

(To be) on tap: To be planned. EX: "Several meetings are on tap for this week."

On the back burner: Not a priority. EX: "He asked me to put the other project on the back burner for now." (He asked me not to concentrate on the other project, as it is not a priority.)

(To be) on the fence: To be undecided. EX: "He's still on the fence about whether or not to hire more developers."

On the brink (of something): On the verge (of something); About to. EX: "Their business is on the brink of bankruptcy." (Their business is about to go bankrupt.)

On the grounds that: Because. EX: "He refused to answer the question on the grounds that he would be incriminated." (He refused to answer the question because it would incriminate him.)

On the market/off the market: For sale/not for sale. EX: "We're sorry, but that property is currently off the market."

On thin ice: Similar to "on shaky ground"; in a questionable/unstable state. EX: "He was on thin ice after the off-color remarks he made during the meeting."

(To be) on top of things: To have everything under control; to be aware of what's happening. EX: "Don't worry. I'm on top of things."

(To be) on track (to do something): To be on course (to do something). EX: "He's on track to make a million dollars by the time he's 30."

(An) open and shut case: A case that's easy to judge. EX: "It wasn't as much of an open and shut case as prosecutors made it out to be."

(To be) out of the woods: To no longer have problems; to be done with the problems one had been experiencing. EX: "They're not out of the woods yet. They're still being investigated by the House Ethics Committee."

(To) outpace one's competitors: To start performing better than one's competitors; to move ahead of one's competitors. EX: "Thanks to some shrewd business sense, the company has managed to outpace most of its competitors."

(An) overhaul: A major change. EX: "We all knew that there he was going to announce a major overhaul in how we conduct business."

(To) overhaul: To change or redesign completely. EX: "The decision forced the company to overhaul its design process."



(To) pave the way (for something): To create a situation in which something becomes possible. EX: "The reforms paved the way for the growth of small business."

(To) peddle: To sell (often used in a derogatory manner). EX: "He keeps peddling his junk."

(To) phase out: To gradually stop producing, selling, etc. EX: "They plan to phase out that model by next year."

(To) pick up: to improve; to perform better than before. EX: "There are signs that the economy is picking up again."

(To) piggyback (on something): When something "piggybacks" on something else, it means that it uses (or exploits) the availability, services, etc. of something else. EX: "You don't have to make the decision yourself. The bank will make it for you by piggybacking on the successful investments of other clients."

(To) pinpoint: To determine; to identify exactly. EX: "They weren't able to pinpoint which employee had been leaking the memos."

(A) pitch: An attempt to sell (or garner interest in) something. EX: "I wasn't very impressed by his pitch. It could have been done better."

(A) pitfall: A problem (especially hidden); trouble. EX: "You've got to learn from others' mistakes in order to avoid certain pitfalls."

(To) play hardball (with someone): To deal with (someone) in a tough manner. EX: "Be careful. He's been known to play hardball during negotiations."

(A) play-it-safe approach: An approach that minimizes risk. EX: "The old CEO took a lot of risks, but the new CEO opted for a play-it-safe approach." Also used as a verb: "to play it safe".

(To) play one's cards right: To make good and/or correct decisions. EX: "If they play their cards right, they could really narrow the gap with their competitors."

(To) play out: To turn out; to develop. EX: "We'll see how the meeting plays out before we make any decisions."

(To) plow money (into something): To invest (unwisely) in something. EX: "I can't believe that people are still plowing so much money into Spanish bonds."

(To be) poised to (do something): To be set to do something. EX: "The court is poised to make a ruling that will settle the dispute."

(To) pony up: To pay money. EX: "Each employee was asked to pony up \$10 for the new refrigerator."

(To) position oneself (to do something): To create a situation where (something) is possible. EX: "These startups are positioning themselves to go public in about two years."

(A) powerhouse: Usually used in the phrase "economic powerhouse" to refer to a country that has a strong, powerful economy. EX: "China is an economic powerhouse."

(A) probe: An investigation. EX: "The government is conducting a probe into recent allegations of fraud."

