

## GMAT Official Idioms

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### 1. Like vs. As

- **Like** Haydn, Schubert wrote a great deal for the stage.
- **As** did Haydn, Schubert also wrote a great deal for the stage.

The GMAT prefers “like” to compare nouns: Like noun 1, noun 2. Do not use “like” to give examples (use “such as” instead). The preposition “As” can be used to compare clauses: As (clause), (clause). Nevertheless, in the second version above, the word “also” is redundant.

### 2. Threaten to (base verb) vs. Threaten (noun)

- Tiny quantities of more than thirty rare gases **threaten to** warm the Earth's atmosphere.
- Tiny quantities of more than thirty rare gases **threaten** a warming of the Earth's atmosphere.

The idiomatic form of expression is *threaten to x*. This idiom also applies to the noun forms of this verb, e.g. *threat to X*.

### 3. Such (adjective) that (clause) vs. Enough to

- Some appetite suppressants caused **such** severe stomach disorders **that** they were banned by the Food and Drug Administration.
- Some appetite suppressants caused stomach disorders severe **enough to** have them banned by the Food and Drug Administration.

The correct idiom is “*such x that y*”, in which x describes a condition and y the result of that condition. *Enough to* suggests a condition that makes something possible, which in this case is illogical.

### 4. Dispute over vs. Dispute about

- Camus broke with Sartre in a bitter **dispute over** the nature of Stalinism.
- Camus broke with Sartre in a bitter **dispute about** the nature of Stalinism.

According to the GMAT, “*dispute about*” is less direct and idiomatic than *dispute over*.

### 5. More (adjective) than vs. So (adjective) than

- Nowhere in Prakta is the influence of modern European architecture **more apparent than** in its government buildings.
- Nowhere in Prakta is the influence of modern European architecture **so apparent than** in its government buildings.

The correct idiom is “*more (adjective) than*”. Comparative adjectives must be followed by “*than*”.

### 6. Expect to be vs. Expect that

- During the first one hundred fifty years of the existence of this republic, no one **expected** the press **to be** fair.
- During the first one hundred fifty years of the existence of this republic, no one **expected** the press **was** fair

The idiomatic form of expression is either *expected that X would be Y* or *expected X to be Y*.

### 7. Led to vs. Led + verb-ing

- The loss of revenue from declines in tourism **led** the Saudi authorities **to** grant a concession for oil exploration to Aramco.
- The loss of revenue from declines in tourism **led** the Saudi authorities' **granting** a concession for oil exploration to Aramco.

The correct idiom is “*lead to*”.

**8. Attribute to vs. Attribute to be vs. Attribute as**

- Many paintings attributed to Rembrandt may actually be the works of his students.
- Many paintings attributed to be Rembrandt's may actually be the works of his students.
- Many paintings attributed as Rembrandt's may actually be the works of his students.

The verb "attribute" requires the preposition "to".

**9. Likelihood that vs. Likelihood of vs. Likelihood for**

- The deliberate and even brutal aggression in some forms of competitive athletics increase the likelihood that imitative violence will erupt among crowds of spectators dominated by young adult males.
- The deliberate and even brutal aggression in some forms of competitive athletics increase the likelihood of imitative violence erupting among crowds of spectators dominated by young adult males.
- The deliberate and even brutal aggression in some forms of competitive athletics increase the likelihood for imitative violence to erupt among crowds of spectators dominated by young adult males.

The correct idiom is *likelihood + (that-clause)*

**10. Regard as vs. Regard to**

- Most nations regard their airspace as extending upward as high as an aircraft can fly.
- Most nations regard their airspace to extend upward as high as an aircraft can fly.

The correct idiom is "regard as", when its meaning indicates seeing, looking at, or conceiving someone of something in a particular way.

**11. Speak on condition that vs Speak on condition of**

- The officials spoke to the press on condition that they not be named in the story.
- The officials spoke to the press on condition of not being named in the story.

The structure "speak on condition that" takes the command subjunctive form: S + Base Verb.

**12. Model after vs. Model like**

- Frédéric-Auguste Bartholdi modeled the face of the Statue of Liberty after that of his mother.
- Frédéric-Auguste Bartholdi modeled the face of the Statue of Liberty like that of his mother.

The correct idiom is "model X after Y." The preposition "like" should be used compare one noun to another.

**13. Inability to vs. Inability of + verb-ing**

- The inability of the French under Napoleon to organize an adequate supply system was a major cause of the failure of their invasion of Russia.
- The inability of the French under Napoleon of organizing an adequate supply system was a major cause of the failure of their invasion of Russia.

The noun "ability/inability" requires an infinitive "to + base verb", while the noun "capability" requires "of + present participle"

**14. Looking to vs. Looking at**

- Cleveland is looking to its waterfront to improve the quality of urban life and attract new businesses.
- Cleveland is looking at its waterfront to improve the quality of urban life and attract new businesses.

The correct idiom is "look to + (noun)" when a solution is needed. "Look at" means "to watch".

**15. From X to Y vs. From X up to Y**

- Since 1982, the number of acres overseen by professional farm-management companies has grown from 48 million to 59 million.
- Since 1982, the number of acres overseen by professional farm-management companies has grown from 48 million up to 59 million.

The correct idiom is "from X to Y".

**16. Believe to be vs. believe + verb**

- Astronomers have discovered a distant supernova explosion, one that they believe to be of a type unknown to science.
- Astronomers have discovered a distant supernova explosion, one that they believe is of a type unknown to science.

The idiom is "believe x to be y".

**17. Rate for vs. Rate of**

- State officials report that soaring rates for liability insurance are forcing cutbacks in the operations.
- State officials report that soaring rates of liability insurance are forcing cutbacks in the operations.

When "rate" means "price charged," it should be followed by "for".

**18. So X that Y vs. Such X that Y**

- So abundant has capital been for commercial real estate that investors regularly scour the country for areas in which to build.
- Such has been the abundance of capital for commercial real estate that investors regularly scour the country for areas in which to build.

The construction "so (adjective)...that (clause)" correctly and clearly expresses the relationship between the abundance and the investors' response. "Such" functions to mean "of a kind" rather than to intensify abundant.

**19. Not X but Y vs. Not X but also Y**

- The inventions of Thomas Alva Edison did not spring to life in a flash of inspiration but evolved slowly from previous works.
- The inventions of Thomas Alva Edison did not spring to life in a flash of inspiration but also evolved slowly from previous works.

If there is a contrast, the correct idiomatic expression is "Not X but Y", in which X must be parallel to Y. The expression "Not X but also Y" is not idiomatic and should be "Not only X, but also Y", in which X and Y do not contrast and must also be parallel.

**20. The number of vs. The numbers of**

- The number of women employed outside the home increased by more than thirty-five percent in the past decade.
- The numbers of women employed outside the home increased by more than thirty-five percent in the past decade.

The correct idiom is "the number of" (always singular). Because a count of women employed outside the home at any given time will be expressed by a single number, the use of the plural noun "numbers of" is not idiomatic.

**21. In the coming months vs. Into the coming months**

- The economy will continue to expand in the coming months.
- The economy will continue to expand into the coming months.

The correct idiom is "in the coming months". The phrase "into the coming months" is not idiomatic.

