

YouTubers: Six English idioms you should know – transcript

Transcript for Six English idioms you should know

Hi, guys! Welcome back to the British Council's LearnEnglish Teens website and YouTube channel. I don't know which platform you're watching this on, but today's video is going to be some of the most common British idioms. When you learn a new language and begin to speak with native people, you might realise that they use these unusual or strange expressions, which don't make sense literally but somehow still make sense! So, I wanted to share some of the most popular British idioms, so that if you're speaking with a British person and one of these pops up, you won't be completely confused.

Also, learning idioms and using them correctly is a great way to make yourself seem more confident and natural when speaking a second language. So, if you can use some of these and keep them 'up your sleeve', then that will do wonders when you're speaking English with a native person, a native speaker or a mother tongue. So, without further ado, let's get started!

Probably the first-ever idiom that I ever heard in my whole life has been 'a penny for your thoughts' and I remember hearing this when I was at primary school and not understanding what it meant. I was a bit confused as to whether someone was going to give me a penny to hear what I was thinking, but basically what it means is, it's a way to ask someone what they're thinking. You don't actually have to give them a penny, so don't worry!

Next is saying that something costs 'an arm and a leg', and that might sound strange but what it basically means is that something is very expensive. For example, 'the new iPad costs an arm and a leg', 'my camera cost me an arm and a leg' ... it's a way to say that something is very expensive or valuable or just costs a lot generally.

If any of you are sports players, you might be able to guess the next one. 'The ball is in your court.' Any ideas? It's basically a way of saying that you have all the power. 'The ball is in your court' means that you can make the next move.

'Beating around the bush' means that you're avoiding speaking about a discussion openly or you're speaking about something indirectly. So, if someone tells you or if you say to someone 'stop beating around the bush', it's a great way to say 'get to the point and stop dilly-dallying!', which is another of my favourite words. 'Dilly-dallying' means wasting time.

'The best thing since sliced bread' is a way of saying that there's a very good invention or idea. And I'm not sure who set the standard of sliced bread being the best invention, but there you go. It's a way to say that this is a really great idea. 'Oh, that's the best thing since sliced bread' – that's the best thing I've heard in a very long time.

And last but not least, 'curiosity killed the cat'. This is one of my favourite ones because there's a lesson to be learned in this idiom as well, and that is that being too inquisitive can lead you to some unpleasant situations – not necessarily death, but there you go. It's basically a way to say 'mind your business, don't go snooping about'.

That's all for today. Comment below and let me know if you have any other British or American English idioms that you know, and let me know if you do try out any of the ones I've mentioned. Erm, that's it. I hope you guys are having a wonderful day and I'll catch you later, alligator! Bye!