(To) pound the pavement: To go out to look for money, support, or a job. EX: "He's been pounding the pavement, trying to get people to sign this petition and donate money to his cause."

(To) pull (something) off: To make something happen, usually against the odds. EX: "No one believed that he would be able to turn the market around, but he pulled it off."

(To) pull the plug (on something): To end (something); to get rid of (something). EX: "After a decade of trying to promote this inferior product, they finally pulled the plug on it last month."

(To) pull the trigger: To implement something; to set something in motion. EX: "He made it quite clear that the government was willing to pull the trigger on the new reforms."

(To) pull together: To gather; to assemble. EX: "We need to pull together all the outstanding issues and address them at next week's meeting."

(To) push: To persuade; to put pressure on someone (to do something). EX: "The CEO pushed the board to hire her."

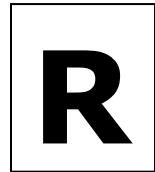
(To) put aside: To save. EX: "His financial advisor suggested that he set aside 10% of his income."

(To) push back: To delay. The opposite of "to push forward". EX: "They had to push back the release date due to a minor problem with the screen display."

(To) put in long hours: To work for many hours in a row. EX: "It's normal for employees to put in long hours right before the launch of a new product."

(To) push the envelope: To do something new, moving beyond existing limits. EX: "When it came to designing the new model, he wanted to push the envelope, but management wouldn't allow him to do this."

(To) put the heat on (someone): To put pressure on someone: EX: "The public protests put the heat on the White House to change legislation regarding gun control."



(To) rack up: To obtain; to accumulate. EX: "He managed to rack up some impressive gains in his 10 years as an investor."; "We've racked up a lot of debt over the past three years."

(To) raise a red flag: To give/issue a warning (about something). EX: "Analysts raised a red flag about the potential dangers of the current loan policy."

(To) raise eyebrows: To shock; To cause suspicion or disapproval. EX: "His aggressive style of selling has always raised eyebrows."

(To) raise the bar: To raise standards or expectations; To make something harder to do. EX: "By hammering out three deals in two weeks, he raised the bar for the other sales managers."

(To) ramp up: To increase and/or improve. EX: "We need to ramp up our fraud protection unit."

(To) rebound: To start doing well again. EX: "After early losses, the stock rebounded in late-afternoon trading."

(To) recall: To order the return of a product (usually because it's faulty). EX: "The hair dryers were recalled because it was determined that they overheated too quickly."

Red tape: Government forms and procedures; bureaucracy. EX: "You have to deal with a lot red tape when you do business in Russia."

(In a) reduced capacity: Performing fewer tasks than before. EX: "He will not be fired. He will stay on in a reduced capacity."

(To) remedy: To fix; to improve; EX: "The measures were implemented to remedy slumping sales."

(To) resonate with consumers: To be accepted and liked by consumers. EX: "The products looked good on paper, but they failed to resonate with consumers."

(To) rethink a strategy: To think of a new strategy, or redevelop an old one. EX: "With sales dipping more and more, we had to rethink our strategy."

(To) revamp (something): To improve (something). EX: "The new, revamped model did very well on the market." Revamped = improved.

(To) revise downward: To estimate something as being lower than was previously expected. EX: "They had projected this year's growth to be 4%, but they later revised that downward to 3%."

(To) revise upward: To estimate something as being higher than was previously expected. EX: "They initially thought that they would see \$2.5 million dollars in profits in the first quarter, but they later revised that upward to \$3 million."

(To) ride someone's coattails: To benefit from someone else's success. EX: "He wanted to build his reputation as a trailblazer. He didn't want to just ride his predecessors' coattails."

(To) ring up: To achieve; to accomplish; to attain. EX: "IKEA managed to ring up a fourth consecutive quarterly gain."

(To) rise to the occasion: To meet a challenge; to succeed in dealing with a tough situation. EX: "By rising to the occasion, he proved himself a valuable employee."

(To) roadblock: To block (someone) from trying to do something. EX: "The council roadblocked the merger."

Robust (adj.): Strong. EX: "This was followed by a period of robust growth."

(A) rocky road. A difficult path. EX: "The road to economic recovery will be a rocky one."

