# NEWS & PRESS VOCABULARY

Vocabulaire journalistique anglais

Mieux comprendre la presse anglo-saxonne

Améliorer son style de rédaction



## 1. INFLUENCE AND POWER

#### A bulwark against protection, defense, safeguard

The unemployment measures introduced by the government are a bulwark against dire poverty.

### **A juggernaut** steamroller, a force that crushes everything on its way

Russia is a sports juggernaut in the Olympic Games.

#### Rubber-stamp approved, endorsed, validated

The National People's Congress in China is often considered as a rubber-stamp parliament.

#### A shock and awe response use of quick overwhelming power

During the Cold War, sending a man on the Moon was a shock-and-awe response in the space race opposing the US and the USSR.

#### **Stalwart** faithful, reliable, staunch

George has been a stalwart support since the start of the project.

#### **A standard-bearer** a lead figure setting an example

The United States has been a standard-bearer of civil liberties in the world for many years.

#### **A theatrical act of chest-beating** boasting, bragging

The national pageantry they displayed to the world was a theatrical act of chest beating.

#### **A tone-deaf (support)** unnuanced

The President benefits from a tone-deaf support from conservative voters.

#### **A towering (figure)** prominent, of great influence

Churchill was the most towering figure of post-WWII.

#### A wake word awakening, arousing, incentivizing

'Make America Great Again' has become a wake word for many hitherto indecisive voters.

#### Whitewashing censorship

Gagging the press was an act of whitewashing from the government.

#### Adamantine stubborn, inflexible

The Prime Minister is an adamantine supporter of the reform.

#### **At someone's behest** responding someone's orders.

at someone's command

Most young interns are at the behest of their managers.

#### **At the helm of** in charge of

Patrick is at the helm of the expansive overhaul undergone by the company.

**Base-rallying (pol.)** resonating with the grassroots, the foundational members

The President's latest policies are a base-rallying blueprint for the next general elections.

Beggar-thy-neighbour (policy) everyone for themselves, protectionist

The new beggar-thy-neighbour trade policies imposed on China will spark many tensions.

**Beholden to** indebted to

I feel beholden to my mentor for inspiring me during my research.

Bigwigs the celebrities, the VIP, the hotshots

All the bigwigs of the party attended the ceremony.

Browbeaten bullied

The new Mayor was browbeaten into opening new dual carriages around the city.

Buccaneering high-risk and adventurous

He succeeded thanks to his spirit of buccaneering entrepreneur.

Clout heft, influence

The clout of the UN has been on the wane for a few years.

Cronyism
favouritism, partisanship

The government was accused of cronyism for granting lots to its allies in the Green Belt.

Crowd-pleasing popular

Her crowd-pleasing policies had her re-elected.

Flagship (brands) showpiece, star, centerpiece

Elon Musk proudly presented his flagship vehicle to the audience

**Glib** smooth-talking

He always knows how to offer glib comments to his supporters.

Heft weight, power

The heft of Chinese trade is visible in its ever-growing GDP.

Hubris excessive pride and self-confidence

Their hubris drove them to bet all their money on that horse but it lost the race!

**In thrall to** enslaved to, controlled by

Children are often in thrall to their parents, which may affect their self-esteem.

Kneecapping impairing, crippling, damaging

His being sent to prison was an act of kneecapping from his opponents.

#### Might is right

the powerful may do as they please

The survival of the fittest is often dubbed the 'might is right' principle.

Moguls

tycoons, magnates, the big cheese

Rupert Murdoch was the mogul of the Press until his newspaper was shut down in 2011.

On a tight rein

to be controlled

The ministers are advised to keep the budget on a tight rein.

Oversight

supervision, surveillance

Social networks require an intense oversight so that terrorist or libelous content might not be widely spread.

Prevalent

widespread, pervasive, ubiquitous

The emergence of artificial intelligence is prevalent in the technological world.

Sabre-rattling

display of military force

Russia's sabre-rattling parade is meant to infuse fear among other nations.

