



American Expression E0280 Follow your nose

IOTS Publishing Team  
International Online Teachers Society  
Since 2011

The phrase "follow your nose" is an idiomatic expression that suggests using one's instincts or intuition to guide decisions or navigate a situation. It encourages individuals to rely on their innate senses or inner compass to find the right path or make choices based on their gut feelings.

The expression draws on the idea that the sense of smell, often associated with the nose, can lead us to things of interest or importance. In a metaphorical sense, "follow your nose" implies trusting one's instincts and allowing them to guide the way.

To "follow your nose" means to rely on your intuition and follow the direction that feels most natural or instinctive. It can refer to making decisions based on one's instincts, hunches, or a deep inner knowing rather than solely relying on logic or external guidance.

The phrase is often used in situations where there may not be a clear or obvious solution or when faced with a dilemma. It encourages individuals to tune in to their inner wisdom, feelings, and subtle cues from the environment to navigate uncertainty.

"Follow your nose" can also imply following one's curiosity or interest. It suggests exploring opportunities or pursuing paths that genuinely attract and resonate with individuals on a personal level. By embracing curiosity and trusting their inclinations, individuals may find themselves on a fulfilling and rewarding journey.

This expression can be applied in various aspects of life, such as career choices, personal relationships, creative endeavors, or problem-solving. It emphasizes the importance of self-awareness, listening to one's inner voice, and having the courage to follow one's own path, even if it diverges from the expectations of others.

However, it is important to note that "follow your nose" should not be seen as an excuse to act impulsively or recklessly. While intuition can be a valuable guide, it is still essential to exercise rational thinking, consider consequences, and seek advice or information when necessary.

In conclusion, "follow your nose" is an idiomatic expression that encourages individuals to trust their instincts and intuition when making decisions or navigating uncertain situations. It emphasizes the importance of listening to one's inner wisdom, following personal interests, and relying on innate senses to find the right path. By embracing intuition, individuals may discover unique opportunities and experiences that align with their authentic selves.

#### Questions for Discussion

1. Have you ever had an experience where you followed your instincts or "followed your nose"? How did it turn out, and what did you learn from trusting your intuition?
2. What are some situations in which following your nose might be beneficial, and when might it be more prudent to rely on logical reasoning or external guidance?
3. How can one differentiate between genuine intuition and impulsive decision-making? What strategies can individuals employ to develop and strengthen their ability to trust their instincts?
4. Are there any cultural or societal factors that influence people's inclination to "follow their nose"? How does the concept of intuition vary across different cultures or belief systems?
5. In what ways can embracing curiosity and following one's interests contribute to personal growth and fulfillment? How can individuals balance their own passions and inclinations with external expectations or societal pressures?