

Phrasal Verbs in Conversation Course

Welcome to the Phrasal Verbs Course!

Phrasal verbs are no different from any other vocabulary words. However, students often find them difficult because they study lists, for example, "10 phrasal verbs with GET" - trying to memorize the differences between "get off," "get up," "get out," etc.

This isn't the best way, in my opinion - it just causes more confusion, because all the phrasal verbs seem so similar!

A better way is to learn phrasal verbs **in context**. That's how native speakers learn - for example, if every morning when I was a child, my mother said to me, "Shayna, time to get up!" - then I learn from the situation that "get up" means "leave the bed."

That's why I created the Phrasal Verbs in Conversation course. It will teach you phrasal verbs through **dialogues**, so that you can better understand (and remember) each phrasal verb from the context and situation in which it is used.

One very important tip for remembering phrasal verbs is to **use them in your own English** – so this course contains both quizzes to help you practice and writing exercises that encourage you to form your own sentences using the phrasal verbs. You can send me your sentences if you'd like to get correction or feedback.

Good luck with your learning, and I hope you enjoy the course!

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Lesson 1:

Phrasal Verbs for Romantic Relationships

Read and listen to the dialog

Emily: Who was that guy you were talking to at the bar? It looked like he was **hitting on you**.

Sarah: Yeah, we struck up a conversation, and eventually he **asked me out**. I gave him my number, but I'm not sure if I'll actually go out with him.

Emily: Oh? How come?

Sarah: He's nice, but I just don't feel like we have much chemistry – so I don't want to **lead him on**.

Emily: Well, don't be too quick to judge. My last boyfriend and I didn't **hit it off** right away – I only started to **fall for him** after we went out a few times and I got to know him better. We were together for 3 years.

Sarah: So why'd you **split up**? (If you don't mind my asking)

Emily: Not at all. We just started to **drift apart** – different interests, different plans for the future. The **breakup** was mutual.

Sarah: Ah, that's great. My last relationship was a nightmare – I **hooked up with** a guy at a New Year's party and we were together for six months – but we were constantly fighting and **making up**. I don't know how I **put up with him** for so long.

Emily: How'd it end?

Sarah: He **cheated on me** – I caught him **making out with** his ex. He begged me for another chance, but I know he was just trying to **jerk me around** – so I said no.

Emily: Ugh! Good for you.

Sarah: Heh, thanks. So how about you – are you **going out with** anyone at the moment?

Emily: Oh, I've gone on a few dates here and there, but nothing serious. To be honest, I'm not really interested in **settling down** just yet – I'm enjoying the single life too much!

Explanation

Let's learn the phrasal verbs from the dialog.

First, Emily says it looked like the guy was **hitting on** Sarah. To hit on someone is to say or do things that demonstrate romantic or sexual interest in that person. It's usually a combination of comments and gestures as well as the way you look at the other person. Another way to say this is that the guy was **flirting with** Sarah.

Sarah says the guy **asked her out** – to ask someone out is to invite the person to go on a date (a romantic encounter). We often say “asked her out for...” and then the activity:

- He asked her out for lunch / dinner.
- He asked her out for coffee.
- He asked her out for drinks.
- He asked her out for a movie.

Sarah then says she's not sure if she likes the guy, and she doesn't want to **lead him on** – this means to provide false hope or expectation to the other person. So if she pretended to be romantically interested even though she really wasn't, this would be **leading him on**.

Emily then says that she and her last boyfriend didn't **hit it off** right away – this means they didn't have a special connection immediately. If you **hit it off** with someone, it means you like each other and you have great social connection from the first moment you meet.

However, with time she began to **fall for him** – the phrasal verb “fall for” means “fall in love with.”

Sarah then asks why Emily and her last boyfriend **split up** – this means to separate, to end the romantic relationship. You can say **split up** or **break up** – and **breakup** can also be used as a noun. Emily says that the **breakup** was because she and her

boyfriend **drifted apart** – this means they slowly started to go in different directions over time.

Sarah's last relationship was a nightmare (which means it was really terrible). It started when she **hooked up with** someone at a party. The phrasal verb **hook up with someone** can be used as a slang expression meaning to have sex with that person, especially someone you just met, or someone you only stay with for one night.

However, in Sarah's case she stayed with the boyfriend for six months, when they were constantly fighting and **making up** – that means reconciling and restoring peace in the relationship after a fight. It was a difficult relationship, and Sarah says she doesn't know how she **put up with him** for so long. The phrasal verb "put up with" someone means to tolerate a difficult, annoying, or unpleasant person.

The relationship ended when the boyfriend **cheated on** Sarah – that means he was kissing or having sex with another woman. Sarah discovered him **making out with** his ex-girlfriend (kissing her very passionately).

The boyfriend wanted another chance with Sarah, but Sarah knew he was trying to **jerk her around** – that means to manipulate her or use her for his own advantage – so she **broke up with** him (ended the relationship).

Sarah asks Emily if Emily is **going out with** anyone at the moment. The phrasal verb **go out with** can mean to go out on a date with someone once, or it can mean to be in a relationship for an extended period of time. In this second case, we usually use it in the present continuous – so Sarah is asking if Emily is currently in a relationship.

Emily says she isn't in a serious relationship because she's not interested in **settling down** yet – in this context, **settle down** means to be in a long-term stable relationship (for example, getting married and having kids, and living a "typical" family life).

You've now learned 16 phrasal verbs about romantic relationships – but wait! It's time for the most important part, which is to practice what you've learned.

Scroll down to the bottom of this lesson and take the quiz to test how well you remember the phrasal verbs. Then do the writing exercise, where you can practice using the phrasal verbs in your own sentences.

If you're already registered for the course, you'll get the next lesson tomorrow. If you're not yet registered, you can [click here](#) to join the course and get 29 more lessons on Phrasal Verbs in Conversation.

Thanks for watching and I'll talk to you tomorrow.

| Phrasal Verb | Definition in Context |
|-------------------------|---|
| hit on someone | demonstrate romantic / sexual interest |
| ask someone out | invite someone for a date (a romantic encounter) |
| lead someone on | give the person false hope or expectations about the relationship |
| hit it off with someone | have a great connection from the first moment you meet the person |
| fall for someone | fall in love with the person |
| split up / break up | separate, end the relationship |
| drift apart | slowly go in different directions over time |
| hook up with | (slang) have sex with |
| make up | reconcile after a fight |
| put up with someone | tolerate a difficult, annoying, or unpleasant person |
| cheat on someone | kiss or have sex with another person (who is not your husband/wife/boyfriend/girlfriend) |
| make out with someone | kiss the person very passionately |
| jerk someone around | manipulate the person or use them for your own advantage |
| go out with someone | 1) go on a date with the person once 2) be in a relationship with the person |
| settle down | be in a long-term stable relationship |

Lesson 1 Quiz

Question 1

I _____ my last girlfriend because she wanted kids and I didn't.

- A broke up with
- B fell for
- C put up with

Question 2

My best friend really _____ my cousin - after I introduced them, they spent hours and hours talking.

- A cheated on
- B drifted apart
- C hit it off with

Question 3

My husband and I always _____ pretty fast after an argument - we don't stay angry at each other for very long.

- A lead on
- B jerk around
- C make up

Question 4

I think I'm _____ my co-worker - what should I do? Should I tell him how I feel, or just keep quiet?

- A hooking up with
- B falling for
- C asking out

Question 5

My girlfriend is constantly late - it's annoying, but I love her so I _____ it.

- A hit on
- B make out with
- C put up with

Question 6

Vanessa was furious when she found out that her husband had been _____ her with her sister.

- A cheating on
- B going out with
- C settling down

Question 7

Barbara and I _____ a few times, but it never really went anywhere - we're just not very compatible.

- A asked out
- B broke up
- C went out

Question 8

I was very uncomfortable when my friend's father started _____. He's 30 years older than me - and married.

- A hitting on me
- B putting up with me
- C jerking me around

Question 9

Samuel likes to brag about how many women he's _____.

- A asked out
- B hooked up with
- C hit off

Question 10

I've been traveling around the world for the past few years, but I'm starting to think about _____ in one place.

- A drifting apart
- B making out
- C settling down

Writing Exercises

How to get the most benefit from these exercises:

Try to use the phrasal verb in your answer!

For example, question #2 asks “Who is a person that you really hit it off with?”

Don’t just answer, “My friend Nathan.”

Instead, say (or write) – “**I really hit it off with my friend Nathan** – we met at a baseball game and discovered we had a lot in common.”

Why? Because **actually using** the phrasal verb will help you remember it better.

1. Write about a time when someone was **hitting on you**. How did you react?
2. Who is a person that you really **hit it off with**?
3. How did your previous relationship end – why did you **break up**?
4. What should a couple do if they begin to **drift apart**, but they want to save the relationship?
5. What is one thing (or one type of person) that you will NOT **put up with** in a relationship?
6. Do you think it’s possible to save a relationship after one person **cheats on** the other?
7. At the moment, are you enjoying the single life, or are you interested in **settling down**? (Or have you already settled down?)

Want to get corrections? [E-mail me your answers!](#)

Answers – Quiz 1

1) A

2) C

3) C

4) B

5) C

6) A

7) C

8) A

9) B

10) C

Lesson 2:

Phrasal Verbs for Emotions

Read and listen to the dialog

Matt: Hey Jane – what's the matter?

Jane: It was a rough day at work – the boss **blew up** at me when I told him I hadn't finished a project on time. He said I was lazy, unreliable, and that I had really **let him down**.

Matt: Sorry to hear that.

Jane: What really **pisses me off** is that there were legitimate reasons for the delay, but he didn't even let me explain. He just yelled at me for a solid 20 minutes before he finally **calmed down**. I was so **shaken up** that I left early to try and **pull myself together**.

Matt: Aw, I **feel for** you. I've worked with a number of people who **flip out** when something doesn't go exactly according to plan.

Jane: How do you **cope with** co-workers like that?

Matt: Try not to let their comments **get to you**. Remember that some people **lash out at** others when they're under a lot of pressure.

Jane: True. I'm dreading going to work tomorrow, though – my boss is probably still **fuming about** the whole situation.

Matt: Don't **fret about** it – just do your best work in the future, and he'll eventually **get over** this one incident.

Jane: I hope so.

Matt: Hey, I know what'll help **cheer you up** – how about seeing that new comedy movie everyone's been **raving about**?

Jane: Oh, my sister saw that the other day and loved it – she said she was **cracking up** the entire time. Let's definitely go!

Explanation

Let's learn the phrasal verbs from the dialog.

Jane says her boss **blew up** – the phrasal verb **blow up** can be used for explosions, like the explosion of a bomb. But in this context, it means that her boss “exploded” in anger. We can also say **blow up at (someone)** to identify the person at whom the anger is directed – so in this case, the boss blew up at Jane.

Jane's boss said that she **let him down**. The phrasal verb “let someone down” means to disappoint someone.

The fact that the boss didn't let Jane explain the situation **pisses her off**. If something **pisses you off**, it means that it REALLY annoys or upsets you (or makes you angry). However, this phrasal verb can be a little bit offensive – so a more polite alternative is **tick off**.

Both of these phrasal verbs can also be used as adjectives – with a form of the verb TO BE – to describe a person who is angry:

- She's really pissed off.
- She's really ticked off.
- She's really angry.

After 20 minutes, Jane's boss finally **calmed down** – this means to become calm and relaxed after being angry or upset. However, Jane was **shaken up** – this means upset or emotionally unstable. People often feel “shaken up” after an accident or a major, shocking event.

She left work early to try to **pull herself together** – this means to stabilize and organize her thoughts and emotions. We always use this phrasal verb with a reflexive pronoun like myself, yourself, herself, etc.

Matt says he **feels for** Jane – this means he can empathize or sympathize with her; in other words, he understands how she's feeling, and he's sorry that she's feeling bad. He has also worked with colleagues who **flip out** – that means get very upset or agitated – when things go wrong. Another phrasal verb for this is **freak out**.

Jane then asks how to **cope with** difficult coworkers – to cope with something is to endure or tolerate a difficult person or situation. It is similar to the phrasal verb **put up with** from the last lesson, except that **put up with** can only be used for annoying situations, whereas **cope with** can be used for annoying OR tragic situations. (For example, coping with the death of a loved one).

Matt tells Jane, “Try not to let their comments **get to** you.” If something “gets to you,” it means it disturbs you or affects you emotionally in a negative way.

He also reminds her that some people **lash out** at others – to lash out means to give a sudden, angry verbal attack. People often lash out when they are feeling defensive or when they are having a bad or stressful day.

Jane is worried about the next day at work, because she thinks her boss is still **fuming about** the situation. To fume about something means to stay angry for an extended period of time.

But Matt advises her not to **fret about** it – fret about means to worry. He tells her that with time, her boss will **get over** the incident. To “get over” something means to recover from it.

Matt then suggests something to **cheer Jane up** – that means make her happier. He wants to go to a movie that people have been **raving about** – that means saying lots of excellent things about it.

Jane says her sister was **cracking up** when she saw the movie – to **crack up** means to start laughing – so Jane agrees to go to the movie.

You’ve now learned 17 phrasal verbs about emotions. Continue to the quiz and writing exercises to put these phrasal verbs into practice – and log in tomorrow for Lesson 3.

| Phrasal Verb | Definition |
|--|---|
| blow up | "Explode" in anger |
| let (someone) down | Disappoint someone |
| piss (someone) off tick (someone) off | Make the person angry |
| calm down | Become calm / relaxed again after being very angry or upset |
| shaken up | Upset, agitated, emotionally unstable |
| pull (oneself) together | Stabilize and organize your thoughts and emotions |
| feel for (someone) | Empathize or sympathize with the person |
| flip out / freak out | Get very upset or agitated |
| cope with (someone / something) | Endure or tolerate an annoying, difficult, or tragic person or situation |
| get to (someone) | Disturb the person, affect them emotionally in a negative way |
| lash out | Give a sudden, angry, verbal attack (often when feeling defensive or stressed) |
| fume about (something) | Stay angry about something for an extended period of time |
| fret about (something) | Worry about it |
| get over (something) | Recover from it |
| cheer (someone) up | Make a sad person happier |
| rave about (something) | Say lots of excellent things about it |
| crack up | Start laughing |

Quiz: Lesson 2

Question 1

The whole class _____ when the teacher spilled coffee all over her desk.

- A fretted about it
- B cracked up
- C calmed down

Question 2

My parents expected me to be a doctor or lawyer. When I chose a career in writing, I felt like I had _____.

- A gotten over them
- B shaken them up
- C let them down

Question 3

I don't need a lot of money to be happy, but constantly wondering if we're going to have enough to pay the bills is starting to _____.

- A get to me
- B blow up at me
- C cope with me

Question 4

My teenage daughter always spends an hour _____ her clothes and makeup in the morning. It's a challenge to get her to school on time!

- A flipping out
- B fretting about
- C raving about

Question 5

He doesn't handle criticism very well. All I did was make one small suggestion about how his work could be improved, and he _____ me.

- A fumed about
- B lashed out at
- C shaken up

Question 6

A drunk driver lost control of his car and crashed into a tree right in front of our house. Luckily no one was hurt, but we were all pretty _____.

- A cracked up
- B blown up
- C shaken up

Question 7

After our family dog died, it took my kids a long time to _____ it.

- A get over
- B fret about
- C tick off

Question 8

Joanna was upset that she didn't get into the university she wanted, but she _____ when she received a full scholarship to another excellent school

- A cheered up
- B freaked out
- C let down

Question 9

He joined a support group to help him _____ his cancer diagnosis.

- A feel for
- B cope with
- C lash out at

Question 10

Playing classical music helps my baby _____ when he's crying.

- A calm down
- B get over
- C get to him

Writing Exercises

1. When was the last time someone **let you down**?
(Or: when you let someone down?)
2. Describe a time when you were **pissed off**. What made you angry? How long did it take for you to **calm down**?
3. Have you ever felt **shaken up**?
4. What's one thing that you **fret about** (even though you know you shouldn't)?
5. If your husband, wife, or best friend was depressed, what would you do to **cheer him/her up**?
6. Describe a funny situation that made you **crack up**.
7. Do you usually **fume about** things that go wrong, or do you **get over** them quickly? Talk about one situation you fumed about, and another situation when you got over the problem quickly.

Want to get corrections? [E-mail me](#) your answers.

Answers – Quiz 2

- | | | | |
|------|------|------|-------|
| 1. B | 4. B | 7. A | 10. A |
| 2. C | 5. B | 8. A | |
| 3. A | 6. C | 9. B | |

Lesson 3:

Phrasal Verbs for Social Situations

Read and listen to the dialog.

Erin: You **missed out** on a great party at Melissa's place last night! Why didn't you go?

Rachel: I **wasn't really up for** it. I mean, I **get along** with Melissa pretty well – but I don't feel like I **fit in with** her friends. They're mostly artists and designers and I'm clueless about art – so it's hard to find much in common. Not to mention Melissa's parties tend to go until 4 in the morning.

Erin: Well, you could have **stopped in** for a little while and then **slipped out** before it got too late. Melissa was wondering where you were.

Rachel: Really? Hmm, I hope it didn't **come across** as rude that I didn't call to let her know I wasn't coming.

Erin: Nah, don't worry – she was just curious; she doesn't think you **blew her off** or anything.

Rachel: That's good. Did I tell you about the last time I went to one of Melissa's parties? She told me it was a costume party, so I **showed up** in a clown suit – but she had actually invited everybody over to LOOK AT the new costumes she had designed for a play.

Erin: So everyone else was dressed normally and you were dressed like a clown? Oh my god, I would've died of embarrassment.

Rachel: I don't think I'll ever **live it down**. Some of her friends still **rag me about** it to this day.

Erin: Do you remember David, my friend from college? He was there last night.

Rachel: Of course I remember him; how could I forget a guy who could **pass for** a model? I actually **bumped into** him at the park last week. Apparently he quit his job?

Erin: He was sick of being **ordered around** by his manager. I've always **looked up to** David for his independence, so I'm not surprised that he **wasn't cut out for** a corporate job.

Rachel: Anyway, I've gotta **head out** – I'm **meeting up with** Barry in half an hour. We're going to Best Buy to check out their electronics sale.

Erin: Oh, can I **tag along**? I'm actually in the market for a new digital camera.

Rachel: Sure!

Explanation

Erin says that Rachel **missed out on** a great party. If you “miss out on” something, it means that you didn't go to something that was good, or you didn't take a good opportunity.

Rachel says she **wasn't up for it**. This expression means that she didn't want to go the party, or she didn't have the energy to go. Although Rachel **gets along with** Melissa (she has a good relationship with Melissa), she doesn't **fit in with** Melissa's friends. To “fit in” means to be similar or compatible to the social group. Rachel doesn't fit in because Melissa's friends are artists, and Rachel knows nothing about art.

Erin then says Rachel could have **stopped in** – to “stop in” means to make a short visit. You can also say “stop by,” “drop by,” or “pop in” to describe a quick visit. If she didn't want to stay long at the party, she could have **slipped out** – this means leave quietly, without attracting attention.

Rachel didn't call Melissa to tell her she wasn't coming, and she hopes this didn't **come across** as rude – the phrasal verb “come across” means to give an impression.

But Erin tells her not to worry, because Melissa doesn't think that Rachel **blew her off** – to blow someone off means to rudely ignore the person.

Rachel says that the last time she went to one of Melissa's parties, she **showed up** (appeared or arrived) in a clown suit because she thought it was a costume party.

Unfortunately, everyone else was wearing normal clothes. It was embarrassing, and Rachel thinks she'll never **live it down** (recover from an embarrassing incident, as other people eventually forget about it). Some of Melissa's friends still **rag her about** it – that means they tease her and make joking comments about that situation.

Erin asks Rachel if she remembers David, who was at the party. Rachel says David could **pass for** a model. This means he looks like a model (even though he isn't one). "Pass for" is also often used for ages: for example, "He's 40, but he could easily pass for 30." – it means he looks younger than he really is, and people could believe he's 30 years old.

Rachel **bumped into** David at the park. To "bump into" or "run into" someone means to meet them unexpectedly.

David quit his job because he didn't like being **ordered around**. To "order someone around" or "boss someone around" means to constantly give them orders and commands telling them what to do and trying to control them. It's usually seen as a negative thing, for example: "I hated my older sister when we were kids, because she always bossed me around."

Erin says she **looks up to** David for his independence – this means she admires and respects him. Because of his independence, he's **not cut out for** a typical corporate job. If you're "not cut out for" something, it means the activity is not compatible to your personality or abilities.

Rachel then says she needs to **head out** – this is an informal way to say she needs to leave. The phrasal verb **take off** is also used in this informal way: "We're gonna take off" means "We're going to leave."

She's going to **meet up with** Barry and go to an electronics store. We use the phrasal verb "meet up with" to mean encounter a person at a particular time or place.

Erin asks if she can **tag along** – to "tag along" or "come along" means to accompany somebody when they go somewhere.

Now you know 19 more phrasal verbs that can be used when talking about social situations. Try the quiz and the writing exercises to practice – and log in tomorrow for Lesson 4.

| Phrasal Verb | Definition |
|--|--|
| miss out on (something) | not go to something that was good; not take a good opportunity |
| not be up for (something) | not want to do it / not have the energy to do it |
| get along with (someone) | have a good relationship with the person |
| fit in | be similar or compatible with a group |
| stop in / stop by / drop by | make a short visit |
| slip out | leave quietly, without attracting attention |
| come across | give an impression |
| blow (someone) off | rudely ignore the person |
| show up | appear or arrive |
| live (something) down | recover from the shame / embarrassment of a situation, as people eventually forget it |
| rag (someone) about (something) | tease the person, make joking comments to the person about the situation |
| pass for | look like, so that other people could believe it |
| bump into / run into | meet someone unexpectedly |
| order (someone) around / boss (someone) around | give the person orders/commands, constantly telling them what to do and trying to control them |
| look up to (someone) look up to (someone) for (character trait) | admire the person |
| not be cut out for (an activity) | the activity doesn't match your personality or abilities |
| head out / take off | leave (informal) |
| meet up with (someone) | encounter a person at a particular time or place |
| tag along / come along | accompany a person when they go somewhere |

Quiz – Lesson 3

Question 1

Mike and I agreed to meet at the cafe at 7 o'clock, but he never _____. I waited for an hour and then went home.

- A headed out
- B showed up
- C tagged along

Question 2

I _____ really well with my dad. I feel like I can talk to him about anything.

- A fit in
- B get along
- C pass for

Question 3

Hold on a minute - I want to say goodbye to Wanda before we _____.

- A blow off
- B come across
- C take off

Question 4

She's so confident that she sometimes _____ a little arrogant.

- A comes across as
- B looks up to
- C passes for

Question 5

I'm _____ cooking tonight. I'd rather just order a pizza.

- A not cut out for
- B not going to live down
- C not up for

Question 6

He _____ the meeting to take a phone call.

- A ordered around

B slipped out of

C stopped by

Question 7

We're going to drop by the hospital to see how Sheila's doing after her surgery.
Would you like to _____?

A come across

B come along

C get along

Question 8

I tried to apologize to him for losing the book he lent me, but he just _____. I think he's still mad about it.

A blew me off

B bumped into me

C ragged on me

Question 9

On Saturday I _____ friends for a barbecue at the beach.

A fit in with

B met up with

C missed out on

Question 10

My daughter is very tall for her age. She's 8, but she could _____ 12.

A be up for

B live down

C pass for

Writing Exercises

1. What's something you **missed out on**, that now you wish you had attended?
2. Talk about one person you **don't get along with**. Why don't you get along with this person?
3. Describe a time when you felt like you **didn't fit in**.
4. Has anyone ever **blown you off**? (Or have you ever blown anyone off?)
5. When was the last time you **bumped into** someone in a place you didn't expect to see them?
6. Talk about a time when someone tried to **boss you around**. How did you respond?
7. Describe a person you **look up to**. What exactly do you admire about this person?
8. What's one job or activity you're just **not cut out for**?

Want to get corrections? [E-mail me](#) your answers.

Answers – Quiz 3

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. B | 6. B |
| 2. B | 7. B |
| 3. C | 8. A |
| 4. A | 9. B |
| 5. C | 10. C |

Lesson 4:

Phrasal Verbs Around the House

Read and listen to the dialog.

Mary: Hi Joanna, it's Mary. Can I ask you a huge favor?

Joanna: Go right **ahead!**

Mary: I'm flying into Chicago this Saturday – is there any chance I could **stay over** at your place?

Joanna: Of course you can **crash with** me! I have a roommate now, so the extra bedroom is occupied – but I can **put you up** on the couch, if you don't mind.

Mary: Not at all.

Joanna: Are your kids coming?

Mary: No, their grandparents will be **looking after** them – so it's just me. I'll be getting in around 2 in the morning, but if you don't want to **stay up**, you can leave the key under the doormat.

Joanna: OK, will do. See you in a few days!

10:30 AM on Saturday morning

Joanna: Good morning! How was your trip?

