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What are phrasal verbs?

1. A phrasal verb is a verb plus a preposition or adverb which creates a meaning different from the original verb.

Example:

I ran into my teacher at the movies last night. **run + into = meet**

He ran away when he was 15. **run + away = leave home**

2. Some phrasal verbs are intransitive. An intransitive verb cannot be followed by an object.

Example:

He suddenly showed up. **"show up" cannot take an object**

3. Some phrasal verbs are transitive. A transitive verb can be followed by an object.

Example:

I made up *the story*. **"story" is the object of "make up"**

4. Some transitive phrasal verbs are separable. The object is placed between the verb and the preposition. In this Phrasal Verb Dictionary, separable phrasal verbs are marked by placing a * between the verb and the preposition / adverb.

Example:

I talked *my mother* into letting me borrow the car.

She looked *the phone number* up.

5. Some transitive phrasal verbs are inseparable. The object is placed after the preposition. In this Phrasal Verb Dictionary, inseparable phrasal verbs are marked by placing a + after the preposition / adverb.

Example:

I ran into *an old friend* yesterday.

They are looking into *the problem*.

6. Some transitive phrasal verbs can take an object in both places. In this Phrasal Verb Dictionary, such phrasal verbs are marked with both * and + .

Example:

I looked *the number* up in the phone book.

I looked up *the number* in the phone book.

7. WARNING! Although many phrasal verbs can take an object in both places, you must put the object between the verb and the preposition if the object is a pronoun.

Example:

I looked *the number* up in the phone book.

I looked up *the number* in the phone book.

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I looked it up in the phone book. **correct**

I looked up it in the phone book. **incorrect**

Phrasal Verb (A)

Phrasal Verb	Definition	Example
act up	behave or function improperly	I think I need to take my car to the mechanic because it's acting up again.
add * up +	calculate a sum	I added up the receipts and it totaled \$135.46.
add up to +	equal an amount	The total expenses added up to \$325.00.
add up	make sense	Her story doesn't add up. I think she is lying.
ask * out +	invite on a date	I can't believe that Joe finally asked me out on a date!
ask * over +	invite to one's home	Why don't we ask the Johnsons over for dinner?

Phrasal Verb (B)

Phrasal Verb	Definition	Example
back down	stop defending your opinion in a debate	Jane never backs down. She always wins arguments.
back out	not keep (a promise, agreement, deal)	Sam backed out at the last second.
back out of +	not keep (a promise, agreement, deal)	Sam backed out of the agreement at the last second.
back * up +	give support	You need examples to back up your opinion.
back up	move backwards, reverse	Could you back up a little so I can open this drawer.
bawl * out	criticize, reprimand (inf.)	She bawled him out for arriving late.
bear down on +	bite	The soldier had to bear down on the leather strap while the doctor removed a bullet from the soldier's arm.
bear down on +	take strong measures against	The U.S.A. is bearing down on drug traffickers.
bear on +	have to do with	This information may bear on this

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		case.
bear up	withstand	I didn't think he would bear up so well in that situation.
bear up under +	withstand	How did he bear up under such extreme pressure.
bear with +	be patient	Please bear with me while I fill out the paperwork.
blow in	visit unexpectedly (inf.)	My cousin blew in unexpectedly with his entire family.
blow over	pass without creating a problem	All this negative publicity will blow over in a couple of weeks.
blow * up +	make explode;destroy using explosives	The terrorists blew the bridge up.
blow up	explode	The bomb blew up before they could defuse it.
blow up	suddenly become very angry	When Joan heard the news, she blew up and rushed out of the room.
break * down +	analyze in detail	We need to break this problem down in order to solve.
break down	stop working properly	The truck broke down in the desert.
break down	become mentally ill	She broke down after her husband died.
break * in +	wear or use something new until it is comfortable	I need to break these shoes in before I go hiking.
break in	interrupt	While we were discussing the situation, Terri broke in to give her opinion.
break in	enter a place unlawfully	The burglar broke in between midnight and 3 AM.
break in on +	interrupt (a conversation)	Jane broke in on the conversation and told us to get back to work.
break into +	enter a house unlawfully	The burglar broke into the house between midnight and 3 AM.
break into +	interrupt (a conversation)	Jane broke into the conversation and told us what she knew.
break * off +	end something	Sally broke her engagement to John off.
break out	appear violently	Violent protests broke out in

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		response to the military coup.
break out +	use something extravagant for celebration	He broke out the champagne to celebrate his promotion.
break out of +	escape	The murderer broke out of the prison.
break * up +	break into pieces	I broke the cracker up into pieces and put it in the soup.
break * up +	disperse (a crowd), stop (a fight)	The police broke the demonstration up before it got out of control.
break up	end a relationship	Sam and Diane broke up again. What a rocky relationship.
bring * about +	cause to happen	Democracy brought about great change in the lives of the people.
bring * along +	bring with	When we go to the forest, bring your wildlife guide along.
bring * around	change someone's mind, convince someone	She doesn't want to go, but we'll eventually bring her around.
bring * away	learn or gain (from an experience)	My trip across the Sahara was difficult, but I brought a new appreciation for life away from the experience.
bring * off +	succeed at something difficult or unexpected	You robbed the bank! I can't believe you brought that off.
bring * on +	cause something	I can't believe she got so angry. What brought that on?
bring * out +	highlight, stress	Your new shirt brings out the color of your eyes.
bring * over +	bring to someone's house	When you visit me, why don't you bring over your son.
bring * to	revive consciousness	We used smelling salts to bring her to after she fainted.
bring * up +	mention	I didn't want to bring up the fact that she was unemployed.
bring * up +	raise (a child)	Sam was brought up in South Carolina.
brush * off +	ignore something or someone (inf.)	Mary brushed her ex-boyfriend off at the party.
burn * down +	destroy by setting fire to	The children burned the house down while playing with matches.

