

## Summary

Learning a new skill is a good thing to do – you never know when it might come in useful. But what has that got to do with strings on bows?! All will be explained in this episode of The English We Speak.

## Transcript

### Jiaying

Hello, I'm Jiaying, and this is The English We Speak...

### Neil

...and hello. I'm Neil.

### Jiaying

What's that awful sound?

### Neil

Are you referring to my violin playing? This is my new hobby – learning to play a new instrument.

### Jiaying

But it sounds like you're murdering a cat! Is there a cat in the studio?

### Neil

I get the message, Jiaying! I'm just trying to learn another skill, in case I lose my current job. I could make some money as a musician.

### Jiaying

So, you are adding another string to your bow?

### Neil

Am I? Is that what I need to improve my violin playing?!

### Jiaying

No, Neil! When we talk about having 'another string to your bow' we mean having an additional skill that can be used if the first one doesn't work out. So, think of another string as another skill – so how many strings do you have, Neil?

### Neil

Hmm, let me count while we hear some other examples of the phrase 'another string to your bow'...

## Examples

Bookkeeping is another string to my bow – I've learnt it in case I lose my job at the bank.

It looks like I'll never be a singer, but luckily, I have another string to my bow – dancing!

Gemma is so talented – she has so many strings to her bow.

**Jiaying**

This is The English We Speak from BBC Learning English and we're talking about the phrase 'another string to your bow' which describes having an additional skill to use if the first skill doesn't work out. We can also say 'to have more than one string to your bow' to mean having lost of skills. Neil's *additional* skill is playing the violin – but sorry, Neil, you need more practice!

**Neil**

Maybe I do, Jiaying – I think I might try a different skill – one that still needs a bow.

**Jiaying**

Neil, you don't need a bow to use this phrase - it's just metaphorical.

**Neil**

I know – but if learn this new skill, I can be like Robin Hood – it's archery.

**Jiaying**

Bows and arrows?!

**Neil**

Mind you head!

**Jiaying**

Watch out – that just missed me! I think you need one *fewer* string to your bow now – it's too dangerous.

**Neil**

No, this is great. Let's have another go!

**Jiaying**

I'm off. Bye.

**Neil**

Bye.