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# BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

## Authentic Real English 地道英语

### Take to the cleaners 让人掏空所有的钱



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(Helen bumps into Rob in her local laundrette)

#### Helen

Hello Rob. I didn't know I would find you here. I love this laundrette. The washing machines are very efficient.

#### Rob

I hope so. I bought a very expensive washing machine last weekend but when I put my clothes in it, they ended up dirtier!

#### Helen

What do you mean?

#### Rob

Well, apparently some oil is leaking in the motor and it stained all the washing! I'm trying to wash them again here in this laundrette!

#### Helen

Oh, I can see all the yellowish stains... This white shirt... it's an expensive, designer one...

#### Rob

Yes, it is. That was my best shirt. It's probably ruined now! If this stain doesn't come out, I'll sue the washing machine manufacturers! I'll take them to the cleaners!

#### Helen

Calm down, Rob! It's the shirt that has to be taken to the cleaners!

#### Rob

Not exactly, Helen. In English, when we say we are going to 'take someone to the cleaners', we mean we're going to take a lot of money from them.

#### Helen

这么说当我们听到 **take someone to the cleaners** 这个表达的时候, 意思是从别人那里拿很多钱。你想让这家洗衣店赔偿你这件昂贵的衬衫, 你要他们赔你很多很多钱, 甚至于是他们所有的钱, 你要他们倾家荡产吗?

**Rob**

Yes! I'm very angry with them. But we should point out that this expression can be used in a sports context too, when a team defeats another one by a large number of points.

**Helen**

**Take to the cleaners** 这个短语还可以用于体育比赛，如果一个队被打得落花流水，一败涂地就可以这么形容。

**Rob**

'Take to the cleaners' is today's expression in Authentic Real English. Let's listen to some examples of how this phrase is used.

**Examples**

*My husband cheated on me with my best friend! I'm going to get the best divorce lawyer in town and take him to the cleaners!*

*My team has the best players and we'll take you to the cleaners in this Sunday's match!*

**Helen**

No need to sue the company, Rob. Call your washing machine manufacturer and ask them to replace it.

**Rob**

But I'm angry!

**Helen**

Don't be. I can take you to the cleaners, but not in the sense of this idiom. I can take you to the cleaners next door - the people who remove stains from clothes. They're very good.

**Rob**

OK. Well, do you think they might be able to remove this stain?

**Helen**

Of course they can. Come on, Rob.

**Rob**

OK. Come on, take me to the cleaners! Thanks, Helen.

**Helen**

You're welcome. Bye.

**Rob**

Bye.