

# Burning the midnight oil?

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Midnight (medianoche) you will know and oil (aceite, petróleo) too.

However, if a mortal has been “burning the midnight oil” he has been studying or working to very late into the night. In Spanish you have something similar: quemarse las pestañas.

Here are 2 examples for you to contemplate:

- Mr Sanchez, the Spanish Prime Minister, has been burning the midnight oil (...se ha estado quemando las pestañas...) trying to decide how to form a government.
- Why are you burning the midnight oil (¿por qué estás trabajando tan tarde?)?

Why is it “midnight oil”? The reason is simple. Your forebears (antepasados) in the 17th century, for example, sometimes had to work late at night and it would be dark, so they would burn oil to illuminate the working space.

So, are you often burning the midnight oil studying English, or writing to Mr. Sanchez? Who knows.