
BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

The English We Speak

To have a good nose (for something)



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ENGLISH

This is not a word-for-word transcript

Feifei

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

Rob

... and hello, I'm Rob.

Feifei

Errr, what is that smell?

Rob

Smell? I can't smell anything.

Feifei

There is definitely a terrible smell, like mouldy cheese. What's in that bag, Rob?

Rob

Oh, this bag! You're right, it is cheese. Beautiful, delicious Stilton cheese in fact. Would you like some?

Feifei

No! So why have you got a bag of mouldy cheese?

Rob

Well, I stopped at the cheese shop on the way to the office and saw this cheese was half price – and you probably know, I have a good nose for a bargain.

Feifei

I don't think so, Rob – judging by this cheese, you have a bad nose – it smells awful!

Rob

No, Feifei. When you have a nose – or even a good nose - for something, it's not about your sense of smell. It describes someone who is naturally good at finding and recognising something – in my case, finding a bargain!

Feifei

I'm not so sure about that, Rob! Well, I have a good nose for finding examples – so here they are...

Examples

We need to sell more newspapers, so we need to find a reporter with a good nose for a story.

I have a good nose for learning languages and was fluent in Spanish in just a year!

My mum's got a nose for bargains and booked us all flights to Italy for just fifty pounds each.

Feifei

This is The English We Speak from BBC Learning English and we're finding out about the phrase 'to have a good nose (for something)'. Rob claims to have one, but I'm not so sure. So how much did you pay for this cheese, Rob?

Rob

Only 20 pounds – it was half price!

Feifei

That's because it's old – look, it's going green! Sorry, Rob - this cannot stay in the studio. It stinks – out it goes.

Rob

That's not very nice.

Feifei

Hold on, I can still smell something bad. It's your socks! Look, you haven't got your shoes on. Urghhh!

Rob

Wow, Feifei, you really have got a good nose – a good nose for bad smells!

Feifei

Your bad smells, Rob!

Rob

Time to go. Bye.

Feifei

Bye.