(To) roll out: To launch; to release. EX: "Dell plans to roll out the new computers by next year."

Rumor mill (n.): Referring to the person/people responsible for starting a particular rumor. EX: "The rumor mill states that he is looking to sell his company."

(A) rule of thumb: A general rule. EX: "The rule of thumb is to ask your potential employer for a slightly higher salary than you expect to receive."

(To) rule out (something): To say that something is not an option; to negate the possibility of something. EX: "The advisory board has not ruled out that more charges would be brought against him."

(To) run circles around (one's competitors): To completely outperform (one's competitors). EX: "The iPhone runs circles around its competitors."

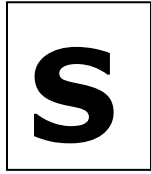
(To) run deep: To be serious, strong, well established, etc. EX: "The resentment between the two candidates runs deep."

(To) run something up the flagpole: To see if something gets approved (by management, etc.) EX: "Let me run it up the flagpole, and I'll let you know tomorrow."

(To) run the risk of: To risk. EX: "If you're too strict with your employees, you run the risk of alienating them."

(To) run through: To quickly go through. EX: "I ran through the list of applicants, and I believe that Peter would be the best man for the job."

(A) run-up: A rapid increase. EX: "A lot of people made a lot of money from last year's run-up in stock prices."



(To) scale back: To reduce. EX: "They've scaled back on hiring this year."

Scandal-plagued (adj.): Having experienced several or more scandals; Prone to experiencing scandals. EX: "The scandal-plagued company struggled to stay afloat."

(A) scapegoat: A person who takes/bears the blame for others. EX: "It was convenient for everyone involved to make him the scapegoat."

(To) secure (something): To obtain something. EX: "They secured the necessary funds to go ahead with the acquisition."

(To) see eye-to-eye: To agree; to have the same interpretation of something. EX: "I value his drive and commitment, but we don't see eye-to-eye when it comes to many business decisions."

(To) send (something) through the roof: To makes something increase considerably in value, price, etc. EX: "The news sent their stock price through the roof."

(A) seven-figure (contract, salary, etc.): A (contract, salary, etc.) of more than \$1,000,000. EX: "He was bragging about the seven-figure contract he had just landed."

Several times over: More than twice. EX: "In the past 30 years, the price of homes has doubled several times over."

(A) shake-up: A reorganization, usually a radical one. EX: "This is the biggest shake-up this company has seen in over 10 years."

(A) shoestring budget: A very limited budget. EX: "I was trying to explain to him that he couldn't run his business on a shoestring budget."

(To) shoot up: To increase (dramatically). EX: "The price of that stock shot up by 25%."

(To) shore up: To support; to prop up. EX: "The South African government was urged to take steps to shore up the economy."

(A) shot in the arm: a boost, a stimulus. "The decision to stay on course was a shot in the arm for the current CEO."

Shy of: Lower than; less than; right before. EX: "He was fired just shy of his birthday." (He was fired right before his birthday.); "He sold the stock just shy of the \$25 dollar mark." (He sold the stock for slightly less than \$25.)

Sentiment (n.): General feeling. "Consumer sentiment" would mean "the general feeling that consumers have (about something)"; "market sentiment" would mean "the general feeling/outlook on the market", etc.

(To) shrug off: To dismiss; to not view as important. EX: "The CEO shrugged off the upcoming probe into the company's activities."

(To) signal an improvement: To suggest that an improvement will occur. EX: "The numbers in the report were not high enough to signal an improvement."

(To) skyrocket: To increase by a large amount. EX: "The price of gas has skyrocketed in the past several months."

(To) slam: To criticize (strongly). EX: "Legislators slammed the plan, calling it unfair."

(A) slap on the wrist: A very light punishment; Often used in the phrase "to get off with a slap on the wrist". EX: "While other companies were penalized quite severely for their part in the scandal, the president's brother's company got off with a slap on the wrist."

(To) slip up: To make a mistake. EX: "He slipped up, and it cost him his job."

(To) slow to a crawl: To slow down considerably. To slow down to very low levels. EX: "The report found that spending had slowed to a crawl."

