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Sir Francis Canker Photography/Moment/Getty Images byKate Woodford It may not surprise you to hear that the weather features in a lot of English idioms. In many of these, the weather words are used metaphorically, in a way that makes the meaning quite obvious. For example, a storm often features in idioms as something negative, referring to a period of trouble, and a cloud is something that spoils a situation. This post will focus on idioms related to storms, of which there are many! Starting with those negative storm idioms, we talk about the calm before the storm, meaning a quiet, peaceful period before a time of great activity or trouble: Weve got 15 kids arriving for Joes party in ten minutes. Its the calm before the storm. In UK English, we use the phrase a storm in a teacup to refer to a situation in which a lot of people express anger and shock over a matter that is not important. US English has the equivalent phrase a tempest in a teapot: In a couple of weeks, everyone will have forgotten what she said. Its a storm in a teacup! If you weather or ride (out) the storm, you survive a difficult period, without permanent damage, often to your reputation: The minister appears to have ridden out the storm. I suspect the government will weather the storm. The phrase any port in a storm means that when you are in a very difficult situation, you will accept anything that seems helpful or attractive, even if it is not ideal: In many ways, they werent the perfect partners for us, but any port in a storm. I guess. The slightly strange phrase perfect storm refers to a very bad situation caused by lots of bad things happening at the same time: It was the perfect storm a fire in the cafe, staffing problems and then the pandemic. There was no way the business could survive. Not all storm idioms are negative, however. If you do something up a storm, you do it with great energy and skill: Alex is cooking up a storm in the kitchen. Meanwhile, if someone takes something or someone by storm, they are suddenly extremely successful in a particular place or with a group of people: In 2019, she took the critics by storm with her debut album. Of course, we cant talk about storm idioms without mentioning thunder and lightning. In UK English, if someone has a face like thunder, they look extremely angry: She walked into the office this morning with a face like thunder. To steal someones thunder is to do what someone else was planning to do before they do it, unfairly taking the attention or praise away from them: Ill let Rachel tell you her news. I dont want to steal her thunder. Meanwhile, if someone does something like greased lightning, they do it extremely quickly: I told Jim she was coming, and he was out of the house like greased lightning! Ill leave you with a saying. Lightning never strikes twice means it is unlikely that something bad or strange will happen twice to the same person or in the same place. Part 2 of this post will look at idioms with the weather words cloud and sun, amongst other words. Idiom:cook up a stormTo enthusiastically and energetically cook a large amount of foodNotes:This idiom often used to describe someone who is a really good cook and can make a big and delicious meal. It can also be used to talk about someone who can create a big impact or achieve great results in a particular situation. So, "cook up a storm" means cooking a lot of food with skill and passion, or creating a big impact or result. Example sentencesMy husband'scooking up a stormagain. Although I love it when he cooks, he makes a complete mess of the kitchen.I hope you'll join us for the barbecue this weekend. My colleagues and I plan tocook up a storm.I'm exhausted aftercooking up a stormall week for my relatives who were in town.I tried to impress my friends by cooking up a storm, but the fire alarm was the loudest applause I received. Maria cooked up a storm for her family's dinner party and everyone loved her delicious dishes. In the restaurant kitchen, the cook masterfully cooked up a storm, preparing multiple orders at once. My mom can cook up a storm in the kitchen, and her meals are always amazing.My brother thinks he can cook up a storm, but his specialty is burning water. John decided to cook up a storm for his friends but it just became a big mess and they went out to a restaurant instead.Our daughter cooked up a storm during an amateur cooking competition and impressed the judges with her culinary skills.My dog loves it when I cook up a storm because he can always find food scraps on the floor to eat.Our caterer cooked up a storm for our wedding reception, serving a variety of mouthwatering dishes. Would you like her phone number?After watching a cooking show, Lisa was inspired to go to the kitchen and cook up a storm of her own.My grandmother used to always cook up a storm during the holidays, preparing traditional family recipes. I miss her so much.My dad's going to cook up a storm on thegrill tonight. Do you want to come over tonight for some delicious burgers and sausages?The chef's creativity was on full display as he cooked up a storm, incorporating unique flavors and presentation in his dishes.The celebrity chef visited a local school and taught the students how to