

I RAN INTO MY FIRST-GRADE TEACHER, ON MY WAY HOME.



Phrasal Verbs types with examples

A phrasal verb is a combination of words (usually a verb and a particle, such as a verb + an adverb or a verb + a preposition). Used together, this combination of words takes on a different meaning than the original verb. In other words, it is a multi-word verb that cannot be understood taken each of the individual parts separately; it must instead be understood as a whole and always together as a combination.

Consider the following sentences:

I **ran into** my first-grade teacher.

→ Here, the verb “run” does not make sense on its own and is not meant literally; it requires the preposition “into” to function in its intended meaning (which actually has little to do with “running” at all). To “run into” someone means that you meet them by chance or unexpectedly.

We made plans to **hang out** with her at the beach this weekend.

→ Here, the verb “hang” does not make sense on its own and is not meant literally; it requires the particle “out” to function in its intended meaning (which actually has little to do with “hanging” at all). To “hang out” with someone means that you spend time together.

Notice that phrasal verbs are used in a sentence just like normal verbs. They simply require the combination to make meaning, as each word has a separate (and very different) meaning if used alone.

Types of Phrasal Verbs

1. *Prepositional Verbs (verb + preposition)*

If the verb is combined with a preposition, we call this a prepositional verb. Below, each phrasal verb combination is in bold.

- My cousin is **looking after** the kids on Saturday.
- Will you **stand by** me even if I make a bad decision?
- Andrea **ran into** her old friend at the movie theatre.
- Your son really **takes after** his father!
- Because of his age, Andrew passes for a high school student.
- Andy refused to go to school after he was **picked on** by a bully.

2. *Particle Verbs (verb + particle)*

If the verb is combined with a particle that does not function as a preposition (since it has no complement), we call this a prepositional verb. Below, each phrasal verb combination is in bold.

- Do you want to **hang out** on Sunday afternoon?
- On Fridays, we are allowed to **dress down** at work and wear jeans.
- Before you invest in a house, you really should **think it over**.
- Did Angela **hand in** her homework?
- After much persuasion, she decided to **give in**.
- Did you **bring up** how delicious her cookies were?

3. *Particle-Prepositional verbs (verb + particle + preposition)*

If the verb is combined with both a particle and a preposition, we call this a particle-prepositional verb. Below, each phrasal verb combination is in bold.

- We are **looking forward to** going camping this weekend.
- Before the hurricane, we **loaded up on** bottled water.
- Why does she **put up with** him?
- My partner has been **sitting in for** me at the meetings.

List of Phrasal Verbs and Their Meanings (with Examples)

Phrasal verbs can be confusing to people learning English precisely because the combination of words changes the meaning of the verb completely, often in ways that mean something entirely unexpected. Below we list some common phrasal verbs (with their meanings in parenthesis), along with an example of each, to help you understand their use.

- abide by (respect or obey a rule, decision, or law)
 - If you want to join this club, you will have to abide by the rules.
- account for (explain, give a reason)
 - The thief was unable to account for his whereabouts at the time of the bank robbery.
- add up (make sense, seem reasonable)
 - The lawyer argued that the facts just didn't add up.
- advise against (recommend not doing something)
 - He advised me against parking too close to the other car.
- agree with (have the same opinion as someone else)
 - Juan didn't agree that it was time to find another job.
- allow for (take into consideration)
 - Many people take extra time when traveling to allow for unexpected events.
- appeal to (be attractive or interesting)
 - The idea of skydiving just doesn't appeal to me.
- apply for (make a formal request for something)
 - Ashley is applying for university this summer.
- back away (move backwards, in fear or dislike)
 - When they saw the snake, they backed away slowly.
- back down (withdraw, concede defeat)
 - The governor backed down on his threat to close restaurants.
- back up (make a copy of)
 - Always back up your work when you are writing!
- bank on (base your hopes on something / someone)
 - Arturo was banking on getting an extra day off this weekend.
- black out (faint, lose consciousness)
 - She was feeling ill and then she suddenly blacked out in the kitchen.
- block off (separate using a barrier)
 - They blocked off the construction site for safety reasons.
- blow up (explode, or to get angry)
 - He blew up when he saw all the damage to his car.
- boil down to (be summarized as)
 - The final decision boils down to who has more money.
- break away (separate from a crowd)
 - We watched as one of the whales broke away and swam the other direction.
- break down (go out of order, cease to function; lose control of one's emotions)
 - She broke down when she heard the news.
- break into (enter by force)
 - I can't believe someone broke into your apartment last night!