(A) slowdown: A period of decline, whether it be in sales, economic activity, etc. EX: "The chairman seemed like he wasn't worried about the recent slowdown in the economy."

Sluggish (adj.): Slow; not dynamic. EX: "They've had three quarters of sluggish growth."

(A) slump: A period of poor performance. EX: "Instead of improving, the slump actually deepened."

(To) slump: To perform poorly. EX: "Microsoft's stock has been slumping recently."

(A) snag (n.): A problem. EX: "He ran into quite a few snags when he was developing his website."

(To) snare: In the business world, this usually means "to receive, obtain, get, etc." EX: "They snared most of the market share."; "They always snare the top candidates."

(A) softening in output: A decrease in output. EX: "The manufacturing sector saw a softening in output."

(To) sort out: To figure out; to fix. EX: "There were a lot of problems with the distribution system, but John managed to sort them all out."

Sound (adj.): Solid; showing good judgment. EX: "The company made several sound decisions in the past year."

(To) spur growth: To increase or stimulate growth. EX: "The point was to spur growth, not stifle it."

(To) squabble: To bicker; to argue. EX: "Most in the company agreed that internal squabbling had been escalating as of late."

(A) stake: A share (of a company). EX: "He bought a stake in the company right before they went under."

(To) stake (someone's) reputation (on something): To build someone's reputation on something. EX: "They've staked their reputation on excellent customer service."

(To) stand in the way of: To block; to be a hindrance to. EX: "The old regulations were scrapped because they stood in the way of progress."

(To) stand out: To be different. EX: "Our goal is to create products that stand out."

(To) stay afloat: To not go bankrupt. EX: "It took a lot of effort to ensure that this company would stay afloat."

(To) stem losses: To minimize losses. EX: "The initiatives were implemented in hopes of stemming losses."

(To) step up (something): To increase something. EX: "They stepped up their hiring." (They started to hire more people.); "They stepped up production." To intensify EX: "They stepped up efforts to secure their network."

(To) step up to the plate: To take responsibility for doing something. EX: "With the stock market in a downward spiral, government officials were urged to step up to the plate to try to improve the situation."

Strapped (adj.) for cash: To not have a lot of cash; to be doing badly, economically speaking. EX: "Local businesses claim that they're strapped for cash and are therefore unable to hire any new employees right now."

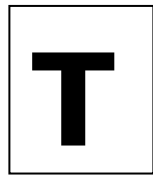
(To) strike a deal: To come to an agreement. EX: "Surprisingly, they managed to strike a deal."

Stuck in a rut: When speaking about the economy, etc. this can mean "not growing". Another way of saying this is "at a standstill". EX: "No matter what measures the government implemented, the economy remained stuck in a rut."

(To) surge: To rise rapidly. EX: "The number of foreclosures surged last month."

Swamped (adj.): Very busy. EX: "I'd help you out but I'm swamped right now."

(To) sweeten a deal: To make a deal more attractive. EX: "They wanted to sweeten the deal by offering him a big signing bonus."



(To) take a back seat to (something): When something "takes a back seat" to something else, it means it becomes (temporarily) less important than that thing. EX: "The economy is once again taking a back seat to foreign policy."

(To) take a beating: To perform very poorly (economically); To lose a lot of value (when speaking of stocks, etc.). EX: "Their stock took a beating on Monday, dropping by more than 20%."

(To) take a dive: To fall sharply. EX: "After news of the scandal came out, their stock took a dive."

(To) take a hit: To suffer a loss or a setback; To lose money. EX: "They took a hit on the sale of their house."

(To) take center stage: To be the center of attention. EX: "Greece's possible departure from the eurozone will take center stage this week."

(To) take exception to (something): To object to (something); to disagree with (something). EX: "The former CEO took exception to the company's unscrupulous business practices."

(To) take off: To do well; to be successful. EX: "Their business really took off."

(To) take possession (of something): To become the owner (of something). EX: "Since he couldn't pay his mortgage, the bank took possession of his house."

(To) take sides: To support one side in a debate, argument, etc. EX: "The government should always be neutral in these matters. They should not take sides."

