



Clichés to “avoid like the plague”

A cliché is a phrase or expression that has been repeated so often it has lost its significance. Since good writing is fresh and new, it is best to avoid clichés when you write. If you have heard it before, find a better way to say it!!

The Writing Tutor has started a list of clichés. If you know of a cliché that is not on this list, send it in.

**the whole nine yards
bite the bullet
in a nut shell
at long last
white as a ghost
white as a sheet
pale as a ghost
pale as a sheet
hit the nail on the head
climbed like a monkey
raining cats and dogs
no use crying over spilled milk
straight as an arrow
high as a kite
like a well-oiled machine
in-your-face
dead as a doornail
faster than the speed of light
as light as a feather
fought an uphill battle
sadder but wiser
blind as a bat
dumb as an ox
quiet as a mouse
slow as a turtle
slept like a baby
free as a bird**

**stubborn as a mule
purring like a kitten
man’s best friend (ref. to dogs)
since the dawn of time
as easy as stealing candy from a baby
as blue as the ocean (or the sky)
as green as grass
a broken record
gift of gab
last but not least
as sick as a dog
as right as rain
calm before the storm
roses are red, violets are blue...
as cute as a button
selling like hotcakes
pack rat (ref. to someone who keeps everything)
a whirlwind vacation (ref. to traveling to a lot of places in a short period of time)
knock on wood
in the heat of the moment
smart as a whip
little white lie
It was like time stood still.
Been there. Done that.**

You may notice that many of these clichés are figures of speech called similes!