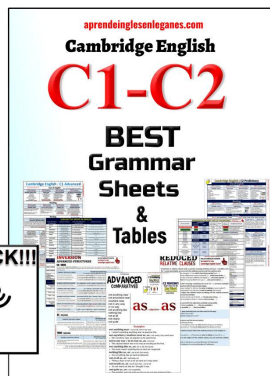


IDIOMS - BEING SURPRISED/UNPREPARED

CATCH SOMEONE



C1-C2
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CATCH/ THROW SOMEONE OFF GUARD / OFF BALANCE

to surprise someone, esp. in a way that makes the person feel confused or uncertain:

- The news caught her completely off guard – she didn't know what to say.
- The questions caught her completely off balance.
- I was caught off guard when I was asked "why should we hire you?"
- I was thrown completely off balance by Anna's reply.



CATCH SOMEONE IN THE ACT (OF DOING SOMETHING)

to find someone and interrupt them when they are doing something wrong

- He denies all guilt, even though he was caught in the act.
- He was caught in the act (of stealing my car).

CATCH SOMEONE ON THE HOP - UK

to surprise someone because you do something that they do not expect you to do

- Yesterday's developments caught the government on the hop.
- Sorry about the mess but you caught me on the hop.
- I'm afraid you've caught me on the hop - I wasn't expecting you until next week.



CATCH SOMEONE NAPPING

If someone is caught napping, something happens to that person that they are not prepared for

- Brazil caught England napping and scored two goals in the first ten minutes.
- The security services were clearly caught napping.

CATCH SOMEONE RED-HANDED

to find someone in the act of doing something illegal or wrong

- He was caught red-handed taking money from the till.
- The police caught the thief red-handed.



CATCH/TAKE SOMEONE UNAWARES

To do something suddenly and unexpectedly without any warning:

- Mbappé's shot caught the goalkeeper completely unawares.
- The government was obviously caught unawares by the criticism.

CATCH SOMEONE WITH THEIR PANTS/TROUSERS DOWN (UK)

to surprise someone in an embarrassing situation or doing something that they should not be doing.

- He's not the first politician to be caught with his pants down.
- I think we caught them with their trousers down. They're a bit confused.