Mary: Exhausting. It sure felt good to **sleep in!** My flight was delayed and I got here around 4 – but you actually left me the wrong key and I was **locked out.**

Joanna: Oh my gosh, I'm so sorry! How'd you get in?

Mary: I knocked on the door until your roommate **got up** and **let me in.**

Joanna: Good thing she **woke up** – I didn't hear you knocking at all. I was watching TV upstairs and I must have **dozed off.**

Mary: So how long have you had a roommate?

Joanna: She moved in last month. I love her company, but she's a little bit messy. She never **puts things away** in the kitchen, and she just tosses her jacket on the couch instead of **hanging it up**. I'm starting to get a little tired of **picking up** after her.

Mary: My son's the same way. I finally laid down the law and told him that I was going to start **throwing out** his stuff if he didn't put it away. Hey – what's that burnt smell?

Joanna: Oh no! I was **heating up** some milk for the coffee and it must have **boiled over**. Hang on a minute while I go **clean that up**.

Mary: Need any help?

Joanna: Yeah, why don't you **chop up** these vegetables so we can make an omelet?

Mary: OK!

Explanation

When Mary asks if she can request a favor, Joanna responds "**Go right ahead!**" The phrasal verb "go ahead" is used to give permission. If you ask someone, "Can I use your bathroom?" or "Can I open the window?" and they answer, "Go ahead!" it means "Yes, you can – you have permission."

Mary asks if she can **stay over** at Joanna's house. **Stay over** and **sleep over** are used when you stay at someone's house overnight. Joanna says, "Of course you can **crash with me!**" **Crash with** is just an informal way to say "stay over at my house/apartment."

Joanna then says, "I can **put you up** on the couch." To **put someone up** means to provide a place for the person to stay.

Mary is coming alone because someone else will be **looking after** her kids. To **look after** someone or something means to take care of it and be responsible for it.

Mary suggests putting the house key under the doormat, since she is arriving at 2 AM and Joanna might not want to **stay up** (continue awake) so late.

Mary is exhausted after her trip, so she **sleeps in** – that means to sleep longer than you usually do. She had a little problem when she arrived – Joanna left the wrong key, and Mary was **locked out** – this phrasal verb means when you don't have the key to enter a house, building, or car.

Joanna's roommate **woke up** (stopped sleeping) when she heard Mary knocking on the door. She then **got up** (got out of bed) and **let Mary in** – that means she opened the door and permitted Mary to enter.

Joanna said she had **dozed off** while watching TV upstairs. **Doze off** or **nod off** means to start sleeping.

Unfortunately, Joanna's roommate is rather disorganized. She never **puts things away** – that means to put them in their correct place. Also, she tosses (throws) her jacket on the couch instead of **hanging it up** – the phrasal verb **hang up**, in this context, means to put a piece of clothing on a hanger. Joanna is tired of **picking up after** her roommate – pick up after someone means to clean the messes that the other person makes.

Mary says she solved the problem of her son's messy habits by threatening to **throw out** his stuff if he didn't start putting it in the correct place. You can also say **throw away** to describe putting something in the garbage or trash.

Joanna was **heating up** some milk – that means putting something on the stove or in the microwave to make it hot. You can also say **warm up** when you want to make the food warm, but not hot. However, she wasn't watching it and the milk **boiled over** – that means it overflowed the pot and spilled.

She tells Mary "Hang on (wait) a minute while I go **clean that up**." The phrasal verb **clean up** simply means to clean a mess completely. Two related verbs are **wipe up** (using a sponge, cloth, napkin, or towel) and **mop up** (to clean spill on the floor where you need to use a mop).

Mary offers to help, so Joanna asks her to **chop up** some vegetables for an omelet – chop up means to cut the vegetables into small pieces. Another phrasal verb for this same action is **cut up**.

Congratulations! You now know **19 more phrasal verbs** for actions around the house. Go ahead and complete the quiz and the writing exercises – and I'll talk to you tomorrow in Lesson 5.

| Phrasal Verb | Definition |
|--|---|
| go ahead | you have permission |
| stay over (at someone's house) crash with (someone) | stay overnight at the person's house or apartment |
| put (someone) up | give the person a place to stay |
| look after (someone / something) | take care of and be responsible for the person or thing |
| stay up | stay awake (not sleep) |
| sleep in | sleep longer than usual |
| (be) locked out | not have the key to enter a house, building, or car |
| wake up | stop sleeping |
| get up | rise; get out of bed |
| let (someone) in | open the door and allow the person to enter |
| doze off / nod off | start sleeping |
| put (something) away | put the thing in the correct place |
| hang (clothing) up | put the clothing on a hanger |
| pick up after (someone) | clean and organize the messes that person makes |
| throw out / throw away | put something in the garbage |
| heat up / warm up | put something on the stove or in the microwave to make it hot or warm |
| boil over | overflow the pot and spill |
| clean up wipe up | clean a mess clean a mess with a sponge, cloth, napkin, or towel |
| mop up | clean a mess on the floor using a mop |
| chop up / cut up | cut something into small pieces |

Quiz – Lesson 4

Question 1

Please _____ after you're finished using them.

- A look after the scissors
- B pick the scissors up
- C put the scissors away

Question 2

No, I didn't stay in a hotel. A friend of mine _____ for the night.

- A put me up
- B slept in
- C went ahead

Question 3

You should get some rest. We have a long trip tomorrow and you don't want to _____ while driving.

- A nod off
- B sleep over
- C wake up

Question 4

I let my kids _____ until midnight so they could see the fireworks on New Year's.

- A get up
- B hang up
- C stay up

Question 5

I can't find anyone to _____ my dogs while I'm on vacation.

- A lock out
- B look after
- C put away

Question 6

I just spilled some soda on the table - can you hand me a paper towel to _____?

- A chop it up
- B heat it up
- C wipe it up

Question 7

The eggs that were in the fridge went bad, so I _____.

- A boiled them over
- B crashed with them
- C threw them away

Question 8

My early-morning yoga class was cancelled, so I'm planning to _____ tomorrow.

- A doze off
- B sleep in
- C stay up

Question 9

_____ and eat the last piece of pizza - I don't want it.

- A Get up
- B Go ahead
- C Warm up

Question 10

Last Saturday I had to finish up some work. I don't have a key to the office, but the security guard _____.

- A let me in
- B locked me out
- C put me up

Writing Exercises

1. When was the last time you **stayed over** at someone's house?
2. Do you go to bed early, or do you like to **stay up** late?
3. Have you ever been **locked out** of your house or car? What did you do?
(or: What would you do if you were locked out?)
4. Do you **get up** immediately when you **wake up**... or do you stay in bed a little longer?
5. How organized are you? Do you normally **put everything away** and **hang up** all your clothes?
6. What was the last thing you **threw out**?
7. What was the last mess you **cleaned up**?

Want to get corrections? [E-mail me](#) your answers!

Answers – Quiz 4

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. C | 6. C |
| 2. A | 7. C |
| 3. A | 8. B |
| 4. C | 9. B |
| 5. B | 10. A |

Lesson 5:

Phrasal Verbs for Health & Sports

Read and listen to the dialog.

Christine: Hi Pamela, it's Christine. I'm heading to the gym, do you wanna join me?

Pamela: Sorry, Christine – I don't **feel up to** it today. I think I'm **coming down with** a cold. My nose is so **stuffed up** I can't breathe.

Christine: Oh no! And you have a big volleyball game tomorrow, don't you?

Pamela: Actually it's a **tryout** for the state team. I'll be all right. I'm surprised you're so into **working out** these days – you never used to be the athletic type.

Christine: Well, I have *way* more energy now that I've **cut down on** carbs. It was especially hard to **give up** pizza and pasta, but I know it'll **pay off** in the long run. I've already lost ten pounds.

Pamela: That's great! Do you think you'll **take up** a sport?

Christine: I'm interested in martial arts, but... did I tell you about the time I went to a karate class?

Pamela: No, I don't think so. What happened?

Christine: It was intense. There was no **warm-up**; the instructor just jumped right into some really difficult moves, and he wouldn't let us drink any water. I felt like I was gonna **throw up**. One guy said he had **passed out** during his first class.

Pamela: Yikes – maybe it's better to **stick to** the gym for now.

Christine: Yeah, I'm only doing light workouts to stay in shape – I don't want to **bulk up**. Listen, I've gotta run – but I hope you feel better soon! Try to **rest up for** tomorrow.

Explanation

Christine invites Pamela to the gym, but Pamela says “I don’t feel up to it today.” If you **don’t feel up to** doing something, it means you are sick and you don’t feel well enough to do the activity.

Pamela is **coming down with** a cold – that means she is starting to get sick. The phrasal verb “coming down with” is typically used with temporary illnesses like a cold or the flu. We don’t use coming down with in the case of permanent conditions like AIDS or for major diseases like cancer.

She says her nose is **stuffed up** – describing your nose as **stuffed up** or **blocked up** means that it is full of mucus, causing difficulty breathing.

It’s a shame that Pamela is sick, because tomorrow she is going to **try out for** the state volleyball team. To **try out for** a sports team means to demonstrate your ability in the hope that you will be accepted onto the team. We can also use **tryout** – one word – as a noun to describe this event, for example: “The tryouts are scheduled for Saturday.”

Pamela is surprised that Christine is so interested in **working out** nowadays. The phrasal verb **work out** means to exercise. Again, we can use **workout** – one word – as a noun to describe a single exercise session, for example: “That was a great workout yesterday!”

Christine says she has more energy now that she has **cut down on** carbs (short for carbohydrates like bread, rice, and pasta). To **cut down on** or **cut back on** something is to reduce it. These phrasal verbs are often used to describe spending less money or eating less food.

Christine had to **give up** pizza and pasta – to **give something up** means to stop having it or stop using it. But she knows her new diet will **pay off** in the long run – the phrasal verb **pay off** means to have a positive result, especially when you have worked hard or made some sacrifice to get the benefit. For example – “All those hours of studying paid off, because I got the highest test grade in the class.”

Pamela asks if Christine is going to **take up** a sport. To take up a hobby or activity means to start doing it. Christine then talks about the karate class she went to. There was no **warm-up** – to warm up means to do light or easy exercise in preparation for more intense exercise later. There’s another phrasal verb used for doing light/easy exercise *after* a workout – that’s **cool down**.

The karate class was so intense that Pamela felt like she was going to **throw up** (vomit). One guy told her that he had **passed out** during his first class. To **pass out** or **black out** is to lose consciousness or faint. Another word for losing consciousness is to be **knocked out** – but this is when you lose consciousness because something hit your head.

Pamela suggests that it would be better for Christine to **stick to** the gym. The phrasal verbs **stick to** and **stick with** mean continue doing something. Christine says she’s only working out to stay in shape (stay in good physical condition), but she doesn’t want to **bulk up** – this phrasal verb means to develop big muscles.

At the end of the conversation, Christine tells Pamela to **rest up for** her tryout tomorrow. To **rest up for** something simply means to get lots of rest in preparation for something that will require your energy in the future.

You’ve now learned 17 phrasal verbs in the context of a conversation about health and sports. Take the quiz and try the writing exercises – and come back tomorrow for Lesson 6.

| Phrasal Verb | Definition |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| not feel up to (doing something) | not be feeling well enough to participate in the activity |
| come down with (a cold / the flu) | start to get sick – used for temporary illnesses |
| stuffed up / blocked up | nose is full of mucus so that you can’t breathe |
| try out for (a team) | demonstrate your abilities in hopes of being accepted onto the team |
| work out | exercise |
| cut down on / cut back on | reduce |
| give up (something) | stop having or using something |
| pay off | have a positive result, especially when you have worked hard or made a sacrifice to get the benefit |
| take up (an activity) | start doing it |

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| warm up | do light / easy exercise in preparation for more intense exercise later |
| cool down | do light / easy exercise <i>after</i> a workout |
| throw up | vomit |
| pass out / black out | lose consciousness, faint |
| (be) knocked out | lose consciousness because something hit your head |
| stick to / stick with | continue doing something |
| bulk up | develop big muscles |
| rest up for (something) | get lots of rest in preparation for something that will require your energy in the future |

Quiz – Lesson 5

Question 1

My daughter is planning to _____ a very competitive gymnastics team.

- A bulk up
- B come down with
- C try out for

Question 2

I'm not a fitness fanatic, but I do try to _____ three times a week.

- A pay off
- B take up
- C work out

Question 3

If you don't _____ before lifting weights, you could end up hurting yourself.

- A give up
- B stick with
- C warm up

Question 4

We had to get our car professionally cleaned after my son _____ all over the back seat.

- A passed out
- B threw up
- C stuffed up

Question 5

My weight has gone up and down for years. I just can't seem to _____ a diet.

- A stick to
- B feel up to
- C cut down on

Question 6

You shouldn't go to work if you're _____ a cold - you'll probably give it to your coworkers.

- A coming down with
- B passing out
- C stuffing up

Question 7

If you exercise hard but don't drink enough water, you might _____.

- A bulk up
- B pass out
- C take up

Question 8

Do you _____ going for a walk, or is your stomach still hurting?

- A feel up to
- B try out for
- C warm up

Question 9

I could never be a vegetarian. It'd be impossible for me to _____ hamburgers.

- A come down with
- B give up
- C throw up

Question 10

My daily stretching routine is _____ - I'm definitely more flexible now.

- A knocking out
- B paying off
- C resting up

Writing Exercises

1. How often do you **work out**? What time of day/week do you prefer to work out?
2. What's one food you need to **cut down on**?
3. What's one food you love so much, you could never **give it up**?
4. Describe a time when you had to work hard or make a sacrifice, but it **paid off** in the end.
5. When was the last time you **threw up**?
6. Have you ever **passed out**? (or seen someone else pass out?)
7. What's an activity that you find it difficult to **stick to**?

Answers – Quiz 5

1. C
2. C
3. C
4. B
5. A
6. A
7. B
8. A
9. B
10. B

Lesson 6:

Phrasal Verbs for School & Studying

Carla: Shirley, could you **look over** this essay before I **turn it in**?

Shirley: Sure, not a problem.

Carla: Thanks a million. I can't afford to fail this Japanese history class – my parents will kill me if I **flunk out**.

Shirley: It's been really hard to **keep up** with all the reading required for this course. I **fell behind** at the beginning of the semester, but then I got more organized and managed to **catch up**.

Carla: I'm the opposite – I started off well, but I've been **slacking off** the past six weeks.

Shirley: I noticed you weren't in class yesterday.

Carla: That's because I was **cramming for** my philosophy final. What'd I miss?

Shirley: The teacher **summed up** the topics that'll be on the test – she actually **gave out** a study guide; you can make a copy of mine if you want. I **jotted down** some extra notes on the last page.

Carla: Let me see... hmm... I need to **brush up on** the feudal era – I only **flipped through** that section of the book; I didn't read it in-depth.

Shirley: Well, although she **touched on** that during the review, I got the sense that the exam is going to focus more on modern Japan. She said we should **read up on** the Empire.

Carla: I hope there's nothing like that section on the mid-term where we had to **fill in** all the dates on the timeline. I spent hours memorizing all the historical events, but when I got to the test I just **blanked out**.

Shirley: It happens to the best of us. So... next semester are you going to **sign up for** History of Ancient China?

Carla: Not a chance!

Explanation

Carla asks Shirley to **look over** her essay. To **look something over** means to inspect or examine it. Don't get **look over** confused with **overlook**, which means to ignore or fail to notice something. A related phrasal verb is **check over** – which is to inspect or examine something carefully looking for any errors or problems.

Carla asks Shirley to look over her essay before she **turns it in**. To **turn in** or **hand in** an assignment means to give it to the teacher (or to the boss, if it's a situation at work).

Carla is worried about failing the class because she doesn't want to **flunk out**. The phrasal verb **flunk out** means to fail so many classes that you can't continue at the school, program, or university.

Two other phrasal verbs related to leaving school are **drop out** and **kick out**. You can **drop out** of school for many reasons – it may be bad grades, but it could also be personal problems or simply a loss of interest in your studies. A school or university will **kick you out** (force you to leave) if you do something illegal or against the rules.

Shirley says it has been hard to **keep up** with all the required reading – to **keep up** with something is to accompany its progress or speed. Shirley **fell behind** at the beginning of the semester – that means she made less progress than she needed.

Fortunately, she got more organized and managed to **catch up** – the phrasal verb **catch up** means to return to accompanying the progress or speed successfully. If you make more progress or go faster than normal, the phrasal verb for that is **get ahead**.

Carla says she started the semester well, but she has been **slacking off** recently. To **slack off** means to be lazy and not complete your responsibilities.

She skipped class yesterday because she was **cramming for** her final exam in philosophy – to **cram for** a test or exam means to do a LOT of studying at the last minute.

Shirley says the teacher **summed up** the topics for the upcoming test. To **sum up** means to give a summary. She also **gave out** (distributed) a study guide to help the

students review. Shirley **jotted down** some notes on her study guide. **Jot down** is an informal way to say **write down** – to write something on paper.

As Carla looks over the study guide, she comments that she needs to **brush up on** a particular era of Japanese history. To **brush up on** something means to refresh your memory of a skill or some knowledge – usually something you knew more about in the past, but you have forgotten with time.

Carla says she had only **flipped through** that section of the textbook. To **flip through** a book or magazine means to turn the pages fast, only looking quickly at the information (not reading it slowly or carefully).

The teacher **touched on** that topic during the class. To **touch on** something means to mention it during a speech, meeting, or discussion. However, it probably won't be a major part of the exam. Instead, the teacher suggested that the students **read up on** a different topic. To **read up on** something simply means to study and research it to learn more about it.

Carla mentions an exercise on the mid-term test, in which the students had to **fill in** dates on a timeline. To **fill in** means to complete missing information. She had studied, but during the test she **blanked out**. The phrasal verb **blank out** means to temporarily forget some information. Another idiom for this is “**draw a blank**.”

Be careful not to get **blank out** confused with the phrasal verb **black out** (lose consciousness) that we learned in the last lesson!

Finally, Shirley asks Carla if she's going to **sign up for** a class on the history of ancient China. To **sign up for** a class or activity means to register to participate. Carla replies, “Not a chance!” – this means she is definitely NOT planning to take that course.

That's 22 phrasal verbs related to school and studying. Now try the quiz and the writing exercises – hopefully you won't “blank out” when doing them!

| Phrasal Verb | Definition |
|--|---|
| look (something) over | inspect or examine it |
| check (something) over | inspect or examine it, looking for any problems or errors |
| turn (something) in / hand (something) in | give an assignment to the teacher / boss |
| flunk out | fail so many classes that you can't continue studying in that program, school, or university |
| drop out | leave school and stop studying for any reason |
| be/get kicked out | be forced to leave a school/university because you have done something illegal or against the rules |
| keep up with (something) | accompany its progress or speed |
| fall behind | make less progress than you need to |
| catch up with (something) | return to accompanying the progress/speed after you fell behind in the past |
| get ahead | make more progress or go faster than normal |
| slack off | be lazy and not complete your responsibilities |
| cram for (a test/exam) | study a LOT at the last minute |
| sum up | give a summary |
| give (something) out | distribute to a number of people |
| jot down (informal) write down | write something on paper |
| brush up on (a topic / skill) | refresh your memory of some knowledge – something you knew more about in the past, but you have forgotten over time |
| flip through (a book or magazine) | turn the pages fast, only looking quickly at the information (not reading it slowly or carefully). |
| touch on (a topic) | briefly mention the topic during a speech, meeting, or discussion |
| read up on (a topic) | study and research it |
| fill in (information) | complete missing information |
| blank out draw a blank | temporarily forget some information |
| sign up for (a class / activity) | register to participate in it |

Quiz – Lesson 6

Question 1

I'm _____ Indian culture because I'll be spending a month in Mumbai this year.

- A flipping through
- B reading up on
- C signing up for

Question 2

Many founders of successful companies have _____ of college to work on their businesses.

- A dropped out
- B gotten ahead
- C jotted down

Question 3

If you can't go to the meeting, I'll send you an e-mail _____ the main points afterwards.

- A cramming for
- B giving out
- C summing up

Question 4

I have plenty of time to finish writing this article. I don't have to _____ until the end of the month.

- A catch up with it
- B look it over
- C turn it in

Question 5

I don't know what page the homework is on. I forgot to _____.

- A blank out
- B brush up on it
- C write it down

Question 6

That new restaurant is _____ free samples of their food to help attract customers.

- A dropping out
- B giving out
- C kicking out

Question 7

I thought the president was going to talk about the economy during his speech, but he didn't _____ at all.

- A read up on it
- B slack off
- C touch on it

Question 8

We need to get a tutor for our son. He's finding it hard to _____ with his math class.

- A keep up
- B look over
- C sum up

Question 9

A lot of people _____ at work on Friday afternoons, so nothing productive gets done.

- A cram for
- B fill in
- C slack off

Question 10

Before you rent a car, you need to _____ to make sure there's no existing damage.

- A brush up on it
- B catch up with it
- C check it over

Writing Exercises

1. Do you tend to **fall behind** on your studies/work, or do you always **keep up** (or do you **get ahead**)?
2. What's one topic or skill you would like to **brush up on**?
3. Have you been **reading up on** anything recently?
4. What was the last thing you **signed up for**?
5. What should a person do if they **blank out** during a test, meeting, or presentation? (or in a social situation)
6. What would you do if your son / daughter was starting to **slack off** in their studies?

Want to get corrections? [E-mail me](mailto:espressoenglish@espressoenglish.net) your answers.

Answers – Quiz 6

1. B
2. A
3. C
4. C
5. C
6. B
7. C
8. A
9. C
10. C

Lesson 7:

Phrasal Verbs for Driving

Laura: How was your weekend, Cathy?

Cathy: Oh man, have I got a story for you! John and I decided to **head for** the coast for a little weekend **getaway**. We **set off** after work on Friday and we immediately hit a traffic jam – a truck had **broken down** in the middle of the road and blocked it almost completely

Laura: Ah, tough luck.

Cathy: It took us two hours to get past the truck. And once we did, John got mad because another car **cut us off**. He **sped up** and started honking and tailgating the guy. I told him to **slow down**, but he didn't listen. Next thing you know, there's a police car behind us telling us to **pull over**.

Laura: He should've listened to you when you told him to **chill out**!

Cathy: Seriously. The second John **rolled down** the window, the police officer handed him a ticket for aggressive driving – with a fine of \$200.

Laura: Oh no! What did you do after that?

Cathy: Well, John was ready to **turn around** and go home, but I convinced him to keep going. By the time we **checked in** to the hotel, it was almost midnight.

Laura: So much for a relaxing weekend.

Cathy: Wait, that's not even the end of the story! On the way home, it was raining. The visibility was really poor and our windshield had **fogged up**. Suddenly John saw a piece of metal in the road and swerved to avoid **running over** it – but we **spun out** because of the rain. We **veered off** the road and **crashed into** a tree.

Laura: How scary! Were you both OK?

Cathy: Yeah, it's a good thing we always **buckle up**. But neither of us had our cell phones, so we had to **flag down** another car for help.

Laura: What a nightmare. Was your car totaled?

Cathy: Yeah. Speaking of which – would you be able to give me a ride to work tomorrow?

Laura: Of course. I'll **pick you up** around 7:30.

Explanation

Cathy and John decide to **head for** the coast – to **head for** is to go towards – in the direction of – that destination. They want to have a quick **getaway**. The word “getaway” is the noun form of the phrasal verb **get away**, which means to escape. In this context, to escape the normal routine of daily life and have a small vacation.

Cathy and John **set off** early – **set off** means to begin a trip or journey. But they get stuck in a traffic jam caused by a truck that has **broken down**. If a vehicle or machine **breaks down**, it means it has a mechanical problem and stops functioning.

Later in the trip, another driver **cuts them off**. To **cut someone off**, in the context of driving, means when another car suddenly drives in front of your car, in a quick and dangerous movement.

This made John angry, so he **sped up** to follow the other car. The phrasal verb **speed up** means to go faster, and the opposite is **slow down** – go slower.

A police car then indicated that they should **pull over**. To **pull over** means to drive to the side of the road and stop. John should have listened to Cathy when she told him to **chill out** (to relax). When John **rolled down** the window, the police officer gave him a ticket. **Roll down** and **roll up** are two phrasal verbs used to describe opening and closing the window of a car.

At this point, John was so stressed out that he wanted to **turn around** and go home. To **turn around** means to turn 180 degrees and go back in the opposite direction. But Cathy convinced him to continue, and they **checked in** to their hotel around midnight. **Check in** and **check out** are the phrasal verbs used for entering and leaving a hotel at the beginning and end of your stay there.

While John and Cathy were driving home, it was raining and the windshield had **fogged up**. If a piece of glass **fogs up**, it means that water vapor condenses on it, making it less transparent and more difficult to see.

John tried to avoid **running over** a piece of metal that was on the road. The phrasal verb **run over** is used when a car passes directly over something. Because of the quick turn and the wet road, the car **spun out** – to **spin out** means when a vehicle rotates out of control.

The car then **veered off** the road – to **veer off** means to turn sharply in a different direction. The car **crashed into** a tree. To **crash into** something means to hit it with a violent impact.

