

Cat Idioms List with Meanings and Examples

Idiom / Phrase	Meaning	Example Sentence
a cat in gloves catches no mice	being too careful can result in failure	You need to tell her how you really feel if you want to marry her. Remember that a cat in gloves catches no mice.
bell the cat	take on a difficult task	Politicians should bell the cat and start reducing the inflation rate.
cat and mouse	playfully deceive	The boss kept playing cat and mouse with me and never gave me the raise.
cat around	sleep with many people	His wife used to cat around while he was working hard at the office.
cat burglar	quick thief	The cat burglar took everything in the house before the cops arrived.
cat got your tongue	said when someone doesn't speak	What's wrong? Cat got your tongue? You haven't said a word since we arrived.
cat on a hot tin roof	very nervous	I felt like a cat on a hot tin roof waiting for my medical results.
cat's cradle	something overly complicated	There is a cat's cradle of rules that you must follow to board a flight these days.
cat's meow	something wonderful	Her birthday cake was the cat's meow. She ate the whole thing in less than a minute!
cat's paw	someone being exploited	Poorer citizens are usually the cat's paw of politicians. They use them only to get votes and never follow through on promised policies.
catcall	sexually suggestive comment	The construction workers were all catcalling the woman as she walked by.
catfight	a fight between two women	The catfight was brutal! The other girl scratched her face with her nails.
catnap	a short sleep	My father always takes a catnap after work.
cool cat	a hip or cool person	He was such a coot cat. He was respected by his peers and the girls all loved him.
copycat	someone who copies another	You're such a copycat! Do your own work!

curiosity killed the cat	curiosity may lead to unwanted circumstances	Don't enter that haunted house. Remember that curiosity killed the cat!
fat cat	wealthy person	Fat cats get wealthier with inflation while the poor have to pay more for groceries.
grin like a Cheshire cat	mischievously satisfied	She was grinning like a Cheshire cat after she had used her boyfriend's credit card.
let the cat out of the bag	reveal a secret	Don't let the cat out of the bag about the birthday party.
like herding cats	a difficult task	Getting everyone to take the vaccine is like herding cats.
like the cat got the cream	satisfaction with some kind of achievement	After proving her innocence, she smiled at the police officer like the cat got the cream.
look what the cat dragged in	someone unwelcome has arrived	Look what the cat dragged in. We told you to stay home and talk to your therapist.
more than one way to skin a cat	more than one way to succeed	There's more than one way to skin a cat. Let's quit our jobs and start a business by the beach!
no room to swing a cat	very small place	There's no room to swing a cat in this apartment. I can almost touch the two walls with both hands.
not have a cat's chance in hell	no chance whatsoever	You don't have a cat's chance in hell of marrying her.
put the cat among pigeons	an action that causes problems	You really put the cat among pigeons when you brought up those bill payments again.
raining cats and dogs	raining heavily	It's raining cats and dogs. Remember your umbrella.
scaredy-cat	someone who is always scared	Are you really afraid of the dark? You're such a scaredy-cat!
the cat's pyjamas	the best person or thing	She's the cat's pyjamas. Everyone loves to watch her perform on the stage.
the cat's whiskers	the best person or thing	Do you think you're really the cat's whiskers? Anybody can parallel park with car sensors now.
while the cat's away, the mice will play	people will misbehave when there is no authority figure	They never do any work when the boss is out of the office. While the cat's away, the mice will play!