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burn down	burn until completely gone (building)	Two buildings burnt down in the fire.
burn up	be hot	I am burning up in here - open the window.
burn up	consume by fire	The papers were burned up in the fire.
burn * up +	destroy by fire	He burnt up the files.
buy * out +	buy the shares of a company or the shares the other person owns of a business	Pacific Inc. was bought out by a company from Oregon.
buy * up +	purchase the entire supply of something	We bought up all the beer in the store.

Phrasal Verb (C)

Phrasal Verb	Definition	Example
call for +	require (as in a recipe)	This recipe calls for milk, not water.
call * off +	cancel something	They called the picnic off because of the rain.
call * off +	order to stop (an invasion, guard dogs)	He called off the dogs when he saw it was his neighbor.
call on +	visit	Mark called on Naomi while he was in town.
call on +	invite someone to speak in a meeting or a classroom	Professor Tanzer called on Tim to answer the question.
call * up +	telephone	I called Sam up to see if he wanted to go to the movies.
calm * down +	make someone relax	You can calm the baby down by rocking her gently.
care for +	nurse someone or something	He cared for the bird until its wing healed.
care for +	like someone or something	I don't care for sour cream on my potato.
carry on +	continue (a conversation, a game)	Please, carry on. I didn't mean to interrupt you.
carry on about +	continue in an annoying way	He kept carrying on about how

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		much money he makes.
carry on with +	continue	I want you to carry on with the project while I am out of town.
carry * out +	complete and/or accomplish something	The secret agent carried out his orders exactly as planned.
carry * over +	continue on a subsequent day, page, etc.	The meeting carried over into lunch time.
catch on	slowly start to understand (inf.)	He caught on after a few minutes.
catch up	make up for lost time	I will never catch up. I am too behind in my work.
catch up with +	speed up to be at the same place as a person or thing in front of you	I had to run to catch up with the others.
catch up on +	become up-to-date	I need to catch up on world events. I haven't seen the news in ages.
check back	return to see if everything is OK	We will check back tomorrow to make sure the project is finished.
check by +	go to a place to see if everything is OK	We need to check by the office to see if the documents are ready.
check for +	try to find	They checked for termites before they bought the house.
check in	enter a hospital, hotel etc.	They need to check in before noon.
check into +	enter a hospital, hotel etc.	They checked into the hotel at 11:00 AM.
check into +	investigate, look for (often through a service)	We are checking into discount flights to London.
check * off +	make a mark next to (an item on a list)	Check each name off the list.
check on +	make sure something is OK	Let's check on the baby again before we go to sleep.
check * out +	investigate, take a look at	He checked out the new restaurant down the street.
check out	leave a hotel, hospital	It's already eleven. We need to check out.
check out of +	leave a hotel, hospital	We checked out of the hotel before ten.

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check * over +	closely examine the condition of something	He checked over the old car to see if it was worth buying.
check up on +	investigate someone or something	The police are checking up on the bomb threats.
check * through	send luggage through (to a destination)	Your luggage will be checked through to Paris.
check with +	ask a person for confirmation	He needs to check with his parents before he goes.
cheer * up	make someone feel cheerful	The party really cheered me up.
cheer up	become cheerful	Cheer up. Everything will be all right.
chew * up +	chew into small pieces	The dog chewed up my shoe.
chop * down +	fell/cut (a tree)	The lumberjack chopped the tree down.
chop * up +	chop/cut into small bits	He chopped the meat up into little pieces.
clean * up +	tidy	Susan cleaned the mess up before she left.
clear out	leave (inf.)	Everybody clear out! We're closed.
clear * up +	tidy	Susan cleared up the mess before she left.
close * down +	close a place permanently	The corner market closed down because they didn't have many customers.
close down	close permanently	The bar was closed down because they served alcohol to minors.
close in on +	approach and threaten	The rebels were closing in on the capital, so the government called in the army.
close * up +	close temporarily	They are closing the ski resort up for the summer.
close up	close temporarily	The ski resort is closing up for the summer.
come about	occur / happen	How did your idea for the book come about.
come across +	discover by accident	They came across some lost Mayan ruins in the jungle.
come across +	initially seem or have the	He comes across as rather rude,

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	appearance	but he isn't.
come along	accompany someone	If you want, you can come along.
come along with +	accompany	Sam came along with us to the beach.
come along	progress	How's the research paper coming along.
come along with +	progress	How are you coming along with the research paper.
come away	leave a place with a particular feeling or impression	I came away from the meeting feeling like the presentation was a success.
come back	return	What time are you coming back?
come by +	get, receive	How did you come by that new Mercedes?
come by	visit a person at their house	I'll come by later this afternoon.
come down with +	become sick with	He came down with the flu.
come into +	inherit	He came into a large sum of money when his aunt died.
come off +	fall off, break off	The handle came off the suitcase when I picked it up.
come out	appear	I didn't see the car at first. It came out of nowhere.
come out	reveal you are homosexual	Sam finally came out last month.
come out	turn out, end up	The pictures came out great.
come out with +	produce and distribute a product	Microsoft is coming out with a new video game system next month.
come over	visit someone at their house	Why don't you come over after work for dinner.
come to	regain consciousness	Don't worry! She faints all the time. She always comes to after a few minutes.
come through	do what is needed or expected	Terry really came through for us in the end.
come up to +	approach; to equal	The job offer didn't come up to her expectations.
come up with +	produce or create (an idea, a plan)	She came up with a great proposal for the new advertising campaign.

