Catch Word #277 – Hit the fan (Ad free)
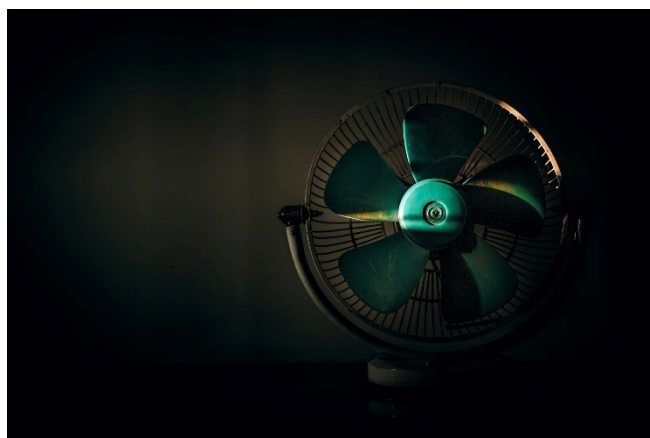
Episode description

In this Catch Word episode, Andrew and Suzanne introduce two expressions to help you describe challenging situations in English: "to hit the fan" and "everything's gone south." These phrases are handy for expressing when things aren't going well. By listening to this episode, you'll learn what they mean, how to use them, and where they come from.

Fun fact

Did you know that during the Victorian era in Europe, people had a secret language called "the language of the fan"? At the time, fans were used to send hidden messages. By fluttering, twirling, or snapping fans in certain ways, people could say things like "I'm interested," "stay away," or even "meet me later!"

Expressions included in the study guide

➢ To hit the fan

➢ Everything's gone south

➢ To lay it all on the line

➢ To call off

➢ To turn things around

➢ To move on

Transcript

Note: The words and expressions that appear in **bold text** within the transcript are discussed in more detail in the Detailed Explanations section that follows the transcript. The transcript has been edited for clarity.

Andrew: Catch Word episode 277, Hit the fan, featuring Andrew and Suzanne.

Hello and welcome to another episode of Catch Word, everyone. I'm here with my co-host, Suzanne. Hello, Suzanne. How's it going?

Suzanne: Yay! Hi, Andrew. It's been so long. Hi, listeners. I'm doing well. I hope you guys are all doing well, too. We've got a fun one for you today. Actually, these expressions are ones that we use when things are not going so well.

Andrew: Yes. I think everyone has been in this kind of situation before, right, Suzanne? You have a project, maybe, that you're working on, and you're stressed out about completing the project and finishing the project, and then something happens, and it just falls apart. Well, in that kind of situation, you need to express your frustration and express that things aren't going so well. And that's what we will be teaching you, everybody, in this episode. So today, the two expressions that we are going to learn about are fun ones. I think these are rather fun. Unfortunately, a little colourful. The first one is **to hit the fan**, and the second one is **everything's gone south**. **Everything's gone south**.

Suzanne: Yeah. These are great expressions for those times when a situation takes a turn for the worse. I actually just recently had that, too, when you said a project. I was doing a project. Then the files weren't uploading on my computer. The audio wasn't editing. I couldn't play the audio. Everything just, yeah, took a turn for the worse. So, these can be really great idioms for those times. So, let's get started. And let's start with **to hit the fan**.

Andrew: Yeah. OK. Let's jump right in to the first expression, like you said, Suzanne, is **to hit the fan**. **To hit the fan**. So, this is the polite form of the expression, right? There are two versions of this expression. There is the one that's, as I mentioned a little bit earlier,

rather colourful and a little bit rude. And then this is the more polite version. And Suzanne, it's been really cute over the last several episodes. I've got a lot of comments and messages and even some voice messages from kids who listen to our show. So, there are lots of kids out there who listen to the show. Kids, I don't want you to repeat this expression if you hear.

Suzanne: Yeah.

Andrew: I don't want you to use it in the future because you might get in trouble from your mom or dad or your teacher. But I will explain the full, rather rude version of this expression just for everybody's education. And so, the full version of this expression is "when shit **hits the fan**" or "shit **hits the fan**." Right? And the more polite version that we'll focus on in this episode is **to hit the fan**. So, to make it more polite, we do take out that swear word from the expression. And Suzanne, maybe you could explain the meaning. What kind of situation would we use this expression in and what does it mean exactly?

