



Our Favorite Expressions

Serie 8 ©

by John Grierson

1. Monday

“A Bird In The Hand Is Worth Two In The Bush”

If someone is always hoping for something better than they have, you might tell them that a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush. The origin lies in the sport of bird-hunting, particularly for game birds, such as grouse or partridge. Thus, you might say to such a person, “You may think you can make even more profit, but you are already doing well - a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush”

2. Tuesday

“Water Under The Bridge”

When something that is in the past, and can't be brought back, like water flowing in a river, it is water under the bridge. Here's how you might use it: “It's very sad that you broke that expensive vase, and it can't be repaired - but that's water under the bridge now, so just forget it.”

3. Wednesday

“Crying Over Spilt Milk”

This expression is very similar to “water under the bridge” and it means that there is no point in regretting something that you, or anyone, may have done, and which you can't undo. You might say “It looks as though you made a serious mistake buying that useless phone app. But, there's no use crying over spilt milk.”

4. Thursday

“Keep Your Hair On”

To someone who is making a fuss, you might say “I know you're upset about the result of the test you failed, but there's no point in shouting - keep your hair on! Don't lose your temper. Keep calm.

5. Friday

“Better The Devil You Know Than The Devil You Don't”

This is usually abbreviated to “better the devil you know ...” Imagine that you are faced with a difficult choice between two things, neither of which you really want. It's better to choose the

one where you know the likely consequences rather than one where you are not sure. This expression or proverb was first used by Richard Taverner in 1539, in Ireland. So, for example: "You may not like him much as the new coach, but it's better than recruiting someone we don't know at all. Better the devil you know ..."