**22. For the building of vs. In order to build**

- From 1050 to 1350, several million tons of stone were quarried in France for the building of eighty cathedrals.
- From 1050 to 1350, several million tons of stone were quarried in France in order to build eighty cathedrals.

The correct idiom in the context of the sentence above is "for the building of". The infinitive of purpose "in order to build" requires a subject who can actually "build."

**23. No less X than Y vs. No less X as Y**

- No less remarkable than the development of the radio has been the development of the Internet.
- No less remarkable as the development of the radio has been the development of the Internet.

The correct form of expression is "no less .... than." The phrases "no less ... as" is unidiomatic.

**24. Native to vs. Native of vs. Native in**

- Bufo marinus toads **are native to** South America but were introduced into Florida in the 1930's.
- Bufo marinus toads **are native in** South America but were introduced into Florida in the 1930's.
- Bufo marinus toads **are native of** South America but were introduced into Florida in the 1930's.

The phrasing “*are native to*” correctly suggests that the toad species is indigenous to, and still exists in, South America.

**25. Attempt to vs. Attempt at**

- Bufo marinus toads were introduced into Florida during the 1930's in **an attempt to** control pest in the state's vast sugarcane fields.
- Bufo marinus toads were introduced into Florida during the 1930's in an **attempt at** controlling pest in the state's vast sugarcane fields.

The noun or verb “*attempt*” should be completed by an “*infinitive*” (to + base verb)

**26. Introduce to vs. Introduce into**

- Bufo marinus toads are native to South America but were **introduced into** Florida in the 1930's.
- Bufo marinus toads are native to South America but were **introduced to** Florida in the 1930's.

Both “*introduce to*” and “*introduce into*” are grammatically correct, but they have different meanings. In the context above, “*introduced to*” Florida is unidiomatic. When we introduce something such as a plant or animal into a country or environment for the first time, we use the preposition “*into*.” We can “*introduce someone to someone*.”

**27. X Instead of Y vs. X rather than Y**

- Many doctors have elected to retire early **rather than** face the threats of lawsuits.
- Many doctors have elected to retire early **instead of** face the threats of lawsuits.

The expressions “*x rather than y*” and “*x instead of y*” require parallelism. “*Rather than*” can be followed by a verb, infinitive, gerund, or noun; “*Instead of*” can only be followed by a gerund or a noun. “*instead of face*” is unidiomatic (“*face*” is a base verb in this context).

**28. Call to vs. Call for**

- Congress is required to **call** a convention **to consider** amendments to the constitution.
- Congress is required to **call** a convention **for considering** amendments to the constitution.

The verb “*call*” requires an “*infinitive*” (to + base verb).

**29. Worry about vs. Worry over**

- The current administration is **worried about** the removal of some foreign trade barriers.
- The current administration is **worried over** the removal of some foreign trade barriers.

The idiomatic expression is “*worried about*”.

**30. Extent to vs. Extent that**

- The term “red shift” denotes the **extent to** which light from a distant galaxy has been shifted.
- The term “red shift” denotes the **extent that** light from a distant galaxy has been shifted.

The noun “*extent*” must be followed by the preposition “*to*”.

**31. Range from X to Y vs. Range from X and Y**

- William H. Johnson's paintings **range from** sensitive portraits **to** awe-inspiring views.
- William H. Johnson's paintings **range from** sensitive portraits **and** awe-inspiring views.

The correct idiom is “*range from X to Y*”.

**32. At least as (adjective) as vs. More than**

- In 1978, **at least as many as** a million women were granted child support by a court.
- In 1978, **at least as many as or more than** a million women were granted child support by a court.

The expression “*more than*” necessarily includes the sense of “*at least as many as*”, so it is redundant to use elements of both expressions to refer to the same number. Keep the first option.

**33. Require that (S + Base Verb) vs. Require that (S + Should + Base Verb)**

- The Gorton-Dodd bill **requires that a bank disclose** to its customers how long it will delay access to funds from deposited checks.
- The Gorton-Dodd bill **requires that a bank should disclose** to its customers how long it will delay access to funds from deposited checks.

The verb “require” can take either the command subjunctive form “*require that (S + Base Verb)*” or the infinitive form “*require subject to + base verb*”.

**34. Consider X Y vs. Consider X to be Y vs. Consider X as Y**

- Critics of the trend toward privately operated prisons **consider** corrections facilities an integral part of the criminal justice system.
- Critics of the trend toward privately operated prisons **consider** corrections facilities **to be** an integral part of the criminal justice system.
- Critics of the trend toward privately operated prisons **consider** corrections facilities **as** an integral part of the criminal justice system.

The preferred construction is “*consider X Y*”. The expression “*consider X to be Y*” has been a correct answer only once, but the expression “*consider X as Y*” has always been incorrect in the GMAT.

**35. Question whether vs. Question if**

- Critics of the trend toward privately operated prisons **question whether** profits should be made from incarceration.
- Critics of the trend toward privately operated prisons **question if** profits should be made from incarceration.

The correct idiomatic expression is “*question whether*”.

**36. Require (S + To + Base Verb) vs. Require (S + Verb)**

- A new bill **requires** certain employers **to** provide workers with unpaid leave.
- A new bill **requires** certain employers **provide** workers with unpaid leave.

The correct structure is “*require (S + To + Base Verb)*.”

**37. So that vs. So as to**

- Employers will be forced to provide workers with unpaid leave **so as to** care for sick or newborn children.
- Employers will be forced to provide workers with unpaid leave **so that** they can care for sick or newborn children.

The phrase “so as to” usually means “in order to” and must be followed by a “base verb”. “So that” means “in order that” and is used to introduce a “clause of purpose”. Both structures could be correct; however, in the context of the sentence above, “so as to” fails to specify that the workers will be the ones caring for the infants and children. Thus, you need “so that they” to specify that the workers will care for sick or newborn children.

**38. As an adolescent vs. While being an adolescent**

- **As an adolescent**, Frances Willard signed a pledge of abstinence.
- **While being an adolescent**, Frances Willard signed a pledge of abstinence.

The correct idiom is “*as + stage of development*”: as a child, as an adolescent, as an adult.

**39. As an instance of vs. As an instance for**

- Reverting to the distinction in Roman law, Grotius and Pufendorf treat protection **as an instance of** unequal treaties.
- Reverting to the distinction in Roman law, Grotius and Pufendorf treat protection **as an instance for** unequal treaties.

The correct structure is *“as an instance of”* and it means *“as an example of.”*

**40. Allow X to Y vs. Allow that (S + Base Verb)**

- Auditors may **allow** a questionable loan **to** remain on the books in order to maintain a bank's profits on paper.
- Auditors may **allow that** a questionable loan remain on the books in order to maintain a bank's profits on paper.

The correct idiomatic structure is *“allow X to Y.”*

**41. Either X or Y vs. Either X and Y**

- The root systems of most flowering perennials **either** become too crowded **or** spread too far outward.
- The root systems of most flowering perennials **either** become too crowded **and** spread too far outward.

The correct idiomatic structure is *“either X or Y.”*, in which X and Y must be parallel (they must start with the same type of word.)

**42. So (adjective) as to (Base Verb) vs. So (adjective) that (clause)**

- The features of the statue are **so** unrealistic **as to** constitute what one scholar calls an an "artificial face."
- The features of the statue are **so** unrealistic **that** they constitute what one scholar calls an an "artificial face."

