

VOCABULARY · EPISODE 18

Slang Expressions Nobody Teaches You Ep1

Key words & expressions · English + Español

10 words

Your English Toolbox

1

to bail on someone**dejar tirado a alguien · rajarse a última hora**

DEF

to cancel plans with someone at the last minute, letting them down

Bail on has a note of disappointment or even betrayal — you made a commitment, then backed out. Common in informal British and American English among friends.

ES

Cancelar planes con alguien a última hora, decepcionándolo.

Tiene un tono de decepción o incluso traición — hiciste un compromiso, luego lo incumpliste.

He bailed on us at the last minute — again — so we went to the restaurant without him.

He bailed on us at the last minute — again. -> Nos dejó tirados a última hora — otra vez.

Don't bail on your English study partner. Consistency matters more than perfection.

Don't bail on your English study partner. -> No te rajes con tu compañero de estudio de inglés.

2

to be on the fence**estar en el aire · no decidirse**

DEF

to be undecided between two options, not committing to either side

On the fence is a visual idiom — imagine sitting on the fence between two fields, unable to choose. It describes comfortable indecision that can frustrate others.

ES

Estar indeciso entre dos opciones, sin comprometerse con ninguno de los dos lados.

Es un modismo visual — imagina sentarte en la valla entre dos campos sin poder elegir.

She's still on the fence about whether to take the English course or teach herself.

She's still on the fence about whether to take the English course. -> Todavía está en el aire sobre si hacer el curso de inglés.

If you're on the fence about starting, the best evidence says: start now.

If you're on the fence about starting, the best evidence says: start now. -> Si no te decides a empezar, la mejor evidencia dice: empieza ya.

3

to call it a day

dejarlo por hoy · dar por terminada la jornada

DEF

to decide to stop what you are doing and finish for now, usually after a sufficient amount of work

Call it a day is not quitting — it is the healthy decision to stop when you have done enough. Language learners benefit from calling it a day rather than studying until exhaustion.

ES

Decidir parar lo que estás haciendo y terminar por ahora, generalmente después de un trabajo suficiente.

No es rendirse — es la decisión saludable de parar cuando has hecho suficiente.

After two hours of focused study, she called it a day and went for a walk.

After two hours of focused study, she called it a day. -> Después de dos horas de estudio concentrado, lo dejó por hoy.

Your brain consolidates language during sleep, so calling it a day is actually part of learning.

Calling it a day is actually part of learning. -> Dar por terminada la jornada es en realidad parte del aprendizaje.

4

to be under the weather

estar pachucho · no encontrarse bien

DEF

to feel slightly ill or unwell, not seriously sick but not at full energy

Under the weather is a gentle euphemism — more polite than 'sick', less serious than 'ill'. The metaphor comes from sailors describing the rough feeling during bad weather at sea.

ES

Sentirse ligeramente enfermo o indispuesto, no seriamente enfermo pero sin toda la energía.

Es un eufemismo suave — más educado que 'enfermo', menos serio que 'mal'.

I'm a bit under the weather today — nothing serious, just a slight headache and low energy.

I'm a bit under the weather today. -> Hoy estoy un poco pachucho.

Even when you are under the weather, ten minutes of listening is better than nothing.

Even when you are under the weather, ten minutes of listening is better than nothing. -> Incluso cuando no te encuentras bien, diez minutos de escucha son mejor que nada.

5 to pull someone's leg tomar el pelo a alguien · vacilar a alguien

DEF

to joke with someone by telling them something false, as a friendly trick

Pull your leg is always affectionate — not a mean lie, but a playful tease. When someone is joking, you can ask 'Are you pulling my leg?' Understanding this idiom is essential for social English.

ES

Bromear con alguien diciéndole algo falso, como una broma amistosa.

Siempre es afectuoso — no una mentira cruel, sino una broma juguetona.

Are you pulling my leg? There is no way that flight costs twenty pounds.

Are you pulling my leg? There is no way that flight costs twenty pounds. -> ¿Me estás tomando el pelo? Es imposible que ese vuelo cueste veinte libras.

He said he had already finished the entire course in three days — I thought he was pulling my leg.

He said he had already finished the entire course in three days. -> Dijo que ya había terminado todo el curso en tres días — pensé que me estaba vacilando.

6 to go to great lengths hacer todo lo posible · llegar muy lejos en sus esfuerzos

DEF

to make a very large effort or go to considerable trouble to achieve something

The idiom emphasises the amount of effort, sacrifice, or planning involved — more than expected or required. Using it suggests admiration or mild surprise at the effort.