cook up a storm with simple and healthy recipes.Whenever I attempt to cook up a storm, my kitchen ends up looking like a tornado hit it.Synonymswhip up a stormprepare a lavish spread Download your free illustrated idioms eBook!Want to expand your idiom knowledge even further? Download our free eBook, '25 Illustrated Idioms,' to learn more useful expressions with fun visuals that make understanding idioms a breeze. Sign up now to get your free copy! You might like these idioms More idioms will be added in the future so check back frequently or sign-up for my free newsletter to learn about new updates to my website.Home Pageldioms ListIdiom: Cook up a storm The phrase cook up a storm refers to the act of preparing food, while a storm suggests a large quantity or intensity. When combined, they create an image of someone who is cooking passionately and energetically, producing a vast amount of mouth-watering dishes that can satisfy even the most voracious appetite.The OriginThe origin of this idiom is unclear, but it has been in use for many years. Some speculate that it may have originated from sailors slang as they cooked meals during rough weather conditions at sea. Others believe it may have come from the idea of creating a culinary masterpiece through intense effort and creativity.UsageCook up a storm is commonly used in informal settings among friends and family members when discussing cooking experiences or plans for meal preparation. It can also be used figuratively to describe any situation where someone creates something impressive with great energy and passion.Example:Im going to cook up a storm for our dinner party tonight!Origins and Historical Context of the Idiom cook up a stormThe phrase cook up a storm is an idiom that has been used in the English language for many years. Its origins can be traced back to ancient times when cooking was considered an art form and chefs were highly respected members of society.Throughout history, cooking has played an important role in human culture. From ancient civilizations to modern times, people have always enjoyed preparing and sharing meals with others. The phrase cook up a storm reflects this long-standing tradition of culinary excellence.In its earliest usage, the term referred to the ability of skilled cooks to create delicious dishes using only basic ingredients. Over time, it came to represent not just culinary skill but also creativity and innovation in the kitchen.Today, cook up a storm is used more broadly to describe any situation where someone is able to produce something impressive or unexpected with relative ease. It remains a popular idiom among foodies and home cooks alike, reflecting our ongoing fascination with all things culinary.Usage and Variations of the Idiom cook up a stormWhen it comes to idioms, there are often variations in their usage that can add nuance or emphasize different aspects of the original meaning. The idiom cook up a storm is no exception, with several variations that can be used depending on the context and desired effect.One common variation is whip up a storm, which has a similar meaning but emphasizes speed and urgency. Another variation is brew up a storm, which is often used in reference to making coffee or tea, but can also refer to cooking in general.In addition to these variations, there are also regional differences in how the idiom is used. For example, in British English, its more common to say cook like mad instead of cook up a storm. Similarly, in Australian English, the phrase cook up a feast may be used instead.VariationMeaningWhip up a stormTo make coffee or tea (or cook) with great intensityCook like madTo cook very fast and furiously (British English)Cook up a feastTo cook a large and elaborate meal (Australian English)Synonyms, Antonyms, and Cultural Insights for the Idiom cook up a stormWhen it comes to cooking, there are many different ways to express the idea of creating something delicious. Some synonyms for cook up a storm include whip up, prepare with gusto, and create a feast. On the other hand, some antonyms might include phrases like half-baked or burnt to a crisp.Cultural insights can also provide context for understanding this idiom. In many cultures around the world, food is an important part of social gatherings and celebrations. Cooking together can be seen as a way of bonding with friends and family members. Additionally, certain dishes may hold special significance in different regions or religions.Understanding these nuances can help us better appreciate the meaning behind idioms like cook up a storm. By exploring synonyms, antonyms, and cultural insights related to cooking, we can gain deeper insight into how language reflects our shared experiences around food and community.Practical Exercises for the Idiom cook up a stormIn order to fully understand and use the idiom cook up a storm, it is important to practice using it in different contexts. Here are some practical exercises that can help you become more comfortable with this expression.Find a partner and engage in a conversation where you both use the idiom cook up a storm. Try to come up with different scenarios where this expression could be used, such as talking about cooking, planning an event or discussing someones creativity.Example:Person