

Using Idioms A Learner's Guide

英语惯用语 用法指南

(英汉双解)

J. B. Heaton

F. W. Noble 著

王智象 徐正虎 译

复旦大学出版社

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(With Bilingual Explanations)

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前 言

本书是以英国学者 J. B. Heaton, T. W. Noble 编写的, Prentice Hall International Ltd. 1987 年出版的《Using Idioms, A Learner's Guide》一书翻译, 注释而成。英语习惯用语是中国学生学习和运用英语的难点之一。为了帮助学生尤其是初学者能够更好地学习和运用英语惯用语, 我们翻译了本书。

本书共收有当代英语习惯用语 1,400 余条, 每一词条均配有简明的英语释义、汉语释义。每一词条至少配置一句如何使用该惯用语的例句。例句语言地道, 简洁, 实用。参考译文力求准确流畅。对于一些惯用语的出处和难以理解、难以掌握的用法以及前后搭配关系等, 则分别作了适当的注释和说明。本书按意念/功能排列, 共有意念/功能义项 138 个, 意义相同或相近的惯用语酌情列入一组, 便于读者表达某一意念时查找和比较。本书还配有按字母顺序排列的意念/功能索引和惯用语词条索引, 便于读者查阅。

本书可供大、中学校师生, 一般英语爱好者, 广大英语自学者及翻译工作者使用。由于译注者水平有限, 错误在所难免, 敬请读者惠予指正。

译注者

1991 年 12 月于上海外国语学院

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(325)

1. ABILITY 能力

ability ability

1.1 on the ball

able to do one's job well, very efficient, alert

能干;效率高的;机灵的

The new clerk is really on the ball. He's already improved the filing system in the office.

新来的办事员真能干,他已经改进了办公室文件归档的方法。

1.2 be / get on top of something

be able to control or deal with something difficult, etc.

能驾驭或处理难事等;通晓

This is a difficult job but I'm sure that Mr Lee is on top of it from the excellent reports I've had.

这是一件棘手的工作,但我敢肯定根据我收到的那份杰出的报告,李先生是能胜任那工作的。

1.3 get / have the hang of something / doing something

develop / have the ability to do or understand something

找到[掌握]做或懂得某事要领的能力

You'll find this car difficult to drive at first. But don't worry: you'll soon get the hang of it.

开头你会发现这辆车很难驾驶,不过别着急:你很快就会知道它的窍门的。

1.4 turn one's hand to something

(begin to)do something for which one is not trained

着手[从事]做某人没学做过的事

I'll ask Bill to repair the washing machine. He can turn his hand to almost any job in the house.

我请比尔修理这台洗衣机,他能做家里的差不多所有的事情。

1.5 get one's eye in

become skilful or develop the ability to do something after a period of

play or practice

玩弄或实践了一段时间后熟悉或提高做某事的能力

John isn't playing very well at the moment, but I'm sure he'll soon get his eye in and play as well as he usually does.

约翰此刻打得不太好,不过我敢肯定,他马上就会熟练并同往常打得一样出色。

1.6 get into one's stride

get into the swing of things / something

reach the stage where one does something very ably or well, become accustomed to doing something so that one does it well

达到做某事的最佳程度;开始习惯于做某件事

It may take Helen a long time to do the job now, but soon she'll work much faster when she has got into her stride / the swing of it.

现在海伦也许要花很长时间完成这项工作,不过一旦她习惯于这项工作时,她不久就会干得快得多。

1.7 find one's feet

reach the stage where one is able to do something on one's own

能独立行动[行事]

I was very grateful to Mr Robinson during my first week in my new job; he helped me a lot until I found my feet.

我非常感谢鲁宾逊先生:在我干新工作的第一周里,他给予我很多帮助,直至我能独立工作。

1.8 spread / stretch one's wings

put to use or try out one's own abilities

施展自己的才能,展翅

You can't do everything for your children; there comes a time when they must leave home and spread their wings.