Both structures could be correct. The idiom *“so (adjective) that (clause)”* is used to emphasize an adjective (so) and express the result of that emphasis (clause). The idiom *“so (adjective) as to (base verb)”* also uses *“so”* to emphasize an adjective and express a consequence of the emphasis with the infinitive (to + base verb).

**43. Recommend X to Y vs. Recommend X + verb-ing**

- The National Transportation Safety Board has **recommended** the use of fail-safe mechanisms on airliner cargo door latches **to** assure that the doors are properly closed.
- The National Transportation Safety Board has **recommended** the use of fail-safe mechanisms on airliner cargo door latches **assuring** that the doors are properly closed.

The correct idiom is *“recommend X to Y”* or *“recommend that (S + Base Verb).”*

**44. Prohibit from vs. Prohibit to**

- Some states have begun to enforce bans **prohibiting** landfills **from** accepting leaves, brush, and grass clippings.
- Some states have begun to enforce bans **prohibiting** landfills **to** accept leaves, brush, and grass clippings.

The correct idiom is *“prohibit X from verb-ing”*.

**45. Except for vs. Excepting for**

- **Except for** a concert performance that the composer himself staged in 1911, Scott Joplin's ragtime opera Treemonisha was not produced until 1972.
- **Excepting for** a concert performance that the composer himself staged in 1911, Scott Joplin's ragtime opera Treemonisha was not produced until 1972.

The correct idiom is *“except for.”*

**46. Research to + (base verb) vs. Research for + (verb-ing)**

- Automobile manufacturers have invested millions of dollars in **research to** develop gasoline-efficient cars.
- Automobile manufacturers have invested millions of dollars in **research for** developing gasoline-efficient cars.

When *“research”* is a noun, the correct idiom is *“research to + base verb.”*

**47. Better served by X than by Y vs. Better served by X rather than by Y**

- Religion may be **better served by** an auditorium **than** by a building actually designed for it.
- Religion may be **better served by** an auditorium **um than** by a building actually designed for it.

The idiomatic construction is *better served by X than by Y*.

**48. X is more (adjective) than Y vs. X is more (adjective) compared to Y**

- The economic bases of colleges in developing countries are often **more** fragile **than** those of most colleges in developed countries.
- The economic bases of colleges in developing countries are often **more** fragile **compared to** those of most colleges in developed countries.

The correct idiomatic expression is *“more X than Y.”* Comparative adjectives must use *“than.”*

**49. A number of vs. The number of**

- **A number of** linguists contend that all of the thousands of languages spoken by the world's five billion people can be traced back to a common root language.
- **The number of** linguists contends that all of the thousands of languages spoken by the world's five billion people can be traced back to a common root language.

Both structures are correct! The GMAT considers *“a number of...”* plural and *“the number of...”* singular.

**50. After vs. After when**

- Black support for Democrats at the state and local levels developed only **after** Harry Truman's support of civil rights legislation.
- Black support for Democrats at the state and local levels developed only **after when** Harry Truman's support of civil rights legislation.

The expression *“after when”* is unidiomatic: one word or the other can be used to establish temporal sequence, but not both together.

**51. Substitute for vs. Substitute in place of**

- Some governments **substitute** living allowances **for** the paychecks of their employees.
- Some governments **substitute** living allowances **in place of** the paychecks of their employees.

The correct idiom is *“substitute X for Y.”*

**52. Rule that vs. Rule on**

- The Supreme Court **ruled that** two states owed restitution to three tribes of Indians for the unlawful seizure of their ancestral lands.
- The Supreme Court **ruled on** the restitution that two states owed to three tribes of Indians for the unlawful seizure of their ancestral lands.

The subordinator *“that”* is needed in this context to introduce a clause that describes the Supreme Court's ruling. To *“rule on + noun”* means to give a decision or judgment about something. Usually, the GMAT prefers a *“that-clause”* to a *“prepositional phrase.”*

**53. Both X and Y vs. Both X as well as Y**

- William Lyon Mackenzie King, prime minister of Canada for over twenty years, was a mystic guided in **both** public **and** private life by omens.
- William Lyon Mackenzie King, prime minister of Canada for over twenty years, was a mystic guided in **both** public **as well as** private life by omens.

The correct idiom is *“both X and Y.”*

**54. As (adjective) as vs. So (adjective) as**

- Land values in most parts of the pinelands rose almost as fast as those outside the pinelands.
- Land values in most parts of the pinelands rose almost so fast as those outside the pinelands.}

The proper comparative form is “*as (adjective) as.*”

**55. Mistake X for Y vs. Mistake X as Y**

- A radar warning system mistook the rising of the moon for a massive Soviet missile attack.
- A radar warning system mistook the rising of the moon as a massive Soviet missile attack.

The correct idiom is “*mistake X for Y.*”

**56. Between X and Y vs. Between X with Y**

- Any apparent connection between eating highly processed foods and excelling at sports is purely coincidental.
- Any apparent connection between eating highly processed foods with excelling at sports is purely coincidental.

The idiomatic phrase is “*between x and y.*”

**57. All of which vs. Of which all**

- The student took several mock tests, all of which were very similar to the real test.
- The student took several mock tests, of which all were very similar to the real test.

The phrase “of which all” is unidiomatic; “all of which” is the correct idiom.

**58. Propose that (subject + base verb) vs. Propose + noun + infinitive**

- The commission proposed that funding for the park's development be obtained through a local bond issue.
- The commission proposed funding for the park's development to be obtained through a local bond issue.

The correct idiomatic form is “propose that (subject + base verb).”

**59. Not only X but also Y vs. Not only X and also Y**

- The interest rates are tied to the prime rate not only on most loans to small and medium-sized businesses, but also on a growing number of consumer loans.
- The interest rates are tied to the prime rate not only on most loans to small and medium-sized businesses, and also on a growing number of consumer loans.

The correct idiomatic phrase is “Not only X but also Y”, in which X must be parallel to Y (they must start with the same type of word).

**60. More X than Y vs. More X as Y**

- Two new studies indicate that many people become obese more because their bodies burn calories too slowly than because they eat too much.
- Two new studies indicate that many people become obese more because their bodies burn calories too slowly as because they eat too much.

The correct idiom is “more X than Y”. The elements of a comparison (more X than Y) should be expressed in parallel form.

**61. Help to vs. Help + noun**

- Native Americans helped to rescue many Pilgrims and pioneers from hardship.
- Native Americans helped the rescue of many Pilgrims and pioneers from hardship.

The structure “*helped the rescue of*” is wordy and unidiomatic. The correct idiom is “*help + to.*”



### 62. Think of X as Y vs. Think of X to be Y

- Consumers may not **think of** household cleaning products **as** hazardous substances.
- Consumers may not **think of** household cleaning products **to be** hazardous substances.

The correct sentence follows the idiomatic form of expression “*to think of X as Y.*”

### 63. Aim at vs. Aim to

- The company has followed a policy **aimed at** decreasing operating costs.
- The company has followed a policy **aimed to** decreasing operating costs.

In general, verbs of targeting (aimed, targeted, thrown, pinpointed) take *at* as their preposition. The correct idiom is “*aim at*”.

