
BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

The English We Speak

Not a sausage



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This is not a word-for-word transcript

Neil

Hello and welcome to The English We Speak. I'm Neil...

Feifei

...and I'm Feifei. So, Neil, did you hear anything?

Neil

About what, Feifei?

Feifei

Rob's new job. He must have told you something?

Neil

No. He didn't even mention it.

Feifei

How strange. Not even a little clue?

Neil

No, **not a sausage**.

Feifei

Well, I'm sure we'll find out soon enough. In the meantime – let's explain that wonderful phrase you just used.

Neil

In this programme we are teaching you the very cute but slightly old-fashioned phrase: **not a sausage**.

Feifei

We use it to mean 'nothing at all'. It's generally used for emphasis or to show mild surprise.

Neil

It's informal and friendly. Let's listen to some examples to get a better sense of how it's used:

Examples

A: Did you find any good deals?

B: No, **not a sausage**.

A: Did the boss say anything about my project?

B: No, sorry, **not a sausage**.

A: Are there any sandwiches left?

B: I'm afraid not. **Not a sausage**.

Feifei

That last one might have sounded confusing: No sandwiches left?

Neil

Not a sausage! Yes, confusingly, we were asking about another kind of food – and the answer was still **not a sausage**.

Feifei

You know what? All this talk of sausages is making me hungry.

Neil

Indeed. I'm meeting Rob for lunch – fancy joining?

Feifei

Great. Hopefully he will finally **spill the beans** about this mysterious new job.

Neil

Ooh – **to spill the beans** – meaning to reveal your secrets. It's often used when you share a secret you didn't mean to share!

Feifei

Another great phrase. So, what do you fancy for lunch?

Neil

Well, it has to be a full English breakfast. With beans and... sausages!

Feifei

But of course! Bye everyone!

Neil

Bye.