Suzanne: Yeah. So, when you can say like something **hits the fan** or **to hit the fan**, it's really when a situation suddenly becomes worse and then worse and then worse. Just very problematic. And if you threw paper, like pieces of paper, at a fan that was maybe, you know, spinning. Right. Those papers would fly all over the place and become very chaotic. So, if we think about it that way, when something **hits the fan**, it is taking a problem and making it go all over the place and become worse and more chaotic.

Andrew: Right. So, the kind of fan that you're talking about here is like the kind of fan that you would use to cool down a room. Right? Just like on a hot summer day, you turn that fan on to cool down a room. And wow, that's a great image of using paper. I like that more instead of poop.

Suzanne: Yeah, definitely cleaner.

Andrew: So, yeah, having like a huge stack of papers in front of a fan, the paper would just blow all over the place. Right? So, we use this expression metaphorically to talk about like if we have a little problem and then that problem is in front of the fan, and it just

spreads all over the place and gets worse and worse and worse. And yeah, so when we're in some kind of situation, maybe Suzanne, like your project that you were working on earlier, where one problem happened and then another and then another. In this kind of situation, it's exactly when we would say, "Oh, it **hit the fan**."

Suzanne: Yup. It just gets exponentially worse.

Andrew: All right. So, Suzanne, now we know about this expression. We know the rude form of this expression. We know the polite form. Although when I say rude and polite, this is a very informal expression. Right? So even though there is one that uses a swear word and is on the ruder side of things, even the polite version of this expression, **hit the fan**, is so informal that you wouldn't really want to use it in like an important business meeting. Although, however, I do think that probably you would hear this expression a lot in the office. Like if, you know, some business deal is falling apart at the last minute, maybe your boss would come into the meeting room and say like, "Oh, everything's **hitting the fan**. We need to have an emergency meeting right now." Right? To try and solve that kind of problem.

So, although it is informal and rather casual, because it is used to talk about projects and work and situations that fall apart or having some huge issue with them, and because that kind of thing happens a lot in business situations, then you do actually hear this a lot in a business environment. I think if you were to watch any Hollywood movies about that kind of thing, you would definitely hear it in the script for sure. So anyways, now we know the meaning. We know how to use it. Why don't we jump in and take a listen to a couple of conversation examples?

Suzanne: All right. So, let's listen to the first example now.

Friend 1: Did you hear about the scandal with the CEO embezzling company funds?

Friend 2: Yeah, it's crazy. And apparently, he's been doing it for years.

Friend 1: I heard the board found out last week and fired him on the spot. I bet things really **hit the fan** when they confronted him with the evidence.

Friend 2: No kidding. I can't imagine the chaos that must have caused in the office. It's going to take a long time for the company to recover from this.

Andrew: Let's break this example down. So, in this example, we heard two friends talking about a news story and it was about a scandal with a big company. And the CEO of that company was embezzling money from the company. Now, Suzanne, this probably is a new word for many of our listeners, so we should explain it. To embezzle means to steal money from a company, right? And usually, you maybe create a secret bank account, and you transfer some money here and some money there. And you kind of work some magic with the bank transfers so that some of that money ends up in your bank account, right? You're kind of sneaky with the way that you do the books, you do the accounting, and you take a little bit of money out of the company funds for yourself. That is embezzling.

And so, you can imagine if a CEO is caught stealing money, embezzling money from the company, that that's not going to go over very well. And so, the board of that company, they found out that this was happening, and the two friends are just imagining like, "Whoa, it must have really **hit the fan** in that boardroom." That's a huge crisis for the company if you have the CEO stealing money from the company. And so, they were just talking about that news story and how it went down and how it **hit the fan** over at that company. No good. Not a very good situation at all.

Suzanne: No, not good at all.

Andrew: All right. Why don't we **move on** to the second example?

Suzanne: Yeah, let's listen to it right now.

Friend 1: I thought you were supposed to turn in that big project today. How did it go?

Friend 2: It was a disaster. I thought I had everything under control, but then I realized I was missing a bunch of important data.

Friend 1: So, what did you do?

Friend 2: I had to go to my boss and explain the situation. It was so embarrassing. I could tell she was really annoyed, but she gave me an extension. I'm just dreading the moment when it all **hits the fan**, and she realizes how much I screwed up.

Suzanne: Oh, no. All right. I'll explain this one.

Andrew: Yeah, break it down for us, Suzanne. What happened here?