(To) take steps: To take action. EX: "The government took steps to remedy the situation."

(To) talk (someone) into (something): To convince someone of something. EX: "He talked John into accepting the offer."

(To) talk up (something): To talk about the positive aspects (of something). EX: "His role was to talk up the benefits of the stimulus package."

(To) tap: To choose. To select. EX: "They tapped John to head the committee."

(To) target: To focus on. EX: "They are targeting the wrong company."

(A) temp: A temporary employee. EX: "John's not a permanent employee. He's a temp."

Tension-laced (adj.): Filled with tension; exhibiting tension. EX: "Their tension-laced exchanges didn't get to the root of the problem."

(A) thaw in the economy: A period of economic growth, usually after a tough economic period. EX: "Every thaw in the economy seems to be followed by more hard times."

(To go) through the roof: To increase enormously in value, etc. EX: "After the new phone came out, their profits went through the roof."

(To) tick up: To increase (slightly). EX: "The NASDAQ ticked up a fraction after falling for most of the day."

(To) tie up loose ends: To complete unfinished tasks. EX: "He wanted to tie up loose ends before his contract ended."

(To be) tight-lipped: To not say much or anything at all. EX: "Employees are tight-lipped about the accusations of fraud."

(A) tight spot: A difficult situation. EX: "The business had never been in such a tight spot before."

(To) tighten one's belt: To take steps to save money. EX: "They had to tighten their belt, so they implemented new cuts."

(To) tighten one's grip: To control (something) more strictly; to expand and become more serious; EX: "The Chinese government has tightened its grip on the internet."; "The bitterly cold weather has tightened its grip on much of Europe."

Time-sensitive (adj.): Something that has to be completed/done in a fairly short time. EX: "This is a time sensitive issue, so prioritize accordingly."

(The) top brass: The bosses; People responsible for running a company, etc. EX: "The top brass at Bank of America claim to have known nothing about these allegations."

Top-of-the-line (adj.): Most expensive in a given line of products. EX: "Their top-of-the-line bike goes for about \$15,000."

Top-tier (adj.): Top-level; highest-quality; similar to "top of the line". EX: "This is one of their top-tier products."

(A) toss-up: A situation where the decision between two things can go either way. EX: "When it comes to which of the two candidates is going to get hired, I'd say it's a toss-up. They're both a good fit for the position."

(To) tout: To show off; to speak (very) highly of. EX: "They touted their new line of products aimed at children."

(A) trailblazer: A person who does something first; a trendsetter. EX: "The company is considered a trailblazer in the field of mobile commerce."

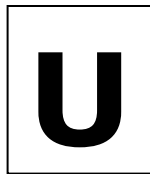
(A) train wreck: A major failure. EX: "Facebook's performance on the public market so far has been a train wreck."

True to form: As is normally the case; Following the usual pattern; EX: "True to form, they kept the merger a secret until the last minute."

(To) tumble: To fall. EX: "Consumer confidence tumbled to its worst reading in five years."

(To) turn a blind eye to (something): To pretend that one doesn't see/notice something; to ignore something. EX: "Instead of dealing with John's disruptive behavior, Steve opted to turn a blind eye to it."

(A) two way street: A situation in which both parties are obliged/required to do something. EX: "Our relationship with our vendors is a two way street."



(To) undercut: To knowingly and deliberately charge a lower price than your competitor; Also means "to undermine"; EX: "The report undercut his position, so he had to resign."

(To be) under fire: To be under attack. EX: "The president is under fire for the comments he made last week."

(To be) under way: To have started. EX: "Talks are under way to determine the course of action the government will be taking."

(An) unnamed source: A source whose name is either unknown or not disclosed. EX: "According to an unnamed source, federal authorities have already seized most of his assets."

(To) unleash: To release; to launch (a product, etc.); to unveil. EX: "They plan to unleash their new, top-of-the-line mobile phone next week."

(To) unveil: To present. EX: "Ford will unveil its new car on Friday."

(To) up (something): To increase (something). EX: "Initially, they expected to invest one million dollars in improving their infrastructure, but they upped that figure to two million dollars on Friday."