Cathy and John weren't injured because they always **buckle up** – that means to put on your seatbelt. Many people say "Everyone buckle up, please" when they enter a car.

Neither of them had their cell phones, so they had to **flag down** another car for help. To **flag down** a car means to stand next to the road and signal for a passing car to stop.

Cathy's car is totaled (damaged beyond repair), so she asks Laura for a ride to work – and Laura offers to **pick her up** tomorrow at 7:30. To **pick someone up** means to take someone in your car and drive them to a place. When you arrive at the destination and the person leaves your car, that is called **dropping the person off**.

You now know 20 phrasal verbs for your next road trip! Try the practice quiz and the writing exercises, and log in tomorrow for Lesson 8.

| Phrasal Verb | Definition |
|---|--|
| head for / head to (a place) | go in the direction of that place |
| get away | escape |
| set off | begin a trip/journey |
| break down | have a mechanical problem and stop functioning |
| cut (someone) off <i>in context of driving</i> | one car to suddenly drive in front of another car, in a quick and dangerous movement |
| speed up | go faster |
| slow down | go slower |
| pull over | drive to the side of the road and stop |
| chill out | relax |
| roll down roll up | open a car window close a car window |

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| turn around | turn 180 degrees and go back in the opposite direction |
| check in / check out | enter and leaving a hotel at the beginning and end of your stay there |
| fog up | when water vapor condenses on a piece of glass, making it less transparent and harder to see |
| run over | when a car passes directly over something |
| spin out | when a vehicle rotates out of control |
| veer off | turn sharply in another direction |
| crash into (something) | hit it with a violent impact |
| buckle up | put on a seatbelt |
| flag down | stand next to the road and signal for a passing car to stop |
| pick (someone) up | take someone in your car and drive them to a destination |
| drop (someone) off | when you reach the destination and the other person leaves your car |

Quiz – Lesson 7

Question 1

It sounds like something's wrong with the engine. We should probably _____ and take a look.

- A pull over
- B break down
- C speed up

Question 2

You missed the exit - you need to _____ and drive back about 2 miles.

- A flag down
- B set off
- C turn around

Question 3

When driving in the snow, you can't make any sudden movements or you might _____.

- A slow down
- B run over
- C spin out

Question 4

I've got a lot of work to do right now, but I might be able to _____ for a few days next month.

- A cut off
- B get away
- C speed up

Question 5

When I need some peace and quiet, I _____ at my mom's house for a few hours.

- A check my kids in
- B drop my kids off
- C head for my kids

Question 6

_____ - the speed limit here is 55 miles an hour, and you're pushing 70.

- A Buckle up
- B Set off
- C Slow down

Question 7

I was so upset when I _____ a cat while driving home from work.

- A chilled out
- B ran over
- C sped up

Question 8

_____ the window, it's starting to rain.

- A Fog up
- B Roll up
- C Pick up

Question 9

We're _____ the mall right now - we should be there in about half an hour.

- A getting away
- B heading to
- C turning around

Question 10

I had to pay \$2000 to fix my car after it _____.

- A broke down
- B rolled down
- C slowed down

Writing Exercises

1. What's the next place you're going to be **heading for**?
2. Has your car ever **broken down**? (Or have you ever had a car accident in which you **ran over** or **crashed into** something?)
3. Do you think it should be illegal for people to drive without **buckling up**?
4. When was the last time you **picked someone up**? Where did you then **drop them off**?
5. If you only had 3 days off from work, what would be your perfect **getaway**?

Want to get corrections? [E-mail me](#) your answers.

Answers – Quiz 7

1. A
2. C
3. C
4. B
5. B
6. C
7. B
8. B
9. B
10. A

Lesson 8:

Phrasal Verbs about Money

Read and listen to the dialog.

Diane: We're going to buy a Christmas gift for our teacher. Would you be able to **chip in**?

Amy: Sure, I'd love to. What's the gift?

Diane: Well, the original idea was to get him that new mp3 player, but I can't find it anywhere – the stores are all **sold out**.

Amy: I'm not surprised – people **snapped them up** as soon as they became available. Here's \$10 – sorry it's not much; I'm just **scraping by** these days.

Diane: Scraping by, huh? Didn't you travel to Europe recently?

Amy: OK, OK – I did **splurge on** a little vacation, but I had to **dip into** my emergency savings to **pay for** it!

Diane: I'm just kidding - \$10 is fine. My husband and I are on a tight budget too. We're trying to **save up for** a house, but we're still **paying off** our student loans, so it's not easy to **set aside** any extra cash.

Amy: Tell me about it. I'll be better off once my cousin **pays back** the \$1000 he owes me. He's been promising to do so since July, but he still hasn't **coughed up** the money.

Diane: Just wait until you have kids – that's when the expenses really start to **add up**. I **shopped around** to find the best prices on baby gear, but it still **came to** about \$5,000 for the first year after my son was born. I think I **shelled out** something like \$900 for diapers alone.

Amy: Wow. Got any money-saving tips for when I have kids someday?

Diane: Don't buy new baby clothes; they tend to be a **rip-off** – think \$40 for an outfit that the baby will outgrow in a matter of weeks. Instead, buy them second-hand – some moms even **give away** their baby's old clothes, so you can get them for free. Don't **skimp on** the crib or car seat though – when it comes to safety, you'll want the

best equipment that money can buy. Finally, whenever there's a sale on baby food, make sure to **stock up**!

Explanation

Diane asks Amy to **chip in** to buy the teacher a Christmas gift. To **chip in** is to contribute a small amount of money towards a collective purchase – when a group of people are going to buy something together.

They wanted to get the teacher a new mp3 player, but the stores are **sold out** of that particular model. The phrasal verb **sell out** simply means that there are no items available at the moment, because they have all been sold to other customers.

Amy comments that people **snapped up** the new mp3 players as soon as they became available. To **snap up** means to buy something quickly. People often **snap up** products that they have been waiting for for a long time – or products that go on sale for a low price.

Amy apologizes for her small contribution of \$10, saying she's just **scraping by**. To **scrape by** means to survive with very little money.

She admits that she did **splurge on** a trip to Europe recently. To **splurge on** something means to spend a lot of money on it – especially on something that is a luxury, not a necessity.

To **pay for** the vacation, she had to **dip into** her emergency savings. We use **pay for** to describe the process of buying an item. **Dip into** is a phrasal verb used when you spend money that you had been saving for a different purpose.

Diane and her husband are trying to **save up for** a house. The phrasal verb **save up** is used to describe saving money to do something specific in the future. You can say **save up for (a noun)** or **save up to (verb)**.

However, they're still **paying off** their student loans. We use the phrasal verb **pay off** to describe the process of paying money that you owe in a series of payments over time. This makes it hard to **set aside** (reserve) extra money.

Amy is waiting for her cousin to **pay her back** \$1000. To **pay (someone) back** is to return (give back) to the person money that they had lent you temporarily. He still hasn't **coughed up** the money – the phrasal verb **cough up** means to pay money that you don't want to pay.

Diane says that expenses start to **add up** (accumulate into a large total) when you have kids. She **shopped around** to find the best prices on baby gear (equipment/supplies) – to **shop around** means to check or visit various stores and compare their prices. But it still **came to** (totaled) about \$5,000 for her son's first year. You often hear the phrasal verb **come to** when you buy multiple items at a store – the cashier might say, "That comes to \$48.50."

Diane says she **shelled out** \$900 for her baby's diapers. To **shell out** (\$_____) is an expression that means to pay a large amount of money.

She advises Amy not to buy new baby clothes because they are a **rip-off**. This means they are much more expensive than they should be. You can also use the phrasal verb **rip (someone) off**, meaning to charge the customer more money than the product is really worth.

Instead, she suggests buying used baby clothes – some mothers even **give them away**. To **give something away** means to give it for free. Diane warns Amy not to **skimp on** safety equipment for the baby. To **skimp on** something is to pay too little, or use too little. When you **skimp on** something, you usually get a product or result of bad quality.

Diane's last piece of advice is to **stock up on** baby food whenever it's on sale. To **stock up on (something)** means to buy a lot of it, so you have a supply that you can use for a long time without needing to buy more.

You've learned **20** phrasal verbs for talking about money. Now take the practice quiz and try the writing exercises – and log in tomorrow for Lesson 9.

| Phrasal Verb | Definition |
|---|--|
| chip in | contribute a small amount of money towards a collective purchase |
| sold out | there are no more items available at the moment, because they have all been sold to other customers |
| snap up | buy something quickly |
| scrape by | survive with very little money |
| splurge on | spend a lot of money on something – especially a luxury, not a necessity |
| pay for (something) | buy the item |
| dip into (savings) | spend money that you had been saving for a different purpose |
| save up for (noun) save up to (verb) | save money to do something specific in the future |
| pay off (loans) | pay money you owe in a series of payments over time |
| set aside | reserve |
| pay (someone) back | give the person money that they lent you temporarily |
| cough up (money) | pay money that you don't want to pay |
| add up | accumulate into a large total |
| shop around | check or visit various stores and compare their prices |
| come to | total |
| shell out (\$_____) | spend a large amount of money |
| rip-off rip (someone) off | something that is more expensive than it should be charge someone more than the product is really worth |
| give (something) away | give it for free |
| skimp on (something) | use or spend too little on that object (usually with poor-quality results) |
| stock up on (something) | buy a lot of it, so that you have a supply that you can use for a long time without needing to buy more |

Quiz – Lesson 8

Question 1

I always bring my own snacks on a trip so that I don't have to _____ \$10 for a tiny sandwich at the airport.

- A come to
- B scrape by
- C shell out

Question 2

Don't just buy the first computer you see - if you _____ you might be able to find a better price on the same model.

- A rip off
- B save up
- C shop around

Question 3

Could you lend me \$20 for lunch? I'll _____ tomorrow.

- A cough up the money
- B pay you back
- C splurge on you

Question 4

When I first started my freelance writing career, I didn't make much - but it was enough to _____.

- A dip into
- B give away
- C scrape by

Question 5

My teenage daughter talks on the phone so much that our last cell phone bill _____ \$250 - I made her pay half of it!

- A came to
- B sold out
- C snapped up

Question 6

I got a bonus at work this month, so I _____ a new pair of designer shoes.

- A skimped on
- B splurged on
- C stocked up on

Question 7

We're teaching our son financial responsibility early - if he wants a video game, he has to _____ his allowance to buy it himself.

- A add up
- B save up
- C sell out

Question 8

Everyone in the family _____ to buy Grandma a new television.

- A chipped in
- B paid off
- C shopped around

Question 9

I had to _____ \$200 to change my flight when I decided to delay my trip for a day.

- A cough up
- B pay back
- C set aside

Question 10

I'm not willing to _____ decorations for the wedding - I want it to be beautiful, and I don't care how much it costs.

- A pay for
- B rip off
- C skimp on

Writing Exercises

1. What was the last thing you **splurged on**?
2. Have you ever had to **dip into** your savings? What was it for? (If not, what is something you would be willing to dip into your savings for?)
3. Are you currently **saving up** for anything? (Or: What was the last thing you **saved up for**?)
4. What would you do if a friend owed you money, but kept forgetting to **pay you back**?
5. Do you normally **shop around** before buying things, or do you think this is a waste of time?
6. Have you ever bought something that was a **rip-off**?
7. Have you **stocked up on** anything recently?

Want to get corrections? [E-mail me](mailto:espressoenglish@espressoenglish.net) your answers.

Answers – Quiz 8

1. C
2. C
3. B
4. C
5. A
6. B
7. B
8. A
9. A
10. C

Lesson 9:

Phrasal Verbs at Work

Read and listen to the dialog. (Martha is Wendy's supervisor at the company)

Wendy: Martha, do you have a few minutes? There's something I'd like to **run by** you.

Martha: Sure, go ahead.

Wendy: As you know, Barry was in a serious car accident and we need someone to **fill in for** him until he recovers. The first person who comes to mind is Dana – what do you think?

Martha: She would be excellent, but I doubt she can **take on** any more work right now. If she was asked to do Barry's tasks as well, she could **burn out**.

Wendy: My second choice is Simon – I'd have to **fill him in** on the procedures because it's not his area, but he tends to **pick things up** quickly.

Martha: Yes, but his work doesn't always **measure up**. Remember when that big deal with the steel supplier **fell through**? That was due to mistakes in Simon's reports.

Wendy: Hmm. Well, you've **shot down** all my suggestions. I don't know anyone else who's qualified. And to be honest, we're all overworked – we've all been **slaving away** ever since the directors **laid off** half our department.

Martha: Here's an idea – let's **draw up** a plan to divide Barry's essential tasks between 5 or 6 people, so no one has to bear the full burden alone. Everyone will just have to **step up** their efforts for the time being. I'd like to monitor everyone's progress to make sure nothing falls through the cracks, though.

(Fall through the cracks = Be overlooked or forgotten)

Wendy: OK – I'll **come up with** a proposal this afternoon, and we can **talk it over** tomorrow morning.

Martha: Actually, I'm completely **tied up** tomorrow morning; I'm giving a training session from seven till noon.

Wendy: Over lunch then? We really need to **nail this down** as soon as possible, otherwise we'll fall even further behind.

Martha: Uh, we can **pencil in** a lunch meeting, but I'm supposed to be seeing some visitors from Korea and they could show up anytime – so I might be called away.

Wendy: All right – why don't I just **carry out** the plan and **report back** on the results later?

Martha: That'd probably be easiest. Like you said – we're all overworked!

Explanation

Wendy says she has something to **run by** Martha. To **run (something) by (someone)** means to present an idea and get the other person's opinion or approval.

One of their co-workers, Barry, was in an accident and they need someone to **fill in for** him. The phrasal verb **fill in for (someone)** means to do another person's work temporarily, because they are away or unable to do it themselves.

Wendy suggests Dana, but Martha says that Dana can't **take on** any more work. To **take (something) on** in this context means to accept the work, project, or responsibility. If Dana was given too much work, she could **burn out** – that means to become completely exhausted due to stress and overwork.

The next option is Simon. He works in a different area, so Wendy would need to **fill him in on** the procedures. To **fill (someone) in on** something means to give the person essential information on that topic.

This phrasal verb is often used when one person was not present, and later needs to receive the information from others: "I missed the meeting this morning; could you **fill me in**?" – that means, "Could you tell me what was discussed at the meeting?"

Careful not to get this phrasal verb confused with **fill in for (someone)**, which we learned earlier!

Simon usually **picks things up** quickly. To **pick up (knowledge or a skill)** means to learn it.

However, Martha comments that his work doesn't always **measure up**. If something **does not measure up**, it means it doesn't have the necessary quality to meet a standard or expectation.

Simon's careless work caused a potential deal with a supplier to **fall through**. If a plan, project, deal, or agreement **falls through**, it means it fails before it is finalized or implemented.

Wendy says that Martha has **shot down** all her suggestions. To **shoot down** an idea, theory, suggestion, or proposal means to criticize it or say it won't be successful.

Everyone in the company has been **slaving away**. To **slave away** means to work very hard – often with the connotation of difficult work that isn't well-compensated or recognized.

The staff has been working hard ever since the directors **laid off** many people in the department. To **lay (someone) off** means to fire the person, to remove the person from their job.

Martha suggests **drawing up** a plan to divide Barry's work among various colleagues. The phrasal verb **draw up** means to prepare a document, agreement, contract, plan, or proposal. She says everyone needs to **step up** their efforts for the moment – to **step up (something)** means to increase it.

Wendy promises to **come up with** (invent, create, or develop) a proposal and **talk it over** (discuss it) with Martha the next morning. But Martha will be **tied up** – busy or occupied.

Wendy pressures Martha to meet over lunch, because they really need to **nail this down**. To **nail (something) down** means to confirm or finalize it. Martha says they can **pencil in** a meeting, but it might be interrupted by visitors from Korea. The phrasal verb **pencil in** means to tentatively schedule something on your calendar, understanding that it might change.

Finally, Wendy says she'll just **carry out** (implement) the plan and **report back** on the results. To **report back on (something)** means to give information and updates to someone who previously asked for it.

You now know **20** phrasal verbs you can use at work. Go ahead and do the practice quiz and the writing exercises – and I'll talk to you tomorrow in Lesson 10.

| Phrasal Verb | Definition |
|--|--|
| run (something) by (someone) | present an idea and get the other person's opinion or approval |
| fill in for (someone) | do another person's work temporarily, because they are away or unable to do it themselves |
| take on (work) | accept the work, project, or responsibility |
| burn out | become completely exhausted due to stress and overwork |
| fill (someone) in on (something) | give the person essential information about the topic (especially when they were previously absent) |
| pick up (a skill / knowledge) | learn it |
| not measure up | not have the necessary quality to meet a standard |
| fall through | when a plan, project, deal, or agreement fails before it is finalized or implemented |
| shoot down (an idea, suggestion, proposal) | criticize it or say it won't be successful |
| slave away | work very hard – often with the connotation of difficult work that is not well-compensated or recognized |
| lay (someone) off | fire the person; remove the person from their job |
| draw up | prepare a document, agreement, contract, plan, or proposal |
| step up (something) | increase it |
| come up with | invent, create, or develop |
| talk (something) over | discuss it |
| be tied up | be busy or occupied with another commitment |
| nail (something) down | confirm or finalize it |
| pencil in (a meeting or appointment) | tentatively schedule something on your calendar, recognizing that it might change |
| carry out (a plan) | implement it |
| report back on (something) | give information to someone who previously asked for it |

Quiz: Lesson 9

Question 1

Most of the candidates didn't _____ - they didn't have the experience or qualifications needed for the job.

- A measure up
- B report back
- C slave away

Question 2

Our plan to build a new factory _____ because the property was in an environmentally-protected area.

- A burned out
- B fell through
- C shot down

Question 3

I was _____ three months ago, and I haven't been able to find work since.

- A laid off
- B nailed down
- C tied up

Question 4

Gina _____ a great idea for motivating our employees - they can earn extra vacation days if they meet certain targets.

- A came up with
- B stepped up
- C took on

Question 5

I joined the company as an intern and _____ for a whole year before being promoted.

- A carried out
- B didn't measure up
- C slaved away

Question 6

Frank is still out of town, but I'll send him an e-mail to _____ on what's been happening.

- A fill him in
- B pick him up
- C run it by him

Question 7

We work with a lot of German clients, so I've _____ a few basic phrases of the language.

- A drawn up
- B picked up
- C taken on

Question 8

I'd like you to analyze our competitors' latest marketing strategies and _____ to me next week.

- A come up with
- B fall through
- C report back

Question 9

Our next conference might be in Israel, Russia, or France. It's not _____ yet.

- A nailed down
- B penciled in
- C shot down

Question 10

I'll have my lawyer _____ a contract and send it to you for review.

- A carry out
- B draw up
- C run by

Writing Exercises

1. What was the last project you **took on**?
2. Have you ever been **burned out**? What did you do?
3. Describe a time when one of your plans or projects **fell through**.
4. What was the last good idea you **came up with**?
5. Describe a situation or problem you've recently **talked over** with a colleague.
6. Do you have anything **penciled in** on your schedule? What about something that's definitely **nailed down**?

Want to get corrections? [E-mail me](#) your answers.

Answers – Quiz 9

1. A
2. B
3. A
4. A
5. C
6. A
7. B
8. C
9. A
10. B

Lesson 10:

Phrasal Verbs for Computers

Read and listen to the dialog. (Isabelle is Julia's mother)

Isabelle: Honey, could you help me with a computer problem? I'm trying to **print out** a flyer for our book club, and it's not working.

Julia: Silly question – is the printer **plugged in**?

Isabelle: Yes, and I even tried turning it off and back on, but it didn't help.

Julia: And is the printer **hooked up** to the computer?

Isabelle: Um, I think so. This is a new printer; your brother just **set it up** for me yesterday. There's an error message that **pops up** whenever I click "print."

Julia: Let me have a look – oh, we just need to install some updates. Click here and let's wait for it to finish.

(15 minutes later)

Isabelle: This is sure taking a while.

Julia: Uh-oh, it looks like it **locked up**. We need to **shut down** the computer and restart it.

Isabelle: Ah. Didn't you also have some kind of computer problem recently?

Julia: Yeah, someone **hacked into** my laptop and erased all the data. But luckily I had a **backup** so I didn't lose anything.

Isabelle: OK, it's finished **booting up**. I'll just open the document and click here to print – aha! Success! Oh – Julia, while you're here, could you help me buy a pair of boots online? I saved them in my shopping cart – let me **log in** to the website to show you.

Julia: There are two pairs of boots here – do you want to buy both?

Isabelle: Well, I'm debating between them. The pictures are really small, though, so I can't get a good look.

Julia: Just click on the picture to **zoom in**.

Isabelle: Oh... I'll take this pair.

Julia: All right, then click "**check out**." Now you need to **type in** your address and credit card number... then **scroll down** and click "Buy now."

Isabelle: Uh-oh – I **messed up**. It's giving me another error message.

Julia: No worries, you just forgot to choose a shipping method. Just click here – and you're done!

Isabelle: Thanks, sweetie – I knew I could **count on** you!

Explanation

Isabelle wants to **print out** a flyer for her book club. The phrasal verb **print out** simply means to transfer a document or photo from a computer to a piece of paper (using a printer).

The first question Julia asks is if the printer is **plugged in** – that means connected to the source of electricity. (The opposite of "plugged in" is not "plugged out" as you might imagine – it's "unplugged.") She also asks if the printer is **hooked up to** the computer – this means connected to the computer.

Isabelle says that Julia's brother **set up** the new printer yesterday. The phrasal verb **set up** means to assemble, install, and put in place so that it is functional.

But when Isabelle tries to print out the flyer, an error message **pops up**. To **pop up** means to appear suddenly and/or unexpectedly. When you're on the internet, it's common for advertisements to **pop up**.

They need to install some updates, but the computer **locks up** in the middle of the process. If a computer **locks up**, it means the computer stops responding and the screen freezes (stops moving) so that you can't move the mouse or type anything.

The only solution is to **shut down** the computer and restart it. To **shut down** a computer or another machine means to turn it off.

Julia mentions that someone recently **hacked into** her computer. To **hack into** is to gain access to a computer, system, or database illegally or without authorization.

The hacker erased all the data on Julia's laptop, but fortunately she had a **backup** of her files. To **back up** data means to make an electronic copy of it, to be kept in reserve in case there's an emergency and the original data is lost. The verb for this action is two words, and the noun, which refers to the copy, is one word.

When the computer finishes **booting up**, Isabelle successfully prints out her document. To **boot up** means to turn a computer on and start operating it. **Boot up** and **shut down** are opposites.

Isabelle also needs help buying a pair of boots at an online store. First, she **logs in** to the website – she accesses it with a password. The opposite of **log in** is **log out**.

There are also two phrasal verbs **log on** and **log off** – these are usually used when accessing a system, network, or the internet in general. **Log in / log out** usually refer to password-protected areas of specific websites. However, they are often used interchangeably.

To see the pictures better, Julia teaches Isabelle how to **zoom in**. The phrasal verb **zoom in** means to magnify an image. The opposite is **zoom out**. Both these phrasal verbs are also used with cameras, when you adjust the camera to view the image from closer or farther away.

After choosing a pair of boots, Isabelle needs to **check out**. This phrasal verb is used for the process of finalizing and paying for your purchase – in both online and offline shopping.

She needs to **type in** her address and credit card number. The verb **type** means to write on a computer using the keyboard – so **type in** means to use the keyboard to write information in a particular space on the screen.

Julia then tells her to **scroll down** – this means to move down on the page. The opposite is **scroll up**.

Isabelle says she **messed up** because she got another error message – to **mess up** or **screw up** means to make a mistake. Both of these phrasal verbs are used for mistakes in general, not only for computers. **Screw up** is a little “stronger” and may not be OK in a professional context.

But Julia helps her mom finish the purchase successfully, and Isabelle says “I knew I could **count on** you!” To **count on (someone)** means to depend on that person.

That’s 16 phrasal verbs about computers – now scroll down to do the exercises. If you mess up, I’ll send you corrections! Log in tomorrow for Lesson 11.

| Phrasal Verb | Definition |
|------------------------|---|
| print (something) out | transfer a document or photo from a computer to a piece of paper (using a printer) |
| plug (something) in | connect something to a source of electricity (opposite: unplug) |
| hook (something) up to | connect one machine to another |
| set (something) up | assemble, install, and put it in place |
| pop up | appear suddenly and/or unexpectedly |
| lock up | when a computer stops responding and the screen freezes, so you can’t move the mouse or type anything |
| shut down | close all the programs and turn the computer off |
| boot up | turn the computer on and start operating it |
| log in / log out | access/leave a website with a password |
| log on / log off | access/leave a system, network, or the internet in general |
| zoom in | magnify an image (see it from a closer point) |
| zoom out | see an image from farther away (a bigger distance) |
| check out | finalize and pay for your purchase (in both online and offline shopping) |
| type in (information) | use the computer keyboard to write information in a particular space on the screen |
| scroll down | move down on the page |
| scroll up | move up on the page |
| mess up / screw up | make a mistake |
| count on (someone) | depend on the person |

Quiz – Lesson 10

Question 1

After you finish your online banking, you should always _____ of your account for security reasons.

