



American Expression E0990 There's cheapest chips

IOTS Publishing Team  
International Online Teachers Society  
Since 2011

The phrase "cheap as chips" is an idiomatic expression that originates from British English, and it is often used to emphasize the extreme affordability of something. When someone says, "There's cheapest chips," they are conveying that a particular item or service is available at an exceptionally low cost, often to the point where it is considered a great bargain. The phrase draws an analogy between the low cost of chips (French fries) and the affordability of the item or situation being described.

The idiom "cheap as chips" has gained popularity due to its catchy and succinct nature. It's used to highlight a remarkable value proposition or a deal that is hard to pass up. It can apply to a wide range of contexts, from consumer products and services to events and experiences.

For instance, if someone is discussing a sale on clothing and they mention, "These shirts are as cheap as chips," they are underscoring that the prices are exceptionally low and attractive. Similarly, in the context of travel, if someone exclaims, "The airfare for that destination is as cheap as chips," they are emphasizing the unusually affordable cost of the flight.

However, while the phrase is used to stress affordability, it doesn't necessarily mean that the quality of the item or service is low. It's possible to find products or experiences that are both reasonably priced and of good quality, reinforcing the idea that a "cheap as chips" deal is one worth considering.

Moreover, the phrase can also be used humorously, especially when the cost of an item is surprisingly low given its perceived value. In such cases, it's used playfully to convey the sense of a fantastic deal that almost seems too good to be true.

The idiom has cultural variations and equivalents in other languages, each with its own twist on emphasizing exceptional affordability. In some cases, these expressions are based on other common foods that are inexpensive.

In conclusion, "There's cheapest chips" is a phrase that playfully underscores the exceptional affordability of an item, service, or experience. Drawing its analogy from the low cost of chips (French fries), the expression is a way to highlight a great bargain that's hard to resist. While focusing on the low price, the phrase doesn't necessarily imply poor quality, and it's a versatile idiom used to emphasize value in various contexts.

#### Questions for Discussion

1. How often do you use the idiom "cheap as chips" or similar expressions in your conversations? Can you share an example of a situation where you used it to emphasize the affordability of something?
2. What are some common scenarios where you've heard the phrase "cheap as chips" being used? How does this idiom impact your perception of the value of the item or service being discussed?
3. In your opinion, what are the key factors that contribute to something being perceived as a great bargain? Is it solely about the price, or are other factors like quality and personal need also important?
4. Have you ever encountered a situation where an item or service was "cheap as chips" but turned out to be of unexpectedly high quality or value? How did that experience change your perspective on the relationship between price and value?
5. How does the cultural context influence the use and interpretation of idiomatic expressions related to affordability? Can you think of equivalents to "cheap as chips" in other languages, and do they carry similar connotations?