THE FLATMATES
Language point:
Idioms: fingers and thumbs

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**The Flatmates – Idioms: fingers and thumbs**

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**Idioms** use language *metaphorically* rather than literally. If you have ‘green fingers’, it means you are very good at gardening and looking after flowers and plants (the metaphorical meaning) not that your fingers are the colour green (the literal meaning).

Idioms are also **fixed groups of words** so you can't change the wording of an idiom. For example, you can say 'She never lifts a finger' to mean that she's very lazy but you can't say 'She never picks up a finger'.

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<th>Idioms - fingers:</th>
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<td>After the money was stolen in the office, she <strong>pointed the finger at</strong> her colleague. She accused her colleague of stealing the money.</td>
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<td>I'll <strong>have my fingers crossed</strong> for you when you sit your exam. I wish you luck and will be thinking about you when you take your exam.</td>
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<td>He's really clever. He's got every answer right <strong>at his fingertips</strong>. He knows the answers without having to think about them or research them.</td>
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<td>You can count the friends she has <strong>on the fingers of one hand</strong>. She doesn't have many friends.</td>
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<tr>
<td>You'd better not <strong>lay a finger on</strong> him! Don't hurt him! Note: This idiom is generally only used in the <strong>negative</strong> or <strong>question</strong> form; not in the positive form.</td>
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<tr>
<td>She's <strong>got her finger in every pie</strong>. I wish she would just concentrate on her own job instead. She's over-involved in every project at work.</td>
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<tr>
<td>She works in advertising so she's really <strong>got her finger on the pulse</strong> of today's teenagers. She has to know all about the current young people's trends and fashions.</td>
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### Idioms - thumbs:

He **stuck out like a sore thumb** at the wedding because he was wearing jeans and everyone else was dressed so formally.

He was very noticeable because he was different to everyone else at the wedding.

She completely **under his thumb**. She has to do whatever he wants, it's so unfair. She is dominated by him. He's the boss in their relationship.

He's **all fingers and thumbs**. Don't give him that plate to carry. He'll drop it. He's very clumsy.

I'm really pleased the idea I put forward got **the thumbs up** from the boss. The boss liked my idea.

Don't sit there **twiddling your thumbs**, help me tidy up! Don't be so lazy.

### Vocabulary:

**I can't get a minute's peace:**

I want some quiet time but people keep interrupting me.

**hard graft:**

hard or difficult work

**a slog:**

a piece of work that is difficult, unpleasant or tiring

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