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come with +	include (an accessory)	The computer system doesn't come with a printer.
count * in +	include	Did you count expenses in?
count on +	depend/rely on	You can really count on Sarah.
count * out +	exclude	You can count James out. He hates playing poker.
count * up +	add	Count the change up and see how much we have.
crack down on +	become tougher on, better enforce laws on	The police have been cracking down on drunk driving.
crack up	laugh uncontrollably, laugh a lot	When I told the joke, they all cracked up.
crack up at +	laugh uncontrollably about, laugh a lot about	I cracked up at his joke.
cross * out +	draw a line through something, eliminate	Why did you cross my name out on the list?
cut down	decrease the amount of	You eat too much fat. You need to cut down.
cut down on +	decrease the amount of	You need to cut down on your fat intake.
cut in	interrupt	She suddenly cut in and delivered the news
cut in on +	interrupt	She cut in on the conversation and delivered the news.
cut * off	interrupt someone while they were speaking	She cut him off before he said something he would regret later.
cut * off +	sever (with a knife)	His finger was accidentally cut off in an industrial accident.
cut * out +	remove	He cut the bone out of the steak.
cut * out	stop an action	Cut it out! You're bothering me.
cut * up +	cut into small pieces	He cut the beef up and put the pieces in the soup.

Phrasal Verb (D)

Phrasal Verb	Definition	Example
die away	diminish in intensity	The applause died away after 5

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		minutes.
die down	diminish in intensity	The controversy about the president's affair finally died down.
die off/out	become extinct	Whales are in danger of dying off.
disagree with +	cause to feel sick due to food or drink	Spicy food disagrees with me.
do away with +	abolish	Some Americans want to do away with the death penalty.
do * over +	repeat	You made many mistakes, so I want you to do the report over.
do without +	manage without something one wants or needs	I couldn't do without a car in California.
draw * up +	create (a contract)	Let's draw an agreement up before we go any further with this project.
dress * down	reprimand severely	The mother dressed her son down for skipping school.
dress down	dress casually	I am dressing down because we're going to a barbecue by the beach.
dress * up +	decorate	You could dress this house up with some bright colors
dress up	wear elegant clothes	She always dresses up at work.
drive * back +	repulse	The invaders were driven back by the army.
drop in	visit someone unexpectedly	Meg dropped in yesterday after dinner.
drop in on +	visit someone unexpectedly	Let's drop in on Julie since we're driving by her house.
drop out	quit an organized activity	Yuri isn't on the team any more. He dropped out.
drop out of +	quit an organized activity (school)	It's difficult to get a good job if you drop out of high school.
drop over	visit someone casually	Drop over any time you feel like talking.

Phrasal Verb (E)

Phrasal Verb	Definition	Example
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eat away	gradually destroy, erode	The heavy rains ate away at the sandstone cliffs.
eat * up +	devour	Ken ate the cookies up.
eat in	eat inside the home	We usually eat in instead of going out for dinner.
eat out	eat outside the home	They eat out once a week.

Phrasal Verb (F)

Phrasal Verb	Definition	Example
face up to +	acknowledge something difficult or embarrassing	I'll never be able to face up to my colleagues after getting so drunk last night at the work party.
fall back on +	be able to use in case of emergency	Yuki can fall back on her degree in biology if she doesn't succeed in her acting career.
fall behind	go slower than scheduled, lag	Hurry up or you will fall behind!
fall behind in +	go slower than scheduled, lag	Cheryl has missed several days of school and now she is falling behind in her homework.
fall off	decrease	Interest in the project fell off when they realized it wouldn't be profitable.
fall out with +	have an argument with	I had a falling out with my sister last month and we haven't talked to each other since.
fall through	fail to happen	Unfortunately, my trip to Indonesia fell through because I couldn't save enough money.
feel * up +	grope	She sued her boss for sexual harassment after he felt her up.
feel up to +	have the energy to do something	I don't feel up to going out tonight because I had a long day at work.
figure on +	expect	Where do you figure on living when you move to the the U.S.A.?
figure * out +	solve something, understand	I finally figured the joke out. Now I understand why everybody was laughing.
figure * up +	calculate	I need to figure my expenses up before I give you an estimate.
fill * in +	complete	Don't forget to fill in all the blanks on the application.

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fill in	substitute	Who is going to fill in while you're gone?
fill in for +	substitute for	Miguel filled in for me at the meeting yesterday because I was sick.
fill * out +	complete (an application)	I filled out an application to rent the apartment last week.
fill out	mature, get breasts	Now that you're filling out honey, we need to get you a bra.
fill * up +	fill to the top	Fill the car up with unleaded gas, please.
find out +	discover	You will never find out all my secrets!
find out	discover	Vicky's parents are going to be so mad when they find out she got a tattoo.
fix * up +	repair, renovate, remodel	My neighbors are fixing their house up.

Phrasal Verb (G)

Phrasal Verb	Definition	Example
get * across +	cause to be understood	It's difficult to get humor across in another language.
get ahead	make progress	I can't get ahead even though I work two jobs.
get ahead of +	surpass	You need to work overtime in order to get ahead of schedule.
get along	have a good relationship	Do you and your sister get along?
get along with +	have a good relationship	Giovanna doesn't get along with her two brothers.
get around +	avoid someone or something	Some people get around paying taxes by hiring a good accountant.
get around	go many places	It's easy to get around town with public transportation.
get away	escape	The bank robbers got away.
get away with +	do something against the rules or illegal and not get caught or punished	My sister gets away with everything!
get by	survive without having the things you need or want	I lost my job, so I am having a hard time getting by this year.
get by on +	survive with minimal resources	It's nearly impossible to get by on

