

Idioms: to kick oneself

Hi! Lori here, welcoming you to another episode of 2-minute English from BetterAtEnglish.com. This episode is in response to a question from Seref, a teacher of English in Turkey, who sent in a question about the sentence *I feel like kicking myself*. Seref is curious about the level of formality of this idiom and wonders if there are any synonyms.

Meaning

According to my trusty [Oxford Dictionary of Idioms](#), if you *kick yourself* you feel "annoyed with yourself because you did something foolish or missed an opportunity." You can also see the [definition of to kick oneself](#) in the Cambridge International Dictionary of Idioms.

Lori is kicking herself for not buying Google stock back in 2004.

Michael bought Google stock when it was at 300 dollars a share, but he still kicks himself every day for not doing it sooner.

Formality

The phrase *to kick oneself* is neutral, informal and conversational. So it's perfectly OK to use it in all but the most formal situations.

Synonyms

The core meaning of the idiom *to kick oneself* is the idea of *regret*: regret for something you did or for an opportunity that you missed. So Seref, if you need a synonym that would suit formal situations, you can use the verb *regret*.

to (deeply) regret (v +ing) something

In general, many people consider idiomatic expressions and phrasal verbs to be less formal than lexical verbs. So in formal situations of a grave or somber nature, you should definitely go with *regret*, or you may end up kicking yourself.

Thanks for tuning in to this episode of 2-minute English, and special thanks to Seref for the question. By the way, if I've been horribly mispronouncing your name I will totally kick myself! You can find some additional links and the full transcript of this show on the website, www.betteratenglish.com. And remember, your continued donations make this show possible, and we really appreciate them. Bye for now!

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Google provides the worlds biggest corpus for doing quick'n'dirty research into language usage. Follow the link below to see examples of how *to kick oneself* is used "out in the wild." See [usage examples of to kick oneself](#) on Google.