- break out (start suddenly)
 - A protest broke out after the election results arrived.
- break out of (escape from a place by force)
 - The criminals were able to break out of police custody.
- break up (come to an end of a marriage, relationship)
 - Danielle and her boyfriend broke up after 5 years together.
- bring up (raise a child)
 - Were you brought up in the United States or another country?
- brush up on (improve, refresh one's knowledge of something)
 - I will brush up on my Spanish skills before traveling to the Dominican Republic.
- bump into (meet by chance or unexpectedly)
 - I bumped into our old neighbors at the grocery store.
- burn out (become exhausted from over-working)
 - This semester has been so much work. Everyone is feeling burnt out!
- call back (return a phone call)
 - Please have the doctor call me back at his earliest convenience.
- call off (cancel)
 - The race was called off at the last minute because of the weather.
- calm down (become more relaxed, less angry or upset)
 - She was able to calm down after she learned everyone was alright.
- carry on (continue)
 - Melanie carried on working despite the fact that the electricity went out.
- carry out (do something as specified)
 - The soldiers carried out their orders.
- check in (register arrival at a hotel or airport)
 - Were you able to check in at the hotel when you arrived?
- check out (investigate)
 - I'll need to check out that information for myself.
- clam up (unable to speak)
 - When the famous actor asked her name, she clammed up.
- clamp down on (act strictly to prevent something)
 - After the protests, the governments started clamping down on large gatherings.
- come across (find by chance; appear, seem, make an impression)
 - When I was moving I came across an old diary.
- come forward (present oneself)
 - Will the person responsible for the damage please come forward?
- count on (rely or depend on for help)
 - You can always count on friends in times of need.
- cut down on (reduce in number or size)

- My mother decided to cut down the amount of sugar in her diet.
- cut out (stop doing something)
 - That sound is annoying. Please cut it out!
- deal with (handle, take care of problem, situation)
 - Sometimes it's important to take a break to deal with stress at work.
- die down (calm down, become less strong)
 - After the storm died down, it was clear there was a lot of damage.
- do without (manage without)
 - If there is not enough money for a vacation this summer, we will have to do without.
- drag on (last longer than expected)
 - That lecture was interesting, but it sure did drag on!
- draw up (write (contract, agreement, document))
 - The lawyers drew up a contract to finalize the sale of the property.
- dress up (wear elegant clothes)
 - Normally we don't dress up unless we are going to a fancy dinner party.
- drop in (visit, usually on the way somewhere)
 - My brother was in town, so he decided to drop in for the weekend.
- drop off (deliver someone or something)
 - I'll swing by and drop off the package later this afternoon.
- drop out (leave school without finishing)
 - Anthony dropped out of college because he lost interest.
- ease off (reduce, become less severe or slow down)
 - The weekday traffic eases off after 9am.
- end up (finally reach a state, place or action)
 - She ended up studying education instead of biology.
- fall through (fail; doesn't happen)
 - Our plans for this evening fell through so we will reschedule.
- figure out (understand, find the answer)
 - They are trying to figure out how they can travel to the mountains and the beach this summer.
- fill out (complete a form/an application)
 - After you fill out the application, we will let you know if you are suitable for the position.
- find out (discover or obtain information)
 - She is going to find out what you did and be very angry.
- focus on (concentrate on something)
 - I'm going to take a break and focus on this other task instead.
- get along (with) (be on good terms; work well with)
 - Martha seems to get along with everyone in her class.
- get at (imply)

- I told him it's not my fault. What is he trying to get at?
- get away (escape)
 - They are planning to drive north and get away for the weekend.
- get by (manage to cope or to survive)
 - It's hard to get by unless your job pays well enough.
- get in (enter)
 - What time will you get in this evening?
- get off (leave or exit a bus, train, plane)
 - You should get off the bus at the last stop.
- get on (board bus, train, or plane)
 - I just got on the train to New York City.
- get on with (something) (continue to do; make progress)
 - They need to cut their losses and get on with their lives.
- get on (well) with (somebody) (have a good relationship with)
 - My boyfriend seems to get on well with my parents.
- get out (leave)
 - She wanted to get out of the city and explore nature.
- get out of (avoid doing something)
 - He is trying to get out of doing his weekly chores again!
- get over (recover from illness, disappointment)
 - Many people who were sick with the virus were able to get over it in a few weeks.
- get rid of (eliminate)
 - She had to get rid of her old car after it broke down for the tenth time.
- get together (meet each other)
 - Let's plan to get together and talk more this afternoon.
- get up (rise, leave bed)
 - I don't like to get up too early in the morning.
- give in (cease opposition; yield)
 - The policy will never give in to the kidnapper's demands.
- give up (stop doing something)
 - He gave up his dreams to become a world champion after the injury.
- go through (experience)
 - Elizabeth went through a lot after her father died.
- grow up (spend one's childhood; develop; become an adult)
 - Did you grow up in Paris or in the countryside?
- hand in (submit report, homework)
 - Anthony handed in his report two days late.
- hand out (distribute)
 - I asked her to hand out masks to all the residents.
- hang out (spend time in a particular place or with a group of friends)