Suzanne: I got to explain myself. So, these are two coworkers discussing a large project that was supposed to be turned in, and so many things went wrong, especially with the data, you know, missing data, important information that they needed for, to complete this project. And the person whose project it was had to go to their boss and kind of **lay it all on the line**. Please, I need more time. I don't have it ready. And it seems like this person is trying to cover up the mistakes and is scared that once the truth comes out, if it comes out that the data is not there in the project, that the important information is not included, that things are going **to hit the fan**. And then more and more problems will just come to this person and possibly the company. And it's like a domino effect, right? It's like you cover up one problem, then the next thing, then the next thing, then the next thing, just like that paper example. It all just flies out all over the place. So, I really hope that they can find a way to fix this. It feels stressful.

Andrew: It does feel stressful. And what I liked about this example is that it's kind of funny. Like there was a problem with the data. The project is ruined, right? But she's not talking about it **hitting the fan** now, because she got an extension from her boss. So, she's bought a little time. This kind of situation, we can say buy time, right? You've got an extension, you've bought some time. It's kind of cool for now, but eventually the boss is

going to find out. Like you can only delay for so long, right? Eventually the boss will find out. And at that moment, then it will **hit the fan**. And yeah, who knows? Maybe she's worried about her job even, right? Like the boss could find out and she could get in trouble or get fired. Who knows? But yeah, that's an example of things **hitting the fan**, for sure. Everything just being a mess and being a big problem. Absolutely.

Suzanne: I just wanted to point out to our listeners that I pronounced it data and I think you pronounced it data and that they're both correct and that you can say that word, d-a-t-a, data or data and you can use both. Sometimes I say data. Sometimes I say data. Just depends on how you feel that day. So, both pronunciations are correct.

Andrew: Yeah, great point. And I think, yeah, I probably go back and forth as well. I don't think I only say data or data. I think I probably interchange them. Another interesting thing is that data is actually the plural version of this word.

Suzanne: Oh, I didn't know that.

Andrew: Many people don't realize that. So, when you hear, especially academics, professors, talking about it, they will say "the data are" instead of "the data is."

Suzanne: Oh, yeah. But you could still say the data are or do you say data are?

Andrew: I think, well, you can say both. I think the singular is a different word. It's like datum or something. Nobody uses the singular version ever. But it's just one of those weird things in English where it seems like you should say data is. And many people do in just everyday life, right? But, yeah, especially professors and academics, or scientists, researchers, when they're talking about data, they'll use it in the plural form and say "the data are indicating this" or something like that. A nice little tidbit about the English language.

Suzanne: That was a good sidebar.

Andrew: All right, Suzanne, let's jump into the next key expression for this episode, our second and final key idiom that we are going to teach everyone. And it's another one that you would use in this kind of situation where things just aren't going so well. And I think this one is pretty easy to visualize, just like the first one, actually. And it is **everything's gone south**. **Everything's gone south**. Or sometimes we just say **it's going south**. Right. We can shorten it down to just **it's going south**. And Suzanne, could you break it down for us and explain what this means?

Suzanne: Yeah, I'd love to break it down. So, it's really when something has taken a negative turn, when something is going down the drain, right, going downhill, **going south**, going in a downward direction, but not in a happy, positive way. Right? We can sometimes think, well, going south sounds great. Like it might be warmer there. It might be sunny and just like lots of beaches. No, not that kind of south. South in it's going down, like, into a drain. It's going away. So, we can say something is **going south**. It is failing. It is getting worse. It's deteriorating.

Andrew: Yeah, exactly. And I think the origin of this expression is pretty easy to, to track. And I know every culture, a lot of different cultures, have different ways of representing a map of the world. But at least in European cultures and definitely in North American cultures as well, we have our map where the north part of the map is at the top of the map and the southern part of the world is at the bottom part of the world. So, we associate up with being north and down with being south.

So, we even, you know, talk about this all the time. Like I'm going up north or I'm going down south. When we travel to one of these places, we use those two expressions. And so that is why we say something is going south. It's just because on a map, the southern direction is associated with going down. It's at the bottom part of the map. So, when everything's **going south** then, just like you said, Suzanne, it means that things are going down and down is associated with being low and bad. And like you said, the drain or the sewer, like a really nasty kind of place, right, where you don't want to be.

So, we use this expression to talk about work, just like with **hit the fan**, you can use it often in an office situation, talking about projects, could be a relationship that you're in. Maybe you're dating someone and it's not going so well. You can say, "Oh, this relationship has really **gone south**." Just any kind of situation where things aren't working out the way that you want them to work out.

