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The English We Speak

To sleep on it



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NB: This is not a word-for-word transcript

Feifei

Hello, welcome to The English We Speak, I'm Feifei...

Neil

...and I'm Neil. Hello. We're out shopping today, aren't we, Feifei?

Feifei

Yes, Neil needs to buy a new bed – his old bed has broken. So Neil, look at all these beds – there are so many to choose from but which one do you want to buy?

Neil

Well, that one there is massive but it wouldn't fit through my front door!

Feifei

Hmm, that one there is quite cheap but... it doesn't look very well made.

Neil

Hey look at this one... a water bed! Listen to the sound it makes!

Feifei

Oh, there are too many beds to choose from!

Neil

Well, Feifei, I'll have to sleep on it.

Feifei

Neil! You can't sleep on that water bed – you haven't bought it yet – and anyway, you haven't brought your pyjamas!

Neil

Relax Feifei – I'm not going to sleep here in the shop – that would be embarrassing! When someone says they're going to sleep on it, they mean they're going to spend some time thinking about something before making a final decision.

Feifei

Phew! So you make your final decision later – not now?

Neil

That's right! So I'm going to think about which is the best bed to buy and come back in the morning, OK? Let's hear some other examples of the phrase 'to sleep on it'...

Examples

We couldn't decide which car to buy so we decided to sleep on it – we didn't want to buy the wrong one!

Thanks for your job offer but I need some time to think about it. Let me sleep on it and I'll give you an answer tomorrow.

He told me he'd have to sleep on it before he could agree to my request for a pay rise.

Feifei

To sleep on it... hmm... but why 'sleep' Neil?

Neil

Because usually you think about your decision overnight – you literally go to sleep before waking up the next day and deciding what to do, when you've had more rest.

Feifei

It sounds like a good idea but hold on Neil...

Neil

What's wrong?

Feifei

You can't 'sleep on it' overnight because you haven't got a bed to sleep on!

Neil

Well, let's not *lose sleep over it* – you've got a spare bed haven't you?

Feifei

What?!

Neil

It's another idiom Feifei but I'll explain it another time. Come on let's go.

Both

Bye.