the weather” – not feeling very well

This comes from sailors feeling seasick, going below decks, literally going “under the weather”

“I’m not coming out tonight, I’m feeling a bit under the weather”

“Playing it by ear” – not planning anything

This comes from the world of music, with skilled musicians not needing sheet music to read from.

“I’ve no idea what I’ll say at the conference, I’ll play it by ear!”

“Driving me up the wall” – getting frustrated and annoyed

“The noise from those builders over the road is driving me up the wall”

“Bitten off more than I can chew” – Taken on too much responsibility

“I wish I hadn’t said that I’d run the club as well as being a volunteer. I think I’ve bitten off more than I can chew!”

“Breathing down one’s neck” – constantly checking up

“The boss doesn’t believe I’m doing the job properly, she’s always breathing down my neck!”

“Costing an arm and a leg” – very expensive

“That car wasn’t as cheap as I thought, in the end it cost me an arm and a leg!”

“I could eat a horse” – very hungry

“I haven’t eaten all day, I could eat a horse!”

“I’ve got bigger fish to fry” – more important things to deal with

“I haven’t got time to waste on negotiating your pay rise, I’ve got bigger fish to fry, trying to save the company”

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“Egg on your face” – Looking foolish or misinformed.

“So you don’t think I’m going to score in the next game? I will, and then you’ll be left with egg on your face”

“Wrong side of the bed” – In a bad mood.

Oh, dear why are you so angry and moody? Did you get of the wrong side of the bed?

“Leave no stone unturned” – Doing one’s best to discover something.

“I want this missing document found – work hard – leave no stone unturned”

“Between the devil and the deep blue sea” – Any option is a bad one.

“Choosing one option, I lose my business, choosing the other option I lose my wife. I’m between the devil and the deep blue sea!”

“The straw that broke the camel’s back” – a maybe small but significant event after a series of events that make you choose a course of action.

“My company have given me terrible jobs to do all year, and then they gave me a pay cut! That was the straw that broke the camel’s back. I quit!!”

“In the doghouse” – someone is angry with you because of some action from you, or some inaction!

“I forgot to put the bins out for collection today, So I’m in the doghouse with my wife”

“Barking up the wrong tree” – Pursuing a course of action that is wrong or misguided.

“Look officer, why are you asking me questions about the robbery? I wasn’t even in that town on that day. You’re barking up the wrong tree!”

“Buttering someone up” – being deliberately nice or polite to someone in return to receive something.

The children have been so good, I guess they’re buttering me up so I’ll take them to the theme park!

“Until the dust settles” – Waiting until a situation becomes clearer.

“I’m sure you could claim compensation for this disaster. It would be best to wait until the dust settles though.”

“Don’t give up the day job!” – It may not be successful.

“Look, friend, I wish you well with the publication of your first book, but, hey, don’t give up the day job!”

“The magic touch” – a great ability or skill to do something.

“You really are so good at telling stories to my children, you really have the magic touch.

“Bringing something to the table”. To contribute well to a group.

“You really are a good new member of our team, you’ve brought so many good ideas to the table.”

“Making a good fist of it.” Doing well even though inexperienced.

“I have to say that even though you are new here, you really have made a good fist of things”



ACRONYM

When you see a group of letters that don't make a word and you're a little confused by them, you are probably looking at an ACRONYM.

This is a group of letters that are the first letters of actual words. Saying or writing the acronym saves time.

Here are some of the best known acronyms in English.

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BYOB – You'll likely see this acronym on an invitation card or in an email where you are invited to a party or social gathering. BYOB means **Bring Your Own Bottle** / Booze (slang for alcoholic drinks) Don't turn up to a party empty-handed when you've been told to BYOB – or Bring Your Own Bottle!

DOB – Date Of Birth, one of the most common English abbreviations found on official forms and documents.

AD/BC – You'll see AD and BC used with historical dates. The first stands for the Latin phrase Anno Domini (In the Year of Our Lord) and refers to dates after the birth of Christ, while the latter, self-evidently enough, is used for dates Before Christ. Recently, however, the secular equivalents CE (Common Era) and BCE (Before Common Era) are becoming increasingly popular.

AKA – also known as. This is used when referring to people who have a penname, a stage name, or some other type of alias, such as Reginald Dwight (AKA Elton John) - David Jones AKA David Bowie, and so on.

ASAP – As Soon As Possible, something your boss might add to the end of an email when your report needs to be finished fast!

AWOL – Absent WithOut Leave. Originally a military abbreviation used of soldiers or marines who had gone off somewhere without permission, 'to go AWOL' is now used casually about friends who have temporarily gone missing. It's pronounced Ay- WOL!

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BO – Body Odour. If someone has BO, you'll be pinching your nose to avoid the smell.

BTW – By The Way. This is a common online abbreviation. 'By the way' is used to introduce a topic to the conversation that is not directly related to what is being said but which the speaker has just remembered. In better English, you could say: 'incidentally'.

DIY – Do-It-Yourself. This refers to decorating your home by yourself or doing your own refurbishments or repairs, rather than employing a professional.

BA, MA, BSC, MSC, PhD etc. – these are all academic abbreviations that describe the type of degree one is taking or has acquired. Respectively, they stand for Bachelor of Arts, Master of Arts, Bachelor of Science, Master of Science, and Doctor of Philosophy.

CC and BCC – These email abbreviations harken back to a time when copies of letters were made using carbon paper. CC means carbon copy and BCC means blind carbon copy, which in email terms means you are sending a copy to someone else as well, but the main recipient doesn't know.

ETA – Estimated Time of Arrival, used to let people know when you think you'll arrive. So you'd say something like, I'll be there, ETA 9 o'clock.

