Similes

All the idioms in these exercises are examples of similes. A simile is an expression that compares one thing with another thing, containing either the word as or the word like. You use similes to give emphasis to descriptions, or to make those descriptions more interesting or amusing.

A typical example of a simile is the expression as cold as ice, meaning very cold.

The similes in exercises 1–3 all contain the word as.

1 Complete the sentences with these nouns.

bat  ox  bird  flash  judge  bone  pancake  nails

1 I’m as blind as a ................................... without my glasses.

2 I was 21, with no job and no family to tie me down, travelling around the world. I was as free as a ...............................

3 Paul will easily lift those boxes. He’s as strong as an .............................

4 She’s very nice when you meet her socially, but she’s as tough as ............................. in her business dealings.

5 ‘No way,’ she replied, as quick as a .............................

6 We can’t dig this soil – it’s as dry as a .............................

7 The countryside around here is as flat as a .............................

8 I’d been drinking water all evening so I was as sober as a .............................
2 Complete the similes with these adjectives.

old  cold  light  thin  clear  stiff

1 as ............... as a board
2 as ................ as a rake
3 as ................ as a bell
4 as ................ as the hills
5 as ................ as ice
6 as ................ as a feather

3 Complete the sentences with similes from exercise 2.

1 Put some gloves on! Your hands are as cold as ice.
2 Celia doesn't need to lose weight – she's as cold as ice!
3 I was lifting heavy boxes yesterday and today my back is as stiff as a board.
4 Yes, I can hear you, as clear as ice.
5 He's been around for sixty years or more – he must be as stiff as a board by now.
6 I can lift you up easily – you're as light as a feather!
The similes in exercises 4–6 all contain the word *like*.

4 Match the first half of each simile with the second half.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>to eat</th>
<th>a</th>
<th>like a glove</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>to fit</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>like a drain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>to laugh</td>
<td>c</td>
<td>like the wind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>to spread</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>like a bird</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>to run</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>like wildfire</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5 Complete the sentences that explain the meaning of the simile in bold.

1 Luca ran **like the wind** to meet her.
   He ran **very fast** to meet her.

2 I’m really pleased with the dress. It **fits like a glove**.
   It fits ..................................................... .

3 I’m not surprised Rosa is so thin. She **eats like a bird**.
   She eats ..................................................... .

4 The news **spread like wildfire** and soon everyone knew.
   The news spread ..................................................... .

5 Philip **laughed like a drain** when he heard the news.
   He laughed ..................................................... .
6 Are these sentences positive ✔ or negative ✗?

1  Nothing will grow in this ground. It's as dry as a bone. ✗

2  She hadn't done any exercise in ages and she was as stiff as a board. ........

3  Josie is good at athletics. She can run like the wind. ..........

4  Viruses can spread like wildfire through contact with infected hands or surfaces. ........

5  The jacket fits like a glove. ........

6  He’s very big for his age. He’s as strong as an ox. ........
## Similes – Answer key

### Exercise 1
1. bat
2. bird
3. ox
4. nails
5. flash
6. bone
7. pancake
8. judge

### Exercise 2
1. stiff
2. thin
3. clear
4. old
5. cold
6. light

### Exercise 3
1. cold as ice
2. thin as a rake
3. stiff as a board
4. clear as a bell
5. old as the hills
6. light as a feather

### Exercise 4
1. d
2. a
3. b
4. e
5. c

### Exercise 5
1. very fast
2. very well
3. very little
4. very quickly
5. very loudly

### Exercise 6
1. ✗
2. ✗
3. ✓
4. ✗
5. ✓
6. ✓