
BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

Authentic Real English 地道英语

To know something like the back of your hand 了如指掌



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Rob

Hello and welcome to Authentic Real English. I'm Rob and joining me today is Helen.

Helen

Hi everyone, I'm Helen. Rob, I hear you have a holiday coming up soon.

Rob

Oh yes, we have booked a trip to China to visit the home of pandas.

Helen

Do you mean Chengdu?

Rob

Yes, we are stopping there for a few days and then to HK for two weeks.

Helen

You know Chengdu is my home town. I grew up there.

Rob

Oh, I didn't know that. So you must know the place like the back of your hand then.

Helen

The back of my hand? 我的手背。我的手背还好啊，有点干。不过这和成都有啥关系？

Rob

Oh, it's a very common expression we use to say that we know somewhere very well, or extremely familiar with the place. You hear people say it all the time.

Helen

噢，原来是这个意思，当我们听到 know somewhere like the back of your hand，意思就是对什么地方非常了解就像对自己的手背那么熟悉一样。以下是两个例句：

Examples

He knows the building like the back of his hand.
She lived in village all her life, and knows the area like the back of her hand.

Helen

那么除了说对什么地方很了解之外，这个短语可以用于其它语境吗？

Rob

Well, we can used to describe books and other things we know very well. It's not just limited to places.

Helen

这个表达还可以用于对什么东西比如书、兴趣，非常精通了解。Here are more examples:

Examples

Jenny knows that book like the back of her hand. She has read it at least twenty times.
Max knows the Bond films like the back of his hand; he could recite the whole script of all of them.

Rob

So Helen, since you lived in Chengdu for many years, any recommendations for good places to visit in Chengdu?

Helen

Actually, the city has changed so much; I would be lost there like any other visitor. But my cousin still lives there. He definitely knows the city like the back of his hand.

Rob

Maybe I should give him a call.

Helen

I'm sure he'll be happy to help.

Rob

Great!

Helen

Have a good trip then.

Rob

Thanks.

Both

Bye!