

Phrasal verbs

Phrasal verbs are very common in English, especially in more informal contexts. They are made up of (composed) a verb **and a particle** (preposition/adverb) or, sometimes, **two particles**. The particle often changes the **meaning** of the verb.

Ex: *I called Jen to see how she was. (call = to telephone)*

They've called off the meeting. (call off = to cancel)

The **order** of the phrasal verb in a sentence.

Ex: *They've called the meeting off.*

OR

They've called off the meeting.

However, separable phrasal verbs **must be separated** when you use a pronoun.

Ex: *The meeting? They've called it off.*

Other separated phrasal verbs:

I didn't want to bring the situation up at the meeting.

(bring up = start talking about a particular subject)

Please can you fill this form in?

(fill in = write information in a form or document)

I'll pick you up from the station at 8 p.m.

(pick up = collect someone in a car or other vehicle to take them somewhere)

Non-separable phrasal verbs:

Some phrasal verbs **cannot** be separated.

Ex: *Who looks after the baby when you're at work?*

I came across your email when I was clearing my inbox.

(come across = to find something by chance)

The caterpillar turned into a beautiful butterfly.

(turn into = become)

It was quite a major operation. It took months to get over it and feel normal again.

(get over = recover from something)

We are aware of the problem and we are looking into it.

(look into = investigate)

Phrasal verbs with two particles (preposition/adverb):

Phrasal verbs with **two particles** are also inseparable. Even if you use a pronoun, you put it after the particles.

Ex: Who **came up with** that idea?

(**come up with** = think of an idea or plan)

Let's **get rid of** these old magazines to make more space.

(**get rid of** = remove or become free of something that you don't want)

I didn't really **get on with** my stepbrother when I was a teenager.

(**get on with** = like and be friendly towards someone)

Can you hear that noise all the time? I don't know how you **put up with** it.

(**put up with** = tolerate something difficult or annoying)

The concert's on Friday. I'm really **looking forward to** it.

(**look forward to** = be happy and excited about something that is going to happen)

- ◆ Phrasal verbs often have more than one meaning. 'Take off' can mean both 'leave the ground' and 'become successful'
- ◆ Phrasal verbs are often used only in very specific situations. They have narrow meanings
- ◆ Many phrasal verbs cannot be accounted. However, you can use the common ones.

some phrasal verbs which have different meaning:

1. GO ON = happen

What's **going on**?

There's a class **going on** at the moment.

What **went on** last night?

2. PICK UP = get something or someone from a place

I **picked up** my brother from the airport.

Please **pick up** some bread.

Would you come and **pick me up** from work tonight?

3. COME BACK = return to a place (the speaker is in that place)

She **came back** around 10pm last night.

When will you **come back** from France?

Please **come back!** It's boring here without you.

4. COME UP WITH = produce an idea

Julie **came up with** a great idea.

He **came up with** an answer to the question very quickly.

Can you **come up with** a better solution?

5. GO BACK = return to a place (the speaker isn't in that place)

*He finished his work and **went back** to his flat.*

*When is she planning to **go back** to Japan?*

*I'll **go back** to the library later.*

6. FIND OUT = get information

*Can you **find out** what time the restaurant opens?*

*I **found out** that we need to submit our essays next Tuesday.*

*I don't know what the weather forecast is for tomorrow, but I'll **find out**.*

7. COME OUT = appear from a place

*She **came out** of the kitchen.*

*He went to the cafe and **came out** with a coffee.*

*Please **come out** of the bedroom.*

8. GO OUT = go to an event / restaurant / pub / party

*Let's **go out** for dinner.*

*You're **going out** a lot these days.*

*We should **go out** more.*

9. POINT OUT = show / mention

*She **pointed out** the beautiful paintings on the walls.*

*Please **point out** to the students that they must attend all the lectures.*

*'We'll miss the bus if we don't hurry', he **pointed out**.*

10. GROW UP = become an adult

I grew up in Scotland.

My children are growing up too fast!

When will he grow up?

11. SET UP = create / arrange

*I need to **set up** a new bank account.*

*She's decided to **set up** her own company.*

*I **set up** some language classes at the school.*

12. TURN OUT = in the end we discover

*The maid **turned out** to have stolen the money.*

*He **turned out** to be a friend of Alex's.*

*The party **turned out** to be a big success.*

13. GET OUT = leave a room / building / car

*I need to **get out** of the house!*

*She **got out** of the car and went into the shop.*

***Get out!** There's a fire in the kitchen!*

14. COME IN / INTO = enter (the speaker is in that place)

*Please **come in!** It's great to see you.*

*She **came into** the living room and sat down.*

*Don't **come in!** I'm not ready yet!*

15. TAKE ON = to be responsible for

*He's going to **take on** the new project.*

*She isn't **taking on** any new students at the moment.*

*Could you **take on** some extra work?*