

British Sayings and Proverbs

Proverbs

'Every cloud has a silver lining'
There's always something good in bad times.

'A stitch in time saves nine'
Act early and you can save a lot of time.

'Nothing ventured nothing gained'
You have to try or you won't get anything.

'Out of the frying pan into the fire'
From one problem to another.

'One man's meat is another man's poison'
People often don't like the same things.

'Don't look a gift horse in the mouth'
Don't question good luck.

'You can lead a horse to water, but you cannot make it drink'
You can give a person a chance, but you can't make him or her take it.

'The grass is always greener on the other side'
You always think that other people's lives are better than yours.

'The best things in life are free'
We don't have to pay for the things that are really valuable, like love, friendship, good health etc.

'Don't cross your bridges before you come to them'
Don't worry about problems before they arrive.

'It was the last straw that broke the camel's back'
There is a limit to everything. We can load the camel with lots of straw, but finally it will be too much and the camel's back will break. And it is only a single straw that breaks its back - the last straw.

This can be applied to many things in life. People often say "That's the last straw!" when they will not accept any more of something.

'Where there's a will there's a way'
If we have the determination to do something, we can always find the path or method to do it.

'Marry in haste, and repent at leisure'
If we get married quickly, without thinking carefully, we may be sorry later. And we will have plenty of time to be sorry.

'The best advice is found on the pillow'

If we have a problem, we may find the answer after a good night's sleep.

People also say: "I'll sleep on it."

'You can't judge a book by its cover'

We need to read a book to know if it's good or bad. We cannot know what it's like just by looking at the front or back cover. This proverb is applied to everything, not only books.

'Bad news travels fast'

'Bad news' means news about 'bad' things like accidents, death, illness etc. People tend to tell this type of news quickly. But 'good news' (passing an exam, winning some money, getting a job etc) travels more slowly.

'Birds of a feather flock together'

Birds of a feather means birds of the same type. The whole proverb means that people of the same type or sort stay together. They don't mix with people of another type

'Live and let live'

This proverb suggest that we should not interfere in other people's business. We should live our own lives and let others live their lives.

'The way to a man's heart is through his stomach'

Many women have won a man's love by cooking delicious meals for him. They fed his stomach and found love in his heart.

'Better untaught than ill taught.'

This proverb drops the verb 'to be'. But we understand: "It is better not to be taught at all than to be taught badly." It's better not to learn something than to learn it badly.

'Soon learnt, soon forgotten'

Something that is easy to learn is easy to forget.

Sayings

'Bob's your uncle'

It is added to the end of sentences a bit like and that's it!

Origin of Bob's your Uncle

"Bob's your Uncle" is a way of saying "you're all set" or "you've got it made." It's a catch phrase dating back to 1887, when British Prime Minister Robert Cecil (a.k.a. Lord Salisbury) decided to appoint a certain Arthur Balfour to the prestigious and sensitive post of Chief Secretary for Ireland.

Not lost on the British public was the fact that Lord Salisbury just happened to be better known to Arthur Balfour as "Uncle Bob." In the resulting furor over what was seen as an act of blatant nepotism, "Bob's your uncle" became a popular sarcastic comment applied to any situation where

the outcome was preordained by favoritism. As the scandal faded in public memory, the phrase lost its edge and became just a synonym for "no problem."

By James Harris

'Burning the Candle at Both Ends'

Working for many hours without getting enough rest

'Eyes are bigger than your belly'

Think you can eat more than you can

'My eyes were bigger than my belly, I couldn't eat every thing I had put on my plate'

'Sleep Tight'

Have a good nights sleep

'Tie the Knot'

Get Married