Salient

prominent

The salient feature of this device is its voice-activated search engine.

Space-hogging

monopolizing space

The space-hogging SUV made it impossible to park outside the house.

The onus on

burden, responsibility, duty

The onus of the intervention in Syria befell the main superpowers involved in the conflict.

The pecking order

hierarchy

He did not get the job because he was the victim of the fierce pecking order in the company.

The rule of thumb

broad principle based on practice

rather than theory

The rule of thumb is to plough this field on a rotational cycle rather than letting it lying fallow.

The tail is wagging the dog

someone important being controlled by someone less so

I was told off by my niece for not sorting out waste. This is the tail wagging the dog!

The whip hand

power, control

The House of Commons has the whip hand over the House of Lords because they can vote a Bill down.

To be tipping in favour of

to change the balance so that

one side is favoured

The popular ratings are tipping in favour of the young candidate to the presidential election.

To act in line with

in conformity with

CEOs often act in line with the general projected trends on the Stock Exchange.

#### **To act on one's threat** to carry out a menace

After he kept repeating to the students to be quiet, the teacher acted on his treat and held them up 15 minutes after the end of class.

To badger to harass

His mother badgered her son until he cleaned his room.

**To bang down the door to**to demand something, to present oneself as a preferable candidate

She was determined to be granted that promotion, so she banged down the door of management to put her case across.

**To bankroll** to support financially

Countless financial institutions were bailed out and bankrolled by their governments during the 2008 crisis.

- **To be a badge of pride/honour** to be something to be proud of His stint in the army was a badge of honour he wore proudly.
- **To be a cut above** to be better than the others

  He deserved to win, as he was clearly a cut above the other candidates.
- **To be a masterstroke** an achievement, a success, a performance His decision to pump money in was a political masterstroke.
- **To be booted out** to be kicked out, to be driven out
  The Prime Minister was booted out when the government was reshuffled.
- **To be bound by** to be accountable to, dependable on Many countries are bound by international treaties.
- **To be cock of the walk** someone who dominates others within a group

  The American President was cock of the walk during the latest G7.
- **To be culled from** to be selected or chosen from a group

  The culled selection of books offered by the library will help students prepare the exhibition.
- **To be edged** to be surpassed or beaten by a small margin I could have won but I was edged by two better competitors.
- **To be front and centre** to be given a lot of attention

  The development of the new space race is now front and centre of all scientific magazines.
- **To be gulled into doing** to be deceived into doing Drivers were gulled into buying diesel vehicles.
- **To be helmed by** to be controlled by

  Brexit is helmed by the European Council along with British MPs.

**To be in cahoots with**to secretly work with someone,
usually on an ill-intended scheme

The secret services were in cahoots with the government to avoid any uprising.

**To be in lockstep with**to be forced to go in the same direction as someone else

Social media followers are in lockstep with the latest trends bandied about online.

**To be in the slipstream of** to follow someone's example

John is in the slipstream of his father: like father, like son!

**To be laid low** to be put out of action

The military tanks were laid low in the region after the peace treaty was signed.

**To be rammed home** to be emphasized very strongly

The protective recommendations were rammed home for people not to forget them.

**To bend nature to our will** to force nature in the direction that

is the most convenient for us

Some scientists bend nature to their will for the sole purpose of research.

To bend to s.o's will to comply with someone's intentions

After much harassment, they finally bent to their mother's will and repainted the house.

**To bring something to heel** to force sb to obey one's wishes or commands Scientists are currently working on a vaccine in order to bring the disease to heel.

**To call the shots** to be in the position of being able to make

the decisions that will influence a situation

It was my father who called the shots when my grandmother passed away and organized the funeral.

**To cement one's control of** to secure one's dominance over

The new laws cemented his control of the government.

**To chivvy** to tell someone repeatedly to do something,

to nag, to badger, to harass, to hound

My sister chivvied me into applying for the most prestigious universities.

**To clobber** to defeat heavily

The centre-right candidate was clobbered in the latest election.

