



American Expression E0187 Cool your jets

IOTS Publishing Team
International Online Teachers Society
Since 2011

"Cool your jets" is an idiomatic expression that is often used to advise someone to calm down or relax, particularly in situations where they may be feeling angry, frustrated, or impatient. The phrase carries the connotation of reducing one's emotional intensity or enthusiasm in order to think more clearly or avoid making hasty decisions.

The origin of the phrase can be traced back to aviation terminology. In the early days of jet-powered aircraft, pilots had to be mindful of the temperature of their engines. If the engines became too hot, they could malfunction or even catch fire. So, when a pilot was pushing their aircraft to its limits or experiencing a high-stress situation, it was essential for them to "cool their jets" by reducing the engine power or taking other measures to prevent overheating.

Over time, this aviation term found its way into everyday language, and its meaning expanded beyond the literal context of aircraft engines. Today, when someone tells you to "cool your jets," they are essentially urging you to take a step back, take a deep breath, and regain composure. It serves as a gentle reminder to slow down and approach a situation with a level head.

The phrase is commonly used in a variety of settings. For example, if two individuals are engaged in a heated argument, a third person may intervene and say, "Hey, guys, let's cool our jets and try to find a solution calmly." Similarly, if someone is rushing through a task and becoming increasingly stressed, a colleague might advise them to "take a break and cool your jets before continuing."

By encouraging individuals to "cool their jets," the phrase promotes self-control, emotional regulation, and thoughtful decision-making. It acknowledges that acting impulsively or aggressively in the heat of the moment rarely leads to positive outcomes. Instead, it emphasizes the importance of taking a step back, gaining perspective, and approaching the situation in a more measured and rational manner.

In summary, "cool your jets" is an idiomatic expression originating from aviation that advises individuals to calm down, relax, and regain composure in stressful or emotional situations. By reducing emotional intensity and impulsive reactions, individuals can approach problems with a clearer mind and make more informed decisions.

Questions for Discussion

1. In what situations do you find it most challenging to "cool your jets" and remain calm? How do you typically try to regain your composure in those moments?
2. Can you think of a time when someone told you to "cool your jets"? How did you react to their advice, and did it ultimately help you in that situation?
3. Are there any alternative phrases or expressions in your culture or language that convey a similar meaning to "cool your jets"? How do they differ or overlap?
4. How do you think practicing emotional regulation and taking a moment to "cool your jets" can benefit personal relationships, both in the workplace and in personal interactions?
5. In high-pressure environments, such as competitive sports or business negotiations, some individuals argue that maintaining an intense, high-energy state is more effective than trying to "cool your jets." What are your thoughts on this perspective? When might it be beneficial to embrace intensity, and when is it more advantageous to take a step back and calm down?