

## PHRASAL VERBS

Phrasal verbs are often used in everyday situations. On a warm day, you *take off* your coat or jacket; we say 'take off' much more frequently than 'remove'. In the opposite situation, when it's cold you *put on* more clothes, and there really isn't another possible verb. Also, you can't just say 'put' without adding 'on'.

Many phrasal verbs have meanings which become increasingly idiomatic – that is, non-literal. It can be difficult to see a connection between the simple and idiomatic uses of these verbs. We *put up* a sign or a picture by hanging it on the wall, but when we *put up* a friend for the weekend, we offer our friend somewhere to stay.

It is best to concentrate on basic meanings first, and to limit, for now at least, the number of phrasal verbs that you try to learn.

## THE GRAMMAR OF PHRASAL VERBS

There are four types of phrasal verbs:

type 1

*The photocopier **broke down** again yesterday.*

verb + adverb particle, no object

type 2

*Can you **look after** the children for me?*

**NOT ~~Can you look the children after for me?~~**

verb + preposition + object

type 3

*I'll **give John back** the money.*

OR

*I'll **give John the money back**.*

verb + adverb particle + object

type 4

*Living here, it's hard to **put up with** the noise from the airport.*

verb + adverb particle + preposition + object

## PERSONAL PRONOUNS WITH PHRASAL VERBS

type 2

*I've had this cold for a week.. I'm just getting over **it** today.*

**NOT ~~I'm just getting it over today.~~**

(the two parts of the verb cannot be separated)

type 3

*I'm too busy for the appointment with our visitors. I'll have to **put them** off.*

**NOT ~~I'll have to put off them.~~**

(the two parts of the verb must be separated)

Type 4

*We've been invited to another boring party. How can we get out of **it**?*

**NOT ~~How can we get it out of?~~**

(the three parts of the verb cannot be separated)

## SOME COMMON PHRASAL VERBS

### Type 1

*My flight **takes off** at 13.30 pm.*

*The fire alarm **went off**, so we left the building.*

*It's difficult to **get by** each month on a low salary.*

*I don't know the answer. I **give up**.*

*There wasn't enough wood, so the fire **went out**.*

### Type 2

*I'm **looking for** the station / a new job / something I've lost.*

*Anne **is looking after** the baby / the patient / something precious.*

*He's **getting over** his illness / his ex-girlfriend / the disappointment.*

*I **ran into** an old friend by chance / an unexpected problem / something accidentally.*

*Thieves **broke into** my car / the flat downstairs / the warehouse.*

### Type 3

*She's **taken up** judo / a new hobby / her new position in the company.*

*We'll have to **put off** our plans / the meeting / something until a later date.*

*I've just **worked out** the solution / the answer / how far it is.*

*Bob has **set up** the project / his own company / something structured.*

*I'm going to **sort out** this mess / the attic / the problem.*

### Type 4

*I'm **looking forward to** a holiday / going out tonight / something pleasant.*

*Excuse me for **breaking in on** your conversation / your meeting / something I'm interrupting.*

*You're wrong to **go back on** your decision / your promise / a commitment you made.*

*Let's **get away from** these stupid people / this polluted city / such an unpleasant subject.*

*She **gets on with** her parents / children / people quite well in general.*

## COMMON PHRASAL VERBS WITH 'DO', 'MAKE' AND 'GET'

### PHRASAL VERBS WITH 'DO'

**verb:** do up

**meaning:** decorate, renovate, restore

*They've **done up** their living room / an old farmhouse / the area around the docks*

**verb:** do away with

**meaning:** get rid of, make superfluous or unwanted

*The company **did away with** the old system / unnecessary paperwork / a number of jobs*

### PHRASAL VERBS WITH 'MAKE'

**verb:** make for

**meaning:** go towards a destination

*Let's **make for** the station / the nearest cafe / shelter*

**verb:** make out

**meaning:** see or understand with difficulty

*I can't **make out** what's on the horizon / these instructions / what he meant*

**verb:** make up

**meaning:** invent or create, also decide

*He **made up** some stories / a long list / his mind*

**verb:** make up for

**meaning:** compensate for something negative

*Being with friends **made up for** the bad weather / the awful trip / the money we lost*

### PHRASAL VERBS WITH 'GET'

**verb:** get away

**meaning:** escape from a constraint or after a crime

*He **got away from** work early / for a weekend break / with £5000 from the robbery*

**verb:** get back

**meaning:** return

*We should **get back home** / to work / to the subject*

**verb:** get on (with)

**meaning:** have good relations with someone, also continue something started

*Anne **gets on with** children / almost everyone / her work quietly*

**verb:** get out

**meaning:** leave a vehicle, also escape from confinement

*The driver / The dog / A serial killer **got out***

**verb:** get over

**meaning:** recover from an illness, a disappointment, a surprise

*She's **getting over** the flu / not being chosen / the shock you gave her*

**verb:** get through (to)

**meaning:** move, finish, communicate (usually on the phone) successfully,

*It was hard to **get through** the crowd / all that work / **to** travel enquiries*

**verb:** get out of

**meaning:** avoid something seen as negative

*He **got out of** paying / attending the meeting / going to the funeral*

**verb:** get away with

**meaning:** evade the consequences or punishment

*She **got away with** just a warning / a £20 fine / travelling without a ticket*

## Exercise 1

Match the phrasal verbs with the correct words to complete the sentences.

