

Lesson 5

t a r g e t

as of yet
at one's fingertips
brand-new
cut in
dwell on

get a hold of
learn (something) by heart
mix up
take by surprise
take time off

□ **as of yet** = until this time; so far

As of yet, he has not been paid by the company.
The date for the final test has not been announced as of yet.

A: Are the new computers in?
B: I'm sorry, sir. They have not arrived as of yet.



□ **at one's fingertips** = easily available; at hand

I don't have that information at my fingertips right now.
Can you wait a minute?
Keep all of your important papers at your fingertips at all times.

A: Wow! Your Palm Pilot is really great!
B: Yeah. It keeps important information right at my fingertips.



❑ **brand-new** = never used; totally new

Their brand-new car was stolen yesterday.

I bought a brand-new stereo to go with my television and DVD player.

A: Your shoes look very clean.

B: Actually, they're brand-new.



❑ **cut in** = go in front of someone unfairly; interrupt someone talking

I hate it when people cut in line at the movies.

She was telling a joke but her brother cut in and told the rest of it.

A: That man just cut in front of us!

B: How rude!



❑ **dwell on** = worry about or consider for a long time

She could not help dwelling on the fact that her mother was sick.

I know you lost your wallet, but try not to dwell on it.

A: I can't stop thinking about my old girlfriend.

B: Don't dwell on her. I'm sure you will find love again.



❑ **get a hold of** = contact; reach

He couldn't get hold of his friend to tell him the plans were changed.

Please write down a phone number where we can get a hold of you.

A: Did you get a hold of Mike?

B: No. His line was busy



□ **learn (something) by heart** = memorize; study to know without thinking

She can't read music, so she learns all the songs by heart.
I had to learn the whole book by heart in elementary school.

A: How did remember all those math equations?

B: I learned them by heart.



He's my favorite!
I've learned all his
songs by heart!



□ **mix up** = confuse

I mixed up your names. Could you say that again?
The office mixed up the addresses and sent the wrong forms to the two customers.

A: You are supposed to come tomorrow, not today.

B: Sorry! I mixed up the dates.

I often mix up my friends' phone numbers.



□ **take by surprise** = surprise; come without warning

His friend's visit took him by surprise.
When he asked her to marry him, he took her completely by surprise.

A: I can't believe that your mother joined the army!

B: Yes. She took us all by surprise.

The phone call took him by surprise.



□ **take time off** = miss work for some time with permission

I have to take time off next week to go to the doctor.
Our company is very strict about taking time off.

A: Why don't we go to Paris next weekend?

B: I'm not sure if I can take time off work.



She took time off to enjoy a vacation in the sun.

Practice

Choose the best answer.

1. She has not come home _____.
I don't know where she is.
a. as of yet
b. brand-new
c. at her fingertips
2. He bought a _____ television
because the screen on his old one
was too small.
a. at his fingertips
b. as of yet
c. brand-new
3. People often _____ the words
"their," "there," and "they're" when
writing.
a. take time off
b. mix up
c. dwell on
4. I couldn't _____ anyone at the
main office. No one would answer
the phone.
a. take by surprise
b. learn by heart
c. get a hold of
5. The boys tried to _____ line for
the roller coaster.
a. mix up
b. cut in
c. dwell on
6. I admire actors because of all the
lines they have to _____.
a. learn by heart
b. take time off
c. mix up
7. She was _____ by all of the
people who came to her birthday
party.
a. got hold of
b. taken by surprise
c. cut in
8. His filing system is excellent. All of
the important information he
needs is _____.
a. brand-new
b. at his fingertips
c. as of yet
9. Some husbands _____ from
work after their wives have a baby.
a. take time off
b. mix up
c. learn by heart
10. It does not do any good to
_____ your mistakes. Forget
them and go on.
a. dwell on
b. take by surprise
c. get hold of

Dialog

Fill in the blanks.

get a hold of
mixed up

at my fingertips
take time off

learn by heart
as of yet

At the office:

Tom: Carol, has Bob come in to work yet?

Carol: Not _____. Would you like me to call him?

Tom: Yes, please. Do you know his phone number?

Carol: Yes, I keep all of the sales representatives' contact numbers
_____ here on my desk.

There are just too many to _____!

Tom: See if he is at home. I think we _____ the vacation schedule.
Both Bob and Sam asked to _____ the same week. Sam was
given the vacation, but Bob wasn't. But I don't know if Bob was
told the right information.

Carol: I'll call him as soon as I get a chance.

Tom: Thanks, Carol. Let me know if you _____ him.



Idioms in Context

Read the following story.

My boyfriend **took time off** from work one Friday to move to a new apartment. It was a lot of hard work. When I got home later that evening, I was exhausted. I wanted to give my boyfriend a call and cancel our plans for the next day.

² My boyfriend also got a **brand-new** phone number for his new apartment, but **as of yet** I had not **learned it by heart**. I usually keep all the phone numbers I need **at my fingertips** in my day planner. Unfortunately, I had not written his number down. The only way I could think of to **get a hold of** my boyfriend was to call the operator and ask for Mike William's phone number.

³ I called the number that the operator gave me, but I was **taken by surprise** when a woman answered the phone. "Hello," she said.

I asked, "Can I speak to Mike?"

The woman said, "He is taking a shower right now."

I was shocked. At first, I didn't say anything.

"Is there anything that...?" she started to ask, but I **cut in**.

"Tell him to call his girlfriend when he gets out of the shower." I hung up the phone quickly without waiting for the woman's answer. I was a bit upset. However, I tried not to **dwell on** the fact that a woman was in my boyfriend's apartment while he was in the shower. I knew Mike made friends with the neighbors when he moved in, so I assumed the woman was his neighbor. She was probably just helping him clean the place up.

⁴ An hour passed and Mike had not called me back. I called again, and a man answered the phone. "Hello," he said. The voice was strange.

⁵ All of a sudden I realized that it was the wrong number. The operator had **mixed up** my boyfriend's number with another man named Mike Williams. I said, "You're not Mike!"

⁶ The man said, "And you're not my girlfriend. I've been trying to explain that to my wife for over an hour."