- A lock up
- B log out
- C shut down

Question 2

I have an old computer. It takes forever to _____.

- A boot up
- B scroll down
- C type in

Question 3

My internet provider has excellent customer service. You can always _____ them to solve the problem.

- A count on
- B hook up to
- C set up

Question 4

If your computer _____ frequently, it might have a virus.

- A locks up
- B prints out
- C zooms in

Question 5

I need a place to _____ my laptop - I only have 10 minutes of battery life left.

- A log on
- B plug in
- C screw up

Question 6

Can we _____ these photos in color?

- A print out
- B scroll up
- C zoom out

Question 7

My dad's good with computers. He'll help you _____ your wireless network.

- A check out
- B count on
- C set up

Question 8

Oops - I must have _____ during the installation, because the program won't open.

- A booted up
- B messed up
- C popped up

Question 9

Make sure the Caps Lock is off when you _____ your password.

- A print out

B scroll down

C type in

Question 10

_____ to the top of the page - I want to read the first paragraph of this article again.

A Hook up

B Lock up

C Scroll up

Writing Exercises

1. What was the last thing you **printed out**?
2. Can you **set up** a new computer by yourself, or do you need help?
3. Has your computer ever **locked up**? What were you working on at the time?
4. How long does it take your computer to **boot up**?
5. Describe a time you **messed up** (it doesn't have to be computer-related).
6. Who is one person you can **count on**? How do you know he or she is reliable?

Want to get corrections? [E-mail me](mailto:shayna@espressoenglish.net) your answers.

Answers – Quiz 10

1. B
2. A
3. A
4. A
5. B
6. A
7. C
8. B
9. C
10. C

Lesson 11: Phrasal Verbs for Travel

Read and listen to the dialog. Pamela is moving to New York City, and she's staying with her friend Heather temporarily until she can find her own apartment.

Heather: Hi, Pamela! How was your trip?

Pamela: It was nice; my whole family came to the airport to **see me off**! Thanks for letting me stay with you until I can find my own place.

Heather: It's my pleasure. I can't wait to **show you around** New York. I have to work today, but I'm **taking the day off** tomorrow so that we can **hang out**.

Pamela: Sounds good – I'll just look around the city on my own today. Do you have a map I can borrow?

Heather: Here you go. You should probably **stay away from** the South Bronx, but all of the other neighborhoods are pretty safe.

Pamela: How can I **get to** Central Park?

Heather: Just **get on** the 7 train and take it all the way to the last stop – Times Square. Then switch to the 1 train and **get off** at 59th Street-Columbus Circle.

Pamela: Oh, I definitely want to **check out** Times Square, too.

Heather: Here's a spare key – I should be home by 6:30 or so. Have fun!

At 8 PM:

Pamela: Wow, you're home late.

Heather: Yeah, I was **held up** by a subway problem – apparently there was a fire on the tracks and everyone had to take a bus instead. So, how was your day?

Pamela: I **wandered around** Central Park for a while, just people-watching and enjoying the fresh air. I wanted to hit the Guggenheim Museum, but it **turns out** they're closed on Thursdays. So I **ended up** going to 5th Avenue and **trying on** a whole bunch of expensive clothes just for kicks.

Heather: Did you buy anything?

Pamela: I wish!

Heather: Well, I don't know about you, but I'm starving. There's this upscale Italian restaurant I've been wanting to try – let's go there for dinner. My treat.

Pamela: OK. Do I need to **dress up** or anything? Maybe I should have bought one of those designer outfits after all.

Heather: No, no, what you're wearing is fine.

Explanation

Pamela is moving to New York, and her whole family went to the airport to **see her off**. To **see (someone) off** means to go to the point of departure to say goodbye to that person.

Heather is excited to **show Pamela around** New York. To **show (someone) around** means to take the person to various places, giving them a little "tour" of the area.

Heather says, "I'm **taking the day off** tomorrow." If you **take (time) off**, it means you decide not to go to work during that period – you are using personal vacation time.

Heather's taking a day off so that she and Pamela can **hang out** – the phrasal verb **hang out** means to spend time in a relaxed, informal way. You can have two or more people **hanging out with** each other (spending time together) or you can **hang out** alone, for example, in a café or at the library.

Heather gives Pamela a map and tells her to **stay away from** the South Bronx because it's not a safe neighborhood. To **stay away from** something means to keep a large distance from that area or object.

Pamela asks, "How can I **get to** Central Park?" The phrasal verb **get to** means "arrive at." It is frequently used when asking for directions.

Heather tells her to **get on** the 7 train, switch to the 1 train, and then **get off** at 59th Street. We use the phrasal verbs **get on** and **get off** to describe entering and leaving trains and buses. With cars and taxis, use **get into** and **get out of** instead.

Pamela says she wants to **check out** Times Square. In this case, **check out** means to see or visit. So far in this course, you've learned 3 different meanings for **check out**:

1. To leave a hotel
2. To finalize and pay for a purchase
3. To see or visit

You'll know which definition is the correct one in a particular sentence from the context.

Later that night, Heather gets home late because she was **held up** by a subway problem. To be or get **held up** means to be delayed by an external circumstance (in other words, it wasn't your fault).

Pamela **wandered around** Central Park for a while. To **wander around** means to walk slowly around an area, without a specific destination. She wanted to visit a museum, but it **turned out** to be closed – so she **ended up** going to 5th Avenue.

Both **turn out** and **end up** refer to the final result of plans or situations that changed and had a different result from what was expected. The difference is that **end up** is typically used when the subject is a person:

- “We had planned to stay for just a week, but we **ended up** staying for a month.”

Turn out is typically used when the subject is not a person:

- “New York **turned out** to be too expensive for me to live there, so I moved to New Jersey.”

In the shops on 5th Avenue, Pamela **tried on** expensive clothes, but didn't buy any. The phrasal verb **try on** means to put on clothing temporarily in a store to see if you like it and if it's the right size. The place in the store where you do this is called the **try-on room**.

Heather and Pamela decide to go out for dinner at an upscale (expensive, for rich people) restaurant. Pamela asks if she needs to **dress up** – that means wear formal

or fancy clothes, clothing that is nicer than what you normally wear in day to day life. But Heather tells her she looks just fine.

You've learned **14** new phrasal verbs for travel. Take the quiz and try the writing exercises – and log in tomorrow for Lesson 12.

| Phrasal Verb | Definition |
|-----------------------|---|
| see (someone) off | go to the point of departure to say goodbye to that person |
| show (someone) around | take the person to various places, giving them a little "tour" of the area |
| take (time) off | decide not to go to work during that period, using personal vacation time |
| hang out | spend time in a relaxed, informal way |
| stay away from | keep a large distance |
| get to | arrive at |
| get on / get off | enter/leave a bus or train |
| get into / get out of | enter/leave a car or taxi |
| check out | visit or see |
| be/get held up | be delayed by an external circumstance |
| wander around | walk slowly around an area, without a specific destination |
| turn out / end up | the final result of a situation that changed and resulted in something different than expected |
| try on | put on clothing temporarily in a store to see if you like it and if it's the right size |
| dress up | wear formal or fancy clothes, clothing that is nicer than what you normally wear in day to day life |

Quiz – Lesson 11

Question 1

You should _____ that beach - the water's polluted.

- A hold up
- B stay away from
- C wander around

Question 2

I _____ the bus at the wrong stop and had to ask for directions.

- A got off
- B took off
- C turned out

Question 3

Wow, you're all _____. Are you going somewhere special?

- A checked out
- B dressed up
- C tried on

Question 4

When I was in college, I _____ to pursue my dream of bicycling across Europe.

- A got out of a semester
- B took a semester off
- C wandered around a semester

Question 5

If you like hiking, you might want to _____ the National Park - it has miles and miles of great trails.

- A check out
- B get into
- C show around

Question 6

When I _____ the temple, they told me I couldn't go in because I was wearing shorts.

- A dressed up
- B got to
- C stayed away from

Question 7

I only wanted to buy a small present for my mother, but everything in the store was so beautiful that I _____ getting gifts for my entire family.

- A checked out
- B ended up
- C saw off

Question 8

The trip took twice as long as usual - we were _____ by heavy traffic.

- A held up
- B hung out
- C taken off

Question 9

When I moved in, my new neighbors offered to _____ the area.

- A get me on
- B see me off
- C show me around

Question 10

When I'm traveling, I prefer to _____ with locals rather than with other tourists.

- A get off
- B hang out
- C turn out

Writing Exercises

1. When was the last time you **took time off** from work? How long was it and what did you do?
2. What's your favorite place (outside of home) to **hang out**, and why?
3. What's one place in your city where you have never been, but you would like to **check out**?
4. Is there anyplace in your city you would tell a tourist to **stay away from**? Why?
5. Describe a time when something **turned out** differently from how you expected.

Want to get corrections? [E-mail me](#) your answers.

Answers – Quiz 11

1. B
2. A
3. B
4. B
5. A
6. B
7. B
8. A
8. C
10. B

Lesson 12:

Phrasal Verbs for Communication

Read and listen to the dialog.

Vanessa: I did the stupidest thing the other day. I'm embarrassed to even talk about it.

Leslie: Haha, come on, **fess up**! What'd you do?

Vanessa: Remember I told you about how my boss always **talks down to** me and treats me like I'm incompetent?

Leslie: Yeah, and I said you should **speak up** – it's not right to treat an employee like that.

Vanessa: Well, I didn't want to cause any problems, so I usually just try to **tune him out**. But yesterday I finally got fed up and **called him out** on it – respectfully, of course. I just **pointed out** that I've been with the company for two years and he doesn't need to **spell out** every single task as if I were a child.

Leslie: Oooh, good for you! How'd he react?

Vanessa: He didn't even let me finish! He **cut me off** and said I was challenging his authority. Then he **rattled off** all his own accomplishments and started **harping on** the importance of new employees needing to respect the company hierarchy.

Leslie: Ugh – so did you keep quiet or **tell him off**?

Vanessa: Before I could say anything, another colleague of mine **butted in** – I thought she was going to **stand up for** me, but she **backed him up** instead! That really stung, because I had **opened up to** her about my frustrations and she had promised to help me out.

Leslie: So... I don't get it. What was the stupid part?

Vanessa: Last night I was at a restaurant with my best friend and I had been **ranting about** my boss for a solid ten minutes when suddenly my friend **blurted out**, "Look behind you!"

Leslie: Let me guess – your boss was right there.

Vanessa: Bingo.

Leslie: How much did he overhear?

Vanessa: Enough to make him furious, although he was trying not to **let on** because he was having dinner with his wife and kids. But I could tell by the look on his face that he's definitely going to **bring up** my "attitude problem" at the next performance review.

Leslie: Ouch. Well, lesson learned – always check your surroundings before you start to vent!

Explanation

Vanessa is hesitant to talk about the stupid thing she did, and Leslie tells her to **fess up**. The phrasal verb **fess up** is an informal way to say "confess" – admit that you did something bad or wrong.

Earlier, Vanessa had told Leslie that her boss **talks down to** her. To **talk down to (someone)** means to talk to them as if they were inferior, stupid, or incompetent. Leslie had encouraged Vanessa to **speak up** – that means to say your opinion about something you believe is wrong, without fear or hesitation.

There's another related phrasal verb, **speak out on/against (an issue)**, which is often used for speaking publicly about controversial issues. **Speak up** is used more for personal conversations or discussions in a small group, and **speak out** is used more for public statements.

Vanessa usually tries to **tune her boss out** – that means to ignore him and pretend she doesn't hear him. But yesterday she got sick and tired of being treated badly, so she finally **called him out** – to **call (someone) out** means to challenge or confront the person, especially about something they are doing wrong.

She **pointed out** that she already has two years' experience in the company. To **point out** means to call attention to a particular fact. She doesn't need her boss to **spell everything out** for her – to **spell (information) out** means to describe or explain it very carefully in a detailed and meticulous way.

Unfortunately, her boss didn't listen – he **cut her off**. In the context of a conversation, to **cut (someone) off** means to interrupt the person in the middle of a sentence. He then **rattled off** his accomplishments – to **rattle off** information means to say a list of things very quickly.

Then he started **harping on** the importance of respect for the company hierarchy. To **harp on** a topic means to emphasize it or say it repeatedly in an annoying way.

Leslie asks, “Did you keep quiet or **tell him off**?” To **tell (someone) off** means to say *exactly* what you think about that person (when you have a negative opinion of them).

But Vanessa didn't have a chance to respond because another colleague **butted in**. To **butt in** means to suddenly enter and interrupt a conversation (often when you are not particularly welcome in that conversation). A rude way of telling someone to stay out of the conversation or situation is to say, “**Butt out!**”

Vanessa had hoped this colleague would **stand up for** her. **Stand up for** or **stick up for** means to defend or support someone or something in the face of opposition. However, the colleague took the boss' side – she **backed him up** – to **back someone up** means to support that person.

Vanessa was disappointed because she had **opened up to** this colleague about her frustrations with the boss. To **open up to (someone)** means to tell them your feelings, especially things that you had previously hidden.

Later that night, Vanessa was **ranting about** her boss to her best friend. To **rant about** something means to complain loudly and angrily. Suddenly, her friend **blurted out**, “Look behind you!” The phrasal verb **blurt out** means to say something quickly and spontaneously, often without thinking.

The boss was furious, but he was trying **not to let on** because he was with his family. **Not let on** means not allowing other people to know about something. It is almost always used in the negative, when someone is trying to hide their emotions or keep some fact secret.

But Vanessa knows the boss will probably **bring up** her attitude at her next performance review. To **bring up (a topic)** means to introduce it into a conversation or discussion.

You now know **20** new phrasal verbs for talking about communication. Go ahead and do the quiz and the writing exercises to practice using them – and log in tomorrow for Lesson 13.

| Phrasal Verb | Definition |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| fess up (<i>informal</i>) | confess; admit you did something bad/wrong |
| talk down to (someone) | talk to the person as if they were inferior, stupid, or incompetent |
| speak up | say your opinion about something you believe is wrong, without fear or hesitation |
| speak out on/against (an issue) | speaking publicly about controversial issues |
| tune (someone / something) out | ignore; pretend not to hear |
| call (someone) out | challenge or confront the person, especially about something they are doing wrong |
| point out | call attention to a particular fact |
| spell (information) out | describe or explain it very carefully in a detailed and meticulous way |
| cut (someone) off | interrupt the person in the middle of a sentence |
| rattle off (information) | say a list of things very quickly |
| harp on (a topic) | emphasize it or say it repeatedly in an annoying way |
| tell (someone) off | say <i>exactly</i> what you think about that person (when you have a negative opinion of them) |
| butt in | suddenly enter and interrupt a conversation (often when you are not particularly welcome in that conversation) |
| stand up for / stick up for (someone) | defend or support someone or something |
| back (someone) up | support the person |
| open up to (someone) | tell them your feelings, especially things that you had previously hidden |
| rant about | complain loudly and angrily |
| blurt out | say something quickly and spontaneously, often without thinking |
| not let on | not allowing other people to know about something |
| bring up (a topic) | introduce it into a conversation or discussion |

Quiz – Lesson 12

Question 1

I knew my boss was lying to the client, but I didn't _____ because I was afraid of losing my job.

- A speak up
- B stand up for him
- C tune out

Question 2

It's annoying when people _____ because they don't think I understand English.

- A cut me off
- B harp on me
- C talk down to me

Question 3

The gym teacher _____ the rules of the game so that all the kids would know how to play it.

- A blurted out
- B spelled out
- C pointed out

Question 4

Steve is really into astronomy - if you can ask him, he can _____ the names of all the constellations.

- A bring up
- B rant about
- C rattle off

Question 5

When my doctor told me my cholesterol levels were high, I _____ and admitted I hadn't stuck to my diet.

- A butted in
- B fessed up
- C spoke out

Question 6

I can't stand people who are always _____ problems, but never offer any solutions.

- A harping on
- B opening up to
- C tuning out

Question 7

We work for an organization that _____ the rights of indigenous people to stay on their ancestral land.

- A brings up
- B calls out
- C stands up for

Question 8

Here comes Sophia - don't _____ that you know about her pregnancy; I don't think it's public knowledge yet.

- A call out
- B let on
- C speak up

Question 9

When I was debating whether or not to buy the product, the salesperson _____ that it would actually save me money in the long run.

- A backed me up
- B pointed out
- C talked down to me

Question 10

I can't concentrate on my work with the noise of the construction outside - it's impossible to _____.

- A cut it off
- B rant about it
- C tune it out

Writing Exercises

1. Describe a time when you had to **fess up** about something you did.
2. Have you ever **stood up for** someone (or had someone stand up for you)?
3. What was the last thing you **ranted about**?
4. Have you ever **blurted out** something that you later wish you hadn't said?
5. Describe a time when you saw something wrong and **spoke up**.
6. Do you know anyone who tends to **harp on** a particular topic?

Want to get corrections? [E-mail me](mailto:shayna@espressoenglish.net) your answers.

Answers – Quiz 12

1. A
2. C
3. B
4. C
5. B
6. A
7. C
8. B
9. B
10. C

Lesson 13:

Phrasal Verbs for Time & Change (Part 1)

Miriam: Hi Jenni, it's Miriam. I'm calling to let you know that there's been a last-minute change in Sam and Ruth's wedding plans.

Jenni: They didn't **call it off**, did they?

Miriam: No, no, nothing like that. Just a date change – it turns out that Sam is starting a new job in August, so they **moved the wedding up** to July 23.

Jenni: **Hold on**, let me check my calendar... it's going to be such a busy summer. I think we can **squeeze in** a trip to Philadelphia in July though.

Miriam: OK, just let me know; I'm keeping track of the guest list. So how are your kids doing? Enjoying their summer vacation so far?

Jenni: More or less. The novelty of not being in school has **worn off** and now they **keep on** telling me they're bored.

Miriam: Haha, been there, done that! I **brought up** four of my own plus my sister's two kids after she **passed away** – and I do remember the summers being challenging.

Jenni: My daughter is perfectly happy to pass the time with a good book. But my boys **take after** their father, they have tons of energy and always need to be entertained.

Miriam: I know it's hard, but try to cherish every moment – they **grow up** so fast! When I **think back on** the days when my children were little, I remember the good times far more than the stress.

Jenni: I'll keep that in mind. So, have you gotten your dress for the wedding yet?

Miriam: No, I've been **putting it off**. I want to lose another five pounds and fit into a smaller size!

Jenni: Haha, I haven't **gotten around to** buying a dress either. Every time I plan to go shopping, something **comes up**. Maybe I'll just wear the one from the last

wedding I was at – it was in a lovely church, but the sermon **dragged on** for over two hours!

Miriam: Wow, I bet even the bride and groom just wanted the pastor to **hurry up** and finish.

Jenni: Yeah – it was exhausting. My kids were getting cranky so we didn't even **stick around** for the reception afterwards.

Miriam: Oh well. Listen, Jenni, I'll let you go – but I'm **looking forward to** seeing you in July!

Jenni: Same here! Take care, Miriam – bye-bye.

Explanation

Miriam calls Jenni to tell her about a change in Sam and Ruth's wedding plans. At first, Jenni asks if they **called it off**. The phrasal verb **call (an event) off** means to cancel it.

But Miriam says it's only a date change – they've **moved it up** from August to July. The phrasal verb **move (an event) up** means to change it to an earlier date. The opposite is to **move (an event) back** – that would mean to change it to a later date, such as September.

Jenni asks Miriam to **hold on** while she checks her calendar. The phrasal verbs **hold on** and **hang on** mean to wait a moment. Jenni will be very busy, but she thinks her family can **squeeze in** a trip. To **squeeze in** or **fit in** means to manage to make a plan or appointment in the middle of a very busy schedule.

Miriam asks about Jenni's kids, who are on summer vacation from school. Jenni says that the novelty of vacation has **worn off** – to **wear off** means its effects have diminished and disappeared over time. Now her kids **keep on** saying that they are bored. To **keep on** doing something means to continue doing that action.

Miriam is an experienced mother – she **brought up** a total of six children. To **bring up** (a child) means to educate and take care of him or her. She had four of her own

kids and adopted her sister's two children after her sister **passed away**. If you say someone **passed away**, it's a polite way to say the person died.

Jenni says that her daughter likes to read, but her sons have a lot of energy - they **take after** their father. If you say someone **takes after** a parent or relative, it means they are similar in personality.

Miriam reminds Jenni that kids **grow up** fast – to **grow up** means to get older and eventually become an adult. When she **thinks back on** the days when her kids were young, she remembers the good times. To **think back on** or **look back on** something means to remember or reflect on something in the past.

Miriam has been **putting off** buying a dress for the wedding because she wants to lose some more weight. To **put off (a task)** means to delay or procrastinate doing it.

Jenni hasn't **gotten around to** shopping for a dress either. To **get around to** doing something means to manage to find time to do it, especially when you are busy or when you have already **put off** (delayed) the task for a while.

Every time Jenni plans to go shopping, something **comes up**. This means that some situation appears that requires her presence or attention, meaning she needs to cancel her other plans.

Jenni talks about the last wedding she attended, where the sermon **dragged on** for more than two hours. If something **drags on**, it means it continues for a long time (and is rather boring or unpleasant).

Miriam comments that the bride and groom (the woman and man getting married) probably wanted the pastor to **hurry up** and finish – the phrasal verb **hurry up** means to go faster.

Because Jenni's kids were getting cranky (upset, annoyed, or in a bad mood), her family didn't **stick around** for the reception after the ceremony. To **stick around** means to stay in a place for some extra time.

At the end of the call, Miriam says she's **looking forward to** seeing Jenni in July. To **look forward to** something means to be happy and excited about an event in the future.

That's 19 phrasal verbs related to time and change – in the next lesson, you'll learn more on this same topic. Go ahead and do the quiz and writing exercises – and log in tomorrow for Lesson 14.

| Phrasal Verb | Definition |
|---|--|
| call (an event) off | cancel it |
| move (an event) up | change it to an earlier date/time |
| move (an event) back | change it to a later date/time |
| hold on / hang on | wait a moment |
| squeeze in / fit in | manage to make plan or appointment in the middle of a very busy schedule |
| wear off | effects have diminished and disappeared over time |
| keep on (doing something) | continue doing that action |
| bring up (a child) | educate, take care of him or her |
| (someone) passed away | the person died |
| (someone) takes after (a parent / relative) | they are similar in personality |
| grow up | get older, a child eventually becoming an adult |
| think back on / look back on (something) | remember or reflect on something in the past |
| put off (a task) | delay or procrastinate doing it |
| get around to (doing something) | manage to find time to do it, especially when you are busy or when you have already put off (delayed) the task for a while |
| "Something came up" | A situation appears that requires your presence or attention, meaning you need to cancel other plans |
| drag on | continue for a long time (and is boring or unpleasant) |
| hurry up | go faster |
| stick around | stay in a place for some extra time |
| look forward to (something) | be happy / excited about an event in the future |

Quiz – Lesson 13

Question 1

My son wants to be a fireman when he _____.

- A brings up
- B grows up
- C hurries up

Question 2

If you _____ for a few minutes after class, I'll answer your question in more detail.

- A drag on
- B put off
- C stick around

Question 3

The product launch didn't go as planned. We had to _____ three months because of last-minute problems in the manufacturing.

- A move it back
- B squeeze it in
- C think back on it

Question 4

I drank a cup of coffee after dinner, and then I couldn't get to sleep until the caffeine high _____.

- A called off
- B moved up
- C wore off

Question 5

You should always set a time limit for meetings, otherwise they tend to _____.

- A drag on
- B keep on
- C hang on

Question 6

This project isn't very high priority - just do it whenever you can _____ it.

- A get around to
- B look forward to
- C take after

Question 7

My ex-girlfriend _____ calling me and begging for another chance, so I finally blocked her number.

- A grew up
- B kept on
- C put off

Question 8

_____ and finish packing - we need to leave for the airport in ten minutes!

- A Come up
- B Hold on
- C Hurry up

Question 9

Brenda won't be at work today - her father _____ just last night and she's taking care of the funeral arrangements.

- A moved back
- B passed away
- C took after

Question 10

Few people signed up for the workshop, so they _____.

- A called it off
- B looked back on it
- C stuck around it

Writing Exercises

Remember to use the phrasal verb in your answer!

1. Do you **take after** your father or mother? (or someone else in your family?)
2. When you were a child, what did you want to be when you **grew up**?
3. What's one task you are currently **putting off**?
4. Describe a time when something **dragged on**.
5. What's one thing you're **looking forward to**?
6. What's one bad habit you **keep on** doing and you wish you could stop?

Want to get corrections? [E-mail me](mailto:shayna@espressoenglish.net) your answers.

Answers – Quiz 13

1. B
2. C
3. A
4. C
5. A
6. A
7. B
8. C
9. B
10. A

Lesson 14:

Phrasal Verbs for Time & Change (Part 2)

Read and listen to the dialog.

Tina: You work for a startup, right, Natalie? What's that like?