Suzanne: Yeah, and it's really that turn, right, **to go south**. It's really like it may have started to go OK for a while and then it does take that turn and then suddenly it's unmanageable. You're fumbling, you know, and it's not easy anymore. So, some similar expressions, literally "to go downhill," right? Things are going downhill. And that has that same feeling, to take that turn and/or "to fall apart," right? That's something you may have heard before or more commonly used, to fall apart. The relationship, right, is falling apart or, you know, your project is falling apart. Or "to take a turn for the worse." To take a turn for the worse.

Andrew: Again, it's got that image behind it of turning, right? So, you could imagine that something is going OK and the progress of the project or the relationship has been OK. But there's been a corner that you have to turn and after you turn the corner, well, then it's downhill, right? Things are falling apart and it's just not so good. So that's kind of the imagery behind this expression and a lot of similarly related expressions as well.

Suzanne: Yeah, and just one more thing I wanted to add. You can use it for things that you project, that you see, to start going wrong, right? So maybe, say you're working on a project with a group of people at work and it's going fine, but then you're seeing that there could be some problems coming up. You're like, "Oh, I'm afraid it's going **to go south**." You know, so you could use it for something that you know is starting to turn or that you saw in the past that, yeah, I projected it was going **to go south**, right? It was going to turn. Or it could be something that suddenly happened where it was going fine, and you had no idea, and it just *phew* took a turn for the worse and it **went south** right away, right? Like you come around the bend of a mountain and then all of a sudden, "Whoa, wait, what's

that?" you know, and it goes down. So, it could be for either something you know that you saw that was going to happen or something that suddenly came up as well.

Andrew: Absolutely. Good point. We can use this for predictable and unpredictable things that happen. Yeah, great point.

All right, Suzanne. Well, I think we're ready to jump in and hear some example conversations. So, we got two here ready for our listeners to take a listen to and we'll start with the first one. Let's do it.

Friend 1: Hey, weren't you and your friends planning a big camping trip this weekend?

Friend 2: Oh, yeah, we were really looking forward to it, but now it looks like **everything's gone south**.

Friend 1: Really? What happened?

Friend 2: Well, first the weather report said there is a big storm coming. Then two people cancelled at the last minute. And now my car is making a weird noise. I think we might have **to call off** the whole trip.

Friend 1: Oh, that sucks. Sounds like everything that could go wrong did go wrong.

Friend 2: Basically.

Andrew: All right, let's break down this example conversation. So, we hear two friends talking about a camping trip that unfortunately has just been cancelled. **Everything went south** with this camping trip. First, the weather forecast. There's a big storm coming. And so, because of that, some people cancelled. You know, nobody likes to go camping in the rain, right? And on top of that, the car that they were going to take to go camping started making a weird noise.

And so, because of all of these factors, they decided just **to call off** the whole trip. And this is actually a really nice phrasal verb here, **to call something off**. And **to call off** just

means to cancel. So, they decided **to call off** the trip. They cancelled the trip. And actually, the conversation ended with a nice phrase as well. "Everything that could go wrong did go wrong." And that's just another way that you could describe a situation that just ended up in the worst possible way. Although I have to say, I don't think this is the worst possible outcome because they could have done the camping trip and they could have been camping in the rain. And the car could have broken down on the side of the road in a massive storm. And that would have been worse.

Suzanne: And then the things would have **hit the fan** even more.

Andrew: Exactly. So, I think it was wise of them to cancel this trip. Anyways, we have one final example conversation for this episode, and we'll take a listen to it now. Here we go.

Friend 1: Oh, hey, how's the app you're working on? How's it going?

Friend 2: Oh, OK. Well, not great, to be honest. We've run into a lot of problems and I'm starting to think this whole project has just **gone south**.

Friend 1: Oh, what kind of problems?

Friend 2: Um, well, where should I start? We're way behind schedule. Plus, the developers keep running into bugs and now we're over budget too. Plus, we just found out our competitor launched a similar app last week.

Friend 1: Oh, no, that does sound rough. Do you think you'll, I don't know, be able **to turn things around**?

Friend 2: I don't know. I think at this point we might just cut our losses and **move on** to something else.

Andrew: OK. And Suzanne, would you do us the honours and break this example down and explain what we heard in this one?