### 64. Credit with vs. Credit as

- Egyptians are **credited with** having pioneered embalming methods as long ago as 2650 BC.
- Egyptians are **credited as** having pioneered embalming methods as long ago as 2650 BC.

If credit(ed) is used as a verb, the idiom is “*to credit X with + verb-ing*”.

### 65. Require that X + Base Verb vs. Require that X + Verb

- Judicial rules in many states **require that** the identities of all prosecution witnesses **be** made known to defendants.
- Judicial rules in many states **require that** the identities of all prosecution witnesses **are** made known to defendants.

The subjunctive mood is used to express a wish or requirement that a certain course of action be taken. Such phrasing takes the form to wish [or] *require that x be y*, not that x should *be y* or *that x is y*.

### 66. To + Base Verb vs. For + ing

- the Breeding Bird Survey uses annual roadside counts along established routes **to monitor** changes in the populations of more than 250 bird species.
- the Breeding Bird Survey uses annual roadside counts along established routes **for monitoring** changes in the populations of more than 250 bird species.

The phrase “to monitor” is idiomatic as a statement of purpose ([in order] to monitor). The second version, “for monitoring,” is possible, but it is less idiomatic than “to monitor”.

### 67. As a result of vs. As a result from

- **As a result of** the destruction of the library at Alexandria, the largest of the ancient world, later generations lost all but the Iliad and Odyssey among Greek epics.
- **As a result from** the destruction of the library at Alexandria, the largest of the ancient world, later generations lost all but the Iliad and Odyssey among Greek epics.

The correct idiom is “As a result of.”

### 68. In danger of + ing vs. In danger to + base verb

- Health officials estimate that 35 million Africans are **in danger of contracting** trypanosomiasis.
- Health officials estimate that 35 million Africans are **in danger to contract** trypanosomiasis.

The correct idiom is “in danger of + ing.”

**69. As much as vs. So much as**

- An inventory equal to 90 days sales is **as much as** even the strongest businesses carry.
- An inventory equal to 90 days sales is **so much as** even the strongest businesses carry.

The sentence depends on the correct use of the idiom “*as much as*” to indicate comparison: they like x as much as y. “*Not so much as*” is another idiom used only in the negative: not so much as a whisper was heard from the crowd.

**70. X times as many as vs. X times as many than**

- In one of the bloodiest battles of the Civil War, **four times as many** Americans were killed **as** would later be killed on the beaches of Normandy during D-Day.
- In one of the bloodiest battles of the Civil War, **four times as many** Americans were killed **than** would later be killed on the beaches of Normandy during D-Day.

The correct idiom is “*x times as many as.*”

**71. Require X + to Y vs. Require X + verb**

- The law **requires** anyone who buys more than 5 percent of a company’s stock **to make** a public disclosure of the purchase.
- The law **requires** anyone who buys more than 5 percent of a company’s stock **make** a public disclosure of the purchase.

The verb require may be followed by an object (it required more time), a relative pronoun (the summons required that he appear), or an infinitive (I am required to go). This sentence uses the idiomatic construction “*require x to do y.*”

**72. Known to vs. Known as**

- There are 12 satellites now **known to** orbit Uranus.
- There are 12 satellites now **known as** orbiting Uranus.

If something or someone is known to be or do something, people know that it is true or happens, or that someone is or does something, the correct idiom is “*known to + base verb*”. If someone or something is known as something, the expression is “*known as + noun*”: he is known as a great businessman.

**73. Order that X + Base Verb vs. Order that X + Must + Base Verb**

- The Ministry of the Environment **ordered that** the levels of bacteria in the lake **be** measured.
- The Ministry of the Environment **ordered that** the levels of bacteria in the lake **must be** measured.

Orders can be expressed using either of two idioms: “*order x + infinitive*” or “*order that x + base verb.*”

**74. Just as (S+V), so (S+V)**

- **Just as** reading Samuel Pepys’s diary gives a student a sense of the seventeenth century, **so** listening to Jane Freed’s guileless child narrator takes the operagoer inside turn-of-the-century Vienna.
- **Just as** reading Samuel Pepys’s diary gives a student a sense of the seventeenth century, **so** the guileless child narrator of Jane Freed takes the operagoer inside turn-of-the-century Vienna.

This sentence is based on the comparative construction “*Just as (S+V), so (S+V),*” in which both clauses must be grammatically parallel elements.

**75. Distinguish between X and Y vs. Distinguish X from Y**

- The psychiatrist **distinguished between** mood swings **and** genuine manic-depressive psychosis.
- The psychiatrist **distinguished** mood swings **from** genuine manic-depressive psychosis.

In order to contrast two problems, the correct idiom is “*to distinguish between X and Y.*”

**76. View X as Y vs. View X to be Y**

- Seventeenth-century colonists **viewed** marriage **as** a property arrangement rather than an emotional bond.
- Seventeenth-century colonists **viewed** marriage **to be** a property arrangement rather than an emotional bond.

The idiomatic construction is *view x as y: viewed (x) marriage as (y) a property arrangement.*

**77. Be determined by vs. Be determined from**

- The direction in which the Earth spins **was determined by** collisions with celestial bodies in the early solar system.
- The direction in which the Earth spins **was determined from** collisions with celestial bodies in the early solar system.

The correct idiom is *determined by*, because it is used to express cause; *determined from* is incorrect in this context.

**78. So that vs. So as to**

- King Henry VIII sought to have his marriage to Queen Catherine annulled **so that** he could marry Anne Boleyn.
- King Henry VIII sought to have his marriage to Queen Catherine annulled **so as to** marry Anne Boleyn.

This sentence should use the construction *x happened so that y could happen*; *so* introduces a clause of purpose, explaining the reason for the action in the main clause. *So as to marry* is not idiomatically correct because it does not identify who will marry.

**79. Targeted at vs. Targeted to**

- Every antibody **is targeted at** an invading microbe or foreign substance.
- Every antibody **is targeted to** an invading microbe or foreign substance.

The idiomatic form to be used here is *targeted ... at* rather than *targeted ... to*.

**80. So (adverb) that (clause) vs. Adverb + enough + that (clause)**

- Sloths move **so infrequently that** two species of algae grow on its coat.
- Sloths move **infrequently enough that** two species of algae grow on its coat.

The phrase *move infrequently enough that* is not idiomatic. The correct construction is *so (adverb) that (clause)*.

**81. X is more than Y vs. X was more as Y**

- No wave of migration has been **more** concentrated **than** the one that brought 12 million immigrants onto American shores in little more than three decades.
- No wave of migration has been **more** concentrated **as** the one that brought 12 million immigrants onto American shores in little more than three decades.

This sentence depends on the comparative structure *x is more than y*. The structure *x is more as y* is not idiomatic.

**82. Not X but Y vs. Not X, rather Y**

- Many economists regard the large increase in credit card borrowing in March **not** as a sign that households needed money, **rather** as a sign of confidence that borrowers could handle new debt.
- Many economists consider the large increase in credit card borrowing in March **not** a sign that households needed money, **rather** a sign of confidence that borrowers could handle new debt.

The idiomatic choice of words for this construction should involve two clauses introduced by *not X but Y*.

**83. In contrast to vs. As contrasted with**

- **In contrast to** the honeybee, a wasp can sting repeatedly without dying.
- **As contrasted with** the honeybee, a wasp can sting repeatedly without dying.