(A startup = A new company that is just beginning its operations)

Natalie: It's interesting – but it definitely has its ups and downs. The past year has been horrible and things are only just starting to **turn around**.

Tina: Dare I ask what happened?

Natalie: We were acquired by another company ten months ago, and when the new management **took over**, they changed everything – including **phasing out** some of our most popular products.

Tina: Whoa, I'd imagine that didn't **go over** well with your customers.

Natalie: It didn't. I would often **plow through** over a hundred sales calls in one day without getting a single new customer. The managers thought we were **holding back** – they demanded that we make at least ten sales a day, but it was impossible to **pull that off**.

Tina: So how'd it all **work out**?

Natalie: After six straight months of losses, they finally **caught on** and **switched back** to the way things were being done before.

Tina: And did the sales start to **pick up**?

Natalie: Little by little. Things are **looking up**, but it'll take a while to **bounce back**. A lot of our investors and partners **backed out**, so we're short on cash.

Tina: Good thing the new managers saw the light before the company **went under**.

Natalie: Yeah – and we sure came close. Well, looking on the bright side... at least I can't say my job is boring!

Explanation

The past year at Natalie's company has been horrible, but now things are starting to **turn around**. You learned the phrasal verb **turn around** in the lesson about driving – but another meaning is when a bad situation starts to improve.

Natalie's company was **taken over** by new management. To **take over** means to take control or responsibility. Unfortunately, one of the changes they made was **phasing out** some of the most popular products. To **phase (something) out** means to gradually eliminate it in stages. The opposite, **phase (something) in**, means to introduce or implement something gradually, in stages.

Tina imagines that those changes didn't **go over** well with the customers. To **go over**, in this case, means to be accepted or approved.

Natalie says she often **plowed through** over 100 sales calls without a single success. To **plow through** some work means to do a series of difficult or intensive tasks in a steady and focused manner.

The new managers thought the sales team was **holding back** – the phrasal verb **hold back** means not to use your full effort or ability. They wanted each person to make ten sales a day, which was impossible to **pull off**. To **pull (something) off** means to succeed in doing it despite difficulties and obstacles.

Tina then asked how the situation **worked out**. In this context, the phrasal verb **work out** isn't referring to doing exercise – it means to resolve a problem. Natalie says that the managers **caught on** after they saw the company was steadily losing money. The phrasal verb **catch on** means to finally start to understand or perceive something.

They **switched back** to the way things were being done before the takeover. To **switch back** means to make a change that returns to an earlier status.

Tina asks if sales started to **pick up** as a result. In this context, **pick up** is an informal way to say increase. It's especially used for sales, registrations, subscribers, and other numbers that indicate the success of a business.

Natalie replies that "Things are **looking up**." This is an expression that means "things are starting to improve, and it appears they will continue to improve."

However, it will take some time to **bounce back**. To **bounce back** means to recover after an injury, disaster, or some other problem. The company doesn't have much money because many of their investors and partners **backed out**. If you **back out**, it means you say you will do something, but then decide not to do it.

Tina says it was good that the managers saw the light (understood the situation clearly) before the company **went under**. Saying a company **went under** is the same as saying it went bankrupt – that means lost all its money and closed.

You now know 15 more phrasal verbs for talking about time and change. Take the practice quiz and try the writing exercises – and log in tomorrow for Lesson 15.

| Phrasal Verb | Definition |
|--------------------------|---|
| turn around | a bad situation starts to improve |
| take over | take control or responsibility |
| phase (something) out | gradually eliminate it in stages |
| phase (something) in | gradually introduce/implement it in stages |
| go over | be accepted or approved |
| plow through | do a series of difficult or work-intensive tasks in a steady and focused manner |
| hold back | not to use your full effort or ability |
| pull (something) off | succeed in doing it despite difficulties and obstacles |
| work out | resolve a problem |
| catch on | finally start to understand or perceive something |
| switch back | make a change that returns to an earlier status |
| pick up | (<i>informal</i>) Increase (sales, registrations, subscribers, etc.) |
| "Things are looking up." | "Things are starting to improve, and it appears they will continue to improve." |
| bounce back | recover after an injury, disaster, or problem |
| back out | say you will do something, but then decide not to do it |
| (a company) went under | went bankrupt – lost all its money and closed |

Quiz – Lesson 14

Question 1

My proposal _____ really well at the meeting - everyone said it was a brilliant idea.

- A phased in
- B pulled off
- C went over

Question 2

Rebecca went through a painful divorce, and it took her several years to _____.

- A back out
- B bounce back
- C hold back

Question 3

Jim's life started to _____ after he stopped drinking so much and got a decent job.

- A pick up
- B plow through
- C turn around

Question 4

I tried using a Samsung Galaxy phone for a few months, but I didn't like it so I _____ to the iPhone.

- A phased out
- B switched back
- C took over

Question 5

Rob and Janet had promised to help me paint the house, but then they _____ so I ended up doing it all myself.

- A backed out
- B held back
- C went under

Question 6

I've been working 12 hours a day - my job is _____ my life!

- A catching on
- B looking up
- C taking over

Question 7

I don't like to multitask - I prefer to take a single project and _____ it until it's done.

- A plow through
- B pull off
- C turn around

Question 8

I'd thought my grandfather would have a hard time learning how to use a computer, but he actually _____ very quickly.

- A caught on
- B phased in
- C worked out

Question 9

I don't know how I _____ such a good grade on that test - I didn't have time to study for it at all!

- A bounced back
- B pulled off
- C went over

Question 10

The negotiations took a long time and there were a few miscommunications during the process, but everything eventually _____ and we all agreed to the partnership.

- A looked up
- B switched back
- C worked out

Writing Exercises

Remember to use the phrasal verb in your answer!

1. Describe a situation that was going badly and then improved – what made it **turn around**?
2. Have you ever made a suggestion that didn't **go over** well with a group of people?
3. Describe a time you **pulled something off** even though other people said you wouldn't be able to do it.
4. What's one thing you learned, in which you **caught on** very quickly?
5. How long did it take you to **bounce back** after your last injury?
6. Have you ever **backed out** of a commitment? (Or has someone else **backed out** of a promise they made to you?)

Want to get corrections? [E-mail me](#) your answers!

Answers – Quiz 14

1. C
2. B
3. C
4. B
5. A
6. C
7. A
8. A
9. B
10. C

Lesson 15:

Phrasal Verbs for Persuading & Deciding

Read and listen to the dialog.

Carrie: Hey Michelle. How's the remodeling going?
(*Remodeling = Making design changes to a house/building*)

Michelle: It's really **stressing me out!** Things are taking forever, and Kevin and I can't seem to agree on anything.

Carrie: Really? Knowing Kevin, I'd have thought he'd **go along with** whatever you wanted for the house. He's so easygoing.

Michelle: See, the problem is that he **roped his sister into** helping us out, and she's an interior designer. So he always **sides with** her 'cause she's the "professional."

Carrie: Yeah, but you're the one who's gonna have to live with the results!

Michelle: That's what I said! The other day we went to **pick out** the wallpaper for the bathroom. I wanted lilac, but she was **pressing for** this awful sea-green color that made me want to throw up.
(*lilac = a light purple color*)

Carrie: So who won that battle?

Michelle: Eh, we **settled for** a light blue. I can live with that.

Carrie: You know, I've been **toying with** the idea of doing some redecorating myself. I'd have to **talk my husband into** it though. He hates spending money on the house, but if I show him it could be done without breaking the bank, he might **come around**.
(*"without breaking the bank" = without spending too much money*)

Michelle: Just make sure you really **think it over** before you begin, because once the work is started, you have to **see it through**. And definitely plan ahead when it comes to the timing – we were **shooting for** having everything finished by June, but I doubt that's gonna happen.

Carrie: Hmm, my husband will probably want to **hold off** until we have a bit more money saved up. But in the meantime, I'll start **asking around** to see if I can find a good designer.

Michelle: Well, you can **rule out** my sister-in-law – she has terrible taste!
(*"taste" in this context means opinion, style, or preferences*)

Explanation

Michelle says that the process of remodeling her house is **stressing her out** – this phrasal verb means it's causing her to feel lots of stress.

Carrie is surprised to hear that Michelle and Kevin are arguing, because she had imagined that Kevin would **go along with** whatever Michelle wanted. To **go along with** something means to agree with it, or to accept it even if you don't agree completely or you don't really have an opinion.

The problem is that Kevin **roped his sister into** helping. To **rope (someone) into** doing something means to convince the person to get involved – maybe using a little bit of force – kind of like how a cowboy uses a rope to capture an animal.

Because his sister is a professional interior designer, Kevin **sides with** her in every decision. To **side with (someone)** means to agree with them or take their side in a discussion, debate, or argument.

Michelle tells Carrie about the day they **picked out** the wallpaper for the bathroom. To **pick (something) out** means to choose one thing from a list or group of possibilities.

Michelle wanted lilac (a light purple), but Kevin's sister was **pressing for** sea-green. To **press for** something means to insist on it and put pressure on other people to do it.

They eventually **settled for** light blue. To **settle for** something means to agree to accept something (although it's not the best option). A related phrasal verb is **settle on** – this simply means to decide (without the idea of being less than ideal).

Carrie says she has been **toying with** the idea of redecorating, too. To **toy with** an idea means to consider it semi-seriously (more or less seriously). However, she would have to **talk her husband into** it. To **talk (someone) into something** means to convince the person to do something, even though they have some objections. In the case of Carrie's husband, he objects to spending so much money.

The opposite of **talk (someone) into** is **talk (someone) out of** something – that means convincing the person NOT to do what they had wanted or intended to do.

If Carrie can show her husband that the work can be done inexpensively, he might **come around**. If a person **comes around**, it means that they change their opinion after some time.

Michelle warns Carrie to **think it over**. To **think (something) over** or **think (something) through** means to think about it carefully and thoroughly, considering all the details.

She says that after the work has started, you need to **see it through**. To **see (a project) through** means to continue supervising or working on it until it is completed.

Michelle and Kevin were **shooting for** having the remodeling done by June. The phrasal verb **shoot for** is an informal way to say you hope and plan to achieve a specific goal.

Carrie says her husband will want to **hold off** until they have more money saved up. To **hold off** means to delay because you're waiting for something else to happen. But at the moment, she can start **asking around** to find a good designer. To **ask around** means to request information from many different people.

Michelle says that Carrie can **rule out** her sister-in-law because she has terrible taste (in this context, "taste" refers to her opinion and style). To **rule (someone / something) out** means to eliminate it from consideration.

You now know 18 new phrasal verbs for persuading and deciding. Take the practice quiz and try the writing exercises – and log in tomorrow for Lesson 16.

| Phrasal Verb | Definition |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| stress (someone) out | cause the person to feel lots of stress |
| go along with (something) | agree with it, or to accept it even if you don't agree completely or you don't really have an opinion |
| rope (someone) into (doing something) | convince the person to get involved – maybe using a little bit of force |
| side with (someone) | agree with the person or take their side in a discussion, debate, or argument |
| pick (something) out | choose one thing from a list or group of possibilities |
| press for (something) | insist on it and put pressure on other people to do it |
| settle for (something) | agree to accept something (although it's not the best option) |
| settle on (something) | decide |
| toy with (an idea) | consider it semi-seriously (more or less seriously) |
| talk (someone) into (something) | convince the person to do something, even though they have some objections |
| talk (someone) out of (something) | convince the person NOT to do what they wanted or intended to do |
| come around | change your opinion – especially after needing to be convinced |
| think (something) over / through | think about it carefully and thoroughly, considering all the details |
| see (a project) through | continue supervising or working on it until it is completed |
| shoot for (something) | hope and plan to achieve a specific goal <i>(informal)</i> |
| hold off (until...) | delay because you're waiting for something else to happen |
| ask around | request information from many different people |
| rule (someone / something) out | eliminate it from consideration |

Quiz – Lesson 15

Question 1

I was thinking of getting a tattoo on my arm, but my friend _____ it by telling me it could hurt my chances in job interviews.

- A roped me into
- B talked me out of
- C went along with

Question 2

We can _____ these three consultants - they're far too expensive for us to work with.

- A hold off
- B rule out
- C toy with

Question 3

After visiting a dozen colleges, Linda _____ attending the state university.

- A came around
- B settled on
- C is thinking through

Question 4

We're going to adopt a dog - we'll _____ from the animal shelter next week.

- A pick one out
- B see one through
- C side with one

Question 5

Let's _____ on making this decision until we get more data.

- A hold off
- B stress out
- C settle for

Question 6

The environmental groups are _____ stricter anti-pollution laws.

- A pressing for
- B ruling out
- C asking around

Question 7

I asked my boss if I could work from home, and he said yes! I can't believe he _____ it.

- A talked me into
- B sided with
- C went along with

Question 8

Sarah has won two Olympic silver medals; she's _____ her first gold this year.

- A picking out
- B shooting for
- C seeing through

Question 9

At first my mother hated the idea of having a cell phone, but after she started using one, she eventually _____.

- A came around
- B stressed out
- C thought it over

Question 10

Gary always _____ the boss during discussions because he's hoping to get promoted.

- A presses for
- B sides with
- C settles on

Writing Exercises

Remember to use the phrasal verb in your answer!

1. Describe a time someone **talked you into (or out of)** something.
2. What's a situation that always **stresses you out**?
3. What's one decision you **thought over** carefully?
4. What's one idea you were (or are) **toying with**?
5. Describe a time when you **settled for** a less-than-ideal option.
6. Is there anything that you are currently **holding off** doing until something else happens?

Want to get corrections? [E-mail me](#) your answers!

Answers – Quiz 15

1. B
2. B
3. B
4. A
5. A
6. A
7. C
8. B
9. A
10. B

Lesson 16:

Phrasal Verbs About the Weather

Read and listen to the dialog – Ashley calls Beth during a storm.

Ashley: Hi Beth, how's it going?

Beth: Hey Ashley. It's really **coming down** out there, isn't it?

Ashley: Sure is! And I don't think it's gonna **let up** anytime soon. My son was supposed to have football practice later tonight, but at this rate it'll be **rained out**.

Beth: I was actually at the farmer's market with my kids when it started. We were ordering some snacks when I noticed that the sky had **clouded over** and the wind was really **picking up**. We **wolfed down** our food and made a dash for the parking lot – just in time!

Ashley: I can't wait for the weather to **warm up**. The winter storms have damaged some of the trees in our yard, and we might need to **cut them down** in the spring.

Beth: Oh, that's too bad. Hey, speaking of spring – you've got some gardening experience, right?

Ashley: Mmm-hmm.

Beth: So last year I tried planting a vegetable garden, but all my plants were eaten up by these tiny green beetles. Do you have any idea how to **get rid of** them?

Ashley: I have a recipe for a really good homemade pesticide that should **wipe out** the bugs without hurting the plants. I'll e-mail it to you.

Beth: Fantastic, thanks! Well... it's time for me to go brave the storm.

Ashley: You're going out in this weather?! What's so important that you can't **wait it out**?

Beth: My mom's visiting this weekend, and I have to pick her up at the bus station. My sister was supposed to go, but she **weaseled out of** it.

Ashley: Well, make sure to bring a nice, strong umbrella – and **bundle up**, because it's going to drop below freezing later tonight.

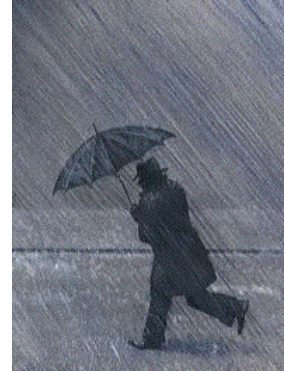
Beth: Definitely! I'll catch ya later, Ashley.

Ashley: Bye.

Explanation

At the beginning of the phone call, Beth comments, "It's really **coming down** out there." – this expression means "It's raining very hard."

Ashley adds that it doesn't look like it will **let up** anytime soon. To **let up** is to diminish and stop. If the rain doesn't stop, Ashley's son's football practice will probably be **rained out**. If something is **rained out**, it means it's cancelled because of rain.



Beth was at the market with her kids when the sky **clouded over** – the phrasal verb **cloud over** means when the sky becomes covered in clouds.

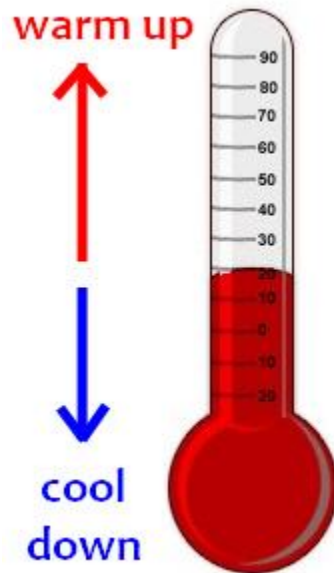


The opposite of **cloud over** is **clear up** – when the clouds go away.

Beth also noticed that the wind was really **picking up** – as we learned previously, one meaning of **pick up** is to increase – so the wind was getting stronger.

Beth and her kids **wolfed down** their food and ran to the car before the rain started. The phrasal verb **wolf down** means to eat extremely fast.

Ashley says that she can't wait for the weather to **warm up** – this means to get hotter, to increase in temperature. The opposite of **warm up** is **cool down** (to get colder, to decrease in temperature).



She mentions that the trees in her yard were so badly damaged by the winter storms that they may need to be **cut down**. The picture shows a man **cutting down** a tree.



Beth asks Ashley a question about gardening – how to **get rid of** the insects that are eating her plants. To **get rid of** something means to eliminate it, or to throw it away.

Ashley suggests using a homemade pesticide to **wipe out** the bugs. To **wipe (something) out** means to completely destroy it.

When Beth says she's going out in the storm, Ashley asks why she can't **wait it out**. To **wait (something) out** means wait for it to finish completely.

Beth's mother is arriving at the bus station, and her sister **weaseled out of** picking her up. **Weasel out of** something is similar to **back out** – not to do something you had promised. But **weasel out** has a more negative connotation; it means to back out in a sneaky or cowardly way.

Ashley tells Beth to **bundle up** because the temperature is going to drop. To **bundle up** means to wear warm protective clothing designed for cold weather.

That's 15 phrasal verbs related to the weather. You can take the practice quiz, but there are no writing exercises today. Log back in tomorrow for Lesson 17.



| Phrasal Verbs | Definition |
|---|--|
| "It's really coming down out there." | "It's raining very hard." |
| let up | diminish and stop |
| (be) rained out | be cancelled because of rain |
| cloud over | when the sky becomes covered in clouds |
| clear up | when the clouds go away |
| "The wind is picking up." | The wind is increasing / getting stronger |
| wolf down (food) | eat very fast |
| warm up | get hotter, increase in temperature |
| cool down | get colder, decrease in temperature |
| cut/chop down (a tree) | cut the tree with an axe or saw until it falls |
| get rid of (something) | eliminate it or throw it away |
| wipe (something) out | destroy it completely |
| wait (something) out | wait for it to finish completely |
| weasel out of (something) | not to do something you had promised (in a sneaky or cowardly way) |
| bundle up | wear warm protective clothing designed for cold weather |

Quiz – Lesson 16

Question 1

I hope this rain lets _____ before the weekend - I'm planning a camping trip.

- A away
- B off
- C up

Question 2

In September, the weather starts to cool _____.

- A down
- B out
- C up

Question 3

It's cloudy right now, but the weather forecast says it'll clear _____ by noon.

- A back
- B up
- C off

Question 4

She wolfed _____ her breakfast and ran out the door.

- A down
- B over
- C away

Question 5

The flood wiped _____ all the houses near the river.

- A on
- B out
- C back

Question 6

I went to the beach, but it clouded _____, so I didn't get a tan.

- A around
- B in
- C over

Question 7

The last day of the music festival was rained _____.

- A out
- B off
- C down

Question 8

I need to get rid _____ all the junk in my garage.

- A for
- B of
- C at

Answers – Quiz 16

1. C

2. A

3. B

4. A

5. B

6. C

7. A

8. B

Lesson 17: Phrasal Verbs in the News

Read and listen to the dialog.

Erica: Did you hear the news? They caught the three guys who **beat up** that girl and left her for dead on the train tracks. All of them were **charged with** assault and attempted murder.

Jasmine: Oh, thank God. That was such a horrible case. I hope they're **locked up** for a long time.

Erica: Yeah, they better not **let them off** with a light sentence. That just sends the message that anyone can **get away with** violence as long as you have a good lawyer.

Jasmine: I don't even watch the news anymore – it's too depressing. Conflicts **flaring up**, people being **gunned down** and buildings **blowing up** – I can only take so much.

Erica: Well, the bad news isn't just on TV – my neighbor's house was actually **broken into** just last week. The thief took \$5,000 worth of electronics and jewelry.

Jasmine: This town is getting worse and worse. Bob Jones is **running for** mayor this year, and making the city safer is one of his big campaign promises.

Erica: Bob Jones? Wasn't he **mixed up in** a scandal a few years ago, when some special-interest group supposedly **bought him off**? Once the news **leaked out**, he lost a lot of supporters, even though his PR team tried hard to **cover it up**.

Jasmine: Actually, he was **cleared of** those charges. He was able to **account for** every dollar of his funds, and it turned out that the person who **tipped off** the police was **put up to** it by one of Jones' political rivals.

Erica: No kidding! I didn't hear about that at all. Guess the media didn't **follow up on** the rest of the investigation.

Jasmine: Whoever gets elected, they really need to **crack down on** crime – I'd like to hear some good news for a change!

Explanation

Erica and Jasmine start talking about a crime in which three guys **beat up** a girl. To **beat (someone) up** means to physically attack the person with punches and kicks. The three men were **charged with** assault and attempted murder – to **be charged with (a crime)** means to be formally accused of that crime in the legal system.

Jasmine hopes the men are **locked up** for a long time. To **lock (someone) up** means to put the person in prison or jail. And Erica hopes they are not **let off** with a light sentence. To **let (someone) off** means to give the person a light punishment that is much less than they deserve for the bad thing they did.



According to Erica, this would send the message that people can **get away with** violence. To **get away with (something)** means to escape the consequences of what you did.

Jasmine hates watching the news because it constantly shows conflicts **flaring up**, people being **gunned down**, and buildings **blowing up**. Let's learn these 3 phrasal verbs. The phrasal verb **flare up** is used when a conflict suddenly intensifies or becomes very violent.

If someone is **gunned down**, it means that they were shot with a gun.



And **blow up** means to explode, like with a bomb or dynamite.



Someone recently **broke into** Erica's neighbor's house. To **break into** a house or building is when a thief enters the house or building with force, usually aiming to steal something.

Jasmine mentions Bob Jones, who is **running for** mayor of the city. To **run for (a political position)** means to be a candidate for election to that position.

Erica remembers that Bob Jones **was mixed up in** a scandal a few years ago. To **be mixed up in (something)** means to be involved in something illegal, suspicious, or bad.

It was suspected that a special-interest group had **bought him off**. The phrasal verb **buy off** means to illegally give money to an official in exchange for a special favor. Another word for this in English is **bribe**.

After news of this scandal **leaked out**, Bob Jones lost many supporters. The phrasal verb **leak out** means when secret information becomes known publicly. Jones' PR (public relations) team tried to **cover it up** – to **cover up (information)** means to hide the facts so that people won't know.

But Jones was finally **cleared of** the corruption charges – that means the legal system officially declared him to be innocent of the accusations. He was able to **account for** every dollar of his funds – to **account for** something means to provide an explanation or justification.

In addition, there was a problem with the person who had **tipped off** the police. The phrasal verb **tip off** means to give inside information. It is often used when reporting crimes to authorities.

This informant was **put up to** the task by one of Jones' political rivals. To **put (someone) up to** something means to convince the person to do something malicious or mischievous. This phrasal verb can be used for crimes, as in this example, as well as innocent funny jokes or pranks.

Erica didn't know about the outcome because the media didn't **follow up** on the rest of the investigation. To **follow up on (something)** means to check on it or inquire about it again after some time has passed.

Finally, Jasmine says that whoever gets elected really needs to **crack down** on crime. The phrasal verb **crack down** means to take stronger action against illegal activity.

You've learned **20** new phrasal verbs in the news! Take the practice quiz and try the writing exercises – and log in tomorrow for Lesson 18.

| Phrasal Verb | Definition |
|---------------------------------|---|
| beat (someone) up | physically attack the person with punches and kicks |
| be charged with (a crime) | be formally accused of that crime in the legal system |
| lock (someone) up | put the person in prison/jail |
| let (someone) off | give the person a light punishment that is much less than they deserve |
| get away with (something) | escape the consequences of what you did |
| flare up | when a conflict suddenly intensifies or becomes very violent |
| be gunned down | be shot with a gun |
| blow up | explode, like with a bomb or dynamite |
| break into (a house / building) | when a thief enters a house or building with force, usually aiming to steal something |
| run for (a political position) | be a candidate for election to that position |
| be mixed up in (something) | be involved in something illegal, suspicious, or bad |
| buy (someone) off | illegally give an official money in exchange for a special favor |
| leak out | when secret information becomes known publicly |
| cover up (information) | hide the facts so that people won't know |
| be cleared of (charges) | the legal system officially declared the person to be innocent of the accusations |
| account for | provide an explanation or justification |
| tip off | give inside information (often when reporting crimes to authorities) |
| put (someone) up to (something) | convince the person to do something malicious or mischievous |
| follow up on (something) | check on it or inquire about it again after some time has passed |
| crack down on | take stronger action against illegal activity |

Quiz – Lesson 17

Question 1

Two children were _____ during a shoot-out between gangs last night.