1. I'm looking for	a) these papers in the desk
2. I'll have to put off	b) before 6 o'clock
3. Please take off	c) to his secretary
4. You'll just have to work out	d) my mind
5. I'm looking after	e) a new factory
6. I'll just put away	f) my appointment
7. I've made up	g) the nearest station
8. I want to get away	h) your coat
9. The company will set up	i) a better solution
10. Please put me through	j) my neighbour's cat

## Exercise 2

What is the correct completion of each of these sentences?

1. Here are my notes. Can you write them ..... in better English please?

- a) up
- b) off
- c) back
- d) down

2. They don't like each other. They ..... very badly.

- a) go off
- b) make up
- c) get on
- d) get away

3. The label is in Chinese. Can you make ..... what it says?

- a) out
- b) up
- c) over
- d) away with

4. He still hasn't ..... over losing his job.

- a) put
- b) given
- c) left
- d) got

5. Mr Harris was lucky, and .got away .... making a serious mistake.

- a) from
- b) for
- c) at
- d) with

6. I've phoned ten times, and still can't get ..... to someone who can answer my question.

- a) back
- b) through
- c) up
- d) off

7. The company has succeeded in ..... middlemen, and can act more freely now.

- a) doing away with
- b) making up for
- c) getting out of
- d) putting up with

8. In his spare time, as a hobby he ..... old sports cars.

- a) does up
- b) makes up
- c) gets into
- d) puts out

9. The two retailers finally ..... serious discussions about a merger last month.

- a) made up
- b) got up to
- c) got down to
- d) did up

10. We'll get ..... to you later when we have the results of the final analysis.

- a) back
- b) through
- c) over
- d) down

11. The city is happy to ..... its historic past in a constant effort to attract tourists.

- a) deal with
- b) trade on
- c) account for
- d) sort out

12. I've had this cold for a week and I can't seem to ..... it off.

- a) put
- b) shake
- c) rip
- d) break

13. The old warehouse has been ..... a fashionable nightclub.

- a) taken for
- b) turned into
- c) brought up as
- d) taken after

14. Ms Tyler soon ..... up a reputation as a dynamic and efficient manager.

- a) built
- b) put
- c) made
- d) turned

15. The government intends to bring ..... a new law concerning safety in the workplace.

- a) up
- b) about
- c) in
- d) down

16. The salary wasn't attractive enough, so I turned ..... the job offer.

- a) back
- b) off
- c) away
- d) down

17. It's a big project. Do you feel ready to ..... ?

- a) make it out
- b) put it up
- c) take it on
- d) try it out

18. Do you think you can ..... up with an improved design in the next couple of months?

- a) come
- b) put
- c) set
- d) check

19. The doctor said I was suffering from stress, brought ..... by working too much.

- a) out
- b) up
- c) on
- d) down

20. The quality of its in-flight service sets the airline ..... from its competitors.

- a) out
- b) aside
- c) up
- d) apart

### Exercise 3

Put the verbs in the table into the sentences, making any necessary changes to the verbs.

<b>break down</b>	<b>give up</b>	<b>hand in</b>	<b>leave out</b>
<b>pass around</b>	<b>point out</b>	<b>put off</b>	<b>set up</b>
<b>sort out</b>	<b>take off</b>	<b>think over</b>	<b>turn up</b>

1. Sorry, there's no coffee. The machine has ..... again!

2. I've ..... the projector and the computer, ready for your presentation.

3. The cupboard is so untidy! I really must ..... it .....

4. Sales were very slow, but they have just started to ..... in the last quarter.

5. Would you mind ..... the documents, so that everyone can read the main points?

6. Mrs Williams is leaving the company. She ..... her resignation yesterday.

7. I can't approve the plan immediately. I'll have to ..... it .....

8. Have my sunglasses .....? I'm sure I left them in this room yesterday.

9. I would have ..... that there was a problem with the software if you'd asked me.
10. You'll have to reprint the brochure as you've ..... the title page.
11. What's the answer? I really don't know. I .....
12. We're thinking of ..... the meeting until next week. Is that OK?

### Exercise 4

Put the verbs in the table into the sentences, making any necessary changes to the verbs.

<b>bring forward</b>	<b>bring up</b>	<b>catch on</b>	<b>do in</b>
<b>dress up</b>	<b>drop out</b>	<b>fill up</b>	<b>hold up</b>
<b>pick up</b>	<b>show up</b>	<b>turn on</b>	<b>wake up</b>

1. Remember to ..... the alarm before you leave the building.
2. Take the bucket to the tap over there and ..... it ..... with water.
3. It's an informal party, so there's no need to .....
4. We're ahead of schedule, so we can ..... the date of the product launch.
5. He started studying medicine at university, but ..... after the first year.
6. I asked to be ..... by reception at 6 o'clock, to have plenty of time to get to the airport.
7. You've raised an important point. I'll ..... it ..... at the next departmental meeting.
8. The traffic was very heavy. We were ..... for about 20 minutes in a traffic jam.
9. I had a really tiring day at work. I'm completely .....
10. The idea is innovative, but it remains to be seen whether it will ..... with users.
11. Unfortunately, due to illness, one of the conference's keynote speakers failed to .....
12. There's room for another person in the car. I can ..... you ..... on my way to work tomorrow.

**a middleman – an intermediary between a company and consumers**

**a cold – a common virus which makes people cough or sneeze**

**an airline – a company which transports people and goods by plane**

**a cupboard – a piece of furniture with a door, where you can store things**

**a resignation – official notification that you are leaving your job**

**a bucket – a recipient with a handle, used for carrying liquids**

**a tap – a mechanism that controls the flow of liquids or gases**

**a keynote speaker – someone who gives a speech on the main theme of a conference**