The intent of the sentence is to contrast two nouns: the honeybee and the wasp. Correct idioms for such a contrast include *in contrast with x, y*; *in contrast to x, y*; and *unlike x, y*. In all these idioms, *x* and *y* must be grammatically and logically parallel. *As contrasted with* is not a correct idiom.

**84. Estimate to be vs. Estimate at**

- Fragments of a dinosaur jawbone unearthed in Argentina was **estimated to be** 70 to 75 million years old.
- Fragments of a dinosaur jawbone unearthed in Argentina was **estimated at** 70 to 75 million years old.

The verb *estimated* should be followed by the infinitive *to be*, not the preposition *at*—unless the writer intends to indicate a location at which someone made the estimate.

**85. The same to x as to y vs. The same to x as y**

- Galileo thought that natural phenomena would appear **the same to** someone on the deck of a ship moving smoothly and uniformly through the water **as** a person standing on land.
- Galileo thought that natural phenomena would appear **the same to** someone on the deck of a ship moving smoothly and uniformly through the water **as to** a person standing on land.

The correct idiom is *the same to x (someone) as to y (a person)*. The two parts of the comparison must be parallel.

**86. Depend on whether vs. Depend on if**

- The gym’s survival **depends on whether** it can broaden its membership and renew its equipment before the summer.
- The gym’s survival **depends on if** it can broaden its membership and renew its equipment before the summer.

This sentence requires the correct use of an idiom: *Depends on* should be followed by *whether*, not *if*, because this is an interrogative clause following a preposition.

**87. Rivalry between X and Y vs. Rivalry between X with Y**

- The plot of *The Bostonians* centers on the rivalry **between** Olive Chancellor **and** Basil Ransom.
- The plot of *The Bostonians* centers on the rivalry **between** Olive Chancellor **and** Basil Ransom.

The correct idiom is the *rivalry between x and y* or the construction *the rivals x and y*. The construction *rivalry between X with Y* is incorrect.

**88. Expend on vs. Expend for**

- In ancient Thailand, much of the local artisans’ creative energy was **expended on** the creation of Buddha images.
- In ancient Thailand, much of the local artisans’ creative energy was **expended for** the creation of Buddha images.

The verb *expended* should be followed by the preposition *on*, not *for*.

**89. Model after vs. Model for**

- Henry Ford **modeled** the automotive conveyor-belt system **after** an assembly-line technique introduced by Ransom Olds.
- Henry Ford **modeled** the automotive conveyor-belt system **for** an assembly-line technique introduced by Ransom Olds.

The correct idiom is *model X after Y*.

**90. Authority on vs. Authority about**

- Elizabeth Barber is an **authority on** textiles in ancient societies.
- Elizabeth Barber is an **authority about** textiles in ancient societies.

The noun *authority* takes the preposition *on*, not *about*.

**91. X is to y what a is to b vs. X is to y just as a is to b**

- Adam Smith’s two major books **are to** democratic capitalism **what** Marx’s Das Kapital **is to** socialism.
- Adam Smith’s two major books **are to** democratic capitalism **just as** Marx’s Das Kapital **is to** socialism.

The comparison between Smith’s books and Marx’s book is expressed as a ratio, so the correct idiomatic expression is *x is to y what a is to b*.

**92. Restriction on vs. Restriction for**

- Some newly elected congressmen from rural states will try to establish tighter **restrictions on** the amount of grain farmers will be allowed to grow.
- Some newly elected congressmen from rural states will try to establish tighter **restrictions for** the amount of grain farmers will be allowed to grow.

The correct preposition following *restrictions* is not *for* but *on*.

**93. Try to vs. Try and**

- Some newly elected congressmen from rural states will **try and** establish tighter restrictions on the amount of grain farmers will be allowed to grow.
- Some newly elected congressmen from rural states will **try to** establish tighter restrictions on the amount of grain farmers will be allowed to grow.

Although *try and* is an idiom often used in colloquial language, *to* is preferred in a more formal setting.

**94. Act as vs. Act like**

- The engineers proposed building parallel to shore a breakwater of rocks that would rise six feet above the waterline and **act as** a buffer.
- The engineers proposed building parallel to shore a breakwater of rocks that would rise six feet above the waterline and **act like** a buffer.

*Act* followed by *like* means *to behave or comport oneself* and describes the action of a person: *He acted like a fool*. Here, *act as* describes the function of a thing; *the breakwater ... acts as a buffer*. As an inanimate object, a breakwater cannot “behave” itself; it must be performing some function.

**95. As a means to vs. As a means of**

- Cities in Europe have been stressing the arts **as a means to** greater economic development.
- Cities in Europe have been stressing the arts **as a means of** greater economic development.

The idiom *as a means to* correctly communicates that *stressing the arts* is a method for achieving *greater economic development*. The idiom *as a means of* would incorrectly suggest that *stressing the arts* is a kind of *greater economic development*.

**96. Attribute X to Y vs. Attribute X as Y**

- Defense attorneys have occasionally **attributed** the criminal or delinquent behavior of their clients **to** a food allergy.
- Defense attorneys have occasionally **attributed** the criminal or delinquent behavior of their clients **as** a food allergy.

The correct idiom in the active voice is one *attributes x* (an effect) *to y* (a cause). In the passive voice, *x* (the effect) *is attributed to y* (the cause).

**97. Not just X but also Y vs. Not just X but Y**

- In 2000, a mere two dozen products accounted for half the increase in spending on prescription drugs **not just** by the fact that drugs are becoming more expensive **but also** by the fact that doctors are writing many more prescriptions for higher-cost drugs.
- In 2000, a mere two dozen products accounted for half the increase in spending on prescription drugs **not just** by the fact that drugs are becoming more expensive **but** by the fact that doctors are writing many more prescriptions for higher-cost drugs.

The correct idiomatic structure is *Not just X but also Y*.

**98. Distinguish between X and Y vs. Distinguish between X or Y**

- It is difficult to **distinguish between** a language and the sublanguages **or** dialects within it.
- It is difficult to **distinguish between** a language and the sublanguages **and** dialects within it.

The idiomatic expression is *distinguishing between x and y*.

**99. Comparatives: Adjective-ER + than vs. Adjective-ER + over**

- Oil prices are expected to be **higher** this year **than** last.
- Oil prices are expected to be **higher** this year **over** last.

Comparative adjectives (more, less, or any adjective-ER) go with *than*, not *over*.

**100. Distinction between X and Y vs. Distinction between X with Y**

- The main distinction **between** our intelligence **and** that of other is our ability to apply knowledge gained in one context to new ones.
- The main distinction **between** our intelligence **with** that of other is our ability to apply knowledge gained in one context to new ones.

The correct idiom is *distinction between X and Y*.

**101. Not so much in X as in Y vs. Not so much in X but in Y**

- The main difference between our intelligence with that of other primates may lay **not so much in** any specific skill **as** in our ability to extend knowledge to new and different contexts.
- The main difference between our intelligence with that of other primates may lay **not so much in** any specific skill **but** in our ability to extend knowledge to new and different contexts.

The correct idiom is *not so much X as Y*.

**102. Aid in healing vs. Aid to heal**

- The supplicants were asking the goddess Bona Dea's **aid in healing** their physical and mental ills.
- The supplicants were asking the goddess Bona Dea's **aid to heal** their physical and mental ills.