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		making minimum wage.
get by with +	manage with	You don't need a computer. You can get by with the typewriter.
get down to +	get serious about a topic	Enough small talk. Let's get down to business.
get in +	enter (a car, a small boat)	Get in the front seat. You will have more leg room.
get in	enter	Get in. I will give you a ride to school
get * off +	send (a package)	I finally got my sister's birthday present off yesterday.
get * off	remove (a spider from your shirt)	Can you get this spider off my shirt?
get off +	leave (a bus, plane, train, boat)	We need to get off the bus at the next stop.
get off	leave	It's dangerous to sit on the roof. Get off!
get off	idiomatic phrase - How does he justify saying that?!	Where does he get off saying that?!
get * on	put on (clothes)	You should get your jacket on because it's going to be cold.
get on	enter (a bus, train), mount (a horse, a bike)	The train is leaving. Quick, get on!
get on +	enter (a bus, train), mount (a horse, a bike)	Get on my bike and I will give you a ride home.
get on	have a good relationship	Natasha doesn't get on with her co-workers.
get on with +	have a good relationship	Do you get on with your neighbors?
get on with +	continue an activity	Now that the police have left, let's get on with the party!
get out of +	exit (a small boat, car, an enclosed area)	I fell into the water when I tried to get out of the canoe.
get over +	recover (a cold, a disease, an ex-boyfriend/ex-girlfriend)	Jennifer still hasn't gotten over her breakup with Peter.
get through +	complete	We will never get through all of these boxes by 9:00 PM.
get through +	penetrate	We need a stronger drill to get through this wall.
get through	penetrate	The door was jammed, so we couldn't

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		get through.
get through (with) +	finish	Have you gotten through with your homework yet?
get through to +	make contact	It's hard to get through to Janet because her telephone line is always busy.
get * up	cause someone to rise (from a sitting position or a lying position)	Ahmed got Abdul up at 5:30 in the morning by turning the music up really loud.
get up	rise (from sitting position or a bed)	What time did you get up this morning?
give * away +	give something without asking for anything in exchange	Why did Nancy give all of her furniture away?
give * away +	betray (a secret)	We are having a surprise party for Susan next Saturday, so don't give our surprise away by acting suspicious.
give * back +	return something you borrowed	When are you going to give that book back to your teacher?
give in	stop trying	Never give in! You can do it!
give off +	release (a smell, light)	That white flower gives off a beautiful smell.
give * out +	distribute	I earn extra money by giving out brochures on the street.
give out	become very tired (inf.)	I hope this car doesn't give out in the middle of the desert.
give * up +	surrender something	The police told the thief to give his gun up.
give up	surrender	Never give up learning English!
go away	leave	I yelled at the dogs to make them go away.
go back	return	When are you going back to your house?
go by +	go past, go close to, visit quickly	We go by the coffee shop everyday.
go back on +	not keep (one's word, a promise)	Don't trust him. He always goes back on his promises.
go down	decrease	The cost of flight tickets is going down.
go for +	try to achieve	Our team is going for the gold medal

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		in the Olympics.
go for	idiomatic phrase - I am craving pepperoni pizza.	I could go for pepperoni pizza.
go in for +	participate (inf.)	Are you going to go in for soccer this year at school?
go into +	discuss in detail	I really don't want to go into that now.
go off	explode	The bomb could go off at any moment.
go off	begin, start (used with signals, alarms, warning sounds)	The alarm clock went off at 6:00 AM.
go off	stop (said of a machine)	The DVD player goes off automatically if you are not using it.
go off	become angry	Maria went off last night after I told her about losing her bike.
go on	continue	Please, go on. Don't let me interrupt you.
go on	happen	This place is a mess! What went on here last night?
go on with +	continue (a plan, a conversation)	I think we should go on with the meeting and stop wasting time.
go out	stop burning (a fire)	The fire went out after three days.
go out	take part in social activities (usually at night)	They love to go out every Saturday night.
go over +	review	Do you usually go over your notes before class?
go over	be well received, succeed	That didn't go over well.
go through +	examine in detail, study carefully	I need to have my lawyer go through this contract before I sign it.
go through +	endure; experience challenges, difficulties or traumas	She has gone through so much in her life.
go through with +	continue or proceed despite difficulties or fears	I have decided to go through with the operation.
go with +	match (clothing)	That shirt doesn't go with those pants.
go with +	accompany a person	I am going with Alejandro to the party.
go with +	have a boyfriend/girlfriend	I am going with Yuri.
go without +	abstain from something you want or need	A person can go without water for three days.

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grow under	go out of business	The restaurant went under after it lost its liquor license.
grow up	mature	Your brother needs to grow up and start thinking about his future.

Phrasal Verb (H)

Phrasal Verb	Definition	Example
hand * back +	return	Is the teacher going to hand back our tests today?
hand * down +	pronounce formally	The president is going to hand his decision down on health care tonight.
hand * down +	give as an inheritance	When my clothes got too small for me as a child, I handed them down to my sister.
hand * in +	submit	I have to hand in an offer by March 12.
hand * out +	distribute	We should hand the concert fliers out at school.
hand * over +	relinquish control of	Hand your car keys over. You're too drunk to drive.
hang around +	stay in a place for fun (inf.)	Maria and Salvador usually hang around the beach after school.
hang around	stay in a place for fun	Those guys just hang around all day.
hang * up +	suspend (clothes on a hanger)	You can hang your jacket up in the front closet.
hang up	put down the telephone receiver	Don't hang up. I'm going to change phones.
hang out +	stay in a place for fun (inf.)	Let's go hang out at the mall tonight.
hang out	stay in a place for fun	What are you doing? - - I'm just hanging out.
have * on +	wear	Do you have your hiking boots on?
have * over	invite guests to your home	Why don't we have Mr. and Mrs. Jones over for dinner tonight.
hear from +	receive news from (a letter, an	Have you heard from Steve lately?

