

## 8 IDIOMS

This document provides additional materials relating to Chapter 8 of *Social English Power* by Peter Clarke. For more information, visit [SocialEnglishPower.com](http://SocialEnglishPower.com)

### PRACTICE 8.1

1. (a)      2. (c)      3. True      4. (a)      5. (c)      6. False  
 7. (b)      8. In the black      9. (c)      10. (a)      11. (b)  
 12. (a)      13. Not quite. *We really made good time* is better.      14. No  
 15. (b)      16. (a)      17. (b)      18. (c)      19. (b)      20. (c)  
 21. (a)

### PRACTICE 8.2

- The more, the merrier. (We need lots of ideas.)
- Not my cup of tea. (You don't like that kind of movie.)
- Drawn a blank. (Failed to find what you were looking for.)
- Bounce an idea off you. (Get your opinion on my idea.)
- In the red (had a negative bank balance).

### PRACTICE 8.6

	Text containing idiom	Is the idiom correct? If not, which idiom is better?
MARIE	Come on, guys, we've only got two weeks until the new interns* arrive, and it's our responsibility to arrange a training programme for them. We have to <b>sit on the fence</b> .§	✗ get a move on (hurry up, because we haven't got much time)

JOEL	Well, do we really need a new programme <b>from scratch</b> ?§ Why not just copy last year's? <b>Ballpark</b> ,§ I think that would be good enough.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ from scratch (not starting from an existing plan)</li> <li>✗ On balance (considering all the pros and cons)</li> </ul>
XAVIER	That's no good. The manager told me last week she really wants a new programme.	
MARIE	How come you didn't mention that before? You should have told us. I mean, <b>it's not your cup of tea</b> § to send us a quick email.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ It's not rocket science (not very difficult)</li> </ul>
XAVIER	Sorry, everyone, I've been so busy it must have <b>fallen through the cracks</b> .§	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ fallen through the cracks (got forgotten because I was busy)</li> </ul>
HILDA	Never mind that. At least we are all <b>in the black</b> now.§ Let's get some ideas on paper. <b>The more, the merrier</b> .§	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ We are all on the same page (we all understand the situation).</li> <li>✓ The more, the merrier (let's have lots of ideas).</li> </ul>
JOEL	Let me <b>shout you</b> .§ How about taking them on a team building weekend at one of those outdoor adventure centres?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ Let me bounce this off you (listen to my idea).</li> </ul>
HILDA	You mean, like, with climbing ropes and white water canoeing and all that? It's <b>not my cup of tea</b> ,§ really.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ not my cup of tea (I don't like it).</li> </ul>
MARIE	Nor mine. And I think the manager would <b>get a move on</b> § in case someone got hurt. And it's her decision <b>at the end of the day</b> .§	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ get cold feet (she would get worried).</li> <li>✓ at the end of the day (the final decision is hers).</li> </ul>
XAVIER	Actually those activities are not really that scary, or dangerous. I went on one <b>off my treat</b> § a few months ago and it was great. We spent the whole day doing fun stuff and then <b>crashed out</b> § in tents. I can tell you, I <b>slept like a log</b> that night.§	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✗ I went on one off my own bat (it was my own idea).</li> <li>✓ crashed out (went to sleep).</li> <li>✓ slept like a log (slept well).</li> </ul>
HILDA	Well, I suppose we could consider it. Any idea <b>ballpark</b> § how much it costs per head?*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ ballpark (approximately).</li> </ul>

JOEL	I was trying to check that before but I <b>got cold feet</b> .§ Let me search again and I'll let you know.	✗ I drew a blank (couldn't find the information).
XAVIER	OK, well it seems like we finally have a workable idea. And <b>ballpark</b> ,§ I think it's a reasonable one. Everyone agree?	✗ on balance (considering all the pros and cons).
MARIE	I'm still not sure. It's really not going to go down well with the manager.	
JOEL	Come on, Marie, you can't just <b>draw a blank</b> .§ Are you for or against it?	✗ sit on the fence (you have to make a decision, for or against).
HILDA	Tell you what, let's give her time to think while we get some coffees. <b>I'll shout you</b> .§	✓ I'll shout you (I'll pay for the coffees).
XAVIER	Good plan. We've <b>got a move on</b> § so far, so let's take five.*	✗ We've made good time (progressed with the task quicker than expected).

### PRACTICE 8.7: SUGGESTED ANSWERS

1. It was fine. The traffic was light, so I made good time.
2. Absolutely. I turned in at 10.30 and slept like a log.
3. Ballpark, it's about 15 minutes' walk.
4. No way could I make a speech **off the cuff** (= without preparation). I would draw a complete blank. Anyway, public speaking's not my cup of tea.
5. Oh sure, I love those big music events with lots of people. The more, the merrier.
6. Yes, definitely. Even my grandmother could use one. It's really not rocket science.
7. I really try to remember it every year. It shouldn't be rocket science (to remember it). But sometimes it falls through the cracks if I've been busy.
8. Our families usually suggest a marriage partner. But at the end of the day, it's my own decision. That way, with the families' support, we're less

likely to get cold feet when the **big day** (= wedding day) arrives.

9. Not always. He likes going to the park and walking by the riverside, but that's not my cup of tea: it's too **tame** (= peaceful, gentle). But on balance, after a bit of bouncing ideas off each other, we usually end up on the same page.

### **PRACTICE 8.8**

Always without success: I've drawn a blank every time

Without me forcing you: Off your own bat / Of your own accord

Considering the pros and cons: On balance

Owing money to the bank: In the red

It's not difficult: It's not rocket science

Eventually: At the end of the day

I certainly agree with you: We're on the same page

As many people as possible: The more, the merrier

Go to bed: Crash out / Turn in / Hit the hay

Slept really well: Slept like a log

It's not something I would enjoy: It's not my cup of tea

Tell you an idea of mine: Bounce an idea off you

Get scared: Get cold feet

Ultimately: At the end of the day

It's not really that difficult: It's not rocket science

Had to be cancelled: Fell through the cracks

Start quickly: Get a move on

I have some money in my bank account: I'm in the black