



WORDS AND THEIR STORIES

Are You Prepared 'to See How the Sausage Is Made'?

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And now, *Words and Their Stories* from VOA Learning English.

Today we talk about a kind of food -- sausage. Sausage can be made from any kind of meat, along with **spices**, **herbs**, sometimes vegetables, and even fruit. My favorite sausage is made from chicken, apple, and the herb sage.

To make sausage, the **ingredients** are mixed together and then shaped into individual servings.

High-quality sausage uses high-quality ingredients and costlier cuts of meat. Some sausages are made from parts of the animal that many people may not normally eat. But everything gets mixed up so much that you do not really know what is in the final product.

For this reason, seeing the sausage-making process might be a bit unpleasant for some people. In other words, some people who like to eat sausage may not want to know how it is made. If they see all the separate ingredients, they may never eat sausage again.

And that is where we get the expression to see how the sausage is made.

If you want to see how the sausage is made, you want to see a complex or **messy** process. You want to know the secrets, even if they are not very pleasing.

We use this expression for any situation or process that happens away from the **view** of others. And most people would find that situation or process unpleasant.

For example, many people like to buy clothing that does not cost much money. But they may not want to know how the clothes are made so cheaply. They would rather not want to know how the sausage gets made.

There are other similar expressions.

You can also say we want to shine a light on something. This expression means you want to **reveal** or **expose** something unpleasant or possibly even illegal.

Another similar expression is to pull back the curtain on something. This one really explains the **behind-the-scenes** nature of all these expressions. A curtain is a piece of cloth or fabric that covers a window. It can hide what is happening inside a room. So, if you pull back the curtain on a process or way of doing something, you reveal how something is created or how it operates in private.

And if you pull back the curtain on a person, you reveal how they act when they are away from public view. You reveal their true personality or you expose their true **intent**.

And that's all the time we have for this *Words and Their Stories*.

Enjoy using these expressions the next time you want to show the unpleasant side of something.

Until next time ... I'm Anna Matteo.

Anna Matteo wrote this lesson for VOA Learning English.

Words in This Story

spice – *n.* a plant product (as pepper or nutmeg) that has a strong pleasant smell and is used to season or flavor food

herb – *n.* a plant or plant part used for making medicine and seasonings

ingredient – *n.* one of the substances that make up a mixture

messy – *adj.* marked by confusion, disorder, or dirt : untidy

view – *n.* range of vision

reveal – *v.* to make known

expose – *v.* to make known

behind-the-scenes – *adj.* being or working out of public view or in secret : revealing or reporting the hidden workings

intent – *n.* set on some end or purpose

We want to hear from you. Do you have a similar expression in your language? In the Comments section, you can also practice using any of the expressions from the story.

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