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Phrasal Verbs

(Level: Intermediate)

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Phrasal Verbs...

Are mostly used in informal English, and are usually replaced with one larger word in formal English.

Are made of a verb + an adverb and/or preposition.

Often have idiomatic or local meanings and associations with other phrases or words.

May or may not take an object (i.e., may be transitive or intransitive). The object may come inside the phrasal verb or after it. It's usually a little less formal to put the object inside the phrase and a little more formal to put it after the phrase. There are a few phrasal verbs that must be split by an object.



Phrasal Verbs with No Object



break down, fall apart - break, stop working

- Our car broke down in the middle of the desert.

break in - robbery

- There was a break in at the bank last night.

catch on - become popular

- That song is really catching on. They play it everywhere.

come/go back - return

- I can never go back to that place.

come in - enter

- Welcome! Please come in.

come around - be persuaded

- Just let him think about what you said. He'll come around.

Phrasal Verbs with No Object (2)



come to/around, wake up - regain consciousness (not from sleep)

- Doctor, the man in a coma is coming around.

come over, come/drop/stop by - visit

- Please stop by later this evening.

cut/break in - interrupt

- At the high school dance, a rude kid cut in and danced with my date.

eat out - eat at a restaurant

- Let's eat out tonight. I'm too tired to cook.

fall down - drop to the ground (usually accidentally)

- Be careful not to fall down, when you're walking on ice.

get away, getaway - escape

- Let's get away this weekend and go to the beach.

Phrasal Verbs with No Object (3)



get by/along, do alright - survive, manage

- We're not rich/wealthy, but we do alright.

get/stand up - arise, stand

- Stand up for what you believe in!

get/wake up - regain consciousness from sleep, get out of bed

- I get up around 6 a.m.

give in/up - surrender

- OK, I give up! Stop hitting me!

give/wear out/down - fail from long/repeated use

- The old car's engine eventually wore out.

go on/ahead - happen

- Go on... tell me what you're thinking.

Phrasal Verbs with No Object (4)



go/get out - exit

- We can get out of the building this way.

go/move/continue on/along, keep [on] __ing - continue

- Even though the athlete's legs were hurting, she kept going.

grow apart - diverge, become distant, lose touch

- I've grown apart from most of my childhood friends.

grow up, get older - mature, become an adult

- Oh, grow up! Stop acting like a child!

hang/hold on - wait

- Please hang on... the doctor will see you in just a minute.

keel over, be/get sick - vomit

- The sick man keeled over in pain.

Phrasal Verbs with No Object (5)



keep/stay away/back - caution, don't come close

- Stay back! This house is still on fire and might collapse!

pass out, keel over - lose consciousness (not from sleep), faint

- When she learned that she had won the lottery, she passed out.

show off - boast, brag

- The arrogant young boxer liked to show off by dancing around the ring and doing fancy moves during fights.

stop it, cut it out - cease/stop doing something

- Cut it out! Leave me alone!

turn around - go in the reverse direction

- We're going in the wrong direction. We need to turn around.

work out - exercise

- I work out every evening after work.

Phrasal Verbs with Object Inside or After



bring on - cause or encourage to arrive or happen

- The man's heart attack was brought on by years of eating fatty food.

bring up - mention

- Please don't bring up the same problem over and over.

call off - cancel

- They called off today's meeting.

cheer on, root for - encourage or support someone during a task

- The baseball fans cheered on their favorite players.

cheer up - encourage or support someone in general

- Watching comedy films always cheers me up when I'm sad.

cut off - quickly drive in front of someone

- That jerk cut me off!

Phrasal Verbs with Object Inside or After (2)



cut off - stop supporting someone (with money, resources, etc.)

- The child's wealthy parents cut him off when he turned 22.

do over - repeat, try again, another try

- Can I do the test over? I'll do better next time.

drop off - bring and leave

- Would you drop me off at work today?

figure out - solve, decide

- Don't worry... we'll figure something out.

fill out - complete

- Please fill out this customer satisfaction survey.

fill up - fill until full

- Please fill up the car's gas tank.

Phrasal Verbs with Object Inside or After (3)

give away - donate

- I always give away my old clothes to poor people.

give back - return

- Please give me back that book I let you borrow.

give/hand out - distribute

- Hand out these political fliers to everyone you meet.

go/look/read over - read, browse, skim, peruse

- Please read over our website before applying for a job at our company.

hand/turn in - submit

- Hand in your work by 5 p.m.

hang out - spend time with

- Do you want to hang out tonight?



