

## Catch Word #23 – Plan B

### Transcript

Jessie: Hi everybody, this is Jessie...

Maura: And Maura...

Jessie: Welcome to today's episode which is a **Catch Word** podcast.

Maura: Yeah, at Culips.com, that's C-U-L-I-P-S.com.

Jessie: So, in Catch Word we take a close look at one word or at an expression.

Maura: Yeah! And we talk about similar expressions and give you examples of these interesting expressions.

Jessie: That's right. And, as always, if you want to learn more about today's episode, or if you'd like to listen to other episodes, you can visit our website.

Maura: Yeah, and you can check out Lipservice with lots of Detailed Explanations and quizzes and fun stuff in there. We promise.

Jessie: So Maura, what's today's expression?

Maura: Today's expression ..."**plan B.**"

Jessie: "**Plan B,**" I like that one a lot.

Maura: Yeah, it's a good one. What is "**plan B,**" Jessie?

Jessie: Well, **plan B** is something you decide to do after the first thing you wanted to do didn't **work out**.

Maura: Right! So, your first choice, something you wanted to do first, it doesn't work. So you decide to do something else, something different, a second option.

Jessie: Yeah, so we call that option "**plan B.**"

Maura: Right and "B" makes sense because first you have "A," then "B" is the second letter so "B" is the second plan.

- Jessie: Exactly! So we might not call our first plan “plan A,” but we can still call our second plan “**plan B**.”
- Maura: Right! So, an example could be I wanted to make something for dinner, I wanted to make pizza, but then I realized I didn’t have tomato sauce, so I went to **plan B**, I decided to make something different for dinner.
- Jessie: Right! So in that case, making pizza was your first plan and it didn’t work out so your **plan B** was to make something else.
- Maura: Yeah, I made pasta instead.
- Jessie: Oh, sounds good .
- Maura: Yeah, it was a good **plan B**.
- Jessie: You can also say something like if I can’t pass this class by studying hard, **plan B** is to **cheat** on the exam.
- Maura: Right, so I guess if you don’t know the answers, the second option is to **copy** the answers.
- Jessie: Always good to have a **plan B**.
- Maura: Yeah, “**plan B**.” It’s good to have a second option because sometimes your first plan doesn’t work out. Like you want to go to the beach and it’s raining so **plan B** for a Saturday is to watch a movie inside.
- Jessie: You could watch a movie about a beach.
- Maura: Exactly!
- Jessie: So, people sometimes use the term “plan A” if they’re talking about their first choice, and sometimes they even use the term “plan C” to mean their third choice.
- Maura: Yeah, so your first choice, your second choice, they both didn’t work, so you need to do your third choice.
- Jessie: Right. But I think that “**plan B**” is the most common.
- Maura: Yeah for sure, “**plan B**.” And what other expressions are similar to “**plan B**”?

- Jessie: Well, you could say “a **backup plan**.”
- Maura: Right, “a **backup plan**.” So your first plan didn’t work so you use your **backup plan**.
- Jessie: Right.
- Maura: Could you give me an example?
- Jessie: Well, I couldn’t pass the test by studying hard so I used my **backup plan** and **cheated**.
- Maura: Nice, I’m happy for you!
- Jessie: I’m doing a lot of **cheating** today.
- Maura: Yeah, we shouldn’t say that **cheating** is OK.
- Jessie: No **cheating** is not a good **backup plan**.
- Maura: Right! So you could use “**backup plan**” and very similarly, a similar expression is “**fallback plan**.”
- Jessie: Right.
- Maura: So just like “**plan B**,” just like “**backup plan**,” your first plan doesn’t work so you use a “**fallback plan**.”
- Jessie: Exactly.
- Maura: Yeah! I wanted to put cream in my coffee, but there was none left so my **fallback plan** was to use milk.
- Jessie: That sounds pretty good.
- Maura: Yeah, thanks! Do you have another example?
- Jessie: Let’s see, I studied really hard, but I still couldn’t pass the test so I had to use my **fallback plan** and **cheat**.
- Maura: You’re doing a lot of **cheating**.
- Jessie: **Can’t help** it, it’s my **plan B**.

Maura: OK, good. So remember, if your first plan doesn't work you can go to **plan B**, the second option, or...

