

A to Z English



A to Z Idioms 21: Idioms with rocks

Website: <http://atozenglishpodcast.com>

In this episode, Kevin and Jack use a couple of idioms using rocks
to **be clear as mud**
to **be stuck between a rock and a hard place**

And a bonus idiom! listen for it!

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We would love to hear your feedback and suggestions for future episodes.

Send questions and comments to: atozenglishpodcast@gmail.com

Intro/Outro Music: Eaters, song Dig Your Own Soul
(eatersmusic2000) <https://freemusicarchive.org/music/eaters/an-evening-with-tuck-pendleton/dig-your-own-soul/>

Full Transcript

00:00:00 Kevin

Welcome to A-Z English idioms from A-Z, Jack and I've got two more idioms for you today and then you can remember to check our website for a transcript as well as links to all of our social media so you can come and try and use the idioms with us as well.

00:00:17 Kevin

And for the last couple of weeks, we've been talking about the elements Jack we had ice.

00:00:22 Kevin

Then we had some some sand the last time and and today let's stick with Earth and talk a little bit about like mud and mud and stones.

00:00:33 Kevin

Some hard.

00:00:35 Kevin

Hard thing, uh mude not so hard really, but it comes from the same thing.

00:00:37 Kevin

We've got the sand mixed with water is mud and then then rocks as well so.

00:00:43 Kevin

This one what do you?

00:00:45 Kevin

What do you?

00:00:45 Kevin

What are the two idioms for today?

00:00:47 Jack

Yes, so our first idiom is clear as mud.

00:00:52 Kevin

Clear as much I think, and I think this one.

00:00:52 Jack

As mud?

00:00:54 Jack

It sounds very odd, right?

00:00:56 Kevin

It does sound very odd because it's very, I mean mud is not clear.

00:01:01 Kevin

That course.

00:01:01 Jack

Right?

00:01:02 Kevin

I think this one will be somewhat easy for people to try and guess.

00:01:08 Kevin

Actually what this means, but we'll talk about in a second.

00:01:09 Jack

Yeah, sure.

00:01:12 Kevin

So to be clear, as mud and.

00:01:15 Jack

And to be stuck between a rock and.

00:01:19 Jack

A hard place.

00:01:20 Kevin

Oh nice, I I see that one used very regularly in different TV shows and stuff, yeah?

00:01:23 Jack

Sure, I use it all the time.

00:01:25 Jack

Well not all the time, but whenever I'm stuck between a rock and a hard place.

00:01:29 Jack

I use it.

00:01:30 Kevin

Yeah, so this one's used a bit more often than some other idioms and idioms are great. They're not used every day, but they're good to know because they they help you understand the culture and they're used often enough that they can be important.

00:01:45 Kevin

So to be clear, as mud.

00:01:48 Kevin

So clear if something is.

00:01:50 Kevin

Clear what does it mean.

00:01:51 Kevin

To be clear, let's just start with.

00:01:52 Kevin

This part of it.

00:01:53 Kevin

If something is clear, what does it mean?

00:01:55 Kevin

I mean my window is clear, I can see through my window.

00:01:55 Jack

I'll give you an example your window.

00:01:57 Jack

Is clear, yeah?

00:01:59 Kevin

Right water is clear.

00:02:02 Kevin

Mod obviously is not clear.

00:02:03 Kevin

I can see through the the water in my cup.

00:02:06 Jack

A lot, a lot of plastic, a lot of plastic water bottles are clear.

00:02:06 Kevin

My water is clear.

00:02:10 Jack

You can see right through it, it's yeah.

00:02:10 Kevin

Of course, glass air, the air is clear, yeah.

00:02:16 Jack

Well, sometimes if it's cloudy.

00:02:18 Jack

We would say the sky is.

00:02:19 발표자 2

True, that's true true.

00:02:19 Jack

There you know no clouds clear.

00:02:21 Kevin

Yeah, it's true.

00:02:21 Kevin

So if it's clear it's clean, usually yeah, OK, so those are some of the meanings of what clear is around us when we see something clear, but that's not what this idiom means.

00:02:33 Kevin

To be clear, of course, and if something is clear.

00:02:37 Kevin

Not glass, not water, right?

00:02:39 Kevin

But just something is clear.

00:02:40 Kevin

What does that mean?

00:02:42 Kevin

And then I think the.

00:02:42 Kevin

Idiom will be easy to guess.

00:02:44 Jack

Yeah, if something is clear, it means that you understand it completely.

00:02:48 Kevin

Right, you understand it easily, it's clear.

00:02:48 Jack

So it's 100% understandable, yeah, hopefully.

