



Our Favorite Expressions

Serie 10 ©

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1. Monday

“Putting Your Best Foot Forward”

This means, quite simply, to do, or try your best. The origin is obscure, but could possibly come from a time in the fifteenth century when men wore tight leggings as part of their everyday clothing, and the idea was to show off the legs, by quite literally putting one leg in front of the other in a pose. Here’s how one might use it; in the interview today for that job you want, remember to put your best foot forward.

2. Tuesday

“Telling A White Lie”

A white lie is still a lie, but it is told for the best of reasons, usually to avoid hurting someone by telling them the truth. If a man’s wife who is somewhat overweight anyway, asks him “do I look fat in this dress?” the kind way and the best way to avoid trouble is to say “no, of course not”. That would be a white lie.

3. Wednesday

“The Last Straw”

The full expression, usually shorted to “that’s the last straw” is “that’s the straw that breaks the camel’s back”. It means that when a situation is already bad, it only takes a very small extra element to turn it into a disaster. The idea is that a camel, already heavily burdened cannot take even the smallest additional load. If you find that your car, already old and falling to pieces, suddenly develops another problem, you’d say “that’s the last straw!”

4. Thursday

“Leave No Stone Unturned”

This is a very old expression, usually attributed to the ancient Greek philosopher Euripides. It means to do everything possible to find something or to solve a problem. It is often used to praise someone's careful work, as in: the researcher left no stone unturned in her search for the original documents.

5. Friday

“Look A Gift Horse In The Mouth“

If someone gives you a present, or does something for you without asking for payment, that is a gift, and even if you don't like it very much, you should not say so. One of the ways to check the age of a horse, and its state of health, is to have a look at its teeth. But if someone gives you a horse as a present, it would be unkind and ungrateful for you to inspect its teeth. Imagine that your elderly aunt gives you a truly awful pullover she has knitted herself. If you say anything uncomplimentary about it, you would be looking a gift horse in the mouth.