
BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

Authentic Real English 道地英語

Under your breath

低聲嘀咕



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Neil

Welcome to Authentic Real English, with me, Neil...

Feifei

... and me, Feifei.

Neil

In this episode, we are looking at the expression: 'under your breath'. It means 'say something so quietly that no one else can hear exactly what you're saying'.

Feifei

我們用“under your breath”來描述一個人“低聲抱怨，小聲嘀咕”，這個表達中的“your”可以用“my、his、her”等物主代詞來替換，“Under your breath”可以與動詞“talk”搭配使用——“talk under your breath”，我們“talk under our breath”的原因經常是想讓別人知道我們對某事感到不滿，但又不想讓人聽清自己到底說了什麼。

Neil

Yes, and it can be a quite unpleasant or nasty situation. We could be saying negative things about someone, and we don't want them to hear exactly what we're saying.

Feifei

沒錯，比如：昨晚我和佳瑩一起看了一部很糟糕的電影，我想表現出來自己不太高興，但又不想讓她知道我的確切想法，所以我說“I hate this film” under my breath.

Neil

While we often use it for complaints or negative comments, sometimes we can use it to describe when we talk to ourselves directly.

Feifei

Yes. 我們還可以用“under my breath”來為自己加油打氣，比如：昨天，我和 Rob 打了一局乒乓球，比賽前，我小聲說了“I'm going to beat you” under my breath.

Neil

Exactly! Let's hear some examples before we talk more about this idiom...

Examples

He always says things under his breath about the work and tasks he's given. I'm not sure what his problem is.

Bruce told himself under his breath that he would not come back to the restaurant again. He hated it.

She said something under her breath, but I couldn't quite hear it! She looked angry though.

Feifei

你正在收聽的是 BBC 英語教學的“道地英語”節目，以上我們學習了表達“under your breath”的用法，它的意思是“輕聲說話，小聲嘀咕”，這樣做的原因可能是表現自己的不滿，也可能是為自己加油打氣。

Neil

We often use it with verbs of speech, so, for example 'I said something under my breath'. We sometimes use it with the verb 'mutter', which has a similar meaning: 'speak quietly in a way that's not easy to hear' and is often used to talk about someone complaining.

Feifei

Yes. 'Mutter something under your breath'. 記住，由於“under your breath”是一句成語，要注意使用的場合。

Neil

The next time you hear someone complaining, but you can't understand everything they're saying, you now know an idiom you can use.

Feifei

They are 'speaking under their breath'. Join us again to learn more common English expressions. Thank you, bye.

Neil

Bye.