你不能为孩子们包干一切:总有一天他们必须离家施展他们自己的才能。

1.9 come into one's own

come into a situation where one can use one's abilities, talents, etc.; be

recognised for them

使自己的才能[才干]得到应有的承认;开始充分发挥自己的才能

Once the topic of conversation turned to sport, Alan came into his own and started talking in a very interesting way.

一旦话题转向体育,艾伦便充分发挥了自己的特长,开始饶有趣味地谈开了。

1.10 give a good / excellent account of oneself

Opposite: **give a poor / disappointing account of oneself**

do something well, especially in a competition, etc.

干得好(尤指在竞争中等);大显身手

Rosemary gave a good account of herself in the tennis finals and almost won.

罗斯玛丽在网球决赛中大显身手,差一点获胜。

1.11 have it in one

have a natural ability (to do something)

有能力(做某事)

Mr Lee doesn't have it in him to be a successful businessman.

李先生不具备成为一个出色生意人的能力。

1.12 keep one's hand in

keep up one's ability to do something by continuing to practise it

不断练习使技能不荒疏

I generally spend a few hours each week painting; I like to keep my hand in.

我一般每周画数小时;我想使技能不荒疏。

1.13 put someone / something through his / her / its paces

make someone / something show what he / she / it can do (as a test of ability)

考查[检查]某人[某物]的实际本领[能力]

You can judge for yourself how clever my horse is. Just watch as I put it through its paces.

你可以自己判断我的马是何等的聪敏。只要观看一下我测试它的本领

即可。

1.14 do one's stuff

do something which one is expert at or which one can do well

显身手,表演拿手好戏

You're a good actor, so do your stuff and show everybody how well you can perform.

你是一名出色的演员,因此请显显身手吧,把你的杰作表演给大家看看吧。

1.15 would not put it / doing something past someone

consider someone is capable of doing something (often bad or unusual)

对某人可能做的事并不感到惊奇(常指坏事或不寻常的事)

"Surely Dave didn't tear the page out of this book," "I don't know. I wouldn't put it past him."

“当然,戴维没有从这本书上撕下一页。”“我不知道。我对此并不感到惊奇。”

1.16 a past-master

an expert at something

干某事的能手[老手]

Don't believe him: he's a past-master at making excuses!

别相信他:他是捏造借口的老手!

1.17 a man Friday / a girl Friday

a loyal and hard wrking assistant who can do different kinds of jobs

能干各种工作的忠实得力助手(注:《鲁滨逊漂流记》中主人公鲁滨逊某个星期五在荒岛上找到了一个野人,取名为“星期五”,后来成为他的忠实仆人。)

George is a real man Friday in my shop. He does all kinds of jobs to help me.

乔治是我的店里的一名得力助手,他帮我干各种活。

1.18 You can't teach an old dog new tricks.

It is very difficult for old people to develop new abilities, etc.

- 很难使守旧的人接受新事物,使年老守旧的人发展新能力很难

He is old, and so you can't expect him to change his ways of doing things.

You can't teach an old dog new tricks.

他年岁大了,因此你别指望他会改变做事的方法,使年老守旧的人接受新事物是很难的。

2. INABILITY 无能为力

2.1 **be / get out of one's depth**

be in a situation which is too difficult for one to deal with or understand
为……力所不及或所能理解

Alan has taken a new job with a computer company but is quite out of his depth with that kind of work.

艾伦在一家计算机公司获得了一个新职位,但是那工作远非是他力所能及的。

2.2 **be / go / pass(right)above / over one's head**

be beyond one's ability to understand

太高深而超过某人的理解力

I'm afraid that most of what Mr Green said about space-shuttle technology went over my head.

恐怕格林先生所说的有关航天飞机技术的大部分东西太深奥,我听不懂。

2.3 **cannot / will not do something to save ones life**

be completely unable to do something

完全无能为力

He couldn't repair a watch to save his life.

他根本无法修理手表。

2.4 **for the life of one**

used to emphasise(or show frustration at)one's inability to do something(used in negative statements)

6 2. INABILITY 2.5—2.8

(用于强调或表示对某事无能为力)即使要自己的命;无论如何(用于否定表述)

For the life of me, I just couldn't move the heavy sofa, no matter how hard I tried.