A: Wow, this meal is amazing! Did you cook all of this yourself?Person B: Yes, I cooked up a storm in the kitchen last night!Exercise 2: Writing PracticeWrite short paragraphs or stories using the idiom cook up a storm. Use your imagination and try to create interesting scenarios where this expression would fit naturally. You can also write about personal experiences related to cooking or organizing events.Example>Last weekend, Sarah decided to host a dinner party for her friends. She spent hours preparing delicious dishes and decorating her apartment. When her guests arrived, they were amazed by how beautiful everything looked. As they sat down to eat, Sarah smiled knowing that she had truly cooked up a storm.Make sure you understand what each word means before trying to use them together.Try using synonyms like whip up or create something amazing instead of always saying cook up a storm.If youre unsure if youre using the phrase correctly, ask someone who speaks English fluently for feedback.With these exercises and tips in mind, youll soon be able to confidently use the idiomatic expression cook up a storm in your everyday conversations and writing.Common Mistakes to Avoid When Using the Idiom cook up a stormWhen using idioms, it is important to understand their meaning and usage. The idiom cook up a storm is commonly used to describe someone who cooks exceptionally well or prepares a large amount of food. However, there are some common mistakes that people make when using this idiom.One mistake is using the idiom in the wrong context. For example, saying I cooked up a storm at work today would not be appropriate as it implies cooking food rather than working hard. Another mistake is overusing the idiom, which can make it lose its impact and become clich.Its also important to note that while the idiom implies cooking well, it does not necessarily mean cooking healthy food. Therefore, using this phrase in relation to unhealthy or excessive eating habits could be seen as insensitive or inappropriate.Lastly, when using idioms in general conversation or writing, its important to consider your audience and whether they will understand the meaning behind them. Not everyone may be familiar with certain idioms and misusing them can lead to confusion or misunderstandings. Audio (General Australian): cook up a storm (third-person singular simple present cooks up a storm, simple past and past participle cooked up a storm)(informal) To do a large amount of cooking at once; to prepare a great deal of cooked food.1997, Susan Merrell, The Accidental Bond:When I started to lose weight, she started cooking up a storm.2005, Sondra Gorney, Brother, Can You Spare a Dime?: The Life of Composer Jay Gorney, ISBN:Karen and Dan luxuriated in the outdoors, and Carrie, too, enjoyed being in a house small as it was and cooking up a storm for us.To cause a storm (metaphorical phenomenon).1996, B. J. Hoff, Storm at Daybreak, ISBN, page 168:"Sounds like it's cooking up a storm outside." Jennifer nodded.2004, Jack Fritscher, Anton Szandor La Vey, Popular Witchcraft: Straight from the Witch's Mouth, ISBN, page 101:In the time of the Armada the British witches got together and cooked up a storm. They did it again when Hitler was on the way.2012, D. J. MacHale, Pendragon Books 6-10, ISBN: I briefly wondered if Saint Dane could possibly cook up a storm, but decided that as powerful as this guy was, he did have his limits. I didn't think he could change the weather.(figurative) To create a stormy situation; agitate or enrage.2009, John Cowan, Hawk Rising: Soaring on the Wings of Desire, ISBN, page 11:Given this information, my imagination was cooking up a storm of other disrupting possibilities. I slept badly and woke up sick to my stomach.2012, Demian Allan, The Astrological Dynamics of the Universe, ISBN, page 42:Air and water can cook up a storm if left too much to their own devices.2013, Jessica Thompson, Three Little Words: They mean so much, ISBN:Love and fear were now dehumanised products, trapped beneath his skin but cooking up a storm inside.2014, Curt Soul, Tep - The Journey Begins, ISBN:It was clear that Destiny's kindness to Tep, was cooking up a storm of jealousy and anger inside Sou.2014, Caitln Matthews, The Complete Lenormand Oracle Handbook, ISBN:Domestic disputes are common with this card, as are petty arguments, aggravations, or things spoken in anger. Rod is largely inflammatory in effect and cooks up a storm over time, like when a person finally snaps after repeated criticism.2015, Kate Bruce, Igniting the Heart: Preaching and Imagination, ISBN, page 188:Have we the wisdom to pray for a storm and for the faith to ride it out with Christ? Perhaps we lack courage - but it's worth remembering that a calm life can be boring, dull, predictable and empty, and storms can be exciting, wild, energizing, invigorating and transforming. Jesus cook up a storm and lead us on.