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FAQ – Frequently Asked Questions. A common abbreviation on company websites, and on promotional materials.

FOMO- Fear Of Missing Out, the feeling that everyone is having a better time of something than you are.

FYI – For Your Information. This is often used in work emails when forwarding relevant information that does not require a reply.

GSOH – Good Sense Of Humour. This is an abbreviation often used in the description of people on dating sites!

IMO – In My Opinion, another common internet abbreviation. You'll also see IMHO, which can mean either in my honest or in my humble opinion.

BLT – A well-known sandwich made up of bacon, lettuce and tomato, plus usually mayonnaise.

EDM – electronic dance music, such as house, trance and techno – the kind that has lots of BPM (beats per minute).

LOL – Laugh(ing) Out Loud. These days, LOL is one of the best-known and most useful English abbreviations, both online and in text messaging and in social media, so much so in fact that it has entered the spoken language as both a verb and a noun. Some people think it means Lots Of Love but that's not what most people think it stands for!

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NEET – This is a type of person who is Not in Education, Employment or Training, and the term NEET is often used by Government departments.

OMG! – Oh My Gosh / God! An expression of surprise or disgust.

P.S. – Post Scriptum. Although seen less and less frequently now that we have email and editing, these two letters still constitute a widely understood abbreviation for adding something to a finished letter, as an afterthought.

P.T.O. – If you see this at the bottom of a document, make sure you follow the instruction to please turn over and read the other side.

R.I.P. – Rest In Peace. You'll find it on gravestones and tombstones.

RSVP – For the French Répondez S'il Vous Plait (or in English, please reply). If you receive an official invitation to an event that includes this abbreviation, make sure you let the organiser know whether you're going or not.

TBA – To Be Announced. If you're planning a get-together but haven't yet chosen the venue, this is the abbreviation to use. Also there is TBC – To Be Confirmed.

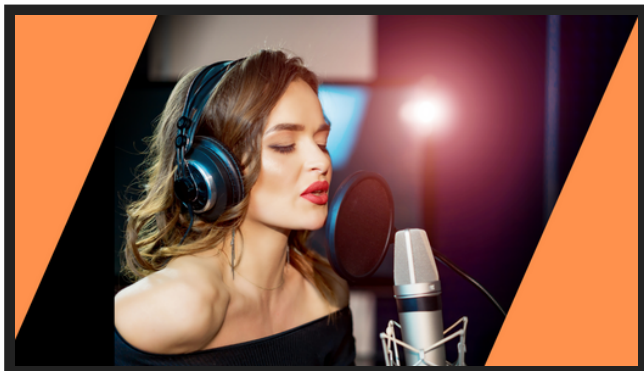
VIP – Very Important Person. You'll hear this used of those rooms in clubs and boxes in stadiums that are reserved for the rich and famous. It's always pronounced fully as V.I.P. and never as one word, so never "Vipp"

TGIF – Thank God It's Friday.

YOLO – You Only Live Once. So enjoy your life!

We have some very strange acronyms in the English language don't we!

So we hope when you see any of these on a poster or in a document, you will now know what they mean.



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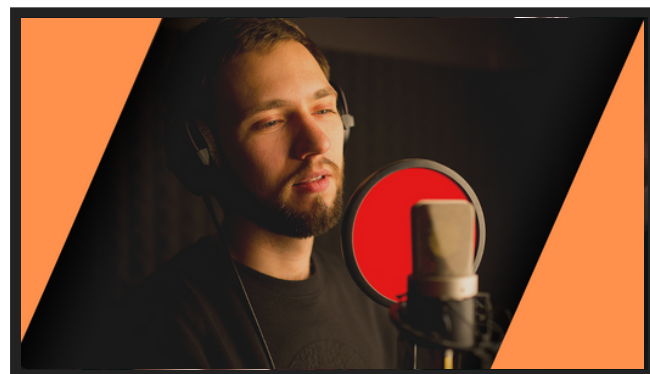
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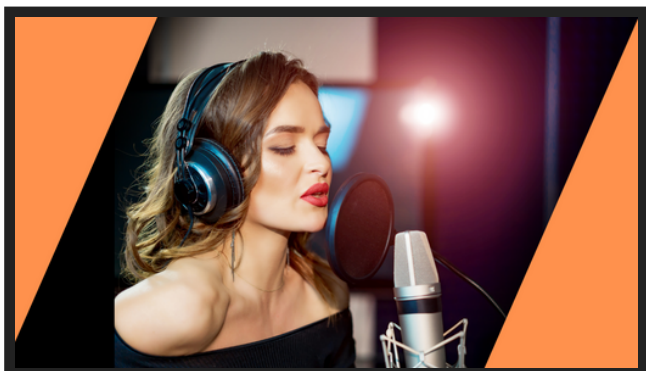


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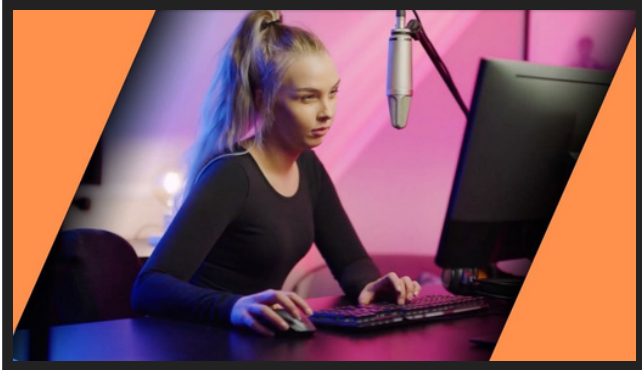
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