

Around the Clock to Call It a Day: 4 Time Idioms in 5 Minutes

English learning resource · EN

Full episode script · English

84 lines

Study task: Listen again and notice the expressions you studied.

Martin, why are you still working?

It is nearly ten o'clock.

Because tomorrow is important, Julia.

You said that yesterday.

Yesterday was also important.

Have you been working around the clock?

Not literally.

But it certainly feels like it.

Then perhaps we should call it a day.

Not yet.

I want to finish before the deadline... not in the nick of time.

You rest once in a blue moon, Martin.

That is an unfair exaggeration.

Is it?

Welcome to Your English Toolbox and Practice Arena Five-Minute English.

I am Martin.

And I am Julia.

Today we are exploring Lesson Two of our free idioms course: Time.

The course gives you a clear path through twenty-five lessons and one hundred useful English idioms.

Each lesson uses a natural dialogue, clear explanations, common mistakes, listening and interactive practice.

Visit Your English Toolbox dot com slash idioms, or use the direct link to Lesson Two in this episode's description.

The complete course is free.

Today's four expressions are around the clock, in the nick of time, once in a blue moon, and call it a day.

So, Martin, why does it feel as if you have been working around the clock?

We are preparing episodes and finishing new Practice Arena exercises.

Around the clock means continuously, all day and all night.

Hospitals provide care around the clock.



There is also an important grammar detail.

After a verb, there are no hyphens: "The team worked around the clock."

Before a noun, we normally use hyphens: "They offer around-the-clock support."

Good.

Now, I usually finish projects in the nick of time.

Meaning just before it is too late.

Exactly.

The expression creates urgency.

Failure was very close.

It is not simply the same as on time.

If I arrive at eleven for an eleven o'clock meeting, I arrive on time.

If I run through the door while it is closing, I arrive in the nick of time.

We say in the nick of time, never on the nick of time.

Now tell the truth.

How often do you take a proper break?

Regularly.

Once in a blue moon?

That means very rarely or almost never.

We can say, "I order takeaway once in a blue moon."

Or, "Once in a blue moon, Julia admits that I am right."

Very funny.

And now our final idiom: call it a day.

It means stop working on something for the day.

We have done enough.

Let us call it a day.

The pronoun is fixed: call it a day, not call this a day.

Time for a quick challenge.

Say the best idiom before Martin answers.

Situation one.

A customer service team is available all day and all night.

Around the clock.

Situation two.

You reach the airport gate seconds before it closes.

In the nick of time.

Situation three.



You visit an expensive restaurant very rarely.

Once in a blue moon.

Final situation.

You have worked enough and decide to stop until tomorrow.

Call it a day.

Now make one sentence about your own life using one of today's idioms.

Complete your sentence aloud.

Quick recap.

Around the clock means continuously, throughout the day and night.

In the nick of time means just before it is too late.

Once in a blue moon means very rarely.

And call it a day means stop working for the day.

Continue with Idioms Lesson Two, Time, through the direct link in this episode's description.

Hear the dialogue, practise the grammar, check common mistakes and complete the interactive activities.

Four expressions.

One very long working day.

About five minutes of clear Slow English.

And now, Martin?

Now we can call it a day.

Excellent.

You agreed before midnight.

Just in the nick of time.

