BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

The English We Speak
Sack something off

This is not a word-for-word transcript.

Feifei
Hello and welcome to The English We Speak, where we explain expressions used by fluent English speakers so that you can use them, too! I'm Feifei, and I'm joined by Georgie. How are you?

Georgie
Feifei I am exhausted, and sadly I've got plans every night this week. Big error!

Feifei
Oh no! What are you going to do?

Georgie
Well, I think I'm going to sack off some of the bigger plans and just hope that my friends don't mind too much.

Feifei
That sounds like a sensible idea. You need to rest! Now, that's a good phrasal verb to learn – sack something off. What does it mean?

Georgie
Well, in this case, sack off plans means cancel plans. More broadly, it can mean to stop or avoid doing something because you feel too lazy or you'd rather be doing something else.

Feifei
Right. I'm supposed to be going to the gym later but I'd rather sack that off and watch TV.

Georgie
Great example! Let's hear more from our BBC Learning English colleagues.

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Examples
The work training is optional and it's so boring, so I decided to sack it off and get some coffee instead.

We booked a walking tour in Paris, but we were so tired after our flight that we decided to sack it off.

I needed to get some ingredients in for dinner, but I was kind of feeling lazy, so I decided to sack it off and get a takeaway instead.

Feifei
Now, 'sack something off' is a phrasal verb, isn't it?

Georgie
That's right, and it's a separable phrasal verb, which means you put an object at the end of the verb or in the middle. So, you can say 'sack off a plan' or 'sack a plan off'. Shall we sack off the rest of this programme?!

Feifei
No, Georgie! We just have to do a recap and then we're done. Don't be lazy!

Georgie
You're right, you're right. OK. We learnt 'sack something off' which means to cancel something, avoid or stop doing something. See you again next time!

Feifei
Thanks for joining us. Bye bye!

Georgie
Bye.

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