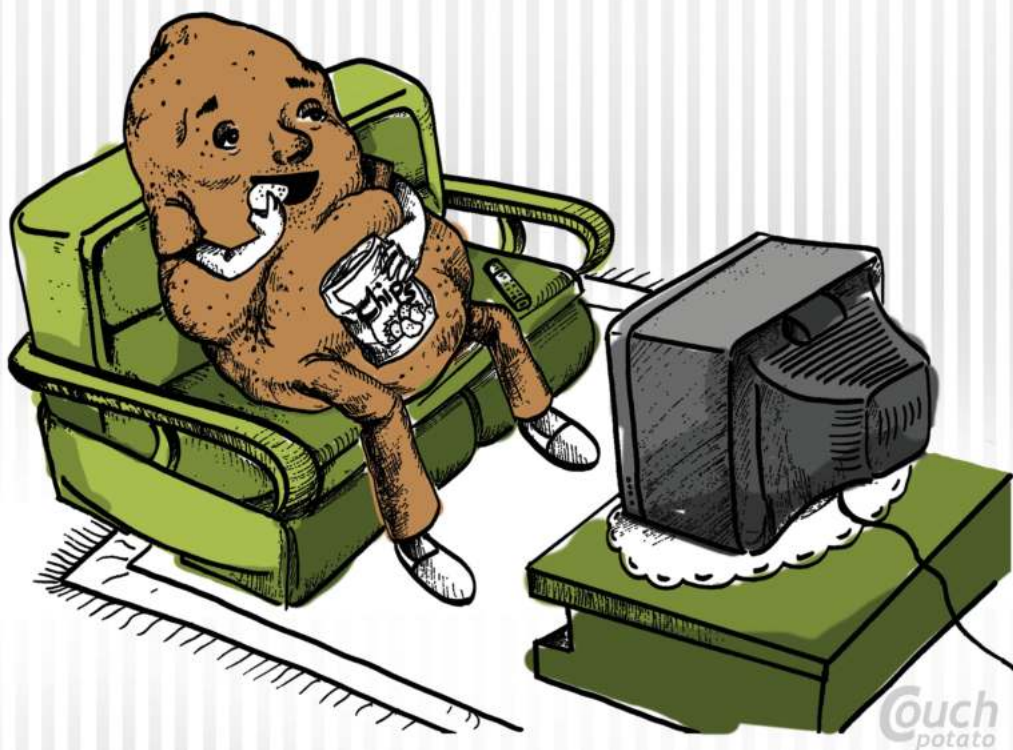


Words & Their Stories

Idioms & Expressions



Couch
potato

● Hussain Havashki

● Mahdi Havashki

In the Name of God

Words and Their Stories

Hussain Havashki

Mahdi Havashki



www.tbteeworld.com

Table of Contents

A Chip on Your Shoulder	4
Apple Pie	7
Are You Loaded	10
Baseball Terms	13
Bigwig	16
Bird Words	19
Clothing Expressions	23
Colorful Expressions	26
Dog Talk	30
Don't Take a Cat Nap!	34
Down to Earth	37
Do You Have a Broken Heart?	40
Easy as Falling Off a Log	43
English Expressions with Kick	46
Fall Guy	50
Feel the Pinch	54
Fish Expressions	57
Food Expressions (1)	61
Food Expressions (2)	64
Food Expressions (3)	68
Get Off My Back	72
Heart to Heart	75
Hit the Spot	78
Hold On	81
Hold Your Horses	84
Hot Potatoes	87
Keeping Your Head above Water	90
Let's Do Business	94
Medical Expressions	97
Money Talks	101
Money	104
Monkey Expressions	107
More Clothing Expressions	110
Mouth Expressions	113
Nose and Ear Expressions	116
Number Phrases	119
Old Proverbs Still Speak the Truth	122
Proverbs Tell How to Succeed in Life	125
Quit Buggin'	128
The Cold, Hard Truth	131



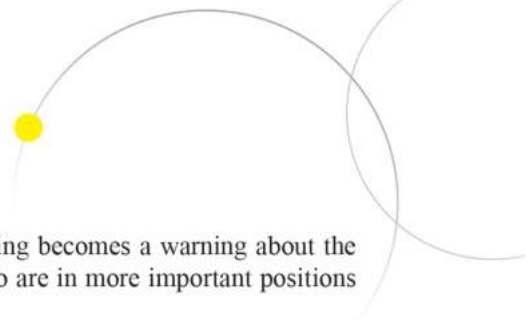
1

A Chip on Your Shoulder

Some popular expressions are a mystery. No one is sure how they developed. One of these is the expression, **carry a chip on your shoulder**. A person with a chip on his shoulder is a problem for anybody who must deal with him. He seems to be expecting trouble. Sometimes he seems to be saying, "I'm not happy about anything, but what are you going to do about it?"