To close ranks to remain united in the face

of danger or criticism

The party members closed ranks when their representative was attacked in the press.

**To come to a head** to reach a crisis

The trade talks came to a head when the US refused to sign the international agreement.

**To court publicity** to curry the favour of or pursue fame

The political bigwigs court the Press publicly in order to be depicted favourably.

#### **To do our bidding** to do what one is told

The teacher exploded and told us to do our bidding and nothing more.

**To drill into someone**to repeat something to someone many times in order for them to remember

My team associate drilled the pitch into me so I could do nothing but remember what I had to say.

**To drip-feed** to introduce something progressively

and in small quantities

Medical information is usually drip-fed to patients in order to put their minds at rest.

**To drum sth into so** to frequently repeat so that someone remembers

My mother drummed all these sewing tips into me. I am now quite well-versed in how to stitch!

**To drum up support** to rally support, to call for encouragement

Their latest online campaign drummed up the support of the younger demographic.

**To exert control or force** to exercise force

Dictatorships exert control over their citizens through censorship and sanctions.

■ **To flex one's muscles** to display, show one's power

France showed what it was made of and flexed its muscle at the European Summit.

To gear up (for battle) to prepare for a fight

Students geared up for battle when they were told that their exam results would be downgraded.

■ **To get in step with** to conform to

The military officers immediately got in step with the General's instructions.

**To give some muscle** to give some strength to

You should add extra appendices in your thesis to give it some muscle and flesh it out.

To goad one another/ to incite or rouse into to goad sb into

The journalists were goaded into inveighing against the current administration.

**To hammer something home** to repeat something so that people remember The teacher hammered the key statement of his lesson home, which bored his students to tears.

**To have a sway over** to have power over

Social influencers have a sway over their followers' consumption habits.

**To have a toehold in**an opportunity to start doing stg small that may lead to bigger and better

opportunities in the future

Now that she has a toehold in the company, she needs to promote herself into climbing the professional ladder.

To have an early edge to benefit from an advantage

right from the start

The younger contestant had an early edge in the interview as he had travelled in the country where the company was willing to outsource.

**To have free rein** freedom of action or expression

The artist had free rein over his representation of the city centre in his latest work.

**To have latitude** to enjoy some leeway, some freedom

of action or expression

MA students have latitude to write an essay on whatever topic inspires them.

To have the final say over to have the final word over something

The head of the company had the final say over the decision to streamline his staff.

To have the whip hand over to have the most power

Superpowers have the whip hand over how to govern the world.

**To hector** to talk in a bullying way,

to intimidate, to browbeat

The teacher hectored his students until they finally got down to work.

**To helm** to direct, to control

My uncle helmed the ceremony in quite a delicate manner.

**To hold sway over** to be in control, to wield power

Our social representations hold sway over the way we perceive the world.

**To impinge on** to violate, to trespass on

These new regulations are impinging on our privacy rights.

**To instigate** to incite sb to do stg/to bring about,

to initiate, to set in motion

The blast instigated the resignation of the entire government.

**To instill fear** to gradually but firmly establish

stg in a person's mind, to implant, to ingrain

Scaremongers instill fear into the most vulnerable audience.

**To jawbone somebody into** to use one's position or authority

to pressure sb to do something

His friends jawboned him into giving up his bid for the Olympic Games.

**To keep in check** to keep under control

The prisoners were kept in check by the threatening dog of the warden.

To keep someone on their toes to cause to remain alert for anything

that might happen

The boss kept us on our toes by menacing to dismiss any shirker in the company.

#### To keep someone in the driving seat

#### to keep someone in control

The President, after his reelection, was then kept in the driving seat for another five years.

To keep tabs on

to monitor the activities or developments of to keep under observation

Most countries use secret intelligence in order to keep tabs on their citizens' activities.

To lay down the rules

to officially state the rules

The master of ceremony laid down the rules of the games before the contest took place.

To lay off

to dismiss

Many employees were laid off after the crisis that hit the country.