Suzanne: Sure. So, these are two friends that, you know, are talking about this new app that one of the friends has created or is in the process of creating. But right when they were maybe ready to launch this app, they ran into so many problems that the project **went south**. The development of the project just started having so many issues. They're behind schedule. They're running into bugs. Maybe the, you know, certain things on the app maybe aren't working. Now they have too much debt. They're over budget. And a competitor has a similar app.

So, really, the whole project, all their hopes and dreams, maybe even financial investments into this project, just went down. **Everything went south**. And they might have to scrap the whole idea. Right?

We have a really interesting idiom here as well at the end where it says, "It might be better to cut our losses." "To cut our losses," meaning they've lost so many things already, maybe money, time, even mental and emotional stress, that maybe let's cut our losses at that point so that we don't lose anything more. And that is an expression you can use when you want to just stop the losing. You've lost so much. It's time to stop it right there.

Andrew: Mmhmm. Yeah. A similar expression that comes to mind is "stop the bleeding." You want to stop the bleeding. Right? Graphic expression. But like you could imagine these guys, these poor guys trying to make this app their little company. And they're losing time. They're losing money. They're losing sleep. They're losing stress. You've just got to stop everything. Cut your losses. Stop the bleeding and just **move on** to a different project.

Well, that's going to bring us to the end of this episode, guys. Take care and we'll talk to you in the next one. Goodbye.

Suzanne: Bye-bye.

Andrew: That brings us to the end of this lesson. Talk to you next time. Bye.

Detailed Explanations

To hit the fan
Idiom, informal

The expression **to hit the fan** is used to describe a situation that suddenly becomes much worse and more chaotic. It communicates the idea of a problem escalating and spreading uncontrollably. You can use it in situations when things go wrong by saying "it all **hit the fan**," "things **hit the fan**," or "it really **hit the fan**."

As Andrew explains, this is the polite version of a more colourful and rude expression, "when shit **hits the fan**." He mentions that even the polite version of this expression is informal and should be used with caution. He also adds that even though this phrase wouldn't be appropriate in a formal business setting, it's commonly used in informal workplace settings. For example, during a meeting, someone might say, "If the deadline isn't met, things will really **hit the fan**."

The origin of this expression comes from the literal image of something hitting a fan and causing a mess. Imagine a fan spinning and someone throwing paper at it. The paper would scatter everywhere, creating a mess. Similarly, when something **hits the fan**, a small problem quickly escalates into a much bigger one.

A common synonym of this expression is **everything fell apart**, which is more acceptable in formal settings. This phrase also conveys the idea of things becoming worse.

Here are a couple more examples with **to hit the fan**:

Jimmy: Hey, did you hear about that dating app that got hacked?

Annie: No, what happened?

Jimmy: Apparently, they had a security breach, and everyone's messages got out. The company is in serious trouble now. Things really **hit the fan** for them!

Sam: Looks like we're in deep trouble with this startup. We've lost all the invested money. What's our next move?

Trisha: I wish I had an answer, Sam. But when the investors find out, everything is going **to hit the fan**. We need to come up with a plan, and fast.

Everything's gone south
Idiom, informal

Much like "to hit the fan," **everything's gone south** is used to describe a situation that has suddenly become worse or taken a negative turn. It suggests that things were initially OK, but then problems came up, quickly making everything worse.

As Andrew and Suzanne explain, this expression is often used to express frustration or disappointment when things don't go as expected. For example, imagine you're planning a surprise party for your friend, and you've organized everything perfectly. And then on the day of the party, the food isn't delivered on time, the balloons fly away, and somebody ruins the surprise by accidentally telling your friend about it. In this scenario, you could say, "Well, **everything's gone south** with this party."

Andrew suggests that the expression comes from associating south with a downward direction on maps. North is usually at the top of maps, and south is at the bottom. So, **going south** metaphorically means moving in a negative direction.

Similar phrases include **going downhill**, **going down the drain**, and **taking a turn for the worse**, which all mean that a situation is getting worse.

Here are a couple more examples with **everything's gone south**:

Jess: How was your vacation?

David: It was a disaster. **Everything went south** starting the moment we arrived. Our luggage got lost, our hotel reservation was messed up, and then we got caught in a tropical storm.

Jess: That sounds like a nightmare. I hope you still managed to enjoy some parts of it.

Olivia: How was your first day at the new job?

Max: It started off promising, but then **it all went south**. First, I spilled coffee all over my keyboard and it stopped working. And then I accidentally sent an email to the entire company instead of just my team.

