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The English We Speak

Kick (something) into the long grass



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This is not a word-for-word transcript

Feifei

Hello and welcome to The English We Speak with me, Feifei...

Rob

...and me, Rob. So, Feifei, what are you doing tonight?

Feifei

Tonight? Oh, erm, I'm busy – I'm washing my hair tonight.

Rob

Oh right – so you're not going to that new bar for a drink? I overheard someone saying that you and some of the team were going.

Feifei

Oh yes! The new bar. We are going for a drink – just one - on the way home – errr.... Would you like to join us?

Rob

Oh yes that would be great!

Feifei

Actually, haven't you got that big project to finish? The one the boss said was very important?

Rob

Oh that! No, no, no – that's not important – I'll leave it for a few days and he'll forget about it.

Feifei

Hmm, so you're going to kick it into the long grass?

Rob

'Kick it into the long grass'? You mean delay a plan or decision about something because it will only cause problems for me – and that by delaying it, it might get forgotten altogether?

Feifei

That's exactly what I meant! Let's hear some examples of this phrase in action...

Examples

The decision to kick the plans for a new railway line into the long grass means that we'll have to continue to face overcrowding and slow journey times.

He hoped by kicking a decision on her marriage proposal into the long grass she'd soon forget – but she didn't!

I've decided to kick this plan to redecorate the house into the long grass – we've got more urgent things to do, like fixing the hole in the roof!

Feifei

You're listening to The English We Speak from BBC Learning English. In this programme, we're looking at the expression 'to kick something into the long grass'. It means to delay a plan or decision because it is difficult or problematic. And Rob is delaying the project the boss asked him to do because it's hard work.

Rob

Hard work? This project is perfect for someone with my skills, but I need time to think about it... maybe a few weeks.

Feifei

But if you kick it into the long grass, you won't be able to find it!

Rob

Of course not. Now, what time are we going for that drink?

The Boss

Rob could I have a word about that urgent project I asked you to do – as soon as possible?

Feifei

Oh dear, Rob. It looks like you're going to have to kick that drink into the long grass. I think you'd better go and see the boss. Good luck!

Rob

OK. See you later.

Feifei

Bye!