

B1

IDIOMS & COLLOCATIONS

≈ 27 MIN

Essential Business Idioms — *lock in the blocks*

You have met the eleven fixed blocks — now you lock them in with new situations, block by block.

An idiom is **one fixed block** — learn the whole phrase, article and preposition included, never word by word.

NAME

DATE

YOUR BUILD

1 · SORTING

2 · FILL-IN

3 · CORRECT

4 · WRITE

BRICK 1 · SORT: PROGRESS OR DELAY · APPROX. 4 MIN

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Read each sentence. Is the situation moving forward, or is it stuck? Sort the fixed phrase into the matching column.

Let's touch base before the shipment call.

The campaign is still up in the air.

The intern will get the ball rolling on onboarding.

Two rejected drafts sent us back to the drawing board.

After the workshop, everyone was on the same page.

The contractor cut corners on the wiring.

A second supplier contract is in the pipeline.

The office move is on the back burner.

Our warehouse team went the extra mile this week.

The bottom line: we lost the contract.

PROGRESS & GOOD NEWS

PROBLEMS & DELAY

BRICK 2 · FILL IN THE FIXED PHRASE · APPROX. 6 MIN

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Fill in the matching phrase from the lesson. The rest of the sentence shows you which block is meant.

01 The two teams finally reached agreement — everyone is now _____ before the rollout.

02 I don't have exact numbers yet, but I can give you _____ over the phone.

03 Two more job openings are _____ for the autumn intake.

04 After three failed drafts, the design team went _____ one more time.

05 The renovation is _____ until the new budget is approved next year.

06 Nobody has confirmed the venue yet, so the whole event is still _____ .

07 Whatever excuses we hear, _____ is that the invoice is two weeks late.

08 Before the supplier meeting, let's _____ so nobody arrives with different numbers.

YOUR BUILD

1 · SORTING

2 · FILL-IN

3 · CORRECT

4 · WRITE

BRICK 3 · FIND AND CORRECT THE MISTAKE · APPROX. 7 MIN



Each sentence hides exactly one mistake in the fixed form of a phrase. Underline it and write the whole sentence correctly.

01 Let's touch the base tomorrow morning before the client call.

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02 The volunteers can get the ball roll on the fundraiser this week.

.....

03 He gave me a ball park number for the new office lease.

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04 The rebranding project is on the back oven for now.

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05 She went an extra mile to fix the shipment error.

.....

06 The builders cut the corners to finish before the deadline.

.....

BRICK 4 · WRITE YOUR OWN SENTENCES · APPROX. 8 MIN



Write one sentence for each prompt. Use the named phrase in its fixed form.

01 A new project is starting: write a sentence with "touch base" or "get the ball rolling" for the start with your team.

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02 A client is asking about cost: write a sentence with "a ballpark figure" for a rough estimate.

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03 A supplier sends an update: write a sentence with "in the pipeline" or "on the back burner" about a delivery status.

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04 A status call is wrapping up: write a sentence with "the bottom line" that sums up the outcome.

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MINI-CHECK – CAN I DO THIS YET?

- ☐ I learn an idiom as one whole block — article and preposition included, never word by word.
- ☐ I never translate a German idiom literally into English, or an English one back into German.
- ☐ I know "cut corners" always carries blame and is never praise.
- ☐ In contracts and formal reports, I choose plain wording instead of the idiom.

Not every box ticked? Build the lesson once more and try this sheet again tomorrow.



Answer key

Check only when you have finished. Every answer comes with the **why** — the rule matters more than the result.

BRICK 1 · SORTING

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| <p>01 Progress — Let's touch base before the shipment call.
<i>Touch base signals brief contact before the next step.</i></p> <p>02 Delay — The campaign is still up in the air.
<i>Up in the air means undecided.</i></p> <p>03 Progress — The intern will get the ball rolling on onboarding.
<i>Get the ball rolling means start something.</i></p> <p>04 Delay — Two rejected drafts sent us back to the drawing board.
<i>Back to the drawing board means starting over after a failure.</i></p> <p>05 Progress — After the workshop, everyone was on the same page.
<i>On the same page means everyone shares the same understanding.</i></p> | <p>06 Delay — The contractor cut corners on the wiring.
<i>Cut corners means skipping steps to save money — always blame.</i></p> <p>07 Progress — A second supplier contract is in the pipeline.
<i>In the pipeline means in preparation, on its way.</i></p> <p>08 Delay — The office move is on the back burner.
<i>On the back burner means deliberately postponed.</i></p> <p>09 Progress — Our warehouse team went the extra mile this week.
<i>Go the extra mile means doing more than required.</i></p> <p>10 Delay — The bottom line: we lost the contract.
<i>The bottom line compresses bad news into one sentence.</i></p> |
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BRICK 2 · FILL-IN

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| <p>01 on the same page
<i>Shared understanding, no extra article.</i></p> <p>02 a ballpark figure
<i>Fixed form for a rough estimate.</i></p> <p>03 in the pipeline
<i>Already in preparation, not yet arrived.</i></p> <p>04 back to the drawing board
<i>Usually follows went after a failed attempt.</i></p> | <p>05 on the back burner
<i>Decided to be unimportant for now.</i></p> <p>06 up in the air
<i>Still open, nothing decided.</i></p> <p>07 the bottom line
<i>Compresses the key point into one sentence.</i></p> <p>08 touch base
<i>No article — brief contact before the meeting.</i></p> |
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BRICK 3 · CORRECT

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| <p>01 Let's touch base tomorrow morning before the client call.
<i>No the base — the block takes no article.</i></p> <p>02 The volunteers can get the ball rolling on the fundraiser this week.
<i>The -ing form: rolling, not roll.</i></p> <p>03 He gave me a ballpark figure for the new office lease.
<i>Fixed form: ballpark figure, not ball park number.</i></p> | <p>04 The rebranding project is on the back burner for now.
<i>The noun is burner, not oven.</i></p> <p>05 She went the extra mile to fix the shipment error.
<i>Fixed article: the, not an.</i></p> <p>06 The builders cut corners to finish before the deadline.
<i>Cut corners takes no article.</i></p> |
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BRICK 4 · WRITE

Your sentences may differ — just check the phrase stands as the correct fixed block.

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|---|---|
| <p>01 "Let's touch base tomorrow morning before the supplier call."
<i>Fits a short check-in before the start.</i></p> <p>02 "I can give you a ballpark figure by Friday, but not the exact number yet."
<i>Gives an order of magnitude, not an exact number.</i></p> | <p>03 "The replacement parts are in the pipeline and should arrive next week."
<i>Shows the delivery is on its way.</i></p> <p>04 "The bottom line is that the project will finish two weeks late."
<i>Compresses the result into one sentence.</i></p> |
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NEXT BRICKS — KEEP BUILDING FREE ONLINE

PAIR WITH THIS

Make vs Do

englisch-lehrer.com/en/lessons/make-do-collocations

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False Friends: German-English (1)

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