The noun *aid* is correctly followed by *in healing* rather than by the infinitive *to heal*.

**103. Claim + infinitive vs. Claim + noun**

- A firm that specializes in the analysis of handwriting **claims to be able to** assess more than 300 personality traits.
- A firm that specializes in the analysis of handwriting **claims the ability to** assess more than 300 personality traits.

The verb *claims* may be followed by one of two correct constructions: *claims that* + (S + V), or *claims* + (to + base verb).

#### 104. Persuade + subject + infinitive vs. Perusade that subject + base verb

- Joan of Arc persuaded Charles VII of France to claim his throne.
- Joan of Arc persuaded that the throne be claimed by Charles VII of France.

The correct idiom is persuade X to Y.

#### 105. Apprenticeship as vs. Apprenticeship of being

- Friedrich Müller's career began in an unpromising apprenticeship as a Sanskrit scholar.
- Friedrich Müller's career began in an unpromising apprenticeship of being a Sanskrit scholar.

Use "as" to refer to roles or functions. The structure *apprenticeship of being* is an incorrect idiom. In general, avoid using "of being".

#### 106. Date at vs. Date to be

- Rock samples taken from the remains of an asteroid have been dated at 3.47 billion years old.
- Rock samples taken from the remains of an asteroid have been dated to be 3.47 billion years old.

The idiomatic way of expressing estimation of age is with the phrase *dated at*.

#### 107. Proof that-clause vs. Proof for

- Parapsychologist Joseph Banks Rhine claimed statistical proof that subjects could identify a card in the dealer's hand by using thought transference
- Parapsychologist Joseph Banks Rhine claimed statistical proof for subjects who could use thought transference to identify a card in the dealer's hand.

The correct version is "*proof that-clause*". The second version inappropriately attempts to describe the claim by using a prepositional phrase, for subjects who ...

#### 108. Efficiency in vs. Efficiency of

- Improved efficiency in converting harvested trees into wood products may reduce harvest rates.
- Improved efficiency of converting harvested trees into wood products may reduce harvest rates.

The correct idiom is "*efficiency in*".

#### 109. Likely + to vs. Likely + that-clause

- Traffic safety officials predict that drivers will be as likely to exceed the proposed speed limit as they are the current one.
- Traffic safety officials predict that drivers will be equally likely that they will exceed the proposed speed limit as the current one.

The correct idiom is **likely + to**. Also, the idiom *as x as y*, rather than the incorrect form *equally x as y*, should be used to express the comparison.

#### 110. Help (n.) to + base verb vs. Help (n.) in + ing

- Many people are turning to stockbrokers for help in buying stocks.
- Many people are turning to stockbrokers for help to buy stocks.

If "help" is a noun, the preferred idiom is "*help + in + verb-ing*".

**111.X rather than Y vs. X instead of Y**

- Today, standard business transactions are handled via computer **rather than** on paper.
- Today, standard business transactions are handled via computer **instead of** on paper.

The correct idiomatic structure is “*rather than*” (*most of the time, that structure is the correct one*). Both “*rather than*” and “*instead of*” can be used to refer to replacement or preference. In both structures, X and Y must be parallel. The main difference is that “*rather than*” can be used to compare verbs, infinitives, nouns (including gerunds), and prepositional phrases, while “*instead of*” can only be used to contrast nouns or gerunds. In this sentence, the prepositional phrase *via computer* parallels *on paper*, so the best option to compare prepositional phrases is “*rather than*”.

**112.Able to vs. Able of**

- Turtles can endure long fasts because they are **able to survive** on weekly or even monthly feedings.
- Turtles can endure long fasts because they are **able of surviving** on weekly or even monthly feedings.

The correct idiom is “*able/ability + to*”. *Able/Ability of + ing* is not idiomatic.

**113.Goal of + ing vs. Goal to + base verb**

- Hotels are conducting surveys with the ultimate **goal of reducing** the number of guests who express overall dissatisfaction with their services.
- Hotels are conducting surveys with the ultimate **goal to reduce** the number of guests who express overall dissatisfaction with their services.

The correct idiom is “*goal of + ing*.”

**114.Such as vs. Like**

- Michelangelo produced a great variety of art works, ranging from paintings, **such as** those in the Sistine Chapel, to sculpture, **such as** the statue of David.
- Michelangelo produced a great variety of art works, ranging from paintings, **like** those in the Sistine Chapel, to sculpture, **like** the statue of David.

Use “*such as*” to provide examples and “*like*” to compare nouns. In this sentence, the best option is “*such as*”.

**115.Some..., others vs. Some..., some others...**

- While **some** places show no tides at all, **others** have tides of more than thirty feet.
- While **some** places show no tides at all, **some others** have tides of more than thirty feet.

The proper idiom for drawing this contrast is “*some places and others*”—not “*some places and some others*.”

**116.In return for vs. As a return on**

- Among the Tsonga, dance teams represent their own chief at the court of another and provide entertainment **in return for** food, drink, and lodging.
- Among the Tsonga, dance teams represent their own chief at the court of another and provide entertainment **as a return on**, drink, and lodging.

In this context, “*in return for*” is the most idiomatic version. “*As a return on*” normally refers to a gain from an investment, not a direct exchange of one good for another.



**117. So (adjective) as to (base verb) vs. (Adjective) enough so that (clause)**

- Major economic shifts are often so gradual as to be indistinguishable from ordinary fluctuations in the financial markets.
- Major economic shifts are often gradual enough so that they are indistinguishable from ordinary fluctuations in the financial markets.

The idiom “*so (adjective) as to (base verb)*” is correctly used. The second version is unnecessarily wordy and awkward, and the use of “enough” often carries the nuance that the sufficiency is of something desirable—which seems not to be so in this context.

**118. Concern that (clause) vs. Concern of (verb-ing)**

- Cold temperatures in Brazil raised concern that the world’s largest crop could be damaged.
- Cold temperatures in Brazil raised concern of possibly damaging the world’s largest crop.

The correct idiom is “concern that – clause”. The preposition *of* after *concern* is an incorrect construction.

**119. Can be said to vs. Can be said that**

- No government can really be said to control all of the complex and interrelated forces that determine the nation’s economic strength.
- No government can be said that it really controls all of the complex and interrelated forces that determine the nation’s economic strength.

The idiom “*can be said to*” is appropriate, but “*no government can be said that it*” is ungrammatical.

**120. Reason to believe vs. Reason for believing**

- Workers cannot be laid off if they have been given reason to believe that their jobs will be safe.
- Workers cannot be laid off if they have been given reason for believing that their jobs will be safe.

The idiom “*reason to believe*” succinctly describes the assurance given to workers.

**121. Established as vs. Establish to be**

- Dissident writers, philosophers, and other professionals in the Czech Republic established Charter 77 as a human rights group.
- Dissident writers, philosophers, and other professionals in the Czech Republic established Charter 77 to be a human rights group.

The idiomatic expression “*established ... as*” is preferable to the nonstandard and somewhat unclear “*established ... to be...*”

**122. Effort to (base verb) vs. Effort of (verb-ing)**

- The AM-1 is one of the many new satellites that are part of a 15-year effort to subject the interactions of Earth’s atmosphere, oceans, and land surfaces to detailed scrutiny from space.
- The AM-1 is one of the many new satellites that are part of a 15-year effort of subjecting the interactions of Earth’s atmosphere, oceans, and land surfaces to detailed scrutiny from space.

