



# A Note on Phrasal Verbs

## I What are Phrasal Verbs?

A **PHRASAL VERB** is an idiomatic phrase consisting of a **verb** and **another element**, either an **adverb** or a **preposition** or a **combination of both**.


Definition of **phrasal verb** noun from the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary

**phrasal verb** *noun*

 /,freɪzəl 'vɜːb/  
 /,freɪzəl 'vɜːrɪb/

(*grammar*)

★ a verb combined with an adverb or a preposition, or sometimes both, to give a new meaning, for example *go in for*, *win over* and *see to*



 **phrasal verb**  
/,freɪzəl 'vəːb/

*noun* GRAMMAR

noun: **phrasal verb**; plural noun: **phrasal verbs**

an idiomatic phrase consisting of a verb and another element, typically either an adverb, as in *break down*, or a preposition, for example *see to*, or a combination of both, such as *look down on*.

**phrasal verb**  
*noun* [C]

UK  /,freɪzəl 'vɜːb/ US  /,freɪzəl 'vɜːb/

**B1**

a phrase that consists of a verb with a preposition or adverb or both, the meaning of which is different from the meaning of its separate parts:

• "Pay for", "work out", and "make up for" are all phrasal verbs.

In other words, **PHRASAL VERBS** are basic verbs which can combine with different prepositions, adverbs etc. to make verbs with completely new meanings. The meaning of phrasal verbs is often unguessable. They are used more in speaking than in writing.

Example:      **Put on**              **Put across**              **Put up with**

## II The structure of Phrasal Verbs:

The phrasal verbs can usually be formed in three ways:

### 1. Verb + Adverb

Example: *Look up*, *break down*

### 2. Verb + Preposition

Example: *Look after*, *see to*

### 3. Verb + Adverb + Preposition

Example: *Look forward to*, *look down on*

### III The grammar of Phrasal Verbs:

The **type I** Phrasal Verb (Verb + Adverb) can either be **transitive** or **intransitive**. Transitive Phrasal Verb will take a direct object while intransitive Phrasal Verb will not have an object at all.

- When this type of Phrasal Verb has a direct object, we can separate the two parts.

Example: She **turned down** my request.

She **turned** my request **down**.

- When the direct object is a **pronoun**, we must separate the two parts of the phrasal verb and insert the pronoun between them.

- Raju **switched off** the TV.
- Raju **switched** the TV **off**.

**and**

- Raju **switched *it* off**.

**but not:**

Raju ~~switched off~~ *it*.

The **type II** Phrasal Verb (Verb + Preposition) is also called a prepositional verb. Every preposition has an object. So, this type will always have a direct object. It will always be **transitive**.

Prepositional verbs cannot be separated.

- ✓ When I was young, my grandmother **looked after** *me*.

**But not**

- ✗ ~~When I was young, my grandmother~~ **looked *me* after**.

The **type III** Phrasal Verb (Verb + Adverb + Preposition) ends with a preposition. Hence, it always takes a direct object. It is **transitive**. This phrasal verb **cannot be separated**.

I **look forward to** opening the school.

Our leader **came up with** a new idea to celebrate the Independence Day.

→ Notice that when we use this phrasal verb with another **verb** we use the **gerund** (opening, visiting, going, .....).

### IV Some commonly used Phrasal Verbs

1. Break in on = interrupt (a conversation)
2. Bring down = reduce or lower
3. Bring up = rear
4. Call at = visit (place)

5. Call for = demand
6. Call off = cancel
7. Call on = visit (person)
8. Call upon = exhort, require, invite
9. Carry on = continue
10. Come across = meet by chance
11. Come up with = find or produce an answer or make a suggestion, etc.
12. Get away = escape
13. Get over = overcome
14. Get rid of = eliminate, eradicate, throw away
15. Give away = distribute
16. Give in = yield, surrender
17. Give up = stop, abandon
18. Go for = attack
19. Go off = explode
20. Go on = continue
21. Go through = undergo (especially a difficult situation), examine
22. Keep on = continue
23. Let off = release
24. Look after = care, protect
25. Look for = search
26. Look forward to = await something eagerly, anticipate with pleasure
27. Make out = understand
28. Put across = convey
29. Put off = postpone
30. Put on = wear
31. Put out = extinguish
32. Put up with = bear, tolerate

33. Set out = start
34. Set up = build
35. Take after = resemble
36. Take off = remove
37. Taken aback = surprised
38. Think back on = recall
39. Turn down = reject, decline
40. Turn up = come, appear, reach

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