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	e-mail)	
hear of +	know about something or somebody	Have you heard of chocolate covered ants?
hit on +	find on accident	I hit on the idea while watching the Simpsons show.
hit on +	flirt with	Jay's friend Marc was trying to hit on my sister last night.
hold * back +	restrain	The police held the demonstrators back while the politicians entered the building.
hold back	not allow to advance in school	The teacher held Frank back a year, so he couldn't enter fifth grade.
hold * off +	restrain	Mr. Johnson held the dog off while we crossed the yard.
hold off on +	delay	We should hold off on making dinner until your parents arrive.
hold on	grasp tightly	Hold on tight! The roller coaster is about to take off.
hold on	tell someone to wait on the telephone	Hold on a minute. I'll get Carol.
hold on to +	grasp tightly	Make sure you hold on to the hand rail as you walk down the stairs.
hold out	not give in, continue to resist	Stop holding out and tell us where you found all of these old records.
hold out against +	not give in, resist	They held out against enemy attack.
hold * up +	delay (a flight, traffic);	The accident held traffic up for an hour.
hold * up +	rob (a bank, a person) with a weapon	Five men held the bank up yesterday.
hook * up +	make the electrical connections required for a machine or information service	Can you hook up the fax machine for me?

Phrasal Verb (I)

Phrasal Verb	Definition	Example
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iron * out	eliminate	We need to have a meeting this week in order to iron out the distribution problems.
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Phrasal Verb (J)

Phrasal Verb	Definition	Example
jack up +	to raise	We need to jack up the car before we change the tire.
joke around	to be humorous	Mike is always joking around at work.
jump in	enter a conversation	Feel free to jump in at any moment while we are talking.
jump to +	make a quick, poorly thought out decision	You shouldn't jump to conclusions.

Phrasal Verb (K)

Phrasal Verb	Definition	Example
keep * around	have handy, have accessible	I always keep a dictionary around to translate new words.
keep at +	not give up (an activity), to persevere	You should keep at your studies.
keep * away	prevent access to, hold back	Keep the kids away from the cookies.
keep * back	maintain a safe distance, cause to maintain a safe distance	Keep back! The burning building is about to collapse.
keep * down	not vomit, not throw up, keep in one's stomach	If I ate that, I down know if I could keep it down.
keep * in	keep in a particular place, have something in a specific location	When I am not using it, I keep my passport in this drawer.
keep * off	prevent from stepping or climbing on to something	Keep the cat off the couch.
keep on	continue	He kept on talking after everybody asked him to stop.
keep * out	prevent from entering	Keep the dog out of the garden; he keeps digging up the flowers.
keep * over	cover something with, put something above	I keep a tarp over my bicycle at night to prevent it from getting wet.

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keep to +	continue, persist in (an activity)	Everybody said she would never finish the puzzle, but she kept to it until it was done.
keep up	stay on the required schedule	You have to keep up if you want to work here.
keep * up +	continue	You are doing a great job! Keep it up.
keep up with +	stay on schedule with (a person, the workload, homework)	I have so much reading that I can't keep up with the writing exercises.
kick back	sit or lie back (to relax)	After work, I like to kick back in front of the TV and relax.
kick in	begin taking effect	The medicine takes one hour to kick in.

Phrasal Verb (L)

Phrasal Verb	Definition	Example
lay away +	save for the future	Why don't you lay away your wedding outfit?
lay down +	establish (laws, rules)	Lori lays down the law in her class. English only!
lay in on +	scold or criticize severely	My mom really laid in on me when I got home at 4:00 in the morning last night.
lay into +	scold or criticize severely	I saw Reto's mom lay into him when he came home late last night.
lay * off +	suspend someone from a job (during a slow period)	The company was losing money, so they had to lay off 100 workers.
lay * out +	arrange	Why don't we lay the pieces of the table out before we put it together.
leave * out +	not include, omit	Why did your parents leave you out of their vacation plans?
let * down	disappoint	I felt let down when I didn't receive a birthday card from my sister.
let * down	lengthen (pants in sewing)	My uncle is a tailor, so he can let your pants down.
let * out	release	I am happy my brother was let out of prison early.
let * out	make bigger (in sewing)	I need to let out this skirt because I

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		have gained weight.
let up	weaken in intensity	I told her NO a thousand times, but she won't let up.
lie down	rest, recline	I need to lie down before we go out tonight.
lie down on +	rest, recline (on a couch, bed)	I'm going to lie down on the sofa for a while.
lie with +	be decided by	Whether or not you can go to the party lies with your father.
light * up +	illuminate	Let's get some candles to light this room up.
light up +	to smoke	Do you have to light up another cigarette? I thought you were trying to cut down.
live * down +	live in a way that a shameful or embarrassing event is forgotten	Jose will never live down singing that song at the karaoke bar.
live on +	survive from	I could live on bread and cheese.
live up to +	keep a standard	It would be hard to live up to her parent's expectations. They are so demanding.
look after +	take care of (a child, a house, a pet)	When my sister goes on vacation, I look after her dog.
look back on +	to remember nostalgically	When I look back on my childhood, I often feel angry.
look down on +	see as inferior	She's so conceited. She looks down on everybody else.
look for +	to seek or search for	I'm looking for my keys. Have you seen them?
look forward to +	anticipate with pleasure	I am looking forward to traveling to New York next year.
look into +	investigate	The police are looking into the murder.
look on	observe as a spectator	Everybody just looked on as the two men fought.
look out	be careful, pay attention, heed a certain danger	Look out, there's a black widow spider on the wall.
look * over +	examine, review	When I'm camping, I look my shoes over before I put them on.

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look * up +	search for (in a dictionary)	I takes time to look up new vocabulary words.
look * up +	locate and visit	If you ever travel to California, you should look me up.
look up to +	respect, admire someone	He looks up to his father.

