

SAFE▶ **BETTER** safe than sorry**SAID**▶ you said it! —see **SAY**▶ **LEAST** said soonest mended**that's/it's easier said than done**

SPOKEN used in order to say that it would be difficult to do what someone has suggested: *"Try to forget him, Fiona." "Yes, well that's easier said than done."* | *Deep breathing exercises and relaxation can be used to reduce stress, but it's easier said than done.*

SAILING**be plain sailing** *BrE***be smooth/clear sailing** *AmE*

if work or an activity is plain, smooth etc sailing, it is easy to do or achieve: *If you've never had a go at painting with water colours before, follow Tom Robb's advice and it'll be plain sailing.* | *We know it may not be smooth sailing for a while, but changes are necessary to keep the business alive.*

SAILS**trim your sails (to sth)**

to change your behaviour, especially to spend less money, in order to deal with a difficult situation
 ◆ **OFTEN USED IN BUSINESS AND POLITICS:** *As the country is starting economic reforms, it's also trimming its sails.* | *To get themselves elected, Labour either had to trim its sails to the new economic situation, or keep its promises.*

SALAD**sb's salad days**

the time when someone was young and did not have much experience of life: *His later music is very different from the precise classically-based works of his salad days.* | *I remembered the long discussions about freedom of the press that we used to have in our salad days.*

SALOON**be (drinking) in the last chance****saloon** *BrE*

used in order to say that if someone does not take action to improve their situation immediately, they will lose their chance to do it: *Mellor warned the press that they were drinking in the last chance saloon, as the government considered limits on reporters' activities.* | *You're in the last chance saloon; if you can't raise the capital to pay off your debts you'll lose all your assets.*

SALT**no ___ worth his/her salt would do sth**(also **any ___ worth his/her salt would do sth**)

used in order to say that someone who is good at their job would do a particular thing: *No government organisation worth its salt would negotiate with*

terrorists. | *Any guitarist worth his salt would surely appreciate the high quality of this instrument.* | *A hairdresser's not worth her salt if she doesn't give a consultation before giving a hair cut.*

In ancient Rome, soldiers were paid in salt instead of money.

rub salt in/into sb's wounds(also **rub salt in/into the wound**)

to do something that makes someone feel even more embarrassed or upset about their situation than they already do: *Not only has he treated her like dirt, now he's rubbing salt in her wounds by bringing Joanne to her party.* | *The Museum of Western Art was officially shut down and, to rub salt into the wound, the building was turned into a meat storage facility.*

Sailors (=men who work on ships) were punished in the past by being beaten with a rope. Salt was put on their wounds, because people thought it would help them get better but, of course, it just made them hurt more.

the salt of the earth

used about a person or group of people you admire, because they are good, honest, ordinary people: *They're decent people, trying to earn a living, and this play shows they're the salt of the earth.* | *People keep saying, you own all that land out there, why don't you go live there? Well, I used to think the people out there were the salt of the earth, but now I can't stand them.*

salt-of-the-earth: *We like our politicians to be salt-of-the-earth types.*

SAME▶ **ONE and the same****same old, same old**

SPOKEN used in order to say that everything is the same as usual: *You always hear how this time they've solved the problem, but it's the same old, same old, and it's getting tiresome.* | *"Hi, Sean. How's it going?" "Oh, you know – same old, same old."*

SAND**be built on sand**

if a relationship, organization etc is built on sand, it is likely to fail or end because the ideas or rules it is based on are not good or moral: *The bank had lent too much to unstable countries and private corporations built on sand.* | *I'm not surprised about the divorce – the whole marriage was built on sand.*

SANDS**the shifting sands of sth**

used about a situation that keeps changing so that it is difficult to deal with: *By 1964 in the complex shifting sands of Ugandan politics, Obote felt strong enough to break away from the leadership.* | *Having been unemployed for six months, I was tired of trying to figure out the shifting sands of job training programmes.*

one sandwich short of a picnic

People often use other words instead of 'sandwich' and 'picnic', although the meaning of the idiom stays the same. The word that replaces 'sandwich' is usually something that is needed to make a group of things complete, or something that is needed to make a system work properly. The word that replaces 'picnic' represents the group or system.

- ◆ a couple of cans short of a six-pack
- ◆ a few clowns short of a circus
- ◆ a few peas short of a casserole
- ◆ a few bombs/bricks short of a full load
- ◆ a few french fries short of a Happy Meal (trademark)
- ◆ a few pickles short of a jar
- ◆ a few planes short of an Air Force
- ◆ one step short of the attic
- ◆ one tree short of a hammock
- ◆ one pepper short of an enchilada
- ◆ one sentence short of a paragraph
- ◆ a flying buttress short of a cathedral

SANDWICH/SANDWICHES▶ **go down like a RAT sandwich****one sandwich short of a picnic**(also **a few/couple sandwiches short of a picnic**)

SPOKEN a humorous expression used about someone who is very stupid or slightly crazy: *Come on, let's face it – nobody trusts the guy because he's at least one sandwich short of a picnic.* | *I know that many of my readers will assume that I'm a few sandwiches short of a picnic when I say that my ten-year-old Metro is a joy to drive, but I assure you it's true.*

SARDINES**be packed like sardines**(also **be crammed, squeezed etc like sardines**)

if a group of people or things is packed like sardines, they are pushed together in a small space: *One of the hostages said they were packed in like sardines and sometimes had to sleep standing up.* | *In the minibus, crammed like sardines, the team sat staring out of the windows.*

SAUCE**hit the sauce**

OLD-FASHIONED to drink a lot of alcohol: *I should lock up the liquor cabinet – Alice has been hitting the sauce again.*

hit the bottle is a more modern way of saying this.

(what's) sauce for the goose (is sauce for the gander)

OLD-FASHIONED used in order to say that if one person is treated in a particular way then you should treat other people in the same situation in the same way: *Lawmakers shouldn't impose something on the country's capital that wouldn't apply in the rest of the country.* *Sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander.*

This idiom sounds less old-fashioned if it is shortened or if people's names are used instead of 'goose' and 'gander': *You have to think about what the children need. What's sauce for us isn't sauce for them.*

SAUSAGE**not a sausage** *BrE*

SPOKEN nothing at all: *Our grandparents always brought my brother lots of presents, but not a sausage for me.* | *"Anything about the demo in the paper?" "Not a sausage."*

SAVE**save it** *AmE*

SPOKEN a rude expression used in order to tell someone to stop talking, because you do not want to hear their opinion or because their opinion cannot change the situation: *Save it, Len – Dennis will never agree to a plan like that.* | *Save it, will ya? I'm tired of listening to your excuses.*

—see also **don't waste your BREATH**

SAWDUST▶ **SPIT** and sawdust**SAY**▶ **to say the LEAST**▶ **WHAT** do you say we...▶ **WHEN** all is said and done**as they say**

used in order to show that what you are saying is a well-known phrase or idiom, that everyone knows: *Shares in Eurodisney have reached an all-time low, but that, as they say, is showbusiness.* | *We rely on public donations to keep the charity going, so please try and give something, however little, because every penny counts, as they say.*

don't say I never give you anything

SPOKEN a humorous expression said when you