



American Expression E1333 Moms the word

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"Moms the word" is a playful and colloquial expression in the English language. It's often used to convey the idea that a particular topic or piece of information should be kept secret or not discussed openly. In essence, it's a way of saying, "Let's keep this between us" or "This is our little secret." The phrase is derived from the more formal expression "mum's the word," with "mum" being a British term for silence or quiet.

The phrase "mum's the word" has a long history, dating back to at least the 16th century. It was commonly used in literature and theater to signify that a character should remain silent or discreet about a certain matter. Over time, it evolved into the more casual and affectionate "moms the word," particularly in American English.

The expression is often used in a lighthearted or conspiratorial context. For example, if two friends are planning a surprise birthday party for someone, one might say to the other, "Remember, moms the word about the party details. We don't want the birthday person to find out!" In this case, it's a way of emphasizing the need for secrecy and discretion.

Another common scenario where you might hear this phrase is when someone shares personal or sensitive information with a friend and wants assurance that it won't be gossiped about or shared with others. By saying "moms the word," they are seeking trust and confidentiality.

The expression can also be used playfully in situations where a small group of people shares a common understanding or secret that sets them apart from others. For instance, if a group of coworkers knows about a surprise promotion that hasn't been officially announced yet, they might exchange knowing glances and say, "Moms the word until the boss makes the announcement!"

Interestingly, the use of "moms" instead of "mum" in this phrase adds a warm and familiar touch. It invokes the idea of a mother's wisdom and guidance, suggesting that the person using the phrase is imparting valuable advice or entrusting someone with important information. It creates a sense of camaraderie and confidentiality.

In summary, "moms the word" is a charming and informal way of indicating that something should be kept secret or not openly discussed. It has its roots in older expressions like "mum's the word" and carries a sense of trust, confidentiality, and camaraderie. Whether used in planning surprises, sharing personal matters, or acknowledging a shared secret, this phrase adds a touch of playfulness and warmth to conversations.

Questions for Discussion

1. Have you ever been in a situation where someone shared sensitive or confidential information with you and said, "Moms the word"? How did you feel about being entrusted with that secret, and how did you handle it?
 2. How does the phrase "moms the word" differ from simply saying, "Keep this a secret" or "Don't tell anyone"? What nuances or connotations does it add to the act of keeping information confidential?
 3. In what types of situations do you find "moms the word" most commonly used in your social or professional circles? Can you think of an example where maintaining secrecy played a crucial role in a positive outcome?
 4. What do you think makes the phrase endearing and relatable to people, even though it's a form of requesting secrecy? Does it evoke feelings of trust and camaraderie that other expressions might not?
 5. Have you ever experienced a time when someone didn't "moms the word" as requested, and confidential information was inadvertently shared? How did this affect relationships or the situation at hand?
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