(idiomatic) To make a big fuss, generate a lot of unnecessary talk or activity; make a scene.1986, Africa Special Report, Bulletin of the Institute of African American Relations, page 51:Iranians cook up a storm in Harare: Iran's President Ali Khamenei, on the final leg of a six-nation tour in mid- January, became embroiled in what the Zimbabwe Herald termed an "unprecedented diplomatic incident" when he refused to attend a banquet held in his honor by Prime Minister Robert Mugabe.2001, The Postal Record - Volume 114, page 49:Well the weather is similar, the hot dang LLVs are still cooking up a storm yet we hardly get the old Hill Street Blues adage of "Let's be careful out there" and any form of liquid is noticeable[sic] by its absence.2013, Nicola Marsh, Banish, ISBN:If she was mad at me, she'd frown, stomp around a lot, cook up a storm, then talk when she'd calmed down.2015, Tim Hannigan, Brief History of Indonesia: Sultans, Spices, and Tsunamis, ISBN:The British, by this time ensconced in Batavia, cooked up a storm of manufactured outrage in response and despatched a fleet to Palembang.To make a splash; to create a spectacle.1991, Fruits of the Earth: Flowers and Fruit in Needlepoint, page 86:Kaffe is really cooking up a storm here, with polychromatic fireworks in shimmering primaries exploding and rioting all over the canvas.1991, Rapport - Volume 16, Issues 3-17, page 49:A Rogers original, Short Stop has the sax section led by Bill Perkins cooking up a storm.2017, Mila Summers, Wake Me with a Kiss, ISBN:Well, if that's the way it is, I won't ask for further details. Would you like to cook up a storm on the dance floor with me? "Cooking up a storm" is a slang term that refers to the act of creating or causing chaos, destruction, or trouble. It can also be used to describe someone who is causing a commotion or making a big fuss over something. The origins of this phrase are not entirely clear, but it may have originated from the idea of a storm brewing in a kitchen as someone prepares a meal.When someone is "cooking up a storm," they are often doing something that is causing a lot of excitement or controversy. This could be anything from starting a fight to causing a riot. It can also refer to someone who is causing a lot of drama or gossip by spreading rumors or stirring up trouble.The term is often used in a negative context and can be considered offensive to some people. It implies that the person in question is causing harm or damage, either intentionally or unintentionally. It can also be seen as a form of bullying or harassment if used to describe someone who is being targeted for their actions or behavior.In some cases, "cooking up a storm" can also refer to someone who is working hard or putting in a lot of effort to achieve a goal. This could be someone who is working long hours to finish a project or someone who is pushing themselves to the limit to achieve success.Overall, "cooking up a storm" is a term that is often associated with negativity and conflict. While it can be used in a positive context to describe hard work or dedication, it is more commonly used to describe chaos and destruction. As such, it should be used with caution and sensitivity to avoid offending others. "That politician is full of sh*t, he's always cooking up a storm to deceive people." "Those protestors are just a bunch of idiots, they're cooking up a storm for no reason." "The boss is such an *sshole, he's always cooking up a storm and making our lives miserable." "I don't give a damn about your opinion, I'm cooking up a storm in the kitchen." "Your ex-girlfriend is a b*tch, she's always cooking up a storm and causing drama." 1. To enthusiastically prepare a large quantity of food, typically during a specific period of time. A: "Mom sure has been cooking up a storm for Thanksgiving, huh?" B: "Yeah, how many side dishes are too many?" You can always tell when Logan is stressed because he starts cooking up a storm. But I am more than happy to taste-test everything he makes! I'm hosting a dinner party on Saturday, so I've been cooking up a storm. I'm exhausted!2. To become or cause to become stormy, as of the weather. Do you hear that howling wind? It's cooking up a storm outside. When I was a kid, I fully believed I could use my magic powers to cook up a storm. I wanted to take the kids to the park, but it looks to be cooking up a storm all of a sudden.3. To be a nuisance or cause a disturbance by complaining, arguing, etc. (about something). At most big box stores, if you cook up a storm about a product that didn't meet your expectations, you'll almost definitely get a refund. Sir, we have politely asked you to leaveplease don't cook up a storm. My mom cooked up a storm when the store refused to accept her return without a receipt.4. To upset or unsettle someone. If she's pacing around the house, then you know anxiety is cooking up a storm in her body. My fears are cooking up a storm, and I can't sleep. Nerves always cook up a storm right before I have to take the stage.5. To be very successful and garner a lot of public attention. The low-budget indie movie is cooking up a storm with audiences worldwide. The video game franchise was canceled after its latest entry failed to cook up a storm. Our fashion house has no future if this year's collection doesn't cook up a storm with starlets and tastemakers.See also: cook, storm, upFarlex Dictionary of Idioms. 2024 Farlex, Inc. all rights reserved.See also: Want to thank TFD for its existence? Tell a friend about us, add a link to this page, or visit the webmaster's page for free fun content. 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