**USEFUL AND FREQUENT IDIOMATIC EXPRESSIONS USING “*RUN”***

(1) **run** (v./trans): **operate, manage**

***Examples -***

run a company

run an economy

run a department

Sue **ran the billing department** for ten years before she retired.

They are good salesmen, but they have no idea how to **run the company**.

(2) **run** (v./intrans): **function**

***Examples -***

**My car isn’t running** very well.

**Things aren’t running** as well as we’d expected.

(3) **run into**: [[1]](#footnote-1) encounter or meet, usually unexpectedly

***Examples -***

run into a problem

run into a situation

run into some information

run into a friend

run into your boss

**Note** You can only “run into” someone you already know.

When you make someone’s acquaintance for the first time, use “meet.”

# Examples –

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| I **met** my best friend over 20 years ago. | **First-time meeting** |
| I **ran into** my best friend downtown the other day. | **Unplanned meeting** |
| I’m **meeting** my best friend for lunch tomorrow at noon. | **Planned meeting** |

(4) **run out of**: [[2]](#footnote-2) deplete, finish a supply

***Examples -***

run out of ideas

run out of solutions

run out of time

run out of money

run out of gas

run out of paper

* I had hoped to explain the proposal in more detail, but **we ran out of time**. We’ll have to provide the details at the next meeting.
* I was copying the article when the copy machine **ran out of paper**. What an inconvenience!

(5) in the short run - short-term

in the long run - long term

***Examples -***

**In the short run** my English will be good enough.

**In the long run**, however, I’ll really need to improve if I want to get where I’d like to go.

1. *“****Run into***” is a phrasal verb – an idiomatic expression. Remember to stress the preposition [particle] in a phrasal verb. The preposition or particle in *run into* is “*into.*” With *ordinary* verbs – such as *run* - stress the verb itself. For example: “He **ran** for half an hour to get some exercise.” **BUT** “He ran **into** an old friend while he was visiting L.A.” [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. “**Run *out* of**” is a phrasal verb with ***two* prepositions** [particles]. When a phrasal verb has *two* prepositions, **stress the first one**.

   Two other common *three-word* phrasal verbs are: (i) *talk out of* and (ii) *look down on*. ***Talk out of***  means to convince someone to refrain from acting, or to convince someone *not to take an action.* For example: “ I was thinking about buying a new laptop, but my friend talked me out of it. He told me I should wait because the prices would be coming down soon. I took his advice, and decided to wait a few more months until prices drop.” ***Look down on*** means to consider oneself superior. It has a very unpleasant connotation. For example: “John is an educational snob. He *looks down on* anyone who hasn’t spent many years in well-known universities.” Another example: “Mary made a lot of money in the stock market and has become a ridiculous snob. Now she *looks down on* people without a lot of money.”

   In each of the above three-word phrasal verbs, stress the *first* of the two prepositions. Stress ***out*** in the expression ***talk out of***. Stress ***down*** in the expression ***look down on***. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)