

BBC Learning English

The Teacher

Insect idioms



In this episode, **The Teacher** introduces you to three idiomatic phrases connected with insects.

1. **Knee-high to a grasshopper**
 2. **To have butterflies in your stomach.**
 3. **To have ants in your pants**
-

Hello, I'm a very interesting and intelligent man.

And these are insects. Today, these insects and I are going to teach you some idioms in English.

I bet you've never been taught by an insect before!

When I was a little boy I loved insects.

Small, wasn't I?

In fact I was knee-high to a grasshopper.

In English, when we want to talk about someone who is very young or very small we can say they're knee-high to a grasshopper.

Which, as you can see, is not very tall.

Knee-high to a grasshopper.

I've got to make a speech... in front of five thousand people. Can you imagine how I feel?

Nervous. I've got that strange feeling in my stomach you get when you're feeling nervous.

Ah yes, butterflies. That's how it feels – like I've got butterflies in my stomach.

In English, if we're very nervous about something we have to do, we can say "I have butterflies in my stomach".

To have butterflies in your stomach.

Well here I go... I hope they're kind to me...

Ah, hello.

I'm going to meet my hero, Mr Bean.

I'm so excited. I've got ants in my pants.

Well, not really, but in English if you're so excited about something that you can't keep still you can say you've got ants in your pants.

To have ants in your pants.

Actually, I have got ants in my pants. Arghhh!