Phrasal Verbs with Object Inside or After (4)

hang up - disconnect

- Hang up the phone.

hold back - stop, refrain

- Don't hold back. Say what you're thinking.

hold up - delay, wait

- Hold up a minute. We need to wait for everyone to get here.

hold/put off - procrastinate, postpone, delay, wait

- Don't put off your work until the last minute.

leave out - avoid, omit

- In the next version of your song, you should leave out the curse words.

look over - check, consider, examine, judge, study

- Look over your work before you turn it in.



Phrasal Verbs with Object Inside or After (5)

look up - search for

- I'll look it up on the Internet.

make up, think of/up - imagine, invent, construct, fabricate

- It doesn't matter what you say to them. Just make up something.

pick out - choose, select

- Pick out your favorite ice cream flavor, and I'll buy it for you.

pick up - connect

- The phone's ringing. Please pick it up.

pick up - collect

- Pick up the kids at school at 3 p.m.

pick/put up - lift, raise

- No, I can't pick you up anymore. You've grown/gotten too big!





Phrasal Verbs with Object Inside or After (6)

point out - mention, call/draw attention, indicate

- Thanks for pointing out the problem.

put away - store, archive, hide

- Please put away your cellphones before the exam.

put on - wear, affect

- Hang on... I need to put on my make-up before we leave.

put out - extinguish

- The firefighters came and put out the fire.

put out - disappoint, agitate

- I don't want to put you out, but I have some bad news.

set up, get ready - arrange, assemble, schedule

- It will take me a few minutes to set up the new computer.

Phrasal Verbs with Object Inside or After (7)

shut up (rude), be quiet, quiet down - silence

- Shut up! How dare you speak to me that way!

slow down, go slower - decelerate

- The traffic signs told drivers to slow down.

speak up - shout, yell, vocalize

- Please speak up -- I can't hear you.

speed up, go faster - accelerate

- Everyone's passing us -- speed up!

take down - disassemble, store, archive

- After a holiday, it takes a few days to take down all of the decorations.

take out of - remove from

- Please take any valuables out of your bag, before putting the bag in a public locker.





Phrasal Verbs with Object Inside or After (8)

take/write down - write, note

- Please take down my instructions.

take/tear/throw off - remove, discard

- He took off his wet clothes, when he got home.

talk about/among[st]/over - discuss, debate

- Let's not fight about it. Let's just talk it over like reasonable people.

throw away - discard, trash

- Too many people throw away trash by the side of the road.

try on/out - test

- Try on this dress. I think you'll like it.

turn down/up - lower/raise, decrease/increase

- Turn that down! It's too loud!

Phrasal Verbs with Object Inside or After (9)

turn down/away - reject

- When a company turns you down for a job, they often send you a letter saying "We regret to inform you...."

turn off - aversion, disgust, repel, repulse

- Yuck! A beard on a man is such a turn off!

turn on - arouse, attract, appeal to

- She's turned on by intelligent men.

turn/switch/power off - disconnect

- Turn off the lights when you leave.

turn/switch/power on - connect

- Power on the computer.

use up - finish, exhaust

- We once had a lot of water, but it's all been used up (or been all used up).

work out - find a solution

- The businessmen worked out a deal.



Phrasal Verbs with Object After



act on - take action on

- These are good ideas. We should act on them.

ask for - request

- He asked for his favorite doctor.

back away from - retreat

- Slowly back away from the snake, so that it doesn't bite you.

bring up children - raise children

- They brought up three children in that house.

call on - ask, call, indicate, reference/cite

- The teacher called on James to answer the question.

call on, look in on - visit

- I'll look in on you later to make sure you're alright.

Phrasal Verbs with Object After (2)

catch up with, talk with - meet, discuss, talk

- It was nice to catch up with my old college friends.

check [up] on, make sure of - monitor, confirm, verify

- Please check on the baby every few minutes.

come forward - report (usually a crime)

- A few people came forward with information about the crime.

come up with - imagine, invent, construct, fabricate

- Sara came up with a really good idea.

come/go up/down to - travel

- Why don't you come up/down to visit us? (Up might mean north or higher. Down might mean south or lower.)

come/run/happen across/upon - discover by chance/accident

- When cleaning the attic, I came across these old family photos.



