

CAMBRIDGE

# English Idioms in Use

60 units of  
vocabulary  
reference and  
practice

Self-study and  
classroom use

**Michael McCarthy**  
**Felicity O'Dell**



# Contents

Acknowledgements	3
Using this book	4

## Learning about idioms

- i What are idioms?
- ii Using your dictionary

## Idioms to talk about ...

- 1 Health
- 2 Happiness and sadness
- 3 Anger
- 4 Knowing and understanding
- 5 Experience and perception
- 6 Success and failure
- 7 Having problems
- 8 Dealing with problems
- 9 Power and authority
- 10 Structuring and talking about arguments
- 11 Conversational responses
- 12 Praise and criticism
- 13 Opinions on people and actions
- 14 Behaviour and attitudes
- 15 Reacting to what others say
- 16 Danger
- 17 Effort
- 18 Necessity and desirability
- 19 Probability and luck
- 20 Social status
- 21 Feelings
- 22 Human relationships
- 23 Size and position
- 24 Money
- 25 Work
- 26 Speed, distance and intensity
- 27 Communication 1: commenting on language
- 28 Communication 2: getting the message across
- 29 Life and experience: proverbs
- 30 Memory

## Idioms from the topic area of ...

- 31 Time 1: the past and the future
- 32 Time 2: clocks and frequency
- 33 The elements
- 34 Colour
- 35 Games and sport
- 36 Animals 1: describing people
- 37 Animals 2: describing situations
- 38 Weapons and war

- 39 Food
- 40 Roads
- 41 Houses and household objects
- 42 Nature
- 43 Boats and sailing
- 44 Science, technology and machines

### **Idioms using these keywords:**

- 45 Finger, thumb, hand
- 46 Foot, heel, toe
- 47 Bones, shoulder, arm, leg
- 48 Head
- 49 Face, hair, neck, chest
- 50 Eyes
- 51 Ear, lips, mouth, nose, teeth, tongue
- 52 Heart
- 53 Brain, mind, blood and guts
- 54 Back
- 55 Long
- 56 Line
- 57 Act, action, activity
- 58 Good and bad
- 59 Ground
- 60 Similes and idioms with *like*

Key 130

List of phonemic symbols 170

Index 171