Phrasal Verb (M)

Phrasal Verb	Definition	Example
make * out	decipher	I can't make out your handwriting. What does this say?
make * out +	write a check or other document	Who should I make this check out to?
make out	succeed	He really made out in the stock market last year.
make out	progress	How is your son making out in his new job?
make out	kiss passionately	I saw Benno and Isabelle making out in the movie theater last night!
make out with +	kiss someone passionately	Did you make out with Sally?
make * over	do again	The teacher made me do my homework over.
make * up +	invent (a story)	Don't believe anything she says. She always makes things up.
make * up +	complete what was missed	Fortunately, my professor let me make up the exam I missed yesterday.
make * up +	put on cosmetics	I takes me 10 minutes to make my face up.
make up	reconcile	You two have been friends for so long that I think you should make up.
make up for +	compensate for	Allen made up for being late by getting me flowers.
mix * up +	confuse	I sometimes mix the verb tenses up.
mix * up +	blend	We need to mix up these different kinds of nuts before we put them in a bowl.
mix * up +	make lively (a party)	Let's mix up this party with a little disco music.

Phrasal Verb (N)

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Phrasal Verb	Definition	Example
name * after +	name a child using another family member's name	I was named after my grandfather.
nod off	fall asleep	The movie was so boring that I nodded off before it was finished.
nose around +	sneak around	I hate it when my mother noses around my room.

Phrasal Verb (O)

Phrasal Verb	Definition	Example
occur to +	pop into one's mind, come to one's mind	It didn't occur to us that we had left the iron on.
open up	share feelings	I'm glad that John feels comfortable enough around me to open up.
out to + verb	try to	She is out to get revenge now that her husband left her for another woman.

Phrasal Verb (P)

Phrasal Verb	Definition	Example
pan out	be successful, turn out well	The trip to Vegas didn't pan out.
pass away	die	After battling cancer for several years, he finally passed away at the age of 87.
pass * off +	try to convince someone that something is real	He tried to pass the fake watch off as a real Rolex.
pass * on +	transmit	Please pass this message on to your co-workers.
pass on +	not accept (an invitation to eat or do something)	Jennifer passed on the invitation to join us for dinner.
pass on	die	I am afraid Professor Johnson has passed on.
pass * out +	distribute	We need to pass out these flyers for the concert tomorrow.
pass out	become unconscious	He passed out because the room was too hot.

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pass * up +	not take advantage (of an opportunity)	I can't believe she passed up the opportunity to study in Rome.
pay * back +	repay	If I loan you money, will you pay me back.
pay * off +	complete payment on a debt	It took me ten years to pay off my credit card debt.
pay * off +	to bribe	Don't try to pay the police officer off if you get pulled over for speeding.
pick on +	to tease, bully	She keeps picking on me! Make her stop.
pick * out +	choose	Diane picked out a lovely dress for the dance.
pick * up +	to lift an object with the hands	Keep your back straight when you lift the TV up.
pick * up +	come and get someone in a car	What time are you going to pick me up.
pick * up +	learn something without effort	It's possible to pick up enough English in two weeks to get by on your trip to Los Angeles.
pick * up +	try to initiate a relationship with someone (often in a bar)	Some weird guy tried to pick Patricia up at the bar.
pick up	grow, increase (inf.)	Business is really picking up this quarter.
play * down +	make less important (inf.)	The President played down his affair with the intern.
play * up	highlight something (inf.)	She played up her part in the new movie, but it was actually a very small role.
play up to +	flatter someone for your personal advantage	She has been playing up to the boss because she wants a promotion.
point * out +	indicate	I'd like to point out that figures in column two might be outdated.
pull down	earn	He pulls down about \$300,000 a year.
pull in	park (a vehicle)	Mark pulled in too quickly and crashed into the wall.
pull out	depart (a vehicle)	Our train pulls out at 8:00, so don't be late.
pull through	barely survive	I didn't think she was going to make it, but she pulled through in the end.

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put * across +	communicate (an idea or suggestion) clearly so that it is understood	I thought Ms. Smith put her ideas across rather clearly in the meeting.
put * away +	return to the proper place of storage	I told you kids to put your toys away.
put * down +	insult, say bad things about	She always puts down people who don't share her opinions.
put in +	officially submit a request (in the armed forces or public services)	He put in for a transfer to the division in Los Angeles.
put * off +	postpone	Don't put off your work - do it now!
put * on +	wear	Make sure you put on a sweater before you go outside.
put * on +	deceive	I didn't believe a thing he said. I think he was putting me on.
put * out +	extinguish (a fire)	Don't use water to put out a grease fire.
put * out +	inconvenience someone	I don't want to put you out, but could you pick me up at the airport.
put out +	spend (usually used with unreasonably large sums of money)	I can't put out that much money each month.
put * up	have a guest stay in your house for a short time	Can you put me up while I'm in town.
put up with +	tolerate	Sandy will not put up with smoking in her house.

Phrasal Verb (Q)

Phrasal Verb	Definition	Example
quiet * down +	be quiet, or cause to be quiet	The neighbors told us to quiet down last night or they would call the police.

Phrasal Verb (R)

Phrasal Verb	Definition	Example
read up on +	research a topic for a reason	I need to read up on the company before I go on the job interview.

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ring * up	telephone	Jack rung me up last night at 3:00 in the morning.
rule * out +	eliminate	I wouldn't rule out the possibility of moving to another country if I get a good job offer.
run across +	find or meet unexpectedly	I ran across some old photos while I was cleaning my house.
run against +	compete in an election	Gore ran against Bush in the 2000 elections in the U.S.A.
run away	leave home permanently before you are a legal adult	The child ran away because her parents beat her.
run away from +	escape from	The child ran away from its parents.
run * down	Trace	Have you run down those phone numbers I asked for last week?
run * down	criticize	My boss runs everyone down.
run * down	hit with a car	My dog was run down by a bus.
run down	lose power, be very tired	You need to wind your watch so it doesn't run down.
run for +	campaign for a government position	Gore is running for president of the U.S.A.
run into +	meet unexpectedly	I ran into my English teacher at the movies last night. She's so nice!
run * off +	make leave	The new government is trying to run the drug traffickers off.
run * off	reproduce (photocopies)	Would you mind running off 10 copies of this document for me?
run off	leave quickly	Why did you run off after the party?
run off	Waste water	You shouldn't swim where the sewage runs off into the ocean.
run out of +	not have any more of something	We ran out of milk this morning, so we need to go to the store.

