



American Expression E0479 A can of corn

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In baseball, the term "a can of corn" is a popular expression used to describe an easy and routine catch made by an outfielder. When a fly ball is hit with little power or trajectory, allowing it to descend in a high, arcing manner, it becomes a can of corn—a simple and routine play for an experienced outfielder.

The origins of the term can be traced back to the early days of baseball, possibly in the late 19th or early 20th century. It is believed to have originated in the context of general stores or groceries, where canned goods were often stored on high shelves. To retrieve a can of corn from a high shelf, all it took was a simple and straightforward upward reach, as the cans were not heavy and were easy to grasp. This ease of retrieval was akin to the outfielder's routine act of catching a high fly ball, thus leading to the phrase "a can of corn" becoming synonymous with an easy and unchallenging task.

In modern baseball, the term "a can of corn" is often used by commentators and fans to describe a fly ball that poses no difficulty for the outfielder. The ball has a predictable trajectory and poses minimal threat of being dropped or mishandled. When an outfielder settles comfortably under the ball and makes a routine catch without needing to sprint or dive, it is indeed "a can of corn."

Despite the simplicity of the play, catching a fly ball consistently and cleanly is essential in baseball, as it prevents baserunners from advancing and keeps opposing teams from scoring. Outfielders are trained to read the ball's trajectory, position themselves accurately, and track the ball with precision to ensure successful catches.

While "a can of corn" is a straightforward play, it is essential for outfielders to remain focused and avoid complacency. In baseball, a split-second delay or lack of concentration can result in a missed catch, leading to extra bases for the opposing team or even changing the outcome of the game.

The expression "a can of corn" extends beyond the baseball field and is sometimes used colloquially to describe any task or action that is exceptionally easy or mundane. It emphasizes the idea that some tasks can be performed without much effort or skill, akin to the routine nature of catching an easy fly ball in baseball.

In conclusion, "a can of corn" is a term commonly used in baseball to describe an easy and routine catch made by an outfielder. The phrase's origins lie in the simplicity of retrieving canned goods from high shelves in general stores, analogous to the straightforward act of catching a high-arcing fly ball. While an easy play, outfielders must remain focused and attentive to execute it consistently and effectively. The expression has become ingrained in baseball lingo and extends beyond the sport, representing any task that requires minimal effort or skill.

Questions for Discussion

1. In baseball, "a can of corn" refers to an easy and routine catch for an outfielder. How do you think outfielders balance the need for focus and concentration during these routine plays while staying prepared for more challenging and unpredictable situations?
2. "A can of corn" is a term that has extended beyond baseball to describe any task that is exceptionally easy or mundane. Can you think of examples from everyday life where this expression could apply, and how do you approach handling such tasks efficiently?
3. In baseball and in life, routine tasks can sometimes lead to moments of complacency. How can individuals stay motivated and engaged in these routine aspects while maintaining a high level of performance and attention to detail?
4. In a baseball game, a well-executed "can of corn" catch can prevent the opposing team from scoring. How do you think routine tasks and attention to detail impact overall success, both in sports and in various other professions or pursuits?
5. Beyond the physical aspect of catching a fly ball, "a can of corn" can also symbolize an easy opportunity or advantage that one may encounter in their life or career. How can individuals make the most of such opportunities, and how do you approach identifying and capitalizing on these "can of corn" moments in your own life?