- A blown up
- B gunned down
- C mixed up in

Question 2

Someone _____ the media that a well-known celebrity was committing tax fraud.

- A accounted for
- B tipped off
- C was charged with

Question 3

My son said it wasn't his idea to put the frog in the teacher's desk; he claims his friend _____ it.

- A covered up
- B ran for
- C put him up to

Question 4

She _____ the charges because there wasn't enough evidence to convict her.

- A bought off
- B cracked down on
- C was cleared of

Question 5

I started learning martial arts as a kid, to defend myself from the bullies who always _____ after school.

- A beat me up
- B leaked out
- C broke into me

Question 6

I'm not sure who I'm going to vote for. I don't like any of the candidates _____ president this year.

- A buying off
- B getting away with
- C running for

Question 7

The CEO tried to _____ the fact that the company was failing so that the employees wouldn't panic.

- A be charged with
- B cover up
- C tip off

Question 8

DNA testing and other modern technologies make it more difficult to _____ a crime.

- A be mixed up in
- B let off
- C get away with

Question 9

You say things are going well in this country, but how do you _____ the 20% unemployment rate?

- A account for
- B follow up
- C leak out

Question 10

Our alarm system automatically calls the police if anyone tries to _____ the building.

- A blow up
- B break into
- C lock up

Writing Exercises

Remember to use the phrasal verb in your answer!

1. Have you ever **gotten away with** doing something bad, and didn't suffer the consequences? (Don't worry, I won't tell anyone!)
2. Would you ever **run for** office (= a political position)? Why or why not?
3. What's one crime that your country is trying to **crack down on** at the moment?
4. What's one thing you need to **follow up on**?
5. In your opinion, is **locking people up** a fair and effective punishment for crime? Why or why not?

Want to get corrections? [E-mail me](mailto:espressoenglish@espressoenglish.net) your answers.

Answers – Quiz 17

1. B
2. B
3. C
4. C
5. A
6. C
7. B
8. C
9. A
10. B

Lesson 18: Phrasal Verbs for Movement

Read and listen to the dialog.

Helen: Hey Martha. How was your weekend?

Martha: It was relaxing, but for all the wrong reasons.

Helen: Oh? How come?

"How come?" = an informal way to say "Why?"

Martha: On Friday afternoon my youngest daughter **fell down** and started crying. When I **bent down** to **pick her up**, I pulled a muscle in my back.

Helen: Ouch! Guess your daughter's not so little anymore. Did you see the doctor?

Martha: Yeah. I **lucked out** – it's nothing serious. But it was painful enough to keep me in bed all weekend. I couldn't even **sit up**. The kids kept **barging into** my room to ask for snacks and drinks, but I told them, "Ask your father. Mommy needs to **lie down**."

Helen: I suppose that is relaxing, in a way. How are you feeling now?

Martha: Well enough to be up and about, although I sure won't be doing any heavy lifting! How about you? Weren't you gonna take your son to the zoo on Saturday?

Helen: Ah, yeah – he loved it! Especially when we saw a baby gorilla that had escaped from its cage.

Martha: Really?

Helen: It was sitting in the middle of the path, and everyone started **crowding around** trying to take pictures. It got scared, so it **bolted away** and **climbed up** a tree.

Martha: Did they manage to capture it?

Helen: Mm-hmm, but it wasn't easy. First the security guards told everyone to **stand back**. Then the zookeepers put a bunch of bananas on the ground to coax it out of the tree. And then it climbed down and started eating the bananas, they **snuck up on** it and captured it with a net.

Martha: Well, good thing no one got hurt – including the gorilla.

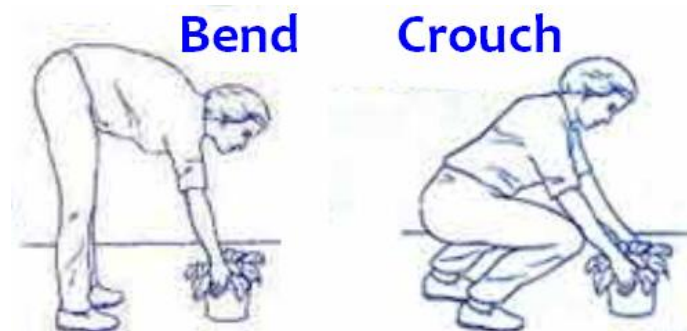
Helen: Yeah. But now my son wants one for a pet!

Explanation

Martha's youngest daughter **fell down** – this means when you fall onto the ground or floor. We also have the phrasal verbs **fall off** – if you fall from a horse or bicycle – and **fall out** – for something that falls out of an enclosed space.



Martha **bent down** to **pick up** her daughter. To **bend down** is to incline your body, like in the picture. This movement isn't very good for your back, so most doctors suggest **crouching down** instead.



To **pick up**, in this context, means to lift someone or something up from the floor/ground. You now know 3 meanings for the phrasal verb “pick up”:

- 1) To take someone in your car (“Please pick me up at 5:00.”)
- 2) To increase (sales, business, subscribers)
 (“Sales always pick up around Christmastime.”)
- 3) To lift something (“Your jacket is on the floor. Please pick it up.”)

Martha **lucked out** because her back injury wasn't serious. The phrasal verb **luck out** is an informal way to say that you had good luck or were fortunate in a specific situation.

Martha had to stay in bed, and she couldn't **sit up**. If you **sit up**, it means you raise your body from a horizontal position to a sitting position. The opposite of **sit up** is

lie down. The phrasal verb **sit down** means to go from standing to sitting. The opposite of **sit down** is **stand up**. Are you confused yet?

Martha's kids often **barged into** her room. To **barge in** is to enter a place suddenly and a little bit rudely. She told her kids to ask their father for things, because she needed to **lie down** – again, **lie down** means to have your body in a horizontal position.

Helen tells about her trip to the zoo, when they saw a baby gorilla that had escaped from its cage. Everyone was **crowding around** it to take pictures. To **crowd around** is when a large number of people gathers around a central point of interest.

All these people frightened the gorilla, so it **bolted away** – this means it ran away extremely fast – and **climbed up** a tree. We use the verb **climb** for going up and down trees, ladders, and mountains.

The security guards told everyone to **stand back**. This means to take a few steps away from something that could possibly be dangerous. They offered the gorilla some bananas, and while it was eating, they **snuck up on** it and captured it with a net. The phrasal verbs **sneak up on** and **creep up on** mean to approach someone carefully and quietly, so that the person (or animal) doesn't notice.

You've now learned 14 phrasal verbs related to movement. You might also enjoy reviewing the "prepositions of movement" lesson – there's a link under this video. Now you can take the practice quiz and try the writing exercises – and log in tomorrow for Lesson 19.

| Phrasal Verb | Definition |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| fall down | fall onto the ground or floor accidentally |
| bend down | incline your body forward |
| crouch down | lower your body by bending your knees |
| pick (something) up | lift it up from the ground (or another surface) using your hand |
| luck out | be lucky or fortunate in a specific situation <i>(informal)</i> |
| sit up | raise your body from a horizontal position to a sitting position |
| sit down | go from standing to sitting |
| stand up | go from sitting to standing |
| lie down | have your body in a horizontal position |
| barge into (a room) | enter suddenly and a little bit rudely |
| crowd around | a large number of people gathers around a central point of interest |
| bolt away | run away extremely fast |
| climb up/down | go up/down a tree, ladder, mountain (or anywhere else that you need to use both your hands and feet to go up/down) |
| stand back | take a few steps away from something that could possibly be dangerous; maintain a big distance |
| sneak up on / creep up on (someone) | approach carefully and quietly, so that the person (or animal) doesn't notice |

Quiz – Lesson 18

Question 1

Henry told the kids to _____ while he lit the campfire.

- A bolt away
- B sit up
- C stand up

Question 2

Tons of people _____ Tom Cruise, asking for an autograph.

- A barged into
- B crouched down
- C crowded around

Question 3

I'm not feeling very well. I'm going to go _____.

- A bend down
- B climb down
- C lie down

Question 4

The first time I tried ice skating, I _____ ten times in the first ten minutes!

- A fell down
- B lucked out
- C sat down

Question 5

I hate it when people _____ my office without knocking.

- A barge into
- B bolt away
- C sneak up on

Question 6

He _____ to inspect the car's tires.

- A crouched down
- B crowded around
- C stood back

Question 7

Tom _____ his towel and left the beach.

- A crept up
- B picked up
- C sat up

Question 8

The teacher asked the students to _____ because the class was about to start.

- A climb down
- B lie down
- C sit down

Question 9

We got the last four tickets to the show before it sold out - we really _____!

- A bolted away
- B lucked out
- C picked up

Question 10

Everyone in the audience _____ and cheered at the end of the performance.

- A bent down
- B snuck up
- C stood up

Writing Exercises

Remember to use the phrasal verb in your answer!

1. When was the last time you **fell down**?
2. On average, how much time per day do you spend **lying down, standing up, and sitting down**?
3. What's something you remember **standing back** from because it could be dangerous?
4. What was the last thing you **picked up**?
5. Describe a time when you **lucked out**.

Want to get corrections? [E-mail me](#) your answers!

Answers – Quiz 18

1. C
2. C
3. C
4. A
5. A
6. A
7. B
8. C
9. B
10. C

Image sources: [fall](#) / [bend & crouch](#) / [photostock](#) @ [FreeDigitalPhotos.net](#) / [Derschueler](#) / [AmarChandra](#)

Lesson 19: Phrasal Verbs for Information

Read and listen to the dialog. Samantha and Kate work for a small non-profit organization that provides educational supplies for poor children.

Samantha: Kate, can you help me out for a minute? I've been **poring over** these financial reports, and I can't **figure out** why the numbers don't **match up** with what we currently have in our accounts.

Kate: Well, first of all, we didn't spend \$5000 on books. You can **cross that out** and put \$3500 instead. We had budgeted \$5000 to **allow for** up to 250 students, but we didn't have that many.

Samantha: Gotcha. Do you happen to know if this figure for the amount of online donations is correct?

Kate: It looks right, but I can't say for sure off the top of my head. I can **find out**, though – I'll **look it up** when I get back to my computer.

Samantha: Wait a second – it just **dawned on me** – these numbers in parentheses look like they're only estimates and not exact figures.

Kate: You might be right. And they look a little low.

Samantha: What are they for – advertising? Hmm, maybe someone was trying to **gloss over** the fact that they overspent.

Kate: Why does it say \$100 for staff travel expenses? That doesn't **add up** – we all traveled a lot last year.

Samantha: You know, what this really **boils down to** is that our staff doesn't understand the importance of keeping good records.

Kate: True. Who prepared this report, anyway?

Samantha: The vice president – Pam.

Kate: Well, instead of wasting all this time **puzzling over** the data, why don't we just **track her down** and ask her about it?

Samantha: I've been trying to call her, but she hasn't **picked up**. She's one busy lady.

Kate: When you do get ahold of her, why don't you also **feel her out** about the possibility of hiring an accountant? That would make everyone's lives a lot easier!

Explanation

Samantha has been **poring over** some financial reports. The phrasal verb **pore over** means to read and study a document very carefully. She's trying to **figure out** why the numbers on the report don't **match up** with the money in the bank account. You already learned the phrasal verb **figure out** – it means to solve a problem or discover information by thinking and using logic. **Match up** means to be the same – so Samantha is saying that the numbers on the financial report do not **match up** with the bank account – they are different.

Kate tells her to **cross out** \$5000 and put \$3500 for the cost of books. To **cross (something) out** means to draw a line through it: ~~like this~~. They originally budgeted \$5000 for books to **allow for** up to 250 students. The phrasal verb **allow for (something)** means to plan for the possibility of it.

Kate says she can **find out** if the number of online donations listed in the report is correct. To **find out** means to discover information. What's the difference between **find out** and **figure out**? You **find out** something by checking another source, or someone else telling you the information. You **figure out** something by logic, with your own thinking.

Kate says she'll **look up** the correct number of online donations later. To **look (something) up** means to search or check a book, a list, a database, etc. For example, you **look up** words in the dictionary to **find out** their definitions.

During the conversation, it **dawned on** Samantha that some of the numbers are estimates and not exact figures. The expression **it dawned on (someone)** means the person suddenly understood a fact, often after not recognizing this fact for some time.

Also, the estimates of advertising costs might be incorrect because someone was trying to **gloss over** the fact that they spent too much money. To **gloss over (something bad)** means to try to minimize, hide, or ignore an unpleasant fact when reporting on the situation.

Kate says that the data on staff travel expenses doesn't **add up**. You learned the phrasal verb **add up** in the lesson about money – it means to add numbers into a total. But the expression “**It doesn't add up**” has another meaning – it means “It doesn't make sense” or “Something is not correct or true” – and you can use this expression for situations in general, not only with money.

Samantha comments that the problems with the report **boil down to** the staff's failure to keep good records. The phrasal verb **boil down to** means to identify the root of a problem, or the simplest essential reason for it.

Kate doesn't want to waste time **puzzling over** the inaccurate report. To **puzzle over** something means to give a lot of thought or consideration to something you don't understand.

She suggests **tracking down** Pam, the person who originally prepared the report. To **track (someone / something) down** means to find the person or thing after searching for him/her/it.

Samantha has been trying to call Pam, but Pam hasn't **picked up**. Here's yet another meaning for the phrasal verb **pick up** – to answer the telephone. The opposite of **pick up** is **hang up** – that means end the connection after finishing a phone call.

Kate suggests **feeling Pam out** about the possibility of hiring an accountant for the organization. To **feel (someone) out** means to carefully discover what someone thinks about an idea, usually through a more indirect conversation and not asking them directly.

You've just learned 16 phrasal verbs for talking about information! Take the practice quiz and try the writing exercises – and log in tomorrow for Lesson 20.

| Phrasal Verb | Definition |
|--------------------------------|---|
| pore over (a document) | read and study a document very carefully |
| figure (something) out | solve a problem or discover information by thinking and using logic |
| match up | be the same |
| cross (something) out | draw a line through it: like this |
| find out | discover information by checking another source, or someone else telling you the information |
| look (something) up | search or check a book, a list, a database, etc. to get the information |
| it dawned on (someone) | the person suddenly understood a fact, often after not recognizing this fact for some time |
| gloss over (something bad) | try to minimize, hide, or ignore an unpleasant fact when reporting on the situation |
| "It doesn't add up" | "It doesn't make sense" or "Something is not correct or true in this situation" |
| boil down to | identify the root of a problem, or the simplest essential reason for it |
| puzzle over (something) | give a lot of thought or consideration to something you don't understand |
| track (someone/something) down | find the person or thing after searching for him/her/it |
| pick up | answer the telephone |
| hang up | end the connection after finishing a phone call |
| feel (someone) out | carefully discover what someone thinks about an idea, usually through a more indirect conversation and not asking them directly |

Quiz – Lesson 19

Question 1

I need the phone number for the restaurant. Could you _____ online?

- A cross it out
- B look it up
- C pore over it

Question 2

I don't know if I've been accepted into the program yet - I should _____ in the next few days.

- A find out
- B gloss over
- C hang up

Question 3

I think he's lying to me. What he says just doesn't _____ the evidence.

- A boil down to
- B figure out
- C match up with

Question 4

We need some information from the December 2009 issue of the newsletter - I'll _____ a copy in the archives.

- A dawn on
- B feel out
- C track down

Question 5

In his speech, the president spoke with an optimistic tone, _____ the fact that the economy hasn't improved.

- A adding up
- B glossing over
- C puzzling over

Question 6

After I thought about it for a while, it finally _____ that taking this job wouldn't really be the best move for my career.

- A dawned on me
- B felt me out
- C tracked me down

Question 7

I've been _____ this message my friend sent me - from what she wrote, I don't understand if she's still angry at me or not.

- A boiling down to
- B picking up
- C puzzling over

Question 8

I couldn't _____ the difference between the present perfect and the past perfect, so I had to ask my teacher.

- A cross out
- B figure out
- C pore over

Question 9

After I _____, I realized I'd forgotten to ask the travel agent an important question, so I called him back.

- A dawned on
- B hung up
- C looked up

Question 10

I'd like to take my family to live in another country for a year, but first I need to _____ my kids to see if they'd be interested in the possibility.

- A feel out
- B match up
- C pick up

Writing Exercises

Remember to use the phrasal verb in your answer!

1. What's something interesting or surprising that you recently **found out**?
2. What was the last thing you **looked up** to find the answer?
3. Do you tend to **gloss over** problems, or do you prefer to talk about them directly?
4. Who/what is one person/thing you need to **track down** in the near future?
5. What's one thing you have **puzzled over** recently?

Want to get corrections? [E-mail me](mailto:espressoenglish@espressoenglish.net) your answers!

Answers – Quiz 19

1. B
2. A
3. C
4. C
5. B
6. A
7. C
8. B
9. B
10. A

Lesson 20: Phrasal Verbs for Events

Read and listen to the dialog.

Gina: So, I saw that Tom Hanks movie that just **came out**. My daughter had been begging me to take her, and I finally **gave in**.

(begging = asking frequently with lots of emotion)

Liz: I heard people were **lining up** around the block to get in. Was it good?

Gina: It was OK, but I didn't think it **lived up to** the hype.

(hype = publicity, excitement)

Liz: Oh really? I heard Tom Hanks' performance really **stood out**. They're saying he might be nominated for the best supporting actor award.

Gina: I dunno, I thought his character **came off as** kinda insecure. I was **rooting for** him to overcome his fears and go after his dreams during the whole movie, but it never really happened, and the ending sort of **fizzled out**.

(dunno = don't know. kinda = kind of, rather, somewhat)

Liz: Oh well.

Gina: How was your weekend? You were running that all-day music festival yesterday, right?

Liz: Yeah, it was awesome! We **threw this event together** at the last minute to **kick off** our series of summer concerts, and I'm glad we did, 'cause it was a huge success.

Gina: Was it all local bands, or were there some big names?

Liz: All local bands. The first few were a bit mediocre, but the third group really **livened things up**. They played some classic hits and got the crowd **singing along**.

(hits = popular songs)

Gina: Nice. Did people stay for the whole day?

Liz: People were coming and going. Things started **winding down** in the early evening, and we **wrapped it up** around 8.

Gina: Definitely let me know when your next event is, and I'll try and make it.
(*make it = come to the event*)

Liz: Will do! By the way, I have some T-shirts **left over** from the festival, do you want one?

Gina: Sure, thanks!

Explanation

Gina says she saw the movie that just **came out**. If a movie, CD, or product **comes out**, it means it is made available to the public. Gina's daughter had been begging to go, and Gina finally **gave in**. To **give in** means to finally submit to what someone else wants, after they have been asking or pressuring for a long time.

Liz heard that the movie was so popular that people were **lining up** around the block. To **line up** simply means to form a line of people.



But Gina thought the movie didn't **live up to** the hype (publicity/excitement). If you say something did **not live up to** an expectation, it means it wasn't as good as expected.

Liz is surprised because she had also heard that Tom Hanks' performance really **stood out**. The phrasal verb **stand out** means to be extraordinary and different, better than others – something that calls your attention.

But in Gina's opinion, his character in the movie **came off as** insecure. If you say someone **comes off as** (a particular character trait), it means the person gave the impression of having that character trait or quality.

Gina was **rooting for** him to pursue his dreams during the movie. To **root for** someone or something means to strongly hope they will succeed. We also use this phrasal verb for supporting sports teams. These guys are **rooting for** their favorite team.



In Gina's opinion, the movie **fizzled out**. To **fizzle out** means to lose strength or excitement and end in a disappointing way.

She then asks Liz about the music festival. Liz tells her that they **threw the event together** at the last minute. To **throw (something) together** means to organize it or create it quickly, without much previous planning.

This festival **kicked off** a series of summer concerts. **Kick off** means to begin or be the first activity in a process, campaign, event, or series of activities.

The first few bands weren't very good, but the third one **livened things up**. The phrasal verb **liven up** means to make something more exciting or interesting, especially when it was rather boring before.

This band played some classic hits (popular songs) and the crowd started **singing along** – that means to sing together with the band or singer.

The festival started **winding down** in the early evening. The phrasal verb **wind down** is used when an activity or event slows down and becomes less busy, especially as it is coming to an end. Liz says they **wrapped it up** around 8. To **wrap (an event/project) up** means to complete it or finish it.

Finally, Liz has some T-shirts **left over** from the festival, so she offers one to Gina. If something is **left over**, it means it remains from an earlier time, when it wasn't

used. We often use **left over** for food – extra food that you didn’t eat during a meal, and you save it for later, is called “**leftovers.**”

You now know 15 new phrasal verbs for talking about events. Take the practice quiz and try the writing exercises – and log in tomorrow for Lesson 21.

| Phrasal Verb | Definition |
|---|--|
| come out | a movie, CD, product, etc. becomes available to the public |
| give in (to someone) | finally submit to what someone else wants, after they have been asking or pressuring for a long time |
| line up | form a line of people |
| not live up to (an expectation) | not be as good as expected |
| stand out | be extraordinary and different, better than others – something that calls your attention |
| someone comes off as (a particular character trait) | the person gives the impression of having that character trait or quality |
| root for (someone / something) | strongly hope they will succeed |
| fizzle out | lose strength or excitement and end in a disappointing way |
| throw (something) together | to organize it or create it quickly, without much previous planning |
| kick off | begin or be the first activity in a process, campaign, event, or series of activities |
| liven (something) up | make something more exciting or interesting, especially when it was rather boring before |
| sing along | sing together with the band or singer |
| wind down | when an activity or event slows down and becomes less busy, especially as it is coming to an end |
| wrap (an event / project) up | complete it or finish it |
| (be) left over | remain from an earlier time, when it wasn’t used |

Quiz – Lesson 20

Question 1

The next conference session starts in just a few minutes, so we need to _____ this workshop.

- A kick off
- B stand out
- C wrap up

Question 2

I know this brochure isn't very well-designed; it's just something I _____ because we needed it urgently.

- A didn't live up to
- B fizzled out
- C threw together

Question 3

The gift I bought for my mother cost less than I expected, so I bought something for my sister with the money that was _____.

- A left over
- B lined up
- C wound down

Question 4

I can't wait for the sequel to this movie - I hear it's _____ next June.

- A coming out
- B giving in
- C singing along

Question 5

He had a great idea for a new business, but he didn't really put in much work and it _____.

- A fizzled out
- B livened up
- C was left over

Question 6

Sandy's really confident; in fact, sometimes she _____ a bit arrogant.

- A comes off as
- B lives up to
- C roots for

Question 7

The singer _____ her 2013 tour with a performance in New York City.

- A kicked off
- B stood out
- C threw together

Question 8

All the kids _____ to wait for their turn to see Santa Claus.

- A fizzled out
- B lined up
- C sang along

Question 9

The high season for tourism in Brazil starts to _____ after Carnaval.

- A come out

- B kick off
- C wind down

Question 10

I don't like conflict. I usually _____ rather than arguing.

- A give in
- B root for
- C wrap up

Writing Exercises

Remember to use the phrasal verb in your answer!

1. Describe something that **didn't live up to** your expectations.
What was disappointing about it?
2. What's your favorite music to **sing along** to?
3. Do you **root for** any particular sports teams?
(If you don't, do you have a friend/family member who does?)
4. Describe a time you had to **throw something together**.
How was the result – did it turn out well?
5. Have you ever had a personal or professional project **fizzle out**?
What happened?

Want to get corrections? [E-mail me](#) your answers!

Answers – Quiz 20

1. C
2. C
3. A
4. A
5. A
6. A
7. A
8. B
9. C
10. A

Image sources: [Vlado @ FreeDigitalPhotos.net](#) / Rick Dikeman, aka [Rdikeman](#) at [en.wikipedia](#)

Lesson 21:

Phrasal Verbs for Manners/Etiquette

Read and listen to the dialog.

Susan: You look exhausted. Everything OK?

Karen: Oh, just some drama at work. My coworker Rita made a silly mistake – it would have been no big deal, but another guy on the team, Victor, kept **rubbing it in** by constantly making these little sarcastic comments throughout the day. Rita was trying to **laugh it off**, but I could tell by her expression that it was really **grating on** her.

Susan: So did you speak up? Tell him to **back off**?

Karen: Not in front of Rita. But I **took Victor aside** later and said he should **knock it off**. He just told me to **lighten up**.

Susan: Hopefully something you said **got through to** him. **Joking around** is fine, but not when it **borders on** bullying.

Karen: Have you ever **dealt with** a similar situation?