ES

Hacer un esfuerzo muy grande o tomarse muchas molestias para lograr algo.

El modismo enfatiza la cantidad de esfuerzo, sacrificio o planificación involucrada.

She went to great lengths to improve her accent — recording herself, hiring a coach, and practising for hours daily.

She went to great lengths to improve her accent. -> Hizo todo lo posible para mejorar su acento.

Native speakers go to great lengths to be clear when they know they are speaking to learners.

Native speakers go to great lengths to be clear when speaking to learners. -> Los hablantes nativos se esfuerzan enormemente por ser claros cuando hablan con estudiantes.

7 to hit the sack irse al sobre · meterse en la cama

DEF

to go to bed; to go to sleep

Hit the sack is informal and friendly — the sack was the old slang word for a bed or mattress. It is the kind of natural, casual English that textbooks never teach.

ES

Irse a la cama; irse a dormir.

Informal y amigable — el tipo de inglés natural y casual que los libros de texto nunca enseñan.

I'm exhausted — I'm going to hit the sack as soon as I get home.

I'm exhausted — I'm going to hit the sack as soon as I get home. -> Estoy agotado — me voy a ir al sobre en cuanto llegue a casa.

Hit the sack at the same time every night and your brain will build a strong sleep routine.

Hit the sack at the same time every night. -> Métete en la cama a la misma hora cada noche.

8

to give it a shot

intentarlo · darle una oportunidad

DEF

to try something, especially when you are not certain of the outcome or when it feels risky

Give it a shot encourages you to attempt something despite uncertainty. It's relaxed and informal — like 'go ahead and try'. For English learners, it's the perfect attitude: give every conversation a shot, even if you're nervous.

ES

Intentar algo, especialmente cuando no estás seguro del resultado o cuando parece arriesgado.

Fomenta el intento a pesar de la incertidumbre — relajado e informal, como 'venga, inténtalo'.

You don't have to be fluent — just give it a shot and see how far you get.

You don't have to be fluent — just give it a shot and see how far you get. -> No tienes que ser fluido — simplemente inténtalo y ve hasta dónde llegas.

She'd never tried speaking English with a native before, but she gave it a shot at the airport.

She'd never tried speaking English with a native before, but she gave it a shot at the airport. -> Nunca había intentado hablar inglés con un nativo antes, pero le dio una oportunidad en el aeropuerto.

9

to cut corners

hacer las cosas a medias · tomar atajos de mala calidad

DEF

to do something in the quickest or cheapest way, often reducing quality or skipping important steps

Cut corners has a slightly negative tone — it implies taking shortcuts that compromise the result. In language learning, cutting corners (avoiding hard grammar, skipping listening practice) always catches up with you later.

ES

Hacer algo de la manera más rápida o barata, frecuentemente reduciendo la calidad u omitiendo pasos importantes.

Tiene un tono ligeramente negativo — implica tomar atajos que comprometen el resultado.

Don't cut corners with your listening practice — every minute you skip is a gap in your understanding.

Don't cut corners with your listening practice — every minute you skip is a gap in your understanding. -> No hagas tu práctica de escucha a medias — cada minuto que te saltas es un hueco en tu comprensión.

Some apps cut corners by skipping pronunciation training, which is why so many learners plateau early.

Some apps cut corners by skipping pronunciation training, which is why so many learners plateau early. -> Algunas apps toman atajos de mala calidad saltándose el entrenamiento de pronunciación, por eso tantos alumnos se estancan pronto.

10 dead set on something

totalmente decidido a algo · empeñado en algo a toda costa

DEF

completely determined to do or achieve something, with no possibility of being talked out of it

Dead set on is stronger than just 'determined' — it means nothing will change your mind. It's informal and emphatic. Useful for expressing conviction about your English goals: being dead set on fluency.

ES

Completamente decidido a hacer o lograr algo, sin posibilidad de que te convenzan de lo contrario.

Más fuerte que simplemente 'decidido' — significa que nada cambiará tu opinión.

She was dead set on moving to London, so she practised English every single day for two years.

She was dead set on moving to London, so she practised English every single day for two years. -> Estaba totalmente decidida a mudarse a Londres, así que practicó inglés todos los días durante dos años.

If you're dead set on sounding natural, you need to shadow real conversations, not just read grammar books.

If you're dead set on sounding natural, you need to shadow real conversations, not just read grammar books.

-> Si estás empeñado en sonar natural a toda costa, necesitas hacer shadowing de conversaciones reales, no solo leer libros de gramática.