# 100 Common Chinese Idioms and Their Best Translations

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| Chinese Idiom (成语) | English Translation |
| 画蛇添足 | Gild the lily |
| 刻舟求剑 | A fool’s errand |
| 掩耳盗铃 | Bury one’s head in the sand |
| 入乡随俗 | When in Rome, do as the Romans do |
| 盲人摸象 | Can’t see the forest for the trees |
| 纸上谈兵 | All talk, no action |
| 井底之蛙 | A frog in a well |
| 学无止境 | Learning never ends |
| 三思而后行 | Look before you leap |
| 温故知新 | Review the old, learn the new |
| 一分耕耘，一分收获 | No pain, no gain |
| 功夫不负有心人 | Where there’s a will, there’s a way |
| 精益求精 | Pursuit of excellence |
| 一鸣惊人 | A dark horse |
| 厚积薄发 | Rome wasn’t built in a day |
| 持之以恒 | Stay the course |
| 百折不挠 | Fall seven times, stand up eight |
| 胸有成竹 | Have a game plan |
| 未雨绸缪 | A stitch in time saves nine |
| 日积月累 | Little strokes fell great oaks |
| 投桃报李 | You scratch my back, I’ll scratch yours |
| 画饼充饥 | All hat and no cattle |
| 爱屋及乌 | Love me, love my dog |
| 一视同仁 | No favoritism |
| 敬而远之 | Keep at arm’s length |
| 患难见真情 | A friend in need is a friend indeed |
| 将心比心 | Put yourself in someone’s shoes |
| 和睦相处 | Get along well |
| 煮鹤焚琴 | Casting pearls before swine |
| 近朱者赤，近墨者黑 | Birds of a feather flock together |
| 未雨绸缪 | Forewarned is forearmed |
| 防微杜渐 | Nip it in the bud |
| 居安思危 | Hope for the best, prepare for the worst |
| 东窗事发 | The cat is out of the bag |
| 水落石出 | The truth will out |
| 拔苗助长 | Haste makes waste |
| 亡羊补牢 | Better late than never |
| 自相矛盾 | Shoot oneself in the foot |
| 瞎子摸象 | Missing the big picture |
| 得寸进尺 | Give an inch, take a mile |
| 千钧一发 | Hanging by a thread |
| 四面楚歌 | Between a rock and a hard place |
| 火上浇油 | Add fuel to the fire |
| 山穷水尽 | Up the creek without a paddle |
| 自食其果 | Reap what you sow |
| 咄咄逼人 | Coming on too strong |
| 劳民伤财 | Throw money down the drain |
| 触目惊心 | A rude awakening |
| 孤注一掷 | All or nothing |
| 力不从心 | Bite off more than you can chew |
| 时来运转 | The tide has turned |
| 否极泰来 | Every cloud has a silver lining |
| 塞翁失马 | Every setback is an opportunity |
| 因祸得福 | Turn lemons into lemonade |
| 风水轮流转 | What goes around, comes around |
| 命中注定 | Written in the stars |
| 吉人天相 | Fortune favors the bold |
| 时不我待 | Make hay while the sun shines |
| 命运多舛 | Born under a bad sign |
| 三生有幸 | Once in a blue moon |