00:02:53 Kevin

Hopefully all of our definitions and explanations of these idioms are pretty clear for everyone listening, you understand what we're trying to tell you, and if we're not clear anyone, please come and ask us, of course.

00:03:07 Jack

And and also your voice can be clear as well.

00:03:09 Jack

So when we're speaking clearly you're you're speaking slowly and using correct pronunciation and not mumbling and so that's another usage of clear as well, yeah.

00:03:12 발표자 2

Sure, true.

00:03:21 Kevin

Right, so clear is it's clean.

00:03:24 Kevin

It's easy to understand in this context.

00:03:27 Kevin

You can hear them, you can understand them, you know what they're talking about.

00:03:31 Kevin

They're clear, so I think for everyone listening again, if something is as clear as mud, what does that mean?

00:03:38 Kevin

It means it's not understandable you cannot see it.

00:03:40 Jack

Not so clearly the.

00:03:42 Kevin

You cannot understand it.

00:03:43 Kevin

You cannot hear it clearly.

00:03:45 Kevin

It's as clear as mud.

00:03:48 Jack

Now Kevin if.

00:03:49 Jack

You're my boss and you said something and that I don't understand.

00:03:53 Jack

Can I say to you?

00:03:53 Kevin

Your boss wait, hold on, I'm you're fired Jack.

00:03:56 Kevin

Get out of here, we we need you we need you Jack, come back, I'll.

00:03:56 발표자 2

Yeah right now.

00:04:00 Kevin

Give you a raise.

00:04:00 Jack

Alright, alright if I can get a raise I'll come back.

00:04:04 Jack

If I if I said.

00:04:05 Jack

To you, if you're my boss Kevin and you, you gave me directions, but I didn't understand them and I said to you, Kevin, you're.

00:04:11 Kevin

Right?

00:04:13 Jack

Clear as mud?

00:04:15 Jack

Is that a?

00:04:16 Jack

Is that a good?

00:04:16 Jack

Thing to say to your boss.

00:04:19 Kevin

No, it's definitely a bit of like a a joke thing to say.

00:04:23 Kevin

It's not very kind, it would be more to talk to your boss.

00:04:28 Kevin

It would be better to say you know, like sorry, this isn't very clear.

00:04:32 Kevin

I don't quite understand what this is asking.

00:04:33 Jack

Right I I'm sorry.

00:04:34 Jack

I don't understand is what you would say to.

00:04:36 Jack

Your boss to.

00:04:37 Jack

Now when you go back to your, if you go back to your your friends that you work with that are, you know, have the same position as you.

00:04:44 Jack

You they could say, did you understand the boss and you?

00:04:47 Jack

Could say no.

00:04:48 Jack

He's his directions were as clear as mud, that's.

00:04:51 Kevin

Right?

00:04:52 Jack

OK.

00:04:53 Kevin

Absolutely, that would be a great time to use it.

00:04:55 Kevin

Yeah, it's as clear as clear as mud and it's like, yeah, that doesn't make any sense, but to your boss it's definitely.

00:05:02 Kevin

Could be a bit rude.

00:05:03 Jack

You could be.

00:05:04 Jack

Understood as rude.

00:05:05 Jack

Yeah, so you wouldn't want to say that, yeah?

00:05:06 Kevin

Yes yes, so be careful, right.

00:05:10 Kevin

So to be clear as mud you don't understand it.

00:05:14 Kevin

And again hopefully our instructions here are as clear as as clear as an unmodded lake.

00:05:19 Kevin

Hopefully everything is clear for us.

00:05:20 Jack

There you go.

00:05:23 Kevin

And then to be stuck between a rock.

00:05:26 Kevin

Rock and a hard place.

00:05:28 Kevin

This is kind of a fun one.

00:05:30 Kevin

I I like this one.

00:05:31 Kevin

A rock and a hard place.

00:05:33 Kevin

Yeah, can we break this one down?

00:05:35 Kevin

A little bit as well.

00:05:36 발표자

What's what's a hard?

00:05:37 Jack

Place well I I feel like they they just ran out of ideas when they when they made this idiom because there's lots of yeah, it's not very creative so if you're stuck between a rock and a hard place a rock.

00:05:45 Kevin

Yes, very creative.

00:05:53 Jack

Is a hard place.

00:05:54 발표자 2

So it.

00:05:54 Kevin

Right, right, the Rock is a hard place.

00:05:57 Jack

Yeah, so basically it means you're stuck between 2:00.

00:06:03 Jack

You're torn between 22 decisions or two.

00:06:06 Jack

Choices and both of them are are not good.

00:06:10 Jack

Both of them are bad, yeah.