Olivia: Oh, no! That sounds awful. I hope tomorrow goes better!

To lay it all on the line
Idiom

To lay it all on the line is a phrase that means to take a risk by being honest in a challenging situation. In the episode, Suzanne uses this expression to explain the second example dialogue featuring the expression "to hit the fan" when she talks about a worker who has to go to their boss and be honest about their mistake.

Imagine you're in a relationship and you need to have a serious conversation with your partner about your feelings. If you decide to **lay it all on the line**, it means you're going to be completely honest and open about your emotions, even if it means risking the relationship or facing uncomfortable truths.

The origin of this expression likely comes from the idea of laying out all your cards on the table in a gambling game, especially poker. When you lay your cards on the line, you're revealing everything you have, risking everything in the hope of winning big. This expression can be used in any situation where you're being transparent and open with the hope of achieving a positive outcome, at the same time knowing that you might lose everything.

A common synonym for **to lay it all on the line** is **to put it on the line**, which also conveys the idea of taking a risk by revealing the truth.

Here are a couple more examples with **to lay it all on the line**:

Jane: I'm thinking about applying for that promotion. But I'm nervous, to be honest. What if I don't get it? What if I get fired or something?

Paul: Maybe it's time to **lay it all on the line** and tell your boss why you deserve it?

Jane: You know what, you're right. I've put in the work and contributed a lot to the team. I do deserve it! Thanks, Paul.

Employee: Hi, Mr. Smith. Can I speak with you for a moment?

Supervisor: Absolutely, what's going on?

Employee: I'm struggling to keep up with my workload, and I think I need **to lay it all on the line**. I need to prioritize my mental health and take a step back from some tasks.

Supervisor: I appreciate you bringing this to my attention. I'll see what I can do for you.

To call off
Phrasal verb

To call off means to cancel or stop a planned event or activity. You can use **to call off** when talking about cancelling any kind of plan, like a party, a trip, or a meeting. We usually **call things off** when there are problems or changes that make the original plan impossible or no longer a good idea.

In this episode, this expression is used in the first dialogue featuring the expression "everything's gone south." In that conversation, friends had **to call off**, or cancel, their camping trip due to the weather changes.

The phrase likely comes from the idea of calling or announcing that something is cancelled. To remember this expression, think of calling someone by using a phone to tell them that the plan is off. In this context, "off" means that it's not happening anymore. Sometimes, we can simply say something like "the meeting's off," meaning that it has been **called off**.

For example, you might hear this phrasal verb used a lot in movies where a wedding gets cancelled. Someone would say, "The wedding is **called off**." Another example: if an event, like a concert, gets cancelled because the singer isn't feeling well, you can say, "The concert was **called off**." As you can see from these examples, the verb **to call off** is often used in the passive voice, as in **to be called off**.

A good synonym for this verb that Suzanne uses in the episode is **to scrap**. It communicates the same idea of cancelling something or getting rid of something.

Here are a couple more examples with **to call off**:

Emily: What's the story with the course? I hear it's not going to be launched.

Adam: Yeah, unfortunately, we had **to call it off**. We expected more people to sign up, but there were only a few participants.

Tina: Are you joining us for the game night? We're meeting at Alex's new place.

Ed: I was going to, but I just got a text from Alex and he says we'll have to **call it off**. He's got some kind of family emergency.

Tina: Oh, that's too bad. Well, maybe we'll do it some other time!

To turn things around
Phrase

In the second example dialogue featuring the expression "everything's gone south," one friend asks how the app development is going. The other friend admits it's not going well, listing a bunch of problems. The first friend then asks if they can **turn things around**, meaning if they can make any improvements despite the problems and still make the app successful.

To turn things around means to change a situation from bad to good or from negative to positive. We use this phrase when talking about making big changes to improve a difficult or challenging situation. You can use **to turn things around** when discussing efforts to improve situations in various areas of life, such as work, relationships, or personal goals.

For instance, if someone struggled with finances but then managed to improve their situation, you might say, "She finally **turned things around** by creating a budget and saving money." Another example: "The company was failing, but with new leadership, they managed to **turn things around** and become profitable again."

The phrase comes from the idea of changing the direction of something. If something is going in the wrong direction, you need to literally turn it around to make sure it's going the right way. You can use this image to help remember this expression.

Here are a couple more examples with **to turn things around**:

Alice: I heard you had a rough time with your studies last semester. How's it going now?