The idiomatic expression is *effort to* rather than *effort of*.

**123. Capable of + ing vs. Capable to**

- Blenders and food processors are capable of inflicting very serious injuries.
- Blenders and food processors are capable to inflict very serious injuries.

The phrase *capable of* is a correct idiom.

#### 124. Appears to (base verb) vs. Appears that (clause)

- The nation's semiconductor industry **appears to** have made a long-awaited recovery.
- The nation's semiconductor industry **appears that** it has made a long-awaited recovery.

The correct idiom is "appears to". "Appears that it has" is an incorrect verb form.

#### 125. As good as vs. As well as

- On the tournament, several tennis students played **as well as** their instructors.
- On the tournament, several tennis students played **as good as** their instructors.

The structure "as good as" is an adjectival phrase, while "as well as" is an adverbial phrase. This sentence needs an adverbial phrase to describe the verb "played", so the correct idiom is "as well as."

#### 126. Legacy to vs. Legacy for

- The more ancient Olmec culture is being explored by historians for its **legacy to** succeeding Mesoamerican societies.
- The more ancient Olmec culture is being explored by historians for its **legacy for** succeeding Mesoamerican societies.

The correct idiom is "legacy to".

#### 127. Neither X nor Y vs. Neither X or Y

- **Neither** federal **nor** state laws require disclosure of foreign ownership.
- **Neither** federal **or** state laws require disclosure of foreign ownership.

The correct idiom is "neither X nor Y", in which X and Y must be parallel.

#### 128. In contrast to vs. In contrast with

- **In contrast to** a dark surface, which tends to absorb heat, a large expanse of snow and ice reflects incoming radiation into space.
- **In contrast with** a dark surface, which tends to absorb heat, a large expanse of snow and ice reflects incoming radiation into space.

When *contrast* follows *in*, *contrast* functions as a noun; the appropriate preposition to use after *contrast* when it functions as a noun is *to*; *with* is the preferred preposition to use after *contrast* only when *contrast* functions as a verb. Thus, the sentence's use of *in contrast with* is incorrect.

#### 129. Among vs. Between

- Though there is some overlap **between** the two concepts *market economy* and *laissez faire*, several important differences must be borne in mind.
- Though there is some overlap **among** the two concepts *market economy* and *laissez faire*, several important differences must be borne in mind.

When talking of just two things, *between* rather than *among* should be used

#### 130. Hesitant to vs. Hesitant in

- Retailers and analysts **hesitate to** predict five-year trends in retail sales.
- Retailers and analysts **hesitate in** predicting five-year trends in retail sales.

The appropriate idiom is "hesitant to" rather than "hesitant in"

### 131. Order X to Y vs. Order X should Y

- Henry II of England **ordered** panels of common citizens **to** prepare lists of suspected criminals.
- Henry II of England **ordered** panels of common citizens **should** prepare lists of suspected criminals.

The correct idiom is “*order X to Y*”.

### 132. Acknowledged to be vs. Acknowledged as being

- Barbara McClintock’s subtle work on the genetics of corn has now been **acknowledged to be** of major importance.
- Barbara McClintock’s subtle work on the genetics of corn has now been **acknowledged as being** of major importance.

The correct idiom is “*acknowledged to be*”. The phrase “*as being major*” is wordy and non-idiomatic.

### 133. Enough to vs. Enough that

- Displays of the aurora borealis can heat the atmosphere over the arctic **enough to** affect the trajectories of ballistic missiles.
- Displays of the aurora borealis can heat the atmosphere over the arctic **enough that** the trajectories of ballistic missiles are affected.

The correct idiom is “*enough to*”.

### 134. Train to vs. Train as

- The Coast Guard is conducting tests to see whether pigeons can be **trained to** help find survivors of wrecks at sea.
- The Coast Guard is conducting tests to see whether pigeons can be **trained as** help to find survivors of wrecks at sea.

The correct idiom is “*train to + base verb*”.

### 135. Perceive as vs. Perceive to be

- The company **perceives** the policies of the government **as** a serious threat to the environment.
- The company **perceives** the policies of the government **to be** a serious threat to the environment.

The correct idiom is “*perceive X as Y*”.

### 136. Prefer to vs. Prefer as compared to

- Airline executives are convinced that most bank customers still **prefer** human tellers **to** automatic teller machines.
- Airline executives are convinced that most bank customers still **prefer** human tellers **compared to** automatic teller machines.

The correct idiom is “*prefer X to Y*”.

### 137. Cite X as Y vs. Cite X to be Y

- United States legislators **cite as** an obstacle to Congressional passage the concern that the bank’s loans will help foreign producers compete with American businesses.
- United States legislators **cite** an obstacle to Congressional passage **to be** the concern that the bank’s loans will help foreign producers compete with American businesses.

The correct idiom is “*cite as*”.

### 138. To take advantage of

- If a firm in a market with no entry or exit barriers raises its prices above marginal cost and begins to earn abnormal profits, potential rivals will enter the market **to take advantage of** these profits.
- If a firm in a market with no entry or exit barriers raises its prices above marginal cost and begins to earn abnormal profits, potential rivals will enter the market **to take advantage with** these profits.

The correct idiom is “*to take advantage of*”.

**139. Pinpoint to vs. Pinpoint in**

- We now have wireless computer networks, direct-broadcast satellite television, digital wireless cable television networks, global telephone service, and global positioning systems that can **pinpoint** an individual's location **to** a few inches.
- We now have wireless computer networks, direct-broadcast satellite television, digital wireless cable television networks, global telephone service, and global positioning systems that can **pinpoint** an individual's location **in** a few inches.

The correct idiom is "pinpoint X to Y".

**140. Conclude to one's satisfaction vs. Conclude by one's satisfaction**

- Section 301 of the 1988 Omnibus Trade and Competitiveness Act enables the United States Trade Representative to single out a country as an unfair trader, begin trade negotiations with that country, and, if the negotiations do not conclude **to the United States government's satisfaction**, impose sanctions.
- Section 301 of the 1988 Omnibus Trade and Competitiveness Act enables the United States Trade Representative to single out a country as an unfair trader, begin trade negotiations with that country, and, if the negotiations do not conclude **by the United States government's satisfaction**, impose sanctions.

The correct idiom is "conclude to one's satisfaction".

**141. Within reach of vs. Within reach for**

- Prospecting for gold during the California gold rush was a relatively easy task, since erosion, prehistoric glacier movement, and ancient, gold-bearing riverbeds thrust to the surface by volcanic activity put gold literally **within reach of** anybody with a pan or shovel.
- Prospecting for gold during the California gold rush was a relatively easy task, since erosion, prehistoric glacier movement, and ancient, gold-bearing riverbeds thrust to the surface by volcanic activity put gold literally **within reach for** anybody with a pan or shovel.

The correct idiom is "within reach of".

**142. Theory that A did B vs. Theory of A doing B/Theory of A that does B**

- Recent findings lend strong support to the **theory that** a black hole lies at the center of the Milky Way and of many of the 100 billion other galaxies estimated to exist in the universe.
- Recent findings lend strong support to the **theory of** a black hole that lies at the center of the Milky Way and of many of the 100 billion other galaxies estimated to exist in the universe.