Phrasal Verbs with Object After (3)



cut down on - decrease, remove, curtail

- We need to cut down on our grocery expenses.

drop out of, give up on, walk out on - abandon, discard, leave, quit

- It's almost never a good idea to drop out of high school.

fill in - mark/darken completely

- Please fill in the blanks on the test.

find out - discover, explore, learn

- N.A.S.A. explores outer space in order to find out what is out there.

get along with - complement, like, tolerate

- You need to try to get along with your coworkers.

get around - solve by/while avoiding

- If you're creative, there are usually ways to get around whatever problem you have.

Phrasal Verbs with Object After (4)



get away with - escape without blame or punishment

- The thief managed to get away with \$2,000,000 worth of diamonds.

get back at, get/take revenge on - avenge

- If you get back at people who hurt you, you are just as bad as them.

get back to - reply, respond

- Please get back to me with your answer by the end of the day.

get over, recover from - heal

- It took me a year to get over that illness.

get over, let go of - detach

- After a breakup, it usually takes people some time to get over their ex-boyfriend or ex-girlfriend.

get rid of, throw away - discard, eliminate, trash

- Get rid of those old clothes and get some new ones.

Phrasal Verbs with Object After (5)



[get] through with, done with - finish

- When you're through with that work, I'll give you some more.

go out with, take out - date

- She's going out with a new boy this weekend.

go through, run out of - finish, exhaust

- We've run out of toilet paper.

hang/hold onto - save, keep

- You should hold onto that signed baseball. It might be valuable someday.

hold up - rob

- The gang members held up a convenience store.

keep up/pace with - stay/run alongside, heel

- Can you keep up with the class?

Phrasal Verbs with Object After (6)

look after, care for, take care of, take responsibility for, wait on

- nurse, mother, father, guardian, parent, serve

- She looked after her mother, when her mother got old.

look down [up]on, frown upon, talk down to - criticize, hate,

despise, denigrate, discourage

- The older children looked down on the younger children.

look forward to - anticipate (positively)

- I always look forward to the weekend.

look into - investigate

- We will look into your complaint.

look up to - admire, respect, like, love, envy

- Children often look up to celebrities.

look/watch out for, wait for - anticipate

- Please stand here and watch out for the bus. Let me know when it's coming.²²



Phrasal Verbs with Object After (7)



look/watch out for - be careful/cautious/wary

- Watch out for traffic, when you cross the road.

make out - result, do, fare

- How did the company make out this year? Did we make much profit?

make out - understand

- It would so loud at the party, I could barely make out what he was saying.

make out with - passionately kiss and touch

- The teenagers snuck out of their houses at night and made out by the lake.

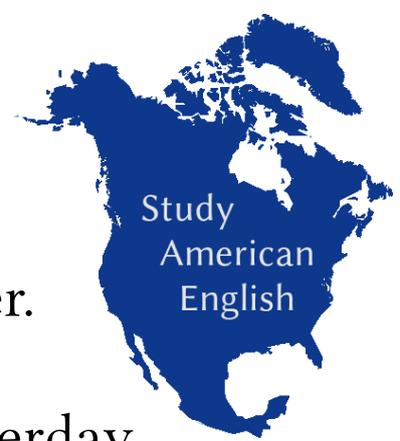
make up - reconcile

- OK, children. Make up and be friends.

pay for - pay a debt or for a good/service

- It will take us 30 years to pay for our house.

Phrasal Verbs with Object After (8)



put up with - tolerate, allow

- The two countries' politicians could barely put up with each other.

run into - meet by chance/accident

- I ran into one of my old university professors at the grocery yesterday.

take after, look like - resemble

- She really takes after her mother.

take off - run, escape, flee

- The children took off from their cruel foster parents' house.

talk back to, give lip to, argue with - respond disrespectfully, sass

- A parent might say to his/her daughter who is arguing with them: "Don't talk back to me, young lady!"

think/look back on/to - remember, recall

- Think back on the night of the crime, and try to remember what happened.



Phrasal Verbs with Object Inside

fill in - inform, explain

- When you learn what is going on, please fill me in.

British: mess about/around - treat unfairly, be a nuisance to

- Stop messing me about.

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