

Idioms

hit the books	study	<i>I have to hit the books because I have an exam next week.</i>
hit the sack	go to sleep	<i>It's time for me to hit the sack, I'm so tired.</i>
up in the air	undecided, uncertain	<i>The date for the wedding is still up in the air.</i>
stab in the back	betray or hurt someone who trusts you	<i>Mary was stabbed in the back by her friend Max when he told lies about her.</i>
sit tight	wait patiently without doing anything	<i>The doctor told him to sit tight until she returned.</i>
on the ball	doing a good job	<i>You're on the ball because you finished your homework early!</i>
under the weather	sick	<i>I'm feeling a little under the weather, so I'm going to sleep early.</i>
blow off steam	stop being stressed or angry by doing something active	<i>I had a fight with my brother, so I went running to blow off steam.</i>
lose one's touch	forget how to do something well	<i>I used to be good at playing piano, but then I stopped playing and I lost my touch.</i>
pitch in	work together to do something	<i>There is a lot of work to do but if we all pitch in we can finish it quickly.</i>

Being Polite

If you don't mind my saying...

I hope you don't mind my saying...

Excuse me, I'd just like to say...

I couldn't help but notice...

Can / May I just say...

English speakers very often compliment strangers -- sometimes it is to start conversation, other times it is just to be nice. In this case these phrases are often used to start the compliment.

Compliment Looks / Possessions

Your **[N]** looks / is **[ADJ]**. *Your dress looks so nice.*

I (really) like / love your **[N]**. *I really love your hairstyle.*

That is a (really) **[ADJ] [N]**. *That is an awesome car.*

What a/an **[ADJ] [N]!** *What a cute dog!*

[ADJ] [N]! *Cool bag! Nice shoes!*

Compliment Ability

You are an excellent *cook / writer / singer!*

You're really good at *English / dancing!*

You really know how to *speak English / dance!*

You can really *speak English / dance!*

Accept / Take a Compliment

(Aw,) Thank you.

You're too kind.

I appreciate it / that.

* I don't think so, but thank you.

* Oh, *this/that* old thing?

* In English speaking countries, it can be considered rude to reject a compliment. However, if a compliment makes you uncomfortable, you can say "thank you" and walk away.