



American Expression E1737 My bread and butter

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The expression "my bread and butter" is an idiom used to refer to a person's primary source of income or livelihood, the means by which they earn a living and provide for themselves and their dependents. It represents the fundamental and essential aspect of one's professional or financial life, often denoting a stable and dependable source of income.

The origin of this idiom can be traced back to the literal meaning of "bread and butter" as basic staples in the diet. Bread and butter have long been considered essential foods that provide sustenance and nourishment. In the same way, one's "bread and butter" represents the essential foundation upon which they build their life and secure their basic needs.

When someone describes their job, career, or business as "their bread and butter," it signifies that this activity is not merely a means of making money, but the primary and reliable source of income that sustains their daily life and expenses. It is the work or business that consistently generates revenue and ensures financial stability.

For example, if a person works as an accountant and earns a steady income from their accounting job, they might say, "My accounting job is my bread and butter." This indicates that their employment as an accountant is the core source of their income, enabling them to cover essential expenses like food, housing, and utilities.

The phrase "my bread and butter" is also often used in the context of business and entrepreneurship. A business owner may refer to their most profitable product or service as "the bread and butter of their company." In this context, it means that this particular offering is the mainstay of their business, generating consistent revenue and serving as the foundation of their operations.

While "bread and butter" suggests reliability and stability, it can also imply a degree of routine or predictability. The work or source of income described as such is typically consistent and dependable but may not always offer excitement or innovation. It is the reliable, everyday work that keeps things running smoothly.

The phrase highlights the importance of having a dependable source of income or a solid foundation for financial security. It emphasizes the necessity of meeting basic needs and obligations before pursuing more discretionary or ambitious goals.

In summary, "my bread and butter" is an idiomatic expression that refers to a person's primary source of income or livelihood, the fundamental means by which they earn a living and provide for themselves and their family. It symbolizes stability, reliability, and the assurance of meeting basic financial needs, making it an essential aspect of one's professional and financial life.

#### Questions for Discussion

1. What is your "bread and butter" in terms of your career or source of income, and how has it evolved or changed over the years? What role does it play in your overall financial stability?
2. In the world of entrepreneurship and business, can you provide examples of companies or industries where a specific product or service serves as the "bread and butter" that anchors the business and ensures its financial health? How do businesses diversify while maintaining their core revenue source?
3. How does the concept of "my bread and butter" relate to the pursuit of passion and personal fulfillment in one's career or work? Are there instances where individuals prioritize passion over financial stability, or do they find ways to align the two?
4. Have you ever experienced a significant disruption or change in your "bread and butter" job or business? How did you adapt to the situation, and what did you learn from that experience in terms of financial security and career resilience?
5. In the context of personal finance and budgeting, how do you allocate resources between your "bread and butter" expenses and discretionary spending? What strategies do you use to ensure financial stability while also pursuing personal goals and aspirations?