Jessie: Or you can use a **backup plan** or a **fallback plan**.

Maura: Right! So all three are expressions for when you need to choose the second option. OK, good. So, that's it for this episode at Culips.com. Don't forget to go to our website. And this has been Maura...

Jessie: And Jessie...

Maura: See you next time.

Jessie: Bye.

## Detailed Explanation

### Plan B

The expression for this episode is “**plan B**”. A **plan B** is something you decide to do after the first thing you try isn’t successful. It’s a second option to use if your first option doesn’t work.

A “**plan**” is something you decide to do before you do it. You could make a **plan** to meet your friend for dinner, or you could have a **plan** to become a doctor after you finish university.

The verb “**to plan**” is the act of making a **plan**, or deciding what you will do in the future. You could **plan** to go to the beach on the weekend or maybe your friends are **planning** to come over to your place.

You can also **plan something**, usually an event that needs some preparation in advance. You could **plan** your brother’s birthday party or **plan** a vacation.

We use the letter “**B**” in the expression “**plan B**” because it’s the second choice, because “**B**” is the second letter of the alphabet.

Here are some things to remember if you’d like to use the expression “**plan B**”:

There are quite a few ways to say that you’re going to use **plan B**. You can use different verbs to express this.

- Use **plan B**,
- Go to **plan B**,
- Resort to **plan B**, or
- Try **plan B**.

If you don’t have a **plan B** and you need one, you could use other expressions to think of a **plan B**.

- Come up with a **plan B**,
- Decide on a **plan B**, or
- Make a **plan B**.

You could use any of the expressions above for any **plan**, not just a **plan B**.

Sometimes people might use the expression “**plan A**” to talk about their first **plan**, or even **plan C** to talk about their third plan, but these aren’t as commonly used as **plan B**.

### Plan A / Plan B

When you are planning something with many options, you may call your first choice “**plan A**.” And it is possible that you already know **plan A** might not work. In this case, you make a **plan B** so that if it doesn’t work you are ready with another **plan**. And there is also a chance that even **plan B** won’t work, so you make a **plan C**.

Here is an example situation where you have all three **plans** before:

**Plan A** is to go for a walk. If it rains, you will go to **plan B** which is going to the museum. You also heard the museum might be closed. If it is closed, then you will go to the mall.

Or maybe you make up these **plans** as you go along. In this case, there is probably no **plan A**.

You decide to go to the beach. Then you think of “**plan B**” when it starts to rain and you decide to go to your friend’s house nearby. But then you find that your friend isn’t home, so you decide to go to a movie. You had to resort to **plan C** because none of the other **plans** worked.

### Backup

Maura and Jessie use the expression “**backup plan**” as a synonym for **plan B**. “**Backup**” is an interesting term, and it can mean a lot of things. In the way Jessie and Maura use it, –“a **backup plan**”– “**backup**” is an adjective meaning something like “alternative” or “second choice.”

For example, you could keep a **backup** umbrella in your car in case you forget to bring your normal umbrella to work with you one day. It’s also a smart idea to keep a **backup** disc of the important files from your computer, in case your computer ever got stolen or stopped working properly.

As an adjective, “**backup**” can mean something like “supporting” or “helping.” Lots of famous singers have **backup** singers and **backup** dancers who perform with them to help the song sound better and the show look more interesting.

**Backup** can be a noun meaning “support” or “help.” For instance, if two police officers are about to arrest a dangerous criminal, they might call for **backup**, meaning that they would call for other officers to come and help them. If you ever watch shows about police and criminals on TV, you’ll probably hear the characters yelling, “We need **backup**!” into their phones when they’re in an especially dangerous situation.

“**To back up**” (notice that **back up** is two words here!) is a verb that means “to move backwards.” For example, if you’re standing too close to the edge of a lake, you might want to **back up** so that you don’t fall in.

Let’s see how many different ways we can use “**backup**” and “**back up**” in one big example:

Janet and her **backup** dancers were driving to their concert when they realized that they had driven past the street where they were supposed to turn. Janet tried to **back up**, but there were too many cars behind her, so she came up with a **backup plan** and decided to turn at the next street. Unfortunately, the next street was very muddy and the car got stuck. Janet and the dancers couldn’t push the car out of the mud alone, so they called for **backup** and some friends came to help them. While they were pushing, Janet lost her car keys in the mud, but it was okay, because she had a **backup** key in her purse!

