

# V O C A B U L A R Y

## 1

### ONE-WORD SUBSTITUTES

A single word that can replace a group of words without any change in meaning is called a one-word equivalent. One-word equivalents help to make our ideas brief and to the point. The use of such words will help the speaker or writer avoid circumlocutions, i.e., lengthy and roundabout expressions and unnecessary repetitions. They are especially useful in précis writing.

A list of one-word substitutes is given below:

archipelago:	a group of islands
atheist:	one who believes that God does not exist
anachronism:	something out of its proper time
aristocracy:	people born in the highest social class, who have special titles
bibliophile:	one who loves the study of books
cacophony:	a mixture of loud unpleasant sounds
connoisseur:	an expert on matters involving the judgement of beauty, quality or skill in art, food or music
creditor:	a person, company, etc. that somebody owes money to
demeanour:	the way somebody looks or behaves
egotist:	one who thinks and talks too much about herself or himself.
enigma:	person or thing difficult to understand
entomologist:	one who studies insects

<b>excavate:</b>	to dig in the ground to look for old buildings or objects that have been buried for a long time
<b>feminist:</b>	one who holds the view that women should have the same rights and opportunities as men
<b>idealist:</b>	one who pursues noble principles and goals
<b>indelible:</b>	impossible to forget or remove
<b>inexplicable:</b>	that which cannot be explained
<b>inexhaustible:</b>	that which cannot be finished
<b>inexpressible:</b>	something which cannot be expressed
<b>inflammable:</b>	that which catches fire easily
<b>insurmountable:</b>	that which cannot be dealt with successfully
<b>kaleidoscopic:</b>	a situation or pattern that is always changing
<b>nihilist:</b>	one who believes nothing has any value
<b>nostalgia:</b>	longing for the past
<b>obliterate:</b>	to remove completely
<b>pacifist:</b>	one who believes in peace and refuses to fight in a war
<b>pauper:</b>	a very poor person
<b>pessimist:</b>	one who always expects bad things to happen
<b>prescribe:</b>	to advise people to take a particular medicine or treatment
<b>progeny:</b>	the young of animals and humans
<b>quisling:</b>	one who helps an enemy
<b>racist:</b>	one who believes that some races are superior to others
<b>sadist:</b>	one who gets pleasure from hurting other people
<b>sanctuary:</b>	a place where birds or animals are sheltered and protected
<b>spasm:</b>	a violent involuntary muscular contraction
<b>spontaneous:</b>	doing something without being asked

socialist:	one who believes in economic equality
squeamish:	easily upset by unpleasant sights or situations
staccato:	a noise consisting of a series of short separate sounds
terrestrial:	of or existing on the earth
topography:	study of the physical features of the land
theist:	one who believes in God
unabashed:	not affected or embarrassed by people's disapproval
unanimous:	agreed on or shared by everyone in a group
undermine:	to make something gradually weaker or less effective
vacillate:	to change or fluctuate
velvety:	pleasantly smooth and soft
wiggles:	to twist your body with quick short movements
yell:	to shout loudly
zealous:	showing great energy and enthusiasm

## EXERCISES

### A. Find one word that is applicable to both the phrases in each set of items below.

- to get angry (the verb often used in passive form)  
a pleasant-smelling smoke
- a sloping surface  
a tendency towards something
- a branch of knowledge studied in a school/college  
likely to suffer from something
- not simple  
a group of similar buildings
- not likely to change  
a place where horses are kept

## 2

### IDIOMS

Idioms are phrases which derive their meanings from convention and established usage rather than from the meanings of their individual words put together. Many idioms are derived from literature, history, a particular age, society, country or culture. For example, 'armed to the teeth', which means 'heavily armed', is said to have its origin in the days when pirates sailed the seas, and 'mad as a hatter', which means 'completely mad', comes from literature.

In a dictionary, idioms are entered after the main meaning of the word. For example, 'at the crossroads' does not literally mean 'standing at the roads that cross', but to be 'at an important point in one's life or career'.

Idioms are figures of speech which enhance spoken and written language. Remember that the verbs in the idioms change according to the tense of the sentence in which the idiom is used and also according to the pronouns used in the idiom.

A list of commonly used idioms along with their meanings and usage is given below. Study them and try to use them in your speech and writing.

# CLOTHES IDIOMS

Idiom	Meaning
<p>1. cut from the same cloth</p> <p><i>Dinesh and his sister are cut from the same cloth. They both speak the truth all the time.</i></p>	<p>sharing a lot of similarities</p>
<p>2. spin a yarn</p> <p><i>It was an interesting story but we all knew he had spun a yarn.</i></p>	<p>to fabricate a story or a lie</p>
<p>3. put oneself in someone else's shoes</p> <p><i>Put yourself in the shoes of people below poverty line and then try to understand their deplorable condition.</i></p>	<p>to imagine what it would be like in someone else's situation</p>
<p>4. handle with kid gloves</p> <p><i>Please handle this box with kid gloves. It's very fragile.</i></p>	<p>treat delicately</p>
<p>5. pull up one's socks</p> <p><i>I will have to pull up my socks if I want to complete the work in time.</i></p>	<p>try harder</p>

## ANIMAL IDIOMS

Idiom	Meaning
<p>1. donkey's years</p> <p><i>The shop on the street corner has been there for donkey's years. I remember going there to buy sweets as a child.</i></p>	<p>a very long time</p>
<p>2. cat nap</p> <p><i>I had a cat nap while I waited for my sister to arrive.</i></p>	<p>a short sleep</p>
<p>3. cat's got one's tongue</p> <p><i>It looks like the cat's got your tongue, Charan. Why don't you speak up and tell me what happened?</i></p>	<p>to not speak, usually due to shyness</p>
<p>4. copycat</p> <p><i>My uncle is such a copycat. He buys the same kind of things that he sees in his neighbour's house.</i></p>	<p>a person who does the same thing as someone else</p>
<p>5. make a beeline</p> <p><i>Sharat made a beeline for the buffet as soon he entered the restaurant.</i></p>	<p>go directly and quickly for something</p>

