

When Plans Go Wrong: 3 Idioms in 5 Minutes

English learning resource · EN

Full episode script · English

75 lines

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

Have you ever planned everything perfectly... and then watched it fall apart?

Oh yes.

Yesterday, in fact.

What happened?

I planned a picnic for twelve people.

I made sandwiches and found the perfect place in the park.

That sounds organised.

It was.

Then the rain started, the park closed, and I dropped the sandwiches.

All of them?

Every single sandwich, Martin.

So you were back to square one.

Exactly.

And that is our first idiom today: back to square one.

Welcome to Your English Toolbox.

I am Martin.

And I am Julia.

Today, you will learn three idioms for moments when life changes your plans.

Back to square one.

A blessing in disguise.

And go with the flow.

Three expressions, one disaster, and about five minutes of Slow English.

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Let us return to your wet picnic.

Please do not call it my wet picnic.

Fair enough.

Back to square one means that a plan failed and you must start again.

Right.

We often use it after an attempt does not work.

For example: the computer lost our work, so we are back to square one.

Notice the pattern: be back to square one, or go back to square one.

It does not mean failure forever.

You simply begin again.

So, Julia, did everybody go home?

No. One friend invited us to her apartment.

Ah.

The disaster changed direction.

We ordered pizza, played music, and talked for hours.

Then the rain was a blessing in disguise.

Exactly.

A blessing in disguise is something that looks bad at first but later produces a good result.

Losing one opportunity can be a blessing in disguise if it leads to a better one.

The key idea is contrast: bad at first, good later.

We normally use it after we can see the unexpected benefit.

Which brings us to our third expression: go with the flow.

To go with the flow means to accept what is happening and adapt.

My picnic was gone.

I could complain all afternoon, or I could go with the flow and enjoy the pizza.

It is informal and useful in everyday conversation.

But it does not mean that you never make decisions.

No. It means that being flexible is better in this moment.

Time for a quick challenge.



We will give you three situations.

Say the best idiom aloud.

Situation one.

Your first solution does not work, so you must start again.

Back to square one.

Situation two.

A cancelled interview gives you time to prepare, and you later get a better job.

A blessing in disguise.

Situation three.

The restaurant is full, so your friends choose another place and you agree.

Go with the flow.

Now your turn.

Think of one plan that went wrong.

Did it send you back to square one?

Did it become a blessing in disguise?

Or did you simply go with the flow?

Say one sentence aloud now.

Excellent.

Today you learned back to square one, a blessing in disguise, and go with the flow.

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One situation.

Three useful expressions.

Five minutes.

See you next time.

