Your English Toolbox

VOCABULARY · EPISODE 240

A Change of Heart: 4 Idioms About Change

English learning resource · EN

Key words & expressions · English

4 idioms and 4 additional expressions

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

1

turn over a new leaf

DEF

To begin behaving in a better way.

Often describes a hopeful change after a bad habit or mistake; change turn for the tense.

Sam turned over a new leaf and began helping.

I want to turn over a new leaf this year.

2

have a change of heart

DEF

To change one's opinion or decision about something.

Often used when someone reverses a previous position; about can introduce the subject.

He had a change of heart about the garden.

She planned to leave, but had a change of heart.

3

break new ground

DEF

To develop an innovative idea or method, especially in a field.

Suggests meaningful innovation, not merely doing something new to one individual.

The team broke new ground in water saving.

Her research broke new ground in medicine.

4

move the goalposts

DEF

To change rules or targets while someone is trying to meet them.

Usually suggests unfairness or frustration; often used with keep when it happens repeatedly.

The manager moved the goalposts after we reached the target.

They keep moving the goalposts.

5

reach a target

DEF

To achieve a result that was set as a goal.

Target can refer to a quantity, deadline or other agreed objective.

The volunteers reached their water-saving target.

Our team reached its target early.

6

from the beginning

DEF

Starting at the first point of a process or event.

Use it when a condition or action applies from the start, rather than being added later.

Ask for clear rules from the beginning.

We discussed the budget from the beginning.

7

save water

DEF

To use less water or avoid wasting it.

Here save means conserve a resource, not rescue someone or keep money.

Collecting rainwater can help save water.

We save water by repairing leaks.

8

without warning

DEF

Without telling someone beforehand that something will happen.

Describes the absence of advance notice, not necessarily an emergency.

The manager changed the target without warning.

The shop closed without warning.