

MISTAKE: "MY BAD"

Have you ever made a mistake before? How did you apologize for it?



DEFINITION

"My bad" is an expression used in informal situations to say that you admit your mistake.

Mistake is something that you have said or done which is not correct and causes problems.

Apology is something that you tell someone to let them know that you are sorry for something you did wrong.

LANGUAGE POINT

1. Adjectives that are commonly used with the word mistake.

great	fatal	possible	likely	sure	grievous	tragic	easy
same	terrible	ill	honest	huge	own	impossible	little
bad	sure	sad	much	first	mutual	serious	such
common	big	gross	single	afraid	liable	grave	

2. Expressions used about making mistakes.

METAPHOR: Mistake can mean "falling over", "being clumsy" or "dropping things."

a. **stumble over** – to make a mistake when you are speaking

Example: Tanya stumbled over her lines.

b. **trip up** – to make a mistake, or to cause someone to make a mistake

Example: The exam was made to trip the examinees up.

c. **fall flat on one's face** – to fail completely and often in an embarrassing way

Example: The performance fell flat on its face due to the lack of practice.

d. **fumble for** [something] – to say something in a way that is not well-versed and effective

Example: He was so nervous about speaking in public that he fumbled for words the entire time.

e. **clumsy attempt to** (do something) – the act of trying to do something in a very awkward manner

Example: John did a clumsy attempt to tell everyone a joke.

f. **get off on the wrong foot** – to have a bad start at doing something (usually in terms of building relationships, meeting people for the first time, etc.)

Example: Alice got off on the wrong foot with her client when she gave rude comments about their company.

g. **slip of the tongue/pen** – something that you say or write by accident when it is supposed to be something else

Example: I shouldn't have told you her secret. It was just a slip of the tongue.

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PRACTICE 1

Fill in the gaps with the appropriate expressions used about making mistakes.

1. Tara usually _____ her speech.
2. The interview was nerve-wracking. I _____ on most of the questions thrown at me.
3. Jane saw Mari crying in a corner of a room. She was the only one in the room who knew her so, she made a _____ comfort her.
4. Chris' finding out about the surprise party for him was just a _____.
5. Sarah _____ with Lisa when she said that her dress didn't compliment her shoes.

VOCABULARY

Here are some of the types of mistakes and their specific definitions.

mix-up – a mistake that confuses somebody to believe that one thing is something else

typo – a small, accidental mistake in a text made when it was typed on a computer

fault – a part of a machine that is not working

gaffe – a social mistake made in speaking or behaving

slip-up – a small mistake

bug – a mistake in a computer program

PRACTICE 2

Identify what type of mistakes are being illustrated in the following situations.

1. Steve Harvey, who hosted Miss Universe 2015, announced the wrong winner. _____
2. They sent me the wrong medical test results. _____
3. I've rebooted my computer twice but the software still wouldn't work. _____
4. My name is supposed to be spelt with an "e" at the end. _____
5. The new speakers I bought stopped working after using it the third time. _____

SPEAKING

Tell me about the biggest mistake you've ever made.

Did you apologize for it? How?

How did you feel after having made that mistake?

How do you think the person felt?

Did they forgive you for having made such mistake?

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