A chip is a small piece of something, like a chip of wood. How did this chip get on a person's shoulder? Well, experts say the expression appears to have been first used in the United States more than one hundred years ago.

One writer believes that the expression might have come from an old saying. The saying warns against striking too high, or a chip might fall into your eye. That could be good advice. If you strike high up on a tree with an axe, the chip of wood that is cut off



will fall into your eye. The saying becomes a warning about the dangers of attacking people who are in more important positions than you are.

Later, in the United States, some people would put a real chip on their shoulder as a test. They wanted to start a fight. They would wait for someone to be brave enough to try to hit it off.

The word chip appears in a number of special American expressions. Another is **chip off the old block**. This means that a child is exactly like a parent.

This expression goes back at least to the early sixteen hundreds. The British writer of plays, George Colman, wrote these lines in seventeen sixty-two. "You'll find him his father's own son, I believe. A chip off the old block, I promise you!"

The word chip can also be used in a threatening way to someone who is suspected of wrongdoing. An investigator may say, "We're going **to let the chips fall where they may.**" This means the investigation is going to be complete and honest. It is also a warning that no one will be protected from being found guilty.

Chips are often used in card games. They represent money. A poker player may, at any time, decide to leave the game. He will turn in his chips in exchange for money or cash.

This led to another meaning. A person who finished or died was said to have **cashd in his chips**.

● Choose the best answer.

- 1. Even though he went to university, he's always **had a chip on his shoulder** about his poor upbringing.
 - a. seemed sad all the time because he had treated someone unfairly
 - b. blamed other people for something bad which has happened to him and to continue to be angry about it
 - c. had a small disk or counter used in poker and other games to represent money
- 2. People call Ray **a chip off the old block** because he
 - a. reminds them of his father
 - b. reminds them of his son
 - c. reminds them of their fathers
- 3. He **cached in his chips** shortly before his ninetieth birthday.
 - a. quitted
 - b. sold
 - c. died



2

Apple Pie

Today we tell about the expression **apple-pie order**. It means in perfect order, very well organized.

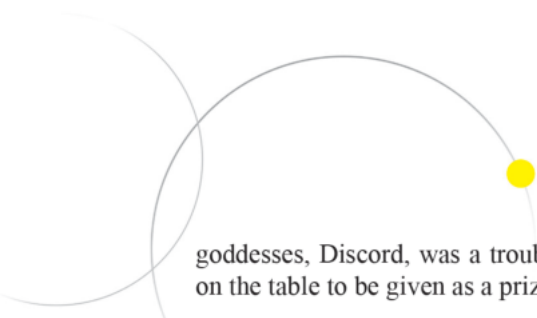
Nobody is sure where and when the expression apple pie order began. Some say that Scottish and English writers used the expression a long time ago. Others say it first was used in the northeastern American states known as New England.

The housewives of New England cut their apples in even slices. Then they filled pie pans with them in an organized way, row upon row. As one writer said, the women of New England loved to have everything in its place. This perhaps explains why it generally is believed that the expression apple-pie order began in New England.

Another old expression describes the opposite condition – wild disorder. That expression is **apple of discord**. It comes from ancient mythology.

The myth says that all the gods and goddesses were sitting around the table to celebrate the marriage of Thetis and Peleus. One of the

7



goddesses, Discord, was a troublemaker. She threw a golden apple on the table to be given as a prize to the most beautiful goddess.

It was not an easy decision to make. How could they choose among Juno, Minerva and Venus? Paris was given the task of deciding. He decided to give the golden apple to Venus. Juno and Minerva were very angry and threatened him. This, the myth says, began the long Trojan War.

At one time, the tomato was called a love apple. That was a mistake. This is how the mistake happened.

In the sixteenth century, Spain imported the tomato from South America after Spanish explorers had landed there. Spain then exported the tomato to Morocco. Italian traders carried it on to Italy. The Italian name for the tomato was pomo di Moro – apple of the Moors.

When French growers imported it from Italy, they thought di Moro meant d'amour, the French word for love. And so pomo di Moro became the apple of love.