- Are we all going to hang out this weekend or not?
- hang up (end phone call)
 - I'll send you the meeting agenda as soon as I hang up.
- hold on (wait; grip tightly)
 - They asked us to hold on until the manager returned.
- hurry up (be quick, act speedily)
 - If she hurries up we will have time to get coffee before the meeting.
- iron out (resolve by discussion, eliminate differences)
 - They were able to iron out the final details of the business deal.
- join in (participate)
 - They wouldn't allow Andrew to join in their football match.
- join up (engage in, become a member of; meet and unite with)
 - Can we join up at the beach later?
- keep on (continue doing something)
 - He keeps on playing the same song over and over.
- keep up with (stay at the same level as someone or something)
 - Do you keep up with events in China?
- kick off (begin, start)
 - They planned a large kick-off event for the summer.
- leave out (omit, not mention)
 - He left out the fact that I did all the work.
- let down (disappoint)
 - I'm sorry to let you down but I was unable to buy the cake you requested.
- look after (take care of)
 - Will you look after my pets while I'm away this weekend?
- look down on (consider as inferior)
 - Martin always looks down on people who have less education than he does.
- look on (be a spectator at an event)
 - You are welcome to look on until you are ready to play football with us.
- look for (try to find something)
 - They went to the city to look for some new clothes.
- look forward to (await or anticipate with pleasure)
 - I'm looking forward to our vacation to Turkey this summer.
- look up to (admire)
 - She really looked up to her grandfather.
- make fun of (laugh at/ make jokes about)
 - Are you making fun of me because I stumbled?
- make up (invent excuse, story)
 - Devin made up an excuse to not attend the party.

- mix up (mistake one thing or person for another)
 - Those two actors look very similar, so I keep mixing them up.
- move in (arrive in a new home or office)
 - The Andersons just moved into the empty house next door.
- move out (leave your home/office for another one)
 - She will be moving out of her apartment at the end of the semester.
- nod off (fall asleep)
 - I always nod off after the evening news comes on.
- own up (admit or confess something)
 - She owned up to knowing the secret all along.
- pass away (die)
 - His aunt passed away peacefully in her sleep last night.
- pass out (faint)
 - She turned white and looked like she was ready to pass out.
- pay back (reimburse)
 - My brother still hasn't paid me back the \$20 I gave him last week.
- put off (postpone, arrange a later date)
 - I have been putting off this dentist appointment for a long time.
- put out (extinguish)
 - The fire was put out immediately when the fire department arrived.
- put up (accommodate, give somebody a bed)
 - They said they can put me up for the weekend when I am in town.
- pick up (collect somebody)
 - She's going to swing by and pick me up at 8am.
- point out (indicate/direct attention to something)
 - She pointed out that the house down the street was for sale.
- rely on (count on, depend on, trust)
 - Elizabeth is a friend you can always rely on when you need help.
- rule out (eliminate)
 - They ruled out all of suspects in the crime except one.
- run away (escape from a place or suddenly leave)
 - The dog ran away from home and now everyone is searching for him.
- run into (meet by accident or unexpectedly)
 - I ran into an old friend the other day.
- run out of (have no more of something)
 - Our neighbor came by because she had run out of sugar.
- set off (start a journey)
 - They set off on a new adventure.
- set up (start a business)
 - The couple set up their own restaurant down the street.
- shop around (compare prices)

- Before you buy your plane ticket be sure to shop around for the best price.
- show off (brag or want to be admired)
 - He drove around town to show off his new car.
- show up (appear/arrive)
 - Anton didn't show up for work this morning.
- shut up (impolite) (stop talking)
 - I wish they would shut up, as they are ruining the movie for me.
- sit down (take a seat)
 - Please ask her to sit down and wait for her turn.
- stand up (rise from a sitting position)
 - Everyone stood up when the King entered the hall.
- stick up for (defend)
 - His brother always sticks up for him when there are fights on the playground.
- take after (resemble, in appearance or character)
 - Their new baby really takes after his mother!
- take care of (look after)
 - I asked her to take care of my plants when I go on vacation.
- take off (leave the ground)
 - Now that everyone was aboard, the plane is ready to take off.
- take on (hire or engage staff)
 - The restaurant will take on twenty new employees.
- take out (remove; extract)
 - I asked him politely to take out the trash.
- tell off (reprimand or criticize severely)
 - She told off the man for stepping in front of her in the bank line.
- think over (to consider)
 - The prime minister will think over the offer before she makes a final decision.
- try on (wear something to see if it fits)
 - Tom will need to try on the shirt to make sure it is the right size.
- turn down (refuse)
 - I offered to help clean up the mess, but he turned me down.
- use up (finish a product to the end)
 - My husband used up all the tea so we need to stop by the store.
- watch out (be careful)
 - Please watch out when driving home in the rain.
- wear out (become unusable or become very tired)
 - Everyone was worn out after a long day hiking the mountain.
- work out (do physical exercise; find a solution or calculate something)
 - Aaron works out five times a week.

- wipe off (To clean)
 - The teacher wiped off the chalkboard after the lesson was over.

