

Stop Saying So-So....

Embarrassment Level: ★ ★ ★ ★ ☆

Arriving in South Korea for the first time I was shocked at how popular the phrase "so-so" was. In native English speaking countries the phrase "so-so" is rather **antiquated**. However, in much of Asia, South Korea and Japan in particular, this phrase is **alive and well**.

"So-so" should be avoided like the plague in your daily English. English teachers are aware that "so-so" is one of the first phrases you learn and is rather easy to remember, yet it makes your English speaking level appear basic. Let's examine some better phrases to help you sound more modern while speaking English.

Incorrect

"How are you Today Sung-Jin?" "So-so..."

"What did you think of the new Iron Man movie?" "It was so-so."

"You don't look to well are you okay?" "My stomach feels so-so."

Correct

"How are you Today Sung-Jin?" "I'm fine/ Not bad/ I'm okay/ I could be better."

"What did you think of the new Iron Man movie?" "It was okay."

You don't look to well are you okay?" "My stomach doesn't feel too well."

Tips:

Remember, so-so is not actually incorrect. However, it is outdated and **peaked** as an expression in the 1960's. Instead of using "so-so" try saying "okay", "not-bad", or "reasonable".

"So-so" and "so and so" are different. We use the phrase "so and so" when the speaker can't remember the name of someone, or the name of the person is not important. For example, "Who left the window open?" "So and so wanted to get some fresh air so he opened the window, what's his name? The new guy..."

Vocabulary:

- **antiquated**: No longer modern or in use; old and outdated. "His profession of stamp making had become antiquated, a thing from the past."
- **"alive and well"**: Strong and healthy; popular. "While his clothing brand was unheard of in Asia it was alive and well in America."
- **peaked**: Reaching the top. "Rock music has always been quite popular, yet many argue it peaked in the 1960's with bands like the Rolling Stones and the Beatles."

Daily Expressions & Idioms:

1.) **"hit the books"**: Means you are going to study.

*"I can't go out tonight. I need to **hit the books** for an upcoming exam later this week."*

2.) **"to twist someone's arm"**: Means convince someone to do something they originally were hesitant in doing.

*"I have to go on a blind date tomorrow. My co-worker kept **twisting my arm** to meet her friend. So I said yes."*