00:06:10 Kevin

Yes, yeah yeah, you've got option A and option B that you have that you're stuck between them, but one is a rock and one is something hard.

00:06:19 Kevin

So basically they're the same thing.

00:06:21 Kevin

Both are not good options.

00:06:22 Kevin

You're you're stuck between these.

00:06:24 Jack

That's right, that's right.

00:06:24 Kevin

I'm stuck between a rock and a.

00:06:26 Kevin

Hard place.

00:06:27 Jack

Yeah, I'm trying to think of an example here, Kevin, can you think of something where we would use this this idiom?

00:06:34 Kevin

I mean stuck between a rock and a hard place.

00:06:36 Kevin

You have a decision to make at work.

00:06:39 Kevin

We're always using work examples here it it seems and and one example here at work is to complain to my boss because they made a mistake, but I don't want to make my.

00:06:51 Kevin

Boss angry or I could follow.

00:06:53 Kevin

My boss's instructions, but then I'm going to make the customer.

00:06:58 Jack

And in that case you look at your coworker and you go.

00:06:58 발표자 2

Right?

00:07:00 Jack

I'm stuck between a rock and a hard place.

00:07:03 Jack

If I do this, I make the customer angry and I get in trouble.

00:07:07 Jack

And if I do the other thing then I make my boss angry and I get in trouble.

00:07:11 Jack

But either way I get in trouble.

00:07:14 Jack

There's no good choice.

00:07:14 발표자 2

Right?

00:07:15 Jack

There's no like you know 3rd off.

00:07:18 Jack

You know?

00:07:18 Kevin

Yeah, exactly.

00:07:19 Kevin

It's two generally bad options.

00:07:21 Kevin

Again to you don't want to be like.

00:07:23 Kevin

Rocks aren't very comfortable, right?

00:07:25 Kevin

I'm not stuck between a feather pillow and my mattress that sounds great in that.

00:07:29 발표자 2

Yeah, right?

00:07:30 Kevin

Yeah, no.

00:07:31 Kevin

It's a rock and a hard place.

00:07:32 Kevin

It's between two options that are not great.

00:07:34 Kevin

Two unsatisfactory options.

00:07:37 Jack

Right and you are between them, so you're in the middle of the rock and the hard place you know physically.

00:07:42 Jack

You can kind of imagine what it.

00:07:44 Jack

Look like and in the idiom idiomatic sense.

00:07:48 Jack

You can understand that the two two decisions, the two things you're in the middle, and can we avoid this situation or.

00:07:54 Jack

Is there is it is?

00:07:56 Jack

It just gonna it happens to everybody sometimes.

00:07:59 Kevin

I mean, at some point I think everyone will be stuck between a rock and a hard place.

00:08:04 Kevin

It's it's going to happen.

00:08:06 Kevin

You will always be stuck between two things and another kind of mini expression for this is to be like the the the lesser of two evils.

00:08:17 Kevin

You have to choose one option and both options are bad, right? We'll see this with voting a lot of times you know you know the presidential candidate one is bad and #2 is bad, and it's a lesser of two evils and it's the same thing.

00:08:17 Jack

Oh yeah.

00:08:30 Kevin

Both are not good options, but you have to choose one and you have to choose which option is less hard, less like a rock.

00:08:37 Kevin

Right?

00:08:37 Jack

Yeah, so if you put that into like a full conversation, you'd say I'm stuck between a rock and a hard place and then the friend says, well go with the lesser of two evil and so you the lesser of two evils is the the least bad.

00:08:53 Jack

Choice they're both bad, but one is more.

00:08:54 Kevin

Yeah, it says.

00:08:56 Jack

One is worse and one is is less less bad, yeah?

00:08:59 Kevin

Bonus bonus idiom for today.

00:09:03 발표자 2

You know?

00:09:05 Jack

It's a good one the the lesser.

00:09:06 Jack

Of two evils.

00:09:08 Jack

Yeah, the two rocks you know rock and a hard place two evils?

00:09:12 Jack

You know it's just a very much about making a decision between two choices.

00:09:18 Kevin

Yep, and knee down we're good.

00:09:18 발표자 2

Few options, yeah.

00:09:20 Kevin

Yep, so hopefully for everyone listening our directions.

00:09:24 Kevin

Our instructions of these are as as clear as water.

00:09:28 Kevin

Not not as mud and and hopefully you won't be stuck between too many rocks and hard places anytime soon.

00:09:36 Jack

That's right.

00:09:38 Kevin

☐

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Alright, well we'll see you next time for some more idioms here on A.

00:09:42 Kevin

To Z English.

00:09:43 발표자 2

Bye bye bye bye.