People believe many things about the apple. One belief is that it has great powers of keeping people healthy. A very common expression is “**An apple a day keeps the doctor away.**”

Another belief is based on fact. The expression is “**One rotten apple spoils the barrel.**” When an apple begins to go bad, it ruins all the other apples around it in the container. The expression has come to mean that one bad person in a group can cause everyone to act bad.

● **Choose the best answer.**

- 1. The right to host the next Olympic Games has become **an apple of discord** between the two countries.
 - a. a good situation
 - b. anything causing trouble, discord, or jealousy
 - c. a war
- 2. Her desk is always in apple-pie order.
 - a. there are lots of apples on the table
 - b. a mess
 - c. excellent or perfect order
- 3. Grandma always fed us lots of apples when we visited her. She believed that **an apple a day keeps the doctor away**.
 - a. doctors think that apples are good for us
 - b. eating an apple each day can help to keep you healthy
 - c. doctors are afraid of apples
- 4. Helen is **the rotten apple that spoils the barrel** in our office. Everyone sees her come in late to work and take long coffee breaks, and they think, “Why can’t I do the same?”
 - a. a bad person that everyone in the office hates him
 - b. a person who is always late
 - c. a bad person influences everyone he or she comes into contact with, making them bad too



3

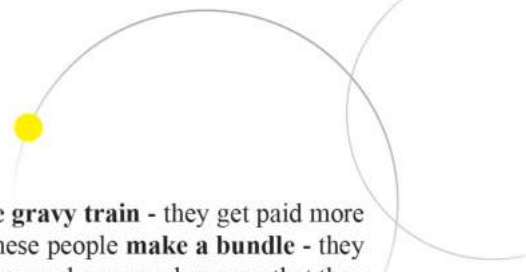
Are You Loaded?

Most people enjoy working for several reasons – their job might be fun, or they like their employer and the other people at work. Most people I know, however, work for the money. I do not know anyone who is **loaded** - or extremely rich.

Most of my friends work to earn enough money to live. They have to **make ends meet** - they have to earn enough money to pay for the things they need. Some even **live from hand to mouth** - they only have enough money for the most important things.

They struggle to earn enough money to **bring home the bacon** - it can be difficult to earn enough money for a family to survive. Sometimes, poor people even get **caught short** - they do not have enough money to pay for what they need.

Or they have to spend or **lay out** more money than they want for something. When this happens, poor people have to **tighten their belts** and live on less money than usual. I hate when I have to live on less money. It takes me longer to get **back on my feet** - or return to good financial health.



However, other people are **on the gravy train** - they get paid more money than their job is worth. These people **make a bundle** - they really **rake in the cash**. In fact, they make so much money that they can **live high off the hog** - they own the best of everything and live in great ease. Sometimes they pay **an arm and a leg** for something.

Because **money is no object** to wealthy people, they will pay high prices for whatever they want. Sometimes, they even **pay through the nose** - they pay too much for things.

I am not rich. I did not **make a killing** in the stock market when my stocks increased in value.

Yet, I am not poor either. When I go out with friends, I do not want to **shell out** - or pay a lot of money. Often, my friends and I will **chip in** - or pay jointly for a fun night out. When we go to restaurants, the meal is **Dutch treat** - each person pays his or her own share.

Once, the owner of a restaurant gave us a dinner **on the house** - we did not have to pay for our meals. However, I admit that we had to **grease someone's palm** - we had to pay money to the employee who led us to our table. The money was for a special request. Yes, it was a **buy-off** - the employee put us at the top of the list for a table instead of making us wait like everyone else. We had a great time that night and the meal did not **set me back** at all -- I did not have to pay anything.

Because of that experience, I will always remember that nice things still happen in a world that is driven by money. But, that is **just my two cents worth** - it is just my opinion.

Match expressions to definitions.

1. loaded

a. a position in which a person or group receives excessive and unjustified money or advantages with little or no effort

2. make ends meet

b. to spend money

3. live (from) hand to mouth

c. to earn and spend equal amounts of money.

4. bring home the bacon

d. to have just enough money to live on and nothing extra

5. caught short

e. to earn a living, especially for a family

6. lay out

f. left without any money temporarily

7. gravy train

g. having a great deal of money

8. money is no object

h. to pay too much for something

9. Shell out

i. make illegal payments to in exchange for favors or influence

10. grease someone's palm

j. my opinion on a particular matter

11. just my two cents worth

k. to spend a certain amount of money

12. pay through the nose

l. something that you say which means it does not matter how much something costs because there is a lot of money available