Nate: Yeah, it was tough, but I'm trying **to turn things around** this semester. I'm going to attend all my classes, stay organized, and study regularly.

Alice: Good for you! I'm sure you'll do much better this time.

Coach: All right, team, we're down by two goals with 15 minutes left. We need **to turn things around**.

Player: Coach, I think we need to play better offense and be faster. We need to get more control of the ball!

Coach: Great. Let's focus on that. We can still win!

To move on
Phrasal verb

In the last dialogue featured in this episode, when two friends talk about trying to improve their situation with a failing app, one of the friends says, "We might just cut our losses and **move on** to something else."

To move on means to leave behind a difficult or unpleasant situation and focus on what comes next. When someone **moves on**, they accept that something has ended or didn't work out and decide to continue forward instead of dwelling on it. You can use **to move on** when you want to talk about letting go of the past and moving forward with your life.

For example, if someone is having trouble with their current job, they might say, "I think it's time **to move on** and find something better." Similarly, if a relationship ends, someone might say, "It's hard, but I need **to move on** and focus on myself now."

Other ways to say **move on** include **let it go**, **move forward**, or **turn the page**. These all communicate the idea of accepting change and transitioning to a new phase in life.

Be careful: avoid using **move on** in situations where it might seem insensitive or inappropriate, like when someone is still processing their feelings about a loss or disappointment and is not ready to let go of it yet.

Here are a couple more examples with **to move on**:

Iris: That presentation to the client didn't go very well. I feel so bad. I can't stop thinking about what I should have done differently.

Nick: Look, you can't change the past. It's time to forgive yourself and **move on**.

Iris: You're right. I guess all I can do is learn from this experience and do better next time.

Sarah: I've been trying to make it as an actor for years now, but things just aren't working out the way I hoped. I don't know, Connor. Maybe it's time for me **to move on** and pursue something else.

Connor: I know it's hard, but you're so talented and dedicated. Don't give up on your dream just yet. Every challenge is a step closer to success. You've got this!

Quiz

1. What does the expression "to hit the fan" usually mean?

a) a celebration is happening
b) a difficult or problematic situation has escalated
c) a pleasant surprise has occurred
d) a fan has been turned on

2. Which of the following is NOT a good synonym for "go south"?

a) turn things around
b) go downhill
c) go down the drain
d) take a turn for the worse

3. What does "to lay it all on the line" mean?

a) to divide something evenly
b) to be direct and honest
c) to lie about something
d) to clean up a mess

4. Which situation below might lead someone to call off a meeting?

a) everyone arrives on time with all necessary documents
b) a surprise guest speaker arrives unexpectedly
c) a sudden announcement of a free lunch for all attendees
d) the venue gets double-booked, and half the attendees cancel

5. When might someone consider moving on from a relationship?

a) when everything is going perfectly
b) when there are minor disagreements
c) when communication breaks down and problems persist
d) when there's a surprise anniversary celebration

Comprehension Quiz

6. What metaphor was used to explain the meaning of "to hit the fan"?

7. What are some situations where the expressions "to hit the fan" and "everything's gone south" can be used?

8. How does Andrew suggest using the expressions "to hit the fan" and "everything's gone south" in conversation?

9. What problems did the friend encounter while working on the app project in the second example conversation?

10. True or false? We can use "everything's gone south" for predictable and unpredictable things that happen.

Writing and Discussion Questions

1. Have you ever been in a situation where things hit the fan or everything went south? Describe what happened and how you dealt with it.

2. When was a time in your life when you had to lay it all on the line to achieve a goal or overcome a challenge?

3. Have you ever had to call off a plan or event due to unforeseen circumstances? What was the situation, and how did you handle it?

4. Can you think of a time when you experienced a setback or failure but managed to turn things around and achieve success?

5. Can you think of a time when moving on from a past mistake or failure led to personal growth or positive change in your life?

Quiz Answers

1.b   2.a   3.b   4.d   5.c

6. "To hit the fan" was explained with the metaphor of throwing pieces of paper at a spinning fan, causing chaos and problems to spread.

7. These expressions can be used to describe situations where things are falling apart, deteriorating, or experiencing a sudden negative turn, such as projects, relationships, or plans.

8. These expressions are commonly used in informal settings such as casual conversations, discussions with friends, or office environments where informality is accepted.

9. The problems included being behind schedule, encountering bugs, going over budget, and facing competition from a similar app launched by a competitor.

10. True

Episode credits	
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