The correct structure is "theory/hypothesis that (S+V)" to give information about what the theory or hypothesis states.

**143. Spend time (on) doing something vs. Spend time to do something**

- If Charles had **spent** half as much **time attending** his classes as he **did complaining** about them, he would have been a good student.
- If Charles had **spent** half as much **time to attend** his classes as he **did to complain** about them, he would have been a good student.

The correct idiom is "spend time on + ing".

**144. Grows to vs. Grows up (to)**

- In undisturbed primary forests, the Honduran mahogany **grows to** a height of 130 feet, with a buttressed trunk and with a crown that spreads over the canopy of lesser trees.
- In undisturbed primary forests, the Honduran mahogany **grows up to** a height of 130 feet, with a buttressed trunk and with a crown that spreads over the canopy of lesser trees.

The correct idiom for growing to a certain size is "grows to"; *grows up to* is incorrect in this sense; *grows up* means to mature, to become an adult.

#### 145. Convinced that vs. Convinced of

- The British sailor is **convinced that** the trip will end in failure.
- The British sailor is **convinced of** the trip ending in failure.

The correct idiom for stating what someone is convinced of is “*convinced that*”. *Convinced of* should be used only for simple noun phrases.

#### 146. In that vs. Because (of)

- The parachutelike membranes of Africa's scaly-tailed flying squirrels differ from those of the flying squirrels in the family Sciuridae **in that** they are attached to a cartilage rod at the elbow rather than at the wrist.
- The parachutelike membranes of Africa's scaly-tailed flying squirrels differ from those of the flying squirrels in the family Sciuridae **because** they are attached to a cartilage rod at the elbow rather than at the wrist.

“*In that*” specifies in what way something is done, whereas “*because*” specifies why.

#### 147. Records of vs. Records that

- The loan company announced it would soon lend money to borrowers with proven **records of** not paying back their loans on time, a group collectively known as the subprime lending market.
- The loan company announced it would soon lend money to borrowers with proven **records that** they do not pay their loans back on time, a group collectively known as the subprime lending market.

The correct idiom is “*records of + ing*”.

#### 148. Preference for vs. Preference of/in

- The list of animals that exhibits a **preference for** using either the right or the left hand (i.e. claw, paw, or foot) has been expanded to include the lower vertebrates.
- The list of animals that exhibits a **preference of** using either the right or the left hand (i.e. claw, paw, or foot) has been expanded to include the lower vertebrates.

The correct idiom is “*preference for*”.

#### 149. Promise + infinitive vs. Promise of

- The state's attorney general accused the bank of engaging in deceptive business practices by failing to honor its **promise to** its customers **to** keep records private.
- The state's attorney general accused the bank of engaging in deceptive business practices by failing to honor its **promise of** its customers **of** keeping records private.

The correct idiom is “*promise to*”.

#### 150. Vulnerable to vs. Vulnerable from

- The ecosystems of barrier islands are extremely **vulnerable to** natural processes such as shoreline recession, rising sea levels, and destructive hurricanes, as well as to the ever-increasing pressures of development.
- The ecosystems of barrier islands are extremely **vulnerable from** natural processes such as shoreline recession, rising sea levels, and destructive hurricanes, as well as to the ever-increasing pressures of development.

The correct idiom is “*vulnerable to*”.

### 151. X rivals Y for vs. X rivals Y in

- By the mid-seventeenth century, Amsterdam had built a new town hall so large that only St. Peter's in Rome could rival it for scale or magnificence.
- By the mid-seventeenth century, Amsterdam had built a new town hall so large that only St. Peter's in Rome could rival it in scale or magnificence.

The correct idiom is "*X rivals Y for*".

### 152. Famous Person's Name + s

- Before Colette, the female writers of France had been aristocrats; there were no Jane Austens.
- Before Colette, the female writers of France had been aristocrats; there was no Jane Austen.

When we wish to refer to a person who would be of the same type as the celebrity's name, we pluralize the name. Thus, the correct expression is "*Jane Austens*".

### 153. On the ground(s) that vs. On the ground(s) of

- A judge overturned the ban on the ground that it violated state laws allowing the use of personal watercraft on common waterways.
- A judge overturned the ban on the ground of violating state laws allowing the use of personal watercraft on common waterways.

The correct idiom is "*on the ground that (S+V)*".

### 154. Provide for vs. Provide in

- Scientists claim that the discovery of the first authenticated mammal bones in amber could provide important clues for determining how and when mammals colonized the islands of the West Indies.
- Scientists claim that the discovery of the first authenticated mammal bones in amber could provide important clues in determining how and when mammals colonized the islands of the West Indies.

The correct idiom is "*provide X for + ing*".

### 155. Different from vs. Different than

- Tektites, which may have been propelled to Earth from lunar volcanoes, are much like the volcanic glass obsidian, but their chemical composition is different from that of any terrestrial lava; they contain far less water than obsidian does and none of its characteristic microcrystals.
- Tektites, which may have been propelled to Earth from lunar volcanoes, are much like the volcanic glass obsidian, but their chemical composition is different than that of any terrestrial lava; they contain far less water than obsidian does and none of its characteristic microcrystals.

The correct idiom is "*different from*".

### 156. Forbid X to do Y vs. Forbid from

- Unlike psychiatrists, psychologists have historically been forbidden to prescribe drugs for their patients.
- Unlike psychiatrists, psychologists have historically been forbidden from prescribing drugs for their patients.

The example above is in the passive voice, so the idiom is "*X is forbidden to do Y*".

### 157. Projected to be vs. Projected at

- The home values in the United States are **projected to decline** by 6% during the next half year.
- The home values in the United States are **projected at declining** by 6% during the next half year.

The correct idiom (like *estimated to be*) is “*projected to be*”.

### 158. Keep X under control vs. Keep X on control

- Stable interest rates on long-term bonds **will keep inflation under control**.
- Stable interest rates on long-term bonds **will keep inflation on control**.

The correct idiom is to “*keep X under control*”.

### 159. Make do without vs. Make X without

- On the Great Plains, nineteenth-century settlers used mud and grass to build their homes, **making do without** timber and nails.
- On the Great Plains, nineteenth-century settlers used mud and grass to build their homes, **making them without** timber and nails.

The correct idiom is “*make do*”, which means “*to manage with the limited or inadequate means available.*”

### 160. Way of vs. Way to

- The recording industry associations of North America, Japan, and Europe hope to create a secure **way of distributing** songs and full-length recordings on the Internet.
- The recording industry associations of North America, Japan, and Europe hope to create a secure **way to distribute** songs and full-length recordings on the Internet.

The correct idiom is a “*way of + ing*”.

### 161. Provide support for vs. Provide support to

- New genetic evidence **provides** compelling **support for** classifying Africa’s forest elephants and its savanna elephants as separate species.
- New genetic evidence **provides** compelling **support to** classify Africa’s forest elephants and its savanna elephants as separate species.

The correct idiom is to “*provide support for + ing*”.

### 162. Agree with vs. Agree to vs. Agree that

- I **agree with** you
- I **agree that** the GMAT is challenging.
- I **agree to** study with my friends.

The three options above are possible. You can “*agree with*” someone. You could also “*agree that + S + V*”. Finally, you can “*agree to + base verb*”.