



BLOOMSBURY INTERNATIONAL

Did You Know?

Interesting worldwide facts for English language learners



The English language consists of approximately 25,000 idioms.

Here's one:

To Put a Sock in it

Definition: An impolite way to tell somebody to stop talking.

Origins:

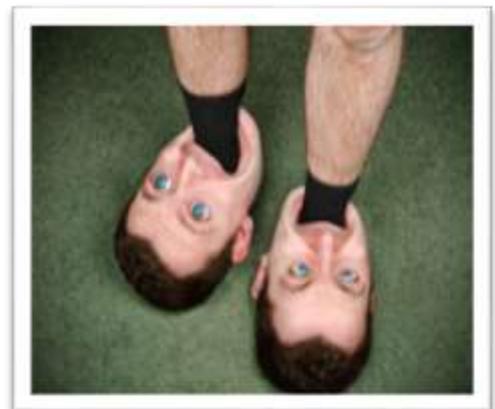
The idiom **to put a sock in it** dates back to a time when iPods and stereo systems didn't exist and when gramophones were all the rage. These old-fashioned record players played scratchy music through a horn. As gramophones lacked a volume control button, the experience was often ear-deafening. This annoyance led one very ingenious person to think of a way to reduce the blaring sound emanating from this contraption, by rolling up a pair of woolly socks into a ball and inserting it deep into the mouth of the horn to regulate the pitch. To everyone's amazement, it worked and became common practice.



The first examples of the use of this expression date back to the 1919, when gramophones had long gone, but the romantic idea of how this expression came about remained in our hearts and has survived through history.

Here are some examples of this idiom in use

1. *Hey, **put a sock in it**, will you? I'm trying to work here.*
2. *He went on and on until I finally told him to **put a sock in it**.*
3. *"I've got a date tonight with a gorgeous, wealthy, tall, slim, well-built hunk" "Ok, Ok, **put a sock in it!**"*



Interesting Facts



There are so many interesting things we don't know about the world but there are many that we do know.

So this week we thought we'd look at some interesting facts. Did you know...

- Bananas are curved because they grow towards the sun.
- Ketchup was sold in the 1830s as medicine.
- Like fingerprints, everyone's tongue print is different.
- A duck's quack doesn't echo.
- The Spanish national anthem has no words.
- Honey does not spoil. You could eat 3000 year old honey.
- When we breathe through our nose, we always inhale more air from one nostril than the other and this changes every 15 minutes.
- Written language was invented independently by the Egyptians, Sumerians, Chinese and Mayans.
- The top of the Eiffel Tower leans away from the sun, as the metal facing the sun heats up and expands, it can move as much as 7 inches.
- The reason why the wedding ring is worn on the fourth finger of your left hand is because it's the only finger that has a vein connecting directly to your heart.
- Antarctica is the only continent with no spiders.
- Dr Seuss invented the word 'nerd'.
- Expiration dates on bottled water is for the bottle and not for the water in it.
- In a typical lifetime we spend over six years dreaming.
- There's a city called Rome (Roma) in every continent.
- Over 75% of people who read this will try to lick their elbow.

- Check our [Idiom of the Week](#) every Wednesday to help broaden your knowledge of English expressions.
- Read our [bi-weekly blog](#) which includes study tips, interesting aspects of the English language, worldwide facts and much more!