ON AGAIN, OFF AGAIN

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Here are fifty idioms you can work on -- easy once you catch onto the fact that each one is on about a phrase in which the word ON is featured:

1. honest
2. alternately
3. free
4. improving
5. secretly
6. promptly
7. freely going
8. considering all
9. alone
10. out for fun
11. charged to credit
12. intermittently
13. over ice
14. crawling
15. quietly
16. without hesitation
17. in flight
18. righteously
19. nervous
20. punctually
21. broadcasting
22. available for duty
23. watchful
24. falling
25. just about

26. teetotaling
27. predatory
28. in suspense
29. haughty
30. careful
31. friendly
32. decrepit
33. reprimanded
34. likely
35. patrolling
36. with it
37. expecting
38. busy
39. recovering
40. evading pursuit
41. without a partner
42. decreasing
43. roaming around
44. discovered something profitable
45. prepared to act
46. exhibited
47. tramping
48. exiting
49. working
50. not working

We offered fifty idioms which featured the word ON. Now we’re off on a hunt for idioms featuring OFF. Ready? You’re off -- but don’t go off the subject:

1. spoiled
2. casually
3. ready-made
4. impromptu
5. misled
6. unprepared
7. unconsidered

26. truncated
27. distant
28. very incorrect
29. mentally deranged
30. mistaken
31. vulgar or obscene
32. unofficial
8. irrelevant 33. auspiciously begun
9. angry 34. curt
10. crazy 35. remote
11. unreasonable 36. obscure
12. started 37. commenced
13. expressed 38. abduct
14. wandering 39. take the loss
15. lost 40. cease transmitting
16. rejected 41. unfavorable time
17. delirious 42. light shade
18. intermittently 43. betting office activity
19. killed 44. behind the scenes
20. first stroke 45. slight likelihood
21. very wrong 46. depart
22. cancelled 47. displease
23. cured of addiction 48. reward
24. unusually bad (sports) 49. aloof
25. holiday 50. improper

Answers can be found in Answers and Solutions at the end of the issue.

ACCIDENTAL ACROSTICS

In the May 1979 Kickshaws, Will Shortz asked Word Ways readers "What is the longest word you can find spelled in order by the initial letters of any series of consecutive paragraphs in any book on your shelf?" In thirty minutes of searching, the best he could find was TIGHT in a Lord Peter Wimsey story. The query subsequently appeared as a Games Magazine contest in July/August 1980, resulting in the seven-letter acrostics ACACIAS, ASSISTS, ATTAIN, DITTIES, EARTHLY, SITTING and THRIFTY. Despite a prize of $150, only 77 entries were received. In an effort to generate more interest, a further prize of $150 was offered to the first reader to find an eight-letter example; the March/April 1981 issue presented SYNONYMS by Shirley Tierney of Johnson City, Wisconsin, who found it on page 10 of Elizabeth Graham's Heart of the Eagle (Harlequin Books, 1978).