

Automotive English: Nickle and Dimed

Is it better to buy a used car or a new one? That's hard to say. New cars are more reliable, but used cars are cheaper. . . and many used cars are reliable, too.

Most students learning English know this about American cars: they know that cars made in the U.S. are famous for being unreliable. If you buy a used American car, you will save a lot of money, but you'll be taking the car to the garage a lot. Today, we're going to talk about an idiom to describe that.

Before You Listen to the Recording

Do you know the words nickle and dime? They're the names of the American five and ten cent coins. (A 'coin' is money in a metal—not paper—form.) What do you think an idiom using the names of coins with low value could mean? Think about possible meanings, and then start the recording.

After You've Listened to the Recording

Does your car nickle and dime you? Does anything else in your life nickle and dime you? (A dog, I know from experience, can be cheap to buy. . . but it will nickle and dime you.)

How will you use this idiom? Let me know!