## SPORTS IDIOMS

Idiom	Meaning
<p>1. front runner</p> <p><i>Seema is the front runner for the post of the union leader.</i></p>	<p>one of the people expected to win</p>
<p>2. on the bench</p> <p><i>The star cricketer was made to sit on the bench as he was out of form.</i></p>	<p>to remove someone from participation</p>
<p>3. blow-by-blow</p> <p><i>My friend gave me a blow-by-blow description of the movie.</i></p>	<p>great detail</p>
<p>4. call the shots</p> <p><i>It is usually the man who calls the shots. It is time that women were given a chance.</i></p>	<p>to make the decisions</p>
<p>5. down and out</p> <p><i>Anamika has been down and out ever since her ancestral property was taken over by the bank.</i></p>	<p>lacking money or prospects; penniless or destitute</p>

## MONEY IDIOMS

Idiom	Meaning
<p>1. at all costs</p> <p><i>Pradeep plans to complete the project at all costs.</i></p>	<p>at any expense of time, effort or money</p>
<p>2. to bank on</p> <p><i>I can always bank on my friends when I'm in trouble.</i></p>	<p>to depend on someone or something</p>
<p>3. bet your bottom dollar</p> <p><i>I would bet my bottom dollar that the boss will be late again today.</i></p>	<p>to bet all one has on something</p>
<p>4. break even</p> <p><i>Hemanth was able to break even only after several months of saving more than half of his salary.</i></p>	<p>to have income equal to expenses</p>
<p>5. bring home the bacon</p> <p><i>Chandana has been working hard all these years, bringing home the bacon for her family.</i></p>	<p>earn the family living</p>



## COLOUR IDIOMS

Idiom	Meaning
<p>1. black sheep</p> <p><i>That woman is the black sheep of her family because she is the only one who has not worked hard at anything.</i></p>	<p>a person who is a disgrace to a family or group</p>
<p>2. out of the blue</p> <p><i>My old friend appeared out of the blue yesterday. I hadn't seen him for ages.</i></p>	<p>sudden and unexpected</p>
<p>3. to feel blue</p> <p><i>Tarun is feeling blue these days because he has lost his job.</i></p>	<p>feel depressed or discontented</p>
<p>4. a highly coloured report</p> <p><i>This is the manager's highly coloured report on the state of things in the organisation.</i></p>	<p>a report that is exaggerated or biased</p>
<p>5. to see someone in their true colours</p> <p><i>When she made a fuss about not being included in the list of participants for the seminar, I saw her in her true colours.</i></p>	<p>to understand someone's true character</p>

## COMMON EXPRESSIONS

Phrase	Meaning
<p>1. leave no stone unturned</p> <p><i>They left no stone unturned in their search for the signed paper, but they just could not find it.</i></p>	<p>to try everything that is possible in order to accomplish something</p>
<p>2. turn over a new leaf</p> <p><i>Ever since her sister recovered she has turned over a new leaf and is no longer smoking cigarettes.</i></p>	<p>to behave in a more responsible manner</p>
<p>3. Out of the frying pan into the fire</p> <p><i>He would later think about how he had jumped out of the frying pan into the fire when he ran away from home.</i></p>	<p>said when actions or decisions result in a move from a difficult situation to one that is worse</p>
<p>4. Be between the devil and the deep blue sea</p> <p><i>He was between the devil and the deep blue sea as he had to tell the truth to his parents but knew that doing so would only upset them.</i></p>	<p>to have two choices, both equally unpleasant</p>

## EXERCISES

## PREFIXES AND SUFFIXES

**Prefixes** are groups of letters added to the beginning of words to get new words. Look at the examples below:

dis + appear = disappear  
 im + balance = imbalance  
 non + violence = nonviolence  
 un + happy = unhappy

This kind of word formation leads to changes in meaning, changes in the part of speech and is also used to indicate number. It is important to know the meaning a prefix imparts before using it to form new words. Look at the examples below. These are arranged according to the kind of change that happens to the base word:

**opposites/absence of something:** unusual, asymmetry, nonviolence

**showing reversal of action:** undo, defrost, disconnect

**time and order/rank:** pre-lunch, post-independence, ex-teacher

**degree and size:** minivan, microtransmitter, booklet, macroeconomics, hypersensitive

**attitude:** mislead, malfunction, pro-capitalism

**location:** trans-Himalayan, subway, intravenous, overcoat

**number:** monolingual, unilateral, biweekly, dioxide, triangle, polygraph, multipurpose

**change in meaning or part of speech:** bewitch, empower, enable

A **suffix** is a letter or a group of letters added at the end of words to form new words with or without a change of word class, for example, 'child' and 'childhood' (noun and noun) and 'free' and 'freedom' (adjective and noun). Look at a few more examples:

- limit + less = limitless
- environment + al = environmental
- nation + al + ity = nationality
- depend + ence = dependence
- quest + ion = question
- honest + y = honesty

Look at these examples of suffixes commonly used to form new words.

- ful: truthful, doubtful, spoonful
- ment: payment, judgement, agreement
- ess: lioness, tigress, princess
- able/-ible: remarkable, manageable, convertible
- ism: idealism, Hinduism, structuralism
- ous: victorious, ceremonious, dangerous
- ing: reading, singing, flying
- al: proposal, natural, survival

**EXERCISES**

**A. Add appropriate prefixes to the following words to form new words.**

1. form
2. regular
3. literate
4. accurate
5. operate
6. pure
7. fix
8. technic