Up-and-comers: People or business who are thought to have a promising future. (Also "up-and-coming", meaning "promising") EX: "These two companies are the up-and-comers of the telecom industry."

(To be) up in arms (about something): To be angry (about something). EX: "The union representative was up in arms about the proposed layoffs."

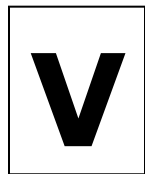
Up in the air: Unclear; uncertain. EX: "His future at this company is up in the air."

Up to date (adj.): Current, not outdated. EX: "Make sure that all the information is up-to-date before we go into the meeting."

(An) uphill battle: A difficult task to accomplish; EX: "Trying to get the government to approve the new drugs was an uphill battle."

(The) upside: The positive aspect of something. The opposite of "downside"; EX: "The upside is that you'll have an opportunity to travel a lot more."

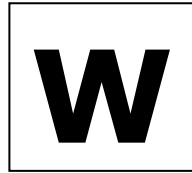
User-friendly (adj.): Easy to use/operate. EX: "The focus groups showed that the product was not as user-friendly as had previously been thought."



(A) vendor: Apart from its main meaning, "a seller of something", in the business world "vendor" also means "a company which supplies products or services to another company."; a supplier. EX: "We're going to try to sync up with another software vendor."

(To) voice one's concern (about something): To express one's concerns/reservations (about something): EX: "The vice president voiced his concern about the troop build-up in Afghanistan."

(To) vote (someone) down: To vote against someone's proposal, suggestion, etc. causing it not to be accepted or not to pass. EX: "John wanted to hire 10 new workers, but the other managers voted him down."



(A) wake up call: A warning to change one's approach, behavior, etc. EX: "The court ruling was a wake up call for Samsung."

(To) walk someone through (something): To explain something to someone (step by step). EX: "I didn't understand the new regulations at first, but my lawyers walked me through them."

(To) warm up to (something/someone): To start liking (something/someone). EX: "I didn't like him at first, but I've warmed up to him, mostly due to his hard work and dedication."

(To) wash one's hands of (something): To declare oneself not responsible (for something). EX: "He washed his hands of any wrongdoing."

(To) watch something from the sidelines: To not be involved in something personally. EX: "John didn't get involved in the conflict. He was happy to just watch it from the sidelines."

(To) weather the storm: To survive difficulties. EX: "The company went through some tough times earlier in the year, but they managed to weather the storm."

(If/when) word gets out: If/when people find out about this. EX: "When word gets out that he has been meeting with the competition, he will surely be fired."

(To) weigh in (on something): To comment; to state one's opinion (about something). EX: "The vice president weighed in on the controversy."

White-collar (adj.): Relating to office workers and other professional workers whose jobs generally do not involve manual labor or the wearing of a uniform, etc. EX: "Pretty much anyone who wears a suit and tie to work is

a white-collar worker." "White-collar crime" refers to criminal activity such as fraud or money laundering, done by bankers, stock-brokers, and other white-collar professionals.

Whopping (adj.): Remarkably high. EX: "Interest rates rose by a whopping 5%!"

Windfall (n.): A stroke of good luck, especially when it results in personal gain. Often used as an adjective in the phrase "windfall profits", which refers to unexpected profits that occur by chance, through no effort on the part of the company that benefits. EX: "The increase in revenue was largely a result of windfall profits."

(To) wing it: To improvise. EX: "Everyone said he should prepare for the meeting, but he just winged it."

(A) who's who: A collection, list, or directory of important people. EX: "The guests at the reception were a who's who of the dot-com world."

(To) wind down inventory: To sell off existing inventory. EX: "It is quite common for companies to wind down inventory before a new product is launched."

With the likes of: With (people, companies, etc.) such as. EX: "They have partnered with the likes of NBC, CBS, and the BBC."

(To) work down to the wire: To keep working until the last minute. EX: "They worked down to the wire to make sure all the glitches were cleared up before the launch."



(To) zap demand: To lower or decrease demand. EX: "The increase in price has zapped demand for the product."