Susan: Yeah, years ago I had a boss who was always **picking on** me. Every time I saw him coming, I'd **brace myself for** some new criticism or insult. But later I found out that he was going through a painful divorce, and was **taking it out on** me. It wasn't right, but I don't **hold it against** him.

Karen: Well, I know there's nothing like that going on with Victor. He's just the type of person who likes to **show off** and give himself an ego boost by **putting other people down**.

(ego boost = make you feel better about yourself)

Susan: Hmm. If it gets really bad, you could always **take it up with** HR.

(HR = the Human Resources department)

Karen: True.

Explanation

Karen describes how her coworker Rita made a mistake, and another colleague, Victor, was **rubbing it in** by making sarcastic comments throughout the day. The phrasal verb **rub it in** means to constantly remind someone about a mistake or bad situation.

Rita tried to **laugh it off**. This means she tried to laugh about it and pretend it wasn't important and didn't bother her. But her facial expression showed that Victor's comments were really **grating on** her. If something **grates on** you, it means it is very annoying or irritating.

Susan asked if Karen **spoke up** and told Victor to **back off**. We learned **speak up** in a previous lesson – it means to say your opinion about something you believe is wrong, without fear or hesitation. The phrasal verb **back off**, in this context, means to stop verbally attacking someone.

Karen **took Victor aside** later to talk about his behavior. To **take (someone) aside** means to remove the person temporarily from a group to discuss something privately. She told him to **knock it off**. The expression **knock it off** is an informal way to tell someone to stop doing something annoying.

Victor just told Karen to **lighten up** – this means to be less serious. But hopefully some of Karen's words **got through to** Victor. To **get through to (someone)** means to make the person understand something, when he/she doesn't want to listen.

Susan says that **joking around** is OK. To **joke around** means to talk with lots of jokes, trying to be funny. However, it's not good when it **borders on** bullying. The phrasal verb **border on (something)** means to be very similar to or close to it. **Border on** is only used for non-physical things like words, ideas, plans, philosophies, etc.

Karen asks Susan if she has ever **dealt with** a mean colleague. To **deal with** something means to manage or take action in a situation. Susan tells her about a boss she had many years ago who always **picked on** her. To **pick on (someone)** is to criticize and tease the person frequently.

Every time Susan saw her boss coming, she would **brace herself for** a new insult. The phrasal verb **brace (yourself) for something** means to mentally prepare yourself for it – usually for something negative, like bad news or criticism.

Susan's boss had been going through a painful divorce at the time, and he was **taking it out on** her. To **take (something) out on (someone)** means to treat the person badly because of other problems that are not that person's fault. In other words, you transfer your anger about the situation onto an innocent person.

But Susan says she doesn't **hold it against** her former boss. To **hold (something) against (someone)** means continuing to blame and resent the person for a long time.

Karen says that Victor simply likes to **show off** and **put other people down**. The phrasal verb **show off** means to demonstrate your abilities in an annoying, arrogant way. And to **put (someone) down** means to criticize, humiliate, or disparage the person.

At the end of the conversation, Susan advises Karen to **take it up with** HR (Human Resources) if the problem with Victor gets worse. The expression **take it up with (someone)** means to complain or discuss a problem with that person, because that is the person with power to resolve it.

You've learned 17 phrasal verbs related to manners and etiquette. Take the practice quiz, try the writing exercises, and log in tomorrow for Lesson 22.

| Phrasal Verb | Definition |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| rub it in | constantly remind someone about a mistake or bad situation |
| laugh (something) off | laugh about it and act like you're not affected by it |
| grate on (someone) | something is very annoying or irritating to that person |
| back off | stop verbally attacking someone |
| take (someone) aside | remove the person temporarily from a group to discuss something privately |
| knock it off (informal) | stop doing something annoying |
| lighten up | be less serious |
| get through to (someone) | make the person understand something, when he/she doesn't want to listen |
| joke around | talk with lots of jokes/humor, trying to be funny |
| border on (something) | be very similar to or close to it (only used for non-physical things like words, ideas, plans, philosophies, etc) |
| deal with (something) | manage or take action in a situation |
| pick on (someone) | criticize and tease the person frequently |
| brace (yourself) for (something) | mentally prepare yourself for it – usually for something negative, like bad news or criticism |
| take (something) out on (someone) | treat the person badly because of other problems that are not that person's fault |
| hold (something) against (someone) | continue to blame and resent the person for a long time |
| show off | demonstrate your abilities in an annoying, arrogant way |
| put (someone) down | criticize, humiliate, or disparage the person |
| take it up with (someone) | complain or discuss a problem with that person, because that is the person with power to resolve it |

Quiz – Lesson 21

Question 1

When I was little, the other kids _____ me because I was fat.

- A dealt with
- B laughed off
- C picked on

Question 2

If you don't like the new policy, you need to _____ Peter, not me. He's the one who made the decision.

- A brace for
- B get through to
- C take it up with

Question 3

People who are offended by comedy movies need to _____. It's not worth getting so upset over a film.

- A back off
- B joke around
- C lighten up

Question 4

My son is lazy. I try to teach him about the importance of hard work, but I can't seem to _____ him.

- A get through to
- B grate on
- C take it out on

Question 5

When I apologized to Diane for ignoring her phone calls, she _____ and said it was no big deal.

- A knocked it off
- B laughed it off
- C rubbed it in

Question 6

My roommate smokes cigarette after cigarette inside our apartment, and it's really _____ me.

- A grating on
- B holding against
- C showing off

Question 7

When my boss called me into her office for a serious talk, I _____ the possibility that I might lose my job.

- A braced myself for
- B bordered on
- C took it up with

Question 8

During the party, my friend _____ and told me I had some food stuck in my teeth. How embarrassing!

- A got through to me
- B put me down
- C took me aside

Question 9

This problem is top priority. I really need you to _____ it as soon as possible.

- A back off
- B border on
- C deal with

Question 10

My uncle is always _____ - it's hard to tell when he's being serious.

- A joking around
- B knocking it off
- C lightening up

Writing Exercises

Remember to use the phrasal verb in your answer!

1. What's one annoying habit your friend/husband/wife has that really **grates on** you?
2. When someone offends you, is it easy for you to **laugh it off**, or do you **hold it against** the person?
3. Describe a time when someone **took you aside** to discuss a private matter.
4. When was the last time you told someone to **knock it off**?
5. Describe a person you know who needs to **lighten up**.
6. Describe a time when you were **showing off** (or you saw someone else **showing off**).

Want to get corrections? [E-mail me](mailto:shayna@espressoenglish.net) your answers!

Answers – Quiz 21

1. C

2. C

3. C

4. A

5. B

6. A

7. A

8. C

9. C

10. A

Lesson 22:

Phrasal Verbs for Destruction & Repair

Read and listen to the dialog.

Carmen: Did you hear that the city's planning to **tear down** the old church on Main Street?

Tara: It is pretty **run-down** – but I thought they were going to **fix it up**.

Carmen: Apparently the restoration would cost way more than they'd **bargained for**. The place really is **falling apart** – one section of the roof **caved in** this past winter.

Tara: That's a shame. I think it's one of the last remaining historical buildings in the area.

Carmen: It is the last one. Remember how the old town hall **burned down** last year?

Tara: Yeah, and the fire department got **mixed up** and went to the wrong address, right?

Carmen: And by the time they got to the right place and **put out** the fire, there was nothing left to salvage.

(salvage = save something from a disaster)

Tara: Terrible.

Carmen: Listen, I wanted to ask you – I'm organizing a campaign to save the old church. I think it's something our community can **rally around**. Do you wanna be a part of it?

Tara: You know, I'm not sure... I'm happy to sign a petition, but I might not be able to **free up** time to go to meetings and whatnot.

(petition = a list of names of people who want to support or change something)

(“and whatnot” is an informal way to say “et cetera” – “and other similar things”)

Carmen: Well, we're still **hashing out** the details of what exactly needs to be done. I just need to know if you're in or out.

Tara: I'm interested, but... let me **sleep on it** and let you know tomorrow.

Carmen: OK, not a problem.

Explanation

Carmen tells Tara that the city is planning to **tear down** an old church. The phrasal verb **tear down** means to demolish a building.



Tara says that the church is **run-down**. This means it's in bad physical condition; it is old, dirty, and not well-maintained.

However, she thought the city had plans to **fix it up**. To **fix (something) up** means to repair it and restore it to good condition. A related phrasal verb is **spruce up**, which means to improve the appearance or condition of a building, house, apartment, yard, or other space.

Unfortunately, the restoration of the church would cost more than the city **bargained for** – this means planned or expected. The church is **falling apart** – to **fall apart** is used when something breaks into pieces because it is old, weak, or damaged.

Last winter, a section of the church's roof **caved in**. This phrasal verb is used when a roof or ceiling collapses.

The church is the last remaining historical building in the area, because the old town hall **burned down** last year. If a building **burns down**, it means it is destroyed by fire.



The firefighters were delayed because they got **mixed up** and went to the wrong address. The phrasal verb **mix up** means to confuse things, or exchange two things in error.

The firefighters **put out** the fire, but it was too late to save the building. The phrasal verb **put out** means to extinguish a fire.

Carmen wants the community to **rally around** the goal of preserving the old, historical church. To **rally around (a person/cause)** means to join together in support of it.

Tara's not sure if she can participate, because she may not be able to **free up** enough time. The phrasal verb **free up** means to re-organize things to make more of a resource available. It's often used with time, space, or money.

Carmen says they're still **hashing out** the details of this campaign. To **hash out (something)** means to discuss it until finally establishing or agreeing on the details.

Tara then says she'll **sleep on it** and give Carmen her answer tomorrow. The expression "**sleep on it**" means to delay a decision until the next day, usually because you can't answer at the moment, or because you want to think about it more carefully.

Now you know **14** phrasal verbs related to destruction & repair. Take the practice quiz, try the writing exercises, and log in tomorrow for Lesson 23.

| Phrasal Verb | Definition |
|-------------------------------|--|
| tear down | demolish a building |
| be run-down | be in bad physical condition; old, dirty, and not well-maintained |
| fix (something) up | repair it and restore it to good condition |
| spruce up | improve the appearance or condition of a building, house, apartment, yard, or other space |
| bargain for | plan or expect |
| fall apart | when something breaks into pieces because it is old, weak, or damaged |
| cave in | when a roof or ceiling collapses |
| burn down | a building or structure is destroyed by fire |
| mix up | confuse things, or exchange two things in error |
| put out (a fire) | extinguish the fire |
| rally around (a person/cause) | join together in support of it |
| free up (time, space, money) | re-organize things to make more of a particular resource available |
| hash out (something) | discuss it until finally establishing or agreeing on the details |
| sleep on it | delay a decision until the next day, because you can't answer at the moment, or because you want to think more |

Quiz – Lesson 22

Question 1

Let's donate some of these clothes to _____ space in the closet.

- A free up
- B put out
- C spruce up

Question 2

The two companies _____ a deal to exchange some of their products and services.

- A fixed up

B hashed out

C slept on

Question 3

They're _____ those apartment buildings to make room for the new highway.

A caving in

B rallying around

C tearing down

Question 4

Dan _____ his old bicycle and gave it to his son.

A fell apart

B fixed up

C ran down

Question 5

That hospital looks a little _____, but it actually has excellent doctors.

A hashed out

B mixed up

C run-down

Question 6

Don't forget to _____ that candle before you go to sleep.

A bargain for

B put out

C burn down

Question 7

Please be careful with that old book - it's _____.

- A falling apart
- B freeing up
- C tearing down

Question 8

I wasn't completely satisfied with her proposal, so I told her I'd _____.

- A rally around it
- B sleep on it
- C spruce it up

Question 9

My cousins are identical twins, and people always _____.

- A hash them out
- B mix them up
- C put them out

Question 10

Everyone _____ the community leader to defend him from the accusations of corruption.

- A bargained for
- B fell apart
- C rallied around

Writing Exercises

Remember to use the phrasal verb in your answer!

1. What's one building you've been in that was rather **run-down**?
2. What's one thing you could do to **spruce up** the place where you live?
3. Describe a time when you **mixed something up**.
4. What's one thing you could do to **free up** some extra time or money?
5. Describe a decision when you **slept on it** rather than giving an answer immediately.

Want to get corrections? [E-mail me](#) your answers.

Answers – Quiz 22

1. A
2. B
3. C
4. B
5. C
6. B
7. A
8. B
9. B
10. C

Image sources: [Wolfgang Staudt](#) from Saarbruecken, Germany; [Al Jazeera English](#)

Lesson 23: Phrasal Verbs with AWAY

For the last week of the course, you're going to learn extra phrasal verbs that didn't quite fit into the other categories. I've grouped them by preposition, so in this lesson you'll learn 10 phrasal verbs with AWAY.

The format will be a little different – for each phrasal verb, I'll explain the meaning and give a short 2-line dialog to show how it's used.

chip away at (something)

= gradually reduce it, making it less powerful or effective, bit by bit

"The internet is down again."

"That's the 5th time this week! It's really **chipping away at** my patience."

It means that your patience is gradually getting less and less because of the frequent technical problems.

You can also **chip away at**:

- patience, happiness, confidence, or self-esteem
- freedoms, rights, or benefits
- big projects or big problems, like poverty or climate change, that are often solved little by little and not all at one time

edge away from (something)

= move away slowly and cautiously, from something that could be dangerous

"Did you see that crazy guy on the train?"

"I was standing right next to him. I started **edging away** because I thought he might become violent."

You can also **edge away from** a dangerous animal, like a snake or an angry dog. When you edge away, you move slowly so that the person or animal doesn't react to a fast movement.

blow (someone) away
= impress the person VERY much

"My daughter's only 6, but she can read at a 10-year-old level."

"She's so smart! I was blown away by her vocabulary."

This means the little girl's vocabulary is VERY impressive. When you see something or someone that you think is absolutely amazing, you can say "**it blew me away.**"

plug away at (something)
= continue trying and working in a determined manner

"I'm taking piano lessons, but I have no talent."

"Neither did I when I started. But keep **plugging away**, and you'll make great progress."

We usually use **plug away** for effort in learning something difficult (as in the example) or working hard on a large or long project.

square away
= finish, arrange, or organize something completely

"Is everything ready for the wedding?"

"Almost – just need to get the decorations **squared away!**"

We often use **square away** for finishing details at work before leaving for the day, or going on a trip.

whisk away

= to move the person/thing away rapidly

“My 4-year-old almost burned himself yesterday – I **whisked him away** from the stove just in time.”

“Wow – good thing you were watching him!”

Whisk away is typically used for a fast, emergency movement to avoid danger.

shy away from (doing something)

= avoid doing it because you are afraid or not confident

“I don’t mind speaking, but I **shy away from** singing in public.”

“Oh, not me. I love performing.”

People often **shy away from**:

- public speaking
- confrontation
- commitment (in relationships)

stash (something) away

= put it in a safe place to use it later

“There’s no food in the house, and the stores are closed!”

“Actually, I have some chips **stashed away** in my room.”

You can **stash away** food and supplies – for example, people who believe the world is going to end often stash away extra food and water. You can also **stash money away** if you want to use it later and avoid spending it immediately.

tear (yourself) away

= stop reading/watching something you don't want to stop

“How was the book?”

“Fantastic! I stayed up all night reading. I couldn't **tear myself away** until I'd finished.”

This expression, **can't tear yourself away**, is typically used with addictive books, movies, TV shows, and websites that you can't stop reading/watching.

fade away

= get weaker and weaker and finally disappear

“Do you think you'll ever get back together with your ex?”

“No – we've been separated 5 years, and my feelings for him have **faded away** by now.”

Fade away is often used with emotions, like enthusiasm, anxiety, anger, fear, and desire. You can also use it for sound or music – for example, music **fades away** as you get more and more distant from the source.

You've learned 10 new phrasal verbs with AWAY. Take the practice quiz, try the writing exercises, and log in tomorrow for Lesson 24.

Quiz – Lesson 23

Question 1

The security guards _____ the president away to a safe place after hearing about an assassination plot.

- A edged
- B stashed
- C whisked

Question 2

Going to the beach seems to make all my worries _____ away.

- A blow
- B chip
- C fade

Question 3

I got all the hotel arrangements _____ away - we can check that off the to-do list.

- A faded
- B plugged
- C squared

Question 4

When I read that book for the first time, it really _____ me away - it completely changed my thinking.

- A blew
- B edged
- C shied

Question 5

I'll be home late tonight - I'm still _____ away at this complicated website design project.

- A plugging
- B tearing
- C whisking

Question 6

We try to _____ away a couple hundred dollars a month in a savings account to help send our kids to college someday.

- A blow
- B square
- C stash

Question 7

The tour guide _____ away from the sleeping tiger.

- A chipped
- B edged
- C faded

Question 8

I _____ away from posting too much personal information on the internet - you never know who could be reading it.

- A shy
- B plug
- C tear

Question 9

I just discovered a great new blog - I read it every day; I can't _____ myself away.

- A blow
- B tear
- C whisk

Question 10

The government keeps _____ away at benefits for veterans - we need to protest this!

- A chipping
- B fading
- C squaring

Writing Exercises

Remember to use the phrasal verb in your answer!

1. Describe something impressive you saw that **blew you away**.
2. What's one thing you **shy away from** doing?
3. What's something you need to **square away** before the end of the month?
4. What's one book, TV show, or website you couldn't **tear yourself away** from?
5. Describe a major personal/professional project that you're **plugging away at**.

Want to get corrections? [E-mail me](#) your answers!

Answers – Quiz 23

1. C

2. C

3. C

4. A

5. A

6. C

7. B

8. A

9. B

10. A

Lesson 24: Phrasal Verbs with DOWN

For the last week of the course, you're going to learn extra phrasal verbs that didn't quite fit into the other categories. I've grouped them by preposition, so in this lesson you'll learn 10 phrasal verbs with DOWN.

The format will be a little different – for each phrasal verb, I'll explain the meaning and give a short 2-line dialog to show how it's used.

count down

= say numbers in a descending order (5...4...3...2...1...)

"How was your New Year's party?"

"Oh, it was great! My kids really loved **counting down** to midnight."

We usually count down when waiting for the New Year to start, or when launching a rocket. In action movies, you often see the timer on a bomb **counting down** to zero, when the bomb will explode.

This phrasal verb is also used in the expression "I'm counting down the days until... (something you really want to happen, will happen)." For example, "I'm so stressed out with school. I'm counting down the days until I graduate."

gulp down / guzzle down (a drink)

= drink all of a drink very fast

"Why didn't Mark eat breakfast?"

"He was really late for work. He just **gulped down** his coffee and ran out the door."

There's a small difference between **gulp down** and **guzzle down**. Usually, you **gulp down** a drink because you are in a rush, you have no time. And you **guzzle down** a drink because you are greedy and you want to drink a lot of it. For example, "He **guzzled down** an entire liter of soda at lunch."

narrow down (something)

= reduce the number of options to make it easier to decide

“Have you picked a college yet?”

“No... I was accepted to 8 schools, and I’ve **narrowed it down** to three – New York University, Colgate University, and Hamilton College.”

The phrasal verb **narrow down** is used when going from many options to few options. You can also say that the police have **narrowed down** the number of suspects in the investigation of a crime.

be/get bogged down

= when progress becomes extremely slow (almost stopped) due to external circumstances

“Whatever happened to that health care reform that was proposed last year? Did it ever go into effect?”

“I don’t think so. It seems to be **bogged down** in government bureaucracy.”

A few common uses of **bogged down** include:

- Laws, applications, and other official things getting bogged down in bureaucracy or paperwork
- People getting bogged down in too much work or too much e-mail needing a response
- Projects getting bogged down with too many details, or bad management
- TV series and movies getting bogged down because the action is progressing too slowly, and it becomes boring

knock (something/someone) down

= hit a person or object so that they fall

“How’d you get that bruise on your knee?”

“Some lady was rushing to catch a bus, and she crashed into me and **knocked me down**! Then she didn’t even stop to help me get up.”

Knocking someone/something down is usually accidental, but it’s possible to be intentional. For example, when you go bowling, you try to **knock down** the pins by using the ball. Another phrasal verb for this action is **knock over**.



step down
= **decide to leave a position of authority**

“After thirty years with the company, the president is **stepping down** in December.”

“ Really? Who’s going to take her place?”

Leaders often **step down** because of some scandal, although this is not always the case. **Step down** is only used for positions of authority or importance. When a regular worker decides to leave his/her job, we say they resign (formal) or quit (informal).

tone (something) down
= **make something more moderate (less strong or extreme)**

“Is that movie OK for kids?”

“Yeah. This director’s last movie was pretty violent, but he’s **toned it down** in this film.”

Things you can **tone down** include:

- words/comments to make them less offensive or less controversial
- aspects of your personality, in certain social situations
- excessive makeup or bright colors in your clothing

play (something) down

= try to minimize the importance of something

“Did you see the interview with that famous singer?”

“Yeah. I noticed he really tried to **play down** the rumors about him cheating on his wife.”

People often try to **play down** unpleasant facts or possibilities. The opposite of **play down** is **play up** – meaning to emphasize something and try to bring attention to it. For example, fast food restaurants **play up** the great taste of their food and **play down** the negative effects on your health.

dumb (something) down

= make something SO easy and simple that even an idiot could understand it

“How was class?”

“Kinda boring. There was one student who didn’t understand the lesson and kept asking questions, so the teacher spent half an hour **dumbing it down** for him.”

This expression can be used for making a complex topic simple so that regular people can understand it. But it’s often used for making a regular topic even simpler so that not-very-intelligent people can understand it. This phrasal verb is informal.

turn (something/someone) down

= say “no” to an offer or invitation

“Did you get that job you interviewed for?”

“Yes... but I **turned it down**. The salary just wasn’t very good, and I’d like to find a better opportunity.”

You might already know the phrasal verb **turn down** meaning to reduce the volume of music or the TV – but here’s another way to use it. **Turn down** is commonly used when saying “no” to a job offer, opportunity, or invitation to go out on a date.

You’ve learned 10 new phrasal verbs with DOWN. Take the practice quiz, try the writing exercises, and log in tomorrow for Lesson 25.

Quiz – Lesson 24

Question 1

I’ve read all the job applications and _____ it down to the 5 most promising candidates for this position.

- A bogged
- B narrowed
- C turned

Question 2

The pastor _____ down a glass of water and continued his sermon.

- A gulped
- B knocked
- C toned

Question 3

I’m going to _____ down as volunteer coordinator - it's just too much work for me to do in my spare time.

- A dumb
- B play
- C step

Question 4

Sarah's 9 months pregnant - she's _____ down the days until the baby arrives.

- A counting
- B knocking
- C narrowing

Question 5

Dave asked Rachel out to dinner, but she _____ him down, saying he wasn't her type.

- A guzzled
- B stepped
- C turned

Question 6

Every time I come home, my dog jumps on me and almost _____ me down.

- A bogs
- B knocks
- C tones

Question 7

Sorry - I still don't understand your article about quantum physics. You're going to have to _____ it down even further for me.

- A dumb
- B play
- C turn

Question 8

That politician has very strong views on abortion, but he _____ it down when talking to the media.

- A counts
- B gulps
- C tones

Question 9

I can't get any of my own work done, because I keep getting _____ down with requests from my colleagues.

- A bogged
- B dumbbed
- C knocked

Question 10

I tried to _____ down the fact that I'd gotten a tattoo, but my mother still wasn't happy about it.

- A play
- B step
- C tone

Writing Exercises

Remember to use the phrasal verb in your answer!

1. What's something that you're **counting down** the days until it happens?
2. Describe a time when you had to **narrow down** your options.
3. Have you ever **turned down** a job offer or invitation?
4. Describe a project you were working on that got **bogged down**. What was the cause of the delay?
5. Has anyone ever **knocked you down**?

Want to get corrections? [E-mail me](#) your answers!

Answers – Quiz 24

1. B
2. A
3. C
4. A
5. C
6. B
7. A
8. C
9. A
10. A

Image source: [Stefan Grazer](#)

Lesson 25: Phrasal Verbs with ON/IN

For the last week of the course, you're going to learn extra phrasal verbs that didn't quite fit into the other categories. I've grouped them by preposition, so in this lesson you'll learn 5 phrasal verbs with ON and 5 phrasal verbs with IN.

The format will be a little different – for each phrasal verb, I'll explain the meaning and give a short 2-line dialog to show how it's used.

frown on (something)

= disapprove of it; consider it wrong or unacceptable

"Why don't you want to dance?"

"Well, I never really learned how. I grew up in a very religious family that **frowned on** dancing."

Frown on can be followed by a noun or by a verb in the -ING form.

Frown on + noun:

- My parents **frown on** tattoos.
- Society tends to **frown on** people who are introverted.

Frown on + verb-ING:

- The company **frowns on** using the internet at work for personal things.
- My sister **frowns on** taking medicine – she believes in all-natural remedies.

egg (someone) on

= encourage/pressure someone to do something bad/mischievous

"I don't smoke. Do you?"

"No. I tried a cigarette when I was 14 – my older brother was **egging me on** – but I thought it was disgusting."

