

SAILING IDIOMS AND EXPRESSIONS

idiom	meaning	example
all hands on deck	everyone is needed to help	The order has to be finished by Monday so it's all hands on deck to complete it.
get off to a flying start	make a successful start	My juice bar didn't get off to a flying start, but it's gaining popularity.
go overboard	be too excessive/extreme	You've bought 16 bottles of wine for 5 people? You always go overboard.
hit a snag	an unexpected problem/issue/difficulty	We've hit a snag. The car has broken down, I don't think we'll make it tonight.
jump ship	leave an organisation and move to another	Did the CEO really jump ship or was he pushed?
learn the ropes	learn the basic principles of a particular job/task/activity	I've been learning the ropes from my dad, he's a good teacher.
on an even keel	a calm/stable/balanced condition	I've been travelling the world for 2 years. I can't wait to be back home on an even keel.
plain sailing	smooth and easy	Our relationship hasn't been plain sailing, but we love each other.
sail close to the wind	do something risky/dangerous	Bruno has been sailing too close to the wind lately. He'll be in prison before long.
sail through	easily pass/win/succeed	I sailed through to the judges' houses stage of X factor.
second wind	another burst of energy to enable you to continue	I should have a second wind once I've eaten lunch.

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shape up or ship out	start improving/behaving or leave	My husband's drinking is out of control. I told him to shape up or ship out.
show someone the ropes	teach someone how to do a particular job/task/activity	I've spent three weeks showing her the ropes but she's still useless.
take the wind out of someone's sails	make someone less confident	Lever has hit five aces in a row, he's taken the wind out of Jackson's sails.
that ship has sailed	the opportunity has passed, it's too late	That ship has sailed, I missed the deadline to submit my application.