Phrasal Verb (S)

Phrasal Verb	Definition	Example
save * up +	accumulate (money)	I hope I will be able to save up enough money to go to school.

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see about +	Arrange or consider something	My dad said he was going to see about buying me a car.
see * off	say good-bye to someone at the beginning of their trip (at the airport, train station)	Did you see your sister off at the train station?
see to +	make sure something happens, arrange	I'll see to it that Mr. Ramirez gets your message.
see * through	finish something despite difficulties	Are you going to be able to see your studies through now that you have a baby?
sell * out	tell on someone	My partner in crime sold me out for a reduced jail sentence.
set * up	Arrange a relationship	My mom set me up with her friend's son.
set * up	falsely incriminate a person	I don't think he killed those men. Somebody set him up.
set up +	arrange (an appointment, a meeting, etc.)	I set up an appointment with my doctor at 3:30 this afternoon.
settle on +	make a decision after a period of time	I settled on the job at the oil company.
settle up	pay one's debts	We need to settle up before you move.
show * off +	show to everybody with a lot of pride	He always shows off his new things.
show off	boast, draw attention to oneself	Young boys show off in order to impress girls.
show * up	make someone seem inferior	He's always trying to show up his co-workers in order to get ahead.
show up	arrive without previous notice	I hadn't seen my cousin for years, and all of a sudden, he showed up at my workplace yesterday!
shut * off	stop from functioning	If you don't pay your electric bill, your power is going to get shut off.
shut * up	make quiet	Would someone shut him up! He's talking so loudly that we're going to get in trouble.
slow * down +	make move more slowly	Because Mary's level in English is lower than the rest of the students, she slows the class down.
slow * up +	make move more slowly	Because Mary's level in English is

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		lower than the rest of the students, she slows the class up.
spell * out +	to explain something in a detailed way so that the meaning is clearly understood	He's so stupid that you have to spell everything out for him.
stand by	wait	I need you to stand by and answer the phone when my broker calls.
stand for +	represent	SCUBA stands for "self contained underwater breathing apparatus."
stand for +	Tolerate	I won't stand for people criticizing me.
stand out	be very noticeable	Soledad is so beautiful! She really stands out in a crowd.
stand * up	not arrive to a date or an appointment (inf.)	I arranged to meet Joe at the library at 8:00, but he stood me up. I hope he has a good excuse.
stand up for +	defend (something one believes in)	Every individual must stand up for what they believe in.
stand up to +	defend oneself against someone or something	I think you should stand up to your older brother and tell him to stop pushing you around.
stay over	spend the night at a person's house	It takes you so long to take the bus home, so why don't you just stay over?
stick it to +	Severely criticize a person (inf.)	My boss really stuck it to me when I arrived late to work for the third time this week.
stick to +	persevere, keep trying	Even though English is a hard language to master, you must stick to it!
stick up for +	defend oneself or opinions	Joseph joined the army because he believes he must stick up for his country.

Phrasal Verb (T)

Phrasal Verb	Definition	Example
take after +	resemble a parent or relative	I take after my father. Who do you take after?
take * away +	remove, seize or capture	The soldiers took the captives away.

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take * back +	retract something you said	I demand that you take back what you said.
take * back +	return an item to a store	The dress my grandmother bought for me didn't fit, so I took it back and exchanged it for a pair of pants.
take * down +	write down what is said	Would you mind taking down my messages while I am on vacation?
take * down +	remove (from a high place)	The city government made the shop take down their bright, neon sign.
take * for	consider, view as	Do you take me for an idiot?
take * in +	learning	Are you taking in all of these phrasal verbs?
take * in +	deceive a person	He was taken in by the con artist.
take * in +	Make smaller when sewing	I lost weight, so I need to take some of my skirts to the tailor to have them taken in.
take * off	when a plane or rocket leaves the ground	My stomach felt funny when the plane took off.
take * off +	remove	In many cultures, it is appropriate to take off your shoes when entering a house.
take * off +	leave work or school for a period of time	I was sick last week, so I took a few days off of work.
take off	Leave	We took off after dinner.
take on +	accept (responsibilities, work)	She has taken on too much responsibility in this project.
take * over +	take control of	Who is going to take over the family business when Aretha's father dies?
take over	take control of	If the President is assassinated, the Vice-president will take over.
take * out +	accompany a person on a date (for dinner, the movies)	I can't meet you tonight because I am taking Fernanda out to dinner.
take * up +	Begin a new hobby	Have you taken up any new hobbies since you moved here?
take * up +	discuss (at a later date)	We should take this issue up in the meeting tomorrow.
take * up +	shorten a garment when sewing	This dress is too long, I am going to take it up.