无论我怎么用劲,就是无法搬动那只沉重的沙发。

2.5 cannot do something for toffee

be unable to do something however hard one tries

对某事完全不胜任

You surely don't think George could sing in public, do you? He can't sing for toffee!

你肯定乔治不会在公开场合演唱,是吗?他根本不能唱!

2.6 past it

no longer able to do something(usually because one is too old, too unfit, etc.)

失去原有的技能[精力](常指由于年纪太大,太不适应等)

Poor chap, he's no longer able to play tennis—he's past it.

可怜的老兄,他再也不能打网球了——他已失去了原有的技能。

2.7 a lame duck

someone or something(e.g. a business)unable to survive without help

无能的人;无用的东西(如商号等)(指得不到帮助无法生存的人或物)

The government refused to invest any more money in a company which never made a profit and which it regarded as a lame duck.

政府拒绝向一家从来赚不到利润并被视为无法维持下去的公司再投资。

2.8 lose the hang of something / doing something

lose one's touch

lose one's skill or ability to do something

失去做某事的技能或能力

I haven't enlarged any photographs for a long time. I hope I haven't lost the hang of it.

我已很长时间没放大照片了,我希望我没有失去这一技能。

2.9 all fingers and thumbs

unable to do anything practical, i.e. by using one's hands; very clumsy
笨手笨脚, 手脚笨拙的

You're all fingers and thumbs; let me tighten the screws for you.

你笨手笨脚的; 让我来帮你旋紧螺丝吧。

3. CLEVERNESS 聪明

3.1 there are no flies on someone

someone is clever (or cunning) and cannot be deceived (sometimes used in a derogatory way)

某人很精明[狡猾], 某人不会受骗上当(有时用于贬义)

You'd better tell your neighbour all the facts. Don't try to fool him in any way: there are no flies on him.

你应该把全部实情告诉你的邻居。无论如何别试图欺骗他; 他这人精明得很。

3.2 have a head for something

have a natural ability to deal with something

很有做某事的天才

I don't like climbing mountains—I don't have a head for heights.

我不喜欢爬山——我没有爬高的本事。

3.3 have a (good) head on one's shoulders

be very clever or shrewd, often in business

很聪明伶俐; 有才能, 有见识(常指商业上)

He must have a good head on his shoulders because he's already started to solve several of the company's problems.

他一定很有才能, 因为他已经着手解决公司中的好多问题。

3.4 know all the answers / angles

be clever, knowledgeable, shrewd (sometimes used in a derogatory way)

好像什么都知道的样子; 自命为万事通(有时用于贬义)

8 4. DULLNESS, STUPIDITY 4.1

John seems to know all the answers, but I don't think he's as clever as he appears at first.

约翰似乎是个万事通,不过我认为他没有看上去的那样聪明。

3.5 not / never / rarely / seldom miss a trick

be alert and ready to take every opportunity

不[从不、极少、很少]错过机会

He's a clever salesman. He never misses a trick when dealing with customers.

他是一个精明的商人。他同顾客打交道时从不错过有利机会。

3.6 a whizz kid

a bright (young) person (who is soon highly successful in his / her job)

神童

He's a real whizz kid. He's had a lot of brilliant new ideas, and most of them have been successful.

他真是一名神童,他有许多高明的新主意,并且大多数很有成效。

3.7 have / keep one's wits about one

be alert, shrewd and not easily fooled

保持机警;精明,机敏;不易上当受骗

He's the kind of person who will try to cheat you, so keep your wits about you when you are dealing with him.

他是那种想欺骗你的人,因此你同他打交道时要保持警惕。

3.8 know a thing or two

have good judgement, be shrewd

明白事理;精明能干

She runs a large electronics factory, so she knows a thing or two about modern technology.

她经营着一家很大的电子工厂,所以她对现代技术是很精通的。

4. DULLNESS, STUPIDITY 迟钝,愚笨

4.1 slow on the uptake