

# PROVERBS

☐ Proverbs are sayings that are so well-known that, when we use them in conversation, we often use just the first few words of the proverb and our listeners will understand the rest. *Examples:*

- **When in Rome ...**

do as Romans do

- **When the cat's away ...**

the mice will play

☐ This is probably the best way to introduce proverbs into conversation: *"Well, you know what they say ..."*

☐ Proverbs often reflect the values of a particular linguistic community, but they should be used sparingly, as you may sound very artificial if you produce them in inappropriate contexts. You also have to be word perfect when you use them: they are fixed expressions.

- . **A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.**
  - . **A change is as good as a rest.**
  - . **A friend in need is a friend indeed.**
    - . **A miss is as good as a mile.**
    - . **A new broom sweeps clean.**
  - . **A penny saved is a penny earned.**
  - . **A rolling stone gathers no moss.**
    - . **A stitch in time saves nine.**
  - . **A trouble shared is a trouble halved.**
  - . **Absence makes the heart grow fonder.**
    - . **Actions speak louder than words.**
- . **All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy.**
  - . **All that glitters is not gold.**
  - . **All's well that ends well.**
  - . **An apple a day keeps the doctor away.**
- . **An old poacher makes the best game-keeper.**

- . **Beggars can't be choosers.**
- . **Beauty is only skin deep.**
- . **Birds of a feather flock together.**
- . **Blood is thicker than water.**
  - . **Boys will be boys.**
  - . **Business is business.**
- . **Don't count your chickens before they're hatched.**
  - . **Don't make a mountain out of a molehill.**
  - . **Don't put all your eggs in one basket.**
  - . **Don't put the cart before the horse.**
    - . **Easy comes, easy goes.**
    - . **Enough is as good as a feast.**
    - . **Every cloud has a silver lining.**
    - . **Every picture tells a story.**
    - . **Fine words butter no parsnips.**
      - . **First come, first served.**
    - . **Give him an inch and he'll take a mile.**
    - . **Good fences make good neighbours.**
      - . **He who hesitates is lost.**
      - . **He who laughs last laughs longest.**
      - . **He who sleeps forgets his hunger.**
    - . **Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned.**
      - . **His bark is worse than his bite.**
  - . **If a thing is worth doing, it is worth doing well.**
  - . **If at first you don't succeed try, try and try again**
    - . **If the cap fits, wear it.**

- . If you're not part of the solution, you're part of the problem.
  - . If you want a thing done properly do it yourself.
    - . It never rains but it pours.
  - . It's an ill wind that blows nobody any good.
    - . It's easy to be wise after the event.
    - . It's no use crying over spilt milk.
  - . It's the last straw that breaks the camel's back.
    - . It takes all sorts to make a world.
- . Laugh and the world laughs with you, weep and you weep alone
  - . Look before you leap.
  - . Make hay while the sun shines.
  - . Many hands make light work.
    - . More haste, less speed.
    - . No news is good news.
      - . No pain, no gain.
  - . Nothing venture(d), nothing gain(ed).
    - . Once bitten, twice shy.
    - . One good turn deserves another.
  - . One man's meat is another man's poison.
  - . One picture is worth ten thousand words
    - . Opportunity makes a thief.
    - . Out of sight, out of mind.
  - . Out of the frying pan and into the fire.
    - . Paddle your own canoe.
    - . Practice makes perfect.
    - . Pride comes before a fall.

- . Rome was not built in a day.
  - . Seeing is believing.
- . Spare the rod and spoil the child.
  - . Still waters run deep.
  - . Strike while the iron is hot.
- . The early bird catches the worm.
- . The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence.
  - . The proof of the pudding is the eating.
    - . There are tricks in every trade.
  - . There's many a slip 'twixt cup and lip.
    - . There's no arguing about tastes.
  - . There are two sides to every question.
    - . Time and tides wait for no man.
    - . Truth is stranger than fiction.
    - . Too many cooks spoil the broth.
    - . Two's company, three's a crowd.
    - . Two wrongs don't make a right.
      - . Waste not, want not.
  - . Weak to perform though mighty to pretend.
    - . What can't be cured must be endured
      - . Where there's a will there's a way.
    - . You can't have your cake and eat it.
  - . You can't run with the hare and hunt with the hounds.
    - . You can't teach an old dog new tricks.
      - . Young saint, old devil.
  - . You scratch my back and I'll scratch yours.