

A number of common idiomatic expressions use the word play. Here is a list of them.

Play along

To play along is to pretend that something is funny or good just to make someone else happy.

I knew that she was playing a prank on me but I decided to play along.

Play around

To play around is to act in a silly manner.

Play at = to do something just for fun

He played at painting for a while, but he never really got serious about it.

Play back

To play back is to listen to something that has been recorded.

I will play it back once the recording is over.

Play down

To play something down is to try to make it seem less important.

He played down the fact that there was a police complaint against him.

Play off

A play off is usually a game played to decide the winner of a tie.

Play off can also mean 'make people compete against each other for your own benefits.'

He is a shrewd businessman who has always managed to make his rivals play off each other.

Play on

To play on is to exploit the feelings or fears of another person to one's own advantage.

He always plays on her insecurities.

Play out = see through till the end

We are determined to play it out until the very end, no matter what the outcome will be.