### Fallback

A **fallback plan** is also the same as “**backup plan**” and “**plan B.**” It is the **plan** you use when the first one doesn’t work.

It is also a verb, “**to fall back**” on something or someone. When something doesn’t work, you can rely or depend on something else. If you **fall back** on a person it means they will support you. This is just like the **fallback plan**, when the first **plan** doesn’t work you can **fall back** on another **plan**.

Here are some examples:

I am going to work as a teacher, but if I don’t like it I have my experience as a waitress to **fall back** on.

She can always **fall back** on us if it doesn’t work out.

### Work / Work Out

I’m sure you know the word “**work.**” You **work** hard at studying English, which is a verb that means to make an effort, to try. And you go to **work**. This is a noun, specifically a job or the place where you are employed.

Maybe you’ve heard the term “**work out**” before too. “**To work out**” can mean to do exercise, like going to the gym or going for a run.

When Maura and Jessie talk about **plan B**, they say it is something that you decide to do if the first thing you try doesn't **work**, or if your first idea doesn't **work out**. In this example, the nouns "**to work**" and "**to work out**" mean the same thing: to be successful, or to have a good result. If you go on a diet and lose 10 kg, you could say that the diet **worked**.

### Cheating/Copying

Jessie uses this example three times in this episode. "**To cheat**" on an exam means that you do not answer the questions yourself. You can **cheat** using a note to help you. Or you can **cheat** by seeing a **copy** of the exams before you take it. You can also **cheat** by looking at the exams of people beside you.

**Cheating** is illegal, and never allowed. Jessie was just using this example as a joke. She is no cheater!

One of the ways that people **cheat** is "**to copy**." "**To copy**" means that you see what someone else has answered and you answer the same way. You can use "**copy**" in other situations too. Here are some examples:

I bought a new coat and then Francis **copied** me and bought the same coat.

She **copies** me all the time. When I say I like something, she says she likes it too.

### Can't help it

In this episode, Jessie kept talking about **cheating** on tests and exams. Maura pointed out that she was doing a lot of **cheating**, and Jessie said, "**I can't help it**, it's my **plan B**."

"**I can't help it**" is an expression meaning "I can't stop it," "I can't do anything about it," or "I can't change it."

Here's an example:

Paul: Could you please stop sneezing so much? I'm trying to study!

Keith: **I can't help it!** I'm allergic to all the dust in this library.

We don't have to only use "it" in this expression. Instead of "it" we could just say the thing we're talking about. In the example above, Keith could have said, "I can't stop sneezing."

There's a very famous song by Elvis Presley called ***I Can't Help Falling in Love with You***. This means that Elvis loves the girl so much he can't stop falling in love with her.

If you search for it on YouTube.com, you can find several videos with the music and the lyrics. This expression is often used in music.



**Quiz** (see the answers at the bottom of this Lipservice)

**1. “Plan B” refers to what kind of plan?**

- a) a fun plan
- b) a plan made by Bonnie
- c) a first plan
- d) a second plan

**2. Which verb does NOT work with plan B?**

- a) use
- b) go to
- c) put
- d) resort to

**3. What is a backup plan?**

- a) a plan B
- b) a plan behind you
- c) a first plan
- d) a last chance

**4. Let’s plan a trip to Grenada and if we can’t find a good hotel, we can use our \_\_\_\_\_.**

- a) fallback plan
- b) back fall plan
- c) backwards plan
- d) fall plan

**5. What is another synonym for “plan B”?**

- a) plan C
- b) back down plan
- c) backwards plan
- d) backup plan

6. I wanted to go to Hawaii for Christmas but my plans didn't \_\_\_\_\_.

- a) wind up
- b) work out
- c) work up
- d) work in

7. Cheating is a good way to finish University.

Choose one.

- a) true
- b) false

8. "I can't help falling in love with you." What does this mean?

- a) I need help to love you.
- b) I am not in love with you.
- c) I can't stop myself from loving you.
- d) I fell down the stairs.

**Answers:** 1.d 2.c 3.a 4.a 5.d 6.b 7.b 8. c

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