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take up +	occupy space	This couch takes up too much space in the living room.
talk back	respond in an impolite way to an adult	Don't talk back!
talk back to +	respond in an impolite way to an adult	Children should not talk back to their parents.
talk * over +	discuss	I hope my parents talk their relationship problems over before they get divorced.
tear * down +	destroy	The county decided to tear down the dilapidated school and build a new one.
tear * up +	tear or rip into small pieces	I always tear up my personal papers before I throw them out.
tell * off +	criticize a person severely, reprimand (inf.)	Carolina told me off when she found out I was gossiping about her date with Martin.
tell on +	report a crime to the police or bad behavior to a parent	Every time I did something wrong when I was a child, my sister would tell on me.
think * over +	consider	Think over the offer before you sign the contract.
think * through +	consider carefully	You need to think this through carefully before you make a decision.
think * up +	create or invent a false story	I need to think up an excuse for not going to her party.
throw * away +	discard	Don't throw away those bottles; we can recycle them.
throw * out +	discard	I asked him not to throw out the Sunday newspaper because I wanted to save an article.
throw * out +	remove by force from (a room, school, a house, etc.)	Mary threw out her roommate because she stopped paying rent.
throw up	Vomit	If you drink too much alcohol, you might throw up.
tie * up +	tie securely	When we dock, make sure you tie the boat up.
tire * out	cause someone to be very tired	Speaking English all day tires me out.
touch on +	talk about for a short time	The presidential candidates touched

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		on the subject of health care during the debates.
touch * up	Make the final improvements	We didn't paint the whole kitchen, we just touched up the cabinets.
try * on +	put on to make sure a piece of clothing fits	Try on the pants before you buy them.
try * out	Test	Try out this massage chair - it feels great!
turn * away	refuse to deal with or give service	They turned us away at the border because we didn't have visas.
turn * around	change or reverse direction	Turn the car around and go back home.
turn * down +	refuse an offer; reject an application	She turned down the new job in New York, because she didn't want to move.
turn * down +	lower the volume or intensity of a TV, radio, or other machine	I'm studying! Please turn down the TV.
turn * in	submit	You need to turn your essays in next week.
turn in	go to bed (inf.)	It's getting late. I think it is about time to turn in.
turn into +	become something different, transform	When she kissed the frog, it turned into a handsome prince.
turn * off +	stop the function of (a stove, a water faucet, a car, etc.)	Don't forget to turn off the iron before you leave the house.
turn on +	attack unexpectedly	The pit bull suddenly turned on the small child.
turn * on	cause to be excited sexually	Scientists have discovered that the smell of cinnamon turns many people on.
turn * on +	start the function of a TV, a radio, a machine	Turn on the TV. The baseball game starts in a few minutes.
turn * out	produce	The weavers can turn out two or three rugs a month.
turn * out	switch off a light	Turn out the light before you go to bed.
turn out	audience members to a function	Over 100,000 people turned out for the concert.
turn out	end up being	She turned out to be the murderer after

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		all.
turn * over	give to authorities (said of evidence or stolen / lost property)	They turned the wallet over to the police.
turn * up +	increase the volume or intensity of a TV, radio, or other machine	Turn up the TV. I can't hear what they're saying.
turn up	find unexpectedly	My keys turned up in the bedroom.

Phrasal Verb (U)

Phrasal Verb	Definition	Example
use * up	use all of something	I used up all of the soap, so we need to buy some more.

Phrasal Verb (V)

Phrasal Verb	Definition	Example
veer away from +	stay away from, avoid	I veer away from the same old summer blockbuster films.

Phrasal Verb (W)

Phrasal Verb	Definition	Example
wait on +	serve, service (a table)	Each waitress waits on three different tables in the restaurant.
wait up	not sleep because you are waiting for something or someone	Don't wait up.
wait up for +	not sleep because you are waiting for someone or something	Let's wait up for Mary to see how her date went.
wake * up +	Awaken someone	The car alarm woke me up at 6:00 in the morning.
wake up	Awaken	Wake up. It's time to get ready for work.
wash up	clean oneself	Make sure you wash up before

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		dinner.
wash * up +	Clean	If we work together, we can wash the kitchen up in a few minutes.
watch out	be careful	Watch out - there's a rattlesnake!
watch out for +	be careful of	Watch out for snakes while you are hiking in the desert.
wear off	disappear after a period of time	The affects of the medicine will wear off after a few hours.
wear * out	use until something is not useable anymore	If you wear the same shoes everyday, you'll wear them out.
wear * out	cause to be very tired	Her three kids wore me out.
wind up +	finish (inf.)	If he doesn't get his act together, he is going to wind up in jail.
wind * up +	tighten the spring of a watch or similar machine	He wound up the toy dog and set it on the floor.
wind * up +	cause an animal or a child to behave wildly	The kids always get wound up when Uncle Henry comes over.
wipe * out +	massacre or destroy	The tidal wave wiped out the small fishing village.
wipe * out	cause to be very tired	After surfing all day, I was completely wiped out.
work * out +	Solve	I hope you two can work out your problems.
work out	exercise	I work out three times a week at the fitness center.
work out	be successful	I am glad your new catering business is working out.
write * down +	Record	Write down the directions so you don't forget them.
write * out +	write down every word or letter	He wrote out the lyrics so I could understand what the singer was saying.
write * up +	Prepare a report	He wrote up a business proposal in order to get a loan.

Phrasal Verb (X)

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Phrasal Verb	Definition	Example
The Phrasal Verb Dictionary contains no phrasal verbs beginning with "X."		

Phrasal Verb (Y)

Phrasal Verb	Definition	Example
yak on	to continue talking in an annoying way ("on" can be repeated for emphasis)	He just yakked on and on and on.
yak on about +	to continue talking in an annoying way about something ("on" can be repeated for emphasis)	She just yakked on and on about her husband's new job.
yammer on	to talk in an annoying way or complain ("on" can be repeated for emphasis)	They yammered on and on and on.
yammer on about +	to talk in an annoying way about something or complain about ("on" can be repeated for emphasis)	He just yammered on and on about how horrible the waiter was.

Phrasal Verb (Z)

Phrasal Verb	Definition	Example
zero in on +	discover, pinpoint	I think I have zeroed in on what has been causing the problem.
zip around +	move quickly from place to place	I zipped around town after work today.
zone out	stop paying attention	He zoned out during class.
zonk out	fall asleep	Jill was so exhausted after taking the TOEFL test that she zonked out before dinner.
zoom in	Focus	You need a telephoto lens to zoom in.
zoom in on +	focus on something, pinpoint	She zoomed in on his face while taking the picture.