The phrasal verb **egg (someone) on** is often used for peer pressure – when kids or teenagers pressure other kids or teenagers to do something that is not completely correct or acceptable.

prey on (someone)

= maliciously take advantage of the person

“A lot of scammers **prey on** senior citizens.”

“I know – my grandmother used to receive tons of fake letters asking for money.”

Prey on has two meanings. When talking about animals, it means that one animal eats another:

- Spiders **prey on** flies and other insects.
- Owls **prey on** mice.
- Sharks **prey on** other smaller fish.

When talking about people, it's when a person with bad intentions takes advantage of another person. Criminals often **prey on** tourists who come to a new city and aren't familiar with the area. Sometimes men **prey on** young girls over the internet.

rub off on (someone)

= when an aspect of one person's personality transfers to another person

“You seem really excited about this new business opportunity.”

“I was actually hesitant at first, but I think my partner's enthusiasm has **rubbed off on me.**”

When a characteristic of another person begins to influence you, and you begin to have that same characteristic, we say the other person **rubbed off on** you. This phrasal verb can be used for transferring positive characteristics (enthusiasm, optimism, sense of humor) or negative characteristics (sarcasm, sadness, a bad mood).

zero/hone in on (something)
= target or focus on it specifically

“We need to figure out a way to get more customers in our store.”

“Let’s talk to our former customers and **hone in on** the reasons they’re not buying – then we’ll know exactly what we need to improve.”

Both **zero in on** and **hone in on** refer to a very targeted focus on a specific area.

tuck in
= put the bottom of your shirt into your pants

“Did your high school have a uniform?”

“Yup. We had to wear the official school shirt – and it always had to be **tucked in**.”

The opposite of **tucked in** is **untucked** (when your shirt is outside your pants).

rein in
= stop someone/something from getting out of control

“Looks like the income tax is going up this year.”

“They raise taxes every year – I really wish the government would learn to **rein in** its spending.”

In this example, the government’s spending is getting out of control, resulting in higher taxes – and the person wishes the government would **rein in** the spending – control it and not let it increase.

You can also **rein in** a person who is getting out of control, for example, if you take your husband to an electronics store, and he really loves electronics, you’d have to **rein him in** to stop him from buying everything in the store.

pitch in

= contribute your work or effort to help someone

“How did you finish painting the house so fast?”

“It was definitely a big job, but our neighbors **pitched in**, so we were able to get it done in a single weekend.”

Pitch in is often used for collective projects, in which multiple people come together to work on it. For example, the entire community can **pitch in** to help clean up a city park.

chime in

= add a comment to a conversation/discussion

“That meeting took forever!”

“You’re telling me. The problem is that people keep **chiming in** with new suggestions, and nothing ever gets finalized.”

The phrasal verb **chime in** is used when someone makes a welcome contribution to a conversation. If a person interrupts or makes an unwelcome comment in a conversation, you can use the phrasal verb **butt in**, which you learned in Lesson 12.

sink in

= finally understand or feel the effects of some knowledge

“How does it feel to be a college graduate?”

“It’s weird not being a student, for the first time in 16 years. That’s going to take a while to **sink in**!”

The phrasal verb **sink in** is often used when you hear some shocking news and it will take some time to fully accept it or feel its effects. It can also be used for major life changes that will take some time to get used to, as in the example of graduating from college and not being a student anymore. Finally, **sink in** is used when you

learn a fact that is difficult to comprehend, and it will take some time to completely understand it.

You've learned 10 new phrasal verbs with ON and IN. Take the practice quiz, try the writing exercises, and log in tomorrow for Lesson 26.

Quiz – Lesson 25

Question 1

All our friends _____ to help throw Rob and Susan a surprise anniversary party.

- A chimed in
- B egged us on
- C pitched in

Question 2

My mother _____ parents who let their kids play video games all day.

- A frowns on
- B reins in
- C preys on

Question 3

You should _____ your shirt - it looks more professional.

- A hone in on
- B sink in
- C tuck in

Question 4

Brad has gotten a lot more organized since he got married. His wife must be _____ him.

- A pitching in
- B rubbing off on
- C zeroing in on

Question 5

I couldn't believe I'd gotten the promotion. It only started to _____ when I was given the best office in the building.

- A chime in
- B egg on
- C sink in

Question 6

This fitness program _____ belly fat and will help you get a flat stomach in just 6 weeks.

- A frowns on
- B preys on
- C zeroes in on

Question 7

My father got really angry at the travel agent when our flight was canceled. I had to _____ to stop him from making a scene.

- A egg him on
- B rein him in
- C rub off on him

Question 8

My wife and I were discussing where to go out for dinner, and our son _____ and said he'd like to have Chinese food.

- A chimed in
- B honed in
- C tucked in

Question 9

Our teenage daughter dyed her hair purple because all of her friends were _____.

- A egging her on
- B pitching in
- C reining her in

Question 10

Bullies often _____ kids who are shy or who have low self-esteem.

- A prey on
- B rub off on
- C sink in

Writing Exercises

Remember to use the phrasal verb in your answer!

1. What's something you **frown on**?
2. Has anyone ever **rubbed off on** you?
3. Describe a time when you **pitched in**.
4. When you were a child/teenager, did anyone ever **egg you on** to do something? How did you respond?
5. Describe a time when you learned or experienced something that took some time to **sink in**.

Want to get corrections? [E-mail me](#) your answers!

Answers – Quiz 25

1. C
2. A
3. C
4. B
5. C
6. C
7. B
8. A
9. A
10. A

Lesson 26: Phrasal Verbs with OUT

For the last week of the course, you're going to learn extra phrasal verbs that didn't quite fit into the other categories. I've grouped them by preposition, so in this lesson you'll learn 10 phrasal verbs with OUT.

The format will be a little different – for each phrasal verb, I'll explain the meaning and give a short 2-line dialog to show how it's used.

branch out

= **expand or extend your interests into a new area**

"So, what exactly does your company do?"

"We repair electronics. We started out just fixing computers, and recently we've **branched out** into cell phones and tablets as well."

The phrasal verb **branch out** can be used for businesses that expand into new sectors, as in the example. You can also use it when a person enters a different area of interest than what they normally do: if you are really into science, you could **branch out** by taking an art class.

weed out

= **identify and remove/eliminate unwanted elements from a group**

"Is that graduate program hard to get into?"

"It's pretty selective. First there's an entrance exam to **weed out** the unqualified candidates, and then there's a round of interviews to select the best from among those who pass the exam."

The phrasal verb **weed out** comes from gardening. When you have a garden of flowers or vegetables, the unwanted plants that grow spontaneously are called "weeds." What do you do with weeds? You remove them from the garden! So the phrasal verb **weed out** is used for removing any undesirable elements from a group.

zone out

= lose concentration; not pay attention to your surroundings

“Do you have a long commute?”

“90 minutes each way. But it’s not so bad – I usually listen to music and **zone out**.”

People often **zone out** while listening to music. It’s also possible to **zone out** when you’re in a boring class or talking to a boring person. When you’ve **zoned out**, and someone says your name or asks you a direct question, it often takes a moment for you to return your attention to the situation.

count (someone) out

= the person will not participate in an activity

“We’re putting together a volleyball team to play on Thursday nights – do you and your sister wanna join?”

“I’d love to! But my sister has class on Thursdays, so you’ll have to **count her out**.”

It’s also common to say “**count me out**” when you don’t want to participate in something. The opposite of **count me out** is **count me in** – say this when you WILL participate. For example: “There’s a free pizza party at the bar on Friday? Count me in!”

kick (someone) out

= expel the person from a house, school, or group

“I heard Peter and Helen are no longer together.”

“It’s true. Peter’s been staying with his brother ever since Helen **kicked him out**.”

The three most common situations when we use the phrasal verb **kick someone out** are:

- When someone kicks a family member, boyfriend/girlfriend, or roommate out of the house or apartment;
- When a student gets kicked out of school or a study program – usually because they did something bad;
- When a person is kicked out of a group or community – again, usually for bad behavior.

When a person is expelled/dismissed from their job, we don't use "kicked out" – instead, we usually say they were "fired" or "laid off."

tough/ride it out

= endure an unpleasant situation/experience until the end

"How's your summer job going?"

"Not so great. My supervisor is making my life miserable. But I need the money, so I can **tough it out** for two more months."

When you **tough out** or **ride out** a situation, you know that there is an end point – like in this example of a temporary summer job. So you decide you can continue to the end despite the difficulty or suffering.

whip (something) out

= remove something from a place very quickly

"I think it's funny how everyone **whips out** their cell phones the instant the airplane lands."

"True! People can't stand to be disconnected for very long nowadays."

Whip out usually refers to removing an object quickly from your pocket, purse, or bag.

jump/leap out at (someone)

= when a particular fact catches your attention

“Did you read that article on the current state of education in the U.S.?”

“Yeah, and what really **jumped out at** me was the fact that one in three Americans wouldn’t even pass the citizenship test. It’s unbelievable!”

The phrasal verb **jump out at** or **leap out at** is used when one specific element in a text, TV show, or situation is especially noticeable or intriguing to you – as in this example, where the reader of the article thought the statistic about one in three Americans failing the citizenship test was the most prominent fact in the article.

crank (something) out

= produce a lot of that thing very fast

“Hey, how’s that book you’re writing coming along?”

“Well, my deadline’s coming up at the end of the month, and I’ll need to **crank out** six more chapters by then!”

Crank out can be used for creative production – cranking out lots of articles, books, songs, ideas, etc. – or for physical objects, like a company that **cranks out** lots of new products.

conk out

1) fall asleep

2) when a machine breaks or stops functioning

Example #1:

“Did your kids have fun at the amusement park?”

“They sure did! They ran around so much that they both **conked out** during the drive home.”

Example #2:

“Sorry – my scanner just **conked out**. Is it OK if I send you this document a little later?”

“Sure, no problem.”

The phrasal verb **conk out** is informal, and it can be used for both people and machines. For people, it means to fall asleep – and another similar phrasal verb is **zonk out**. In the case of machines, it means when the machine stops functioning – and an equivalent phrasal verb is **break down**.

You’ve learned 10 new phrasal verbs with OUT. Take the practice quiz, try the writing exercises, and log in tomorrow for Lesson 27.

Quiz – Lesson 26

Question 1

I _____ out on the couch and missed the end of the movie.

- A conked
- B counted
- C kicked

Question 2

He _____ out his camera to take a picture of the parrot before it flew away.

- A branched
- B jumped
- C whipped

Question 3

We need to test all these devices and _____ out the ones that are defective.

- A crank
- B weed
- C zone

Question 4

If you're all going to go surfing, _____ me out - I'm not into water sports.

- A count
- B kick
- C ride

Question 5

It was a great book all around, but what really _____ out at me was the character development.

- A branched
- B leapt
- C toughed

Question 6

This area is getting more and more expensive to live in, but I'll need to _____ it out for another 6 months until I finish school

- A conk
- B tough
- C weed

Question 7

My daughter talks about nothing but clothes and boys. I wish she'd _____ out a little bit.

- A branch
- B count

C zone

Question 8

That singer is very successful - she's been _____ out hit after hit.

A cranking

B kicking

C riding

Question 9

William was _____ out of the martial arts school after they caught him stealing gear and equipment.

A jumped

B kicked

C whipped

Question 10

I was so embarrassed when I _____ out in class and the teacher asked me a question three times before I heard her.

A branched

B cranked

C zoned

Writing Exercises

Remember to use the phrasal verb in your answer!

1. Describe a time when you **branched out** and tried something new or different.
2. Do you know anyone who has been **kicked out**?
3. Describe a situation where you decided to **tough it out** until the end.
4. What's something that has **jumped out at** you in the news recently?
5. What's one activity that, if your friends invited you to do it, you would say "**count me out**"?

Want to get corrections? [E-mail me](#) your answers!

Answers – Quiz 26

1. A
2. C
3. B
4. A
5. B
6. B
7. A
8. A
9. B
10. C

Lesson 27: Phrasal Verbs with OFF

For the last week of the course, you're going to learn extra phrasal verbs that didn't quite fit into the other categories. I've grouped them by preposition, so in this lesson you'll learn 10 phrasal verbs with OFF.

The format will be a little different – for each phrasal verb, I'll explain the meaning and give a short 2-line dialog to show how it's used.

polish off

= consume food or drink completely

"I'm hungry."

"There are two pieces of pizza left in the fridge; why don't you **polish them off**?"

The phrasal verb **polish off** can be used as an informal way to say "finish" – for example, if you say, "I've just **polished off** the last book in the series" it means "I've just finished reading the last book." However, it's most frequently used for completely finishing some food or drink.

goof off

= act silly, not concentrate, not be serious

"What's the hardest part about being a middle school teacher?"

"Getting all the kids to stop **goofing off** and pay attention!"

When someone is **goofing off**, they are acting silly instead of concentrating on the task they should be doing. Students often **goof off** in class by talking and laughing during the lesson, passing notes to each other, or playing with their cell phones. Adults can **goof off** too – by joking, chatting, and/or doing crazy things instead of doing their work. Another phrasal verb for this is **goof around**.

put (someone) off

= make the person stop liking something or someone

“Why didn’t you go on a second date with Nathan?”

“Well, he took me out to dinner on the first date – and I was really **put off** by his terrible table manners.”

You already learned the phrasal verb **put (something) off** meaning to delay or procrastinate a task – but this is a different meaning. An experience that **puts you off** makes you stop liking someone or something – like in the dialog, where the girl was **put off** by Nathan’s disgusting eating habits – so she stopped liking him and didn’t want to go on a second date.

throw (someone) off

= when something unexpected distracts, surprises, or confuses you

“What did you think of the English test?”

“It was fine for the most part, but the section on the past perfect **threw me off** – we hadn’t reviewed that at all.”

In this example, the student wasn’t expecting questions about the past perfect to appear on the English test – so when she saw the section about past perfect, it surprised and confused her – and the phrasal verb for this situation is “It **threw her off**.”

fend off (an attack)

= successfully resist or defend yourself from something

“I have fifteen years of martial arts experience.”

“Wow – so if someone attacked you on the street, you could probably **fend them off**.”

Fend off is used for successful defense against real physical attacks – but it can also be used in the case of “attacks” that are not violent; for example, a celebrity trying to **fend off** reporters and photographers.

“to top it off”

= add something extra to make a good situation better or a bad situation worse

“What’s the matter?”

“It was an awful week at work – and **to top it off**, I’m going to have to work the entire weekend.”

This dialog gives a negative example – a stressful week that is made even worse by the fact that the person will need to work over the weekend, too. But you can also use the expression “**to top it off**” in a positive sense; for example, “She was accepted into the country’s best university – and **to top it off**, she got a full scholarship.”

dash off / rush off

= leave a place very quickly

“Have you seen Amanda today?”

“Only for about five minutes. She got home from work, changed clothes, and **dashed off** to volleyball practice.”

People often **dash off** or **rush off** when they have very little time, or they might be late for something.

storm off / stomp off

= leave a place angrily

“My boyfriend and I can’t agree on where to spend our summer vacation. We had an argument about it and he just **stormed off**.”

“Well, maybe when he comes back you can discuss the issue more calmly.”

When a person goes out of a room, house, or building angry or in a bad mood, we say they **stormed off** or **stomped off**. In this example, the boyfriend **stormed off** after arguing with his girlfriend about vacation plans.

brush (someone) off

= dismiss a person as if they were not important

“Did you talk to the director about the problem?”

“I tried – but he **brushed me off** and said I should make an appointment with his secretary for next week.”

The phrasal verb **brush (someone) off** is similar to the phrasal verb **blow (someone) off**, which means to ignore a person rudely. The difference is that when you **blow (someone) off**, the rudeness is more obvious than when you **brush (someone) off**.

face off

= when two people, teams, or groups confront or compete against each other

“What are you up to tonight?”

“Watching the basketball game. The Boston Celtics and the Miami Heat are **facing off** for the first time this season.”

The phrasal verb **face off** is often used for sports games or athletic competitions. However, it can also be used for two people confronting each other in a debate, or two companies confronting each other in a legal battle.

You’ve learned 10 new phrasal verbs with OFF. Take the practice quiz, try the writing exercises, and log in tomorrow for Lesson 28.

Quiz – Lesson 27

Question 1

My best friend is really beautiful. Whenever she goes to a club, she has to _____ off dozens of men.

- A fend
- B put
- C throw

Question 2

The two finalists will _____ off on Saturday in the last round of the dance competition.

- A brush
- B face
- C polish

Question 3

I was _____ off by the terrible customer service in that store. I don't think I'll shop there again.

- A goofed
- B put
- C topped

Question 4

My son _____ off to his room after I took away his video game as punishment for not doing his homework.

- A polished
- B rushed

C stomped

Question 5

It _____ me off when someone asked me a random question in the middle of my presentation.

A goofed

B dashed

C threw

Question 6

He _____ off as soon as the party ended; he didn't even say goodbye.

A brushed

B faced

C rushed

Question 7

Our vacation was a disaster. The flights were delayed, the kids got sick, and to _____ it off, it rained the entire week.

A put

B storm

C top

Question 8

My friends and I _____ off three bottles of wine during dinner.

A fended

B polished

C threw

Question 9

I couldn't enjoy the movie because the teenagers sitting behind me were _____ off the entire time.

- A facing
- B goofing
- C topping

Question 10

I feel bad that I _____ Carla off when she wanted to talk to me, but I just didn't have time to listen.

- A brushed
- B put
- C stomped

Writing Exercises

Remember to use the phrasal verb in your answer!

1. Describe a situation when an experience you had really **put you off**.
2. When was the last time something **threw you off**?
3. Talk about a time when something good got better, or something bad got worse – using **“to top it off.”**
4. Have you ever **stormed off**? (or seen someone else **storm off**?)
5. What was the last food or drink you **polished off**?

Want to get corrections? [E-mail me](#) your answers!

Answers – Quiz 27

1. A
2. B
3. B
4. C
5. C
6. C
7. C
8. B
9. B
10. A

Lesson 28: Phrasal Verbs with UP

For the last week of the course, you're going to learn extra phrasal verbs that didn't quite fit into the other categories. I've grouped them by preposition, so in this lesson you'll learn 10 phrasal verbs with UP.

The format will be a little different – for each phrasal verb, I'll explain the meaning and give a short 2-line dialog to show how it's used.

chalk (something) up to (something)
= say that one thing is caused by another thing

"I made a lot of mistakes during my first week on the job."

"Well, you can **chalk it up to** inexperience. You'll get better with time."

If you **chalk (one thing) up to (another thing)**, you are saying that the second thing caused the first one – as in the example, where the person's mistakes were caused by her inexperience in the new job.

psych (yourself) up to (do something)
= mentally prepare yourself for an activity that will require courage

"I'm trying to **psych myself up** for the interview tomorrow – this will be my first time appearing on TV."

"Don't worry, I'm sure you'll do great!"

People often **psych themselves up** for:

- participating in a sports event or competition
- giving a presentation or performance
- doing an adventurous activity like skydiving

gear up for (something)

= get ready for an action/event in the near future

“Are you still singing in that choral group?”

“Yup, and right now we’re **gearing up for** our big Christmas concert – you should come!”

The phrasal verb **gear up** means preparation in general (mental and physical). It is different from **psych up** because the coming event doesn’t necessarily need courage; it just needs some early preparation and organization.

rack up (something)

= acquire a lot of it – especially points, goals, money, and awards

“Who do you think is the most promising player on the team?”

“Definitely Jessica – she’s **racked up** ten goals in the first four games of the season. She’s off to an incredible start.”

Rack up is often used with sports statistics, but you can also **rack up** money (in debt or in sales), **rack up** a number of awards or prizes, or even **rack up** an impressive number of punishments or convictions for breaking the rules or the law.

divvy up (something)

= divide it among various people

“Do your husband and kids help with the housework?”

“Yeah – we **divvy up** the chores pretty evenly.”

The phrasal verb **divvy up** is often used for dividing things equally, as in the example. However, it’s also possible to **divvy up** things unequally – you can **divvy up** a bag of cookies and give 10 to one person who is really hungry, 5 to another, and 2 to someone else who is not very hungry.

stack up against (something)
= compare to it

“I just got the newest tablet computer.”

“Really? How does it **stack up against** the older model?”

The phrasal verb **stack up against** is often used in questions about how two products compare, as in the example. You can also use it for sports teams, cities, and other things you are comparing.

turn up
= appear

“Did you ever find that hat you were looking for?”

“Yes! I really thought I had lost it, but then it **turned up** while I was cleaning out my closet.”

You probably already know the phrasal verb **turn up** meaning to increase the volume of music or the TV – but this is another definition. It can be used when objects or people appear. In the case of objects, it’s often used for things that were lost and later found, as in the example of the hat. When talking about people, you can say a person **turned up** when they arrive at a place. In this context, it is similar to the phrasal verb **show up**.

be cooped up
= be confined to a small space

“Do you remember that big winter storm we had last year?”

“I sure do! We were **cooped up** in the house for three days – it was impossible to drive anywhere.”

The phrasal verb **cooped up** can be used for people or animals. You're usually **cooped up** because of some external circumstance – like bad weather. Or you can be **cooped up** in the library because you need to study all day.

shape up

#1 – proceed; develop

#2 – improve to reach a satisfactory standard

Example 1:

"How's the conference planning going?"

"Good – we've been pretty organized, so everything is **shaping up** nicely."

Example 2:

"The boss is mad at Betty because she never finishes her work on time."

"If she doesn't **shape up**, she's gonna lose her job."

In the first example, you can see **shape up** used to say that the conference planning is proceeding or developing well. In the second example, **shape up** is used to express the idea that Betty needs to improve her behavior until it is OK, because at the moment, it is less than satisfactory.

make up for (something)

= compensate for it

"How are your guitar lessons going?"

"I'm making progress. I have no musical talent whatsoever, but I **make up for** it with lots of practice!"

The phrasal verb **make up for** is used when you do something to compensate for a loss or lack in another area – as in the example, where frequent practice can compensate for a lack of natural talent.

You've learned 10 new phrasal verbs with UP. Take the practice quiz, try the writing exercises, and log in tomorrow for Lesson 29.

Quiz – Lesson 28

Question 1

I completely forgot to call Rachel on her birthday - I'll offer to take her out to dinner to _____ it.

- A gear up for
- B make up for
- C stack up against

Question 2

I got a really high score the first time I ever went bowling - but I think we can _____ to beginner's luck!

- A be cooped up
- B chalk it up
- C psych myself up

Question 3

We need to decide how to _____ the project tasks among the team members.

- A divvy up
- B rack up
- C shape up

Question 4

The president is _____ for a long trip to Europe and Asia.

- A chalking up

B gearing up

C turning up

Question 5

My dog likes to run around; he hates being _____ inside the apartment.

A cooped up

B made up

C shaped up

Question 6

A lot of college students _____ thousands of dollars in credit card debt by the time they graduate.

A divvy up

B rack up

C turn up

Question 7

Fred is _____ to ask the most beautiful girl at the party to dance.

A cooping up

B making up for

C psyching himself up

Question 8

A surprising number of people _____ at our ten-year high school reunion - it was great to see all my old friends.

A geared up

B stacked up

C turned up

Question 9

She told her boyfriend that if he didn't _____ and start looking for a job, their relationship was over.

- A psych up
- B rack up
- C shape up

Question 10

How does London _____ New York in terms of cost of living?

- A chalk up to
- B divvy up
- C stack up against

Writing Exercises

Remember to use the phrasal verb in your answer!

1. Describe a time when you had to **psych yourself up** to do something.
2. Have you ever believed you lost something, but then it **turned up** later?
3. How does your current house/apartment **stack up against** the last place you lived?
4. Do you know anyone who needs to **shape up**?
5. What's one area in which you lack something, and what do you do to **make up for** it?

Want to get corrections? [E-mail me](mailto:shayna@espressoenglish.net) your answers!

Answers – Quiz 28

1. B
2. B
3. A
4. B
5. A
6. B
7. C
8. C
9. C
10. C

Lesson 29:

Confusing Pairs of Phrasal Verbs

In this lesson, we're going to review the differences between some commonly confused phrasal verbs. For example, you learned that both **find out** and **figure out** mean to discover information... but you "find out" information from another source, and you "figure out" something by using your own thought and logic.



write down vs. write up

Both of these phrasal verbs mean to put information into written form. However, **write down** is usually used for short pieces of information - such as phone numbers and addresses - or taking notes while listening to a class or lecture. You **write down** small pieces of information so that you can remember or refer to them later.

Write up is used for taking a larger amount of information and putting it into a formal report that will probably be published or distributed to other people. For example, after a conversation with a colleague about a possible project, you can say "I'll **write up** a proposal and send it to the boss." This means you will take all the ideas that you discussed and organize them into an official document.

mix up vs. mess up

Both of these phrasal verbs refer to an error.

However, **mix up** is a very specific type of error - meaning to confuse or exchange two or more things. If you are cooking, and the food doesn't taste right, it could be because you **mixed up** the salt and the sugar!

Mess up refers to making a mistake in general. The mistake could be mixing up two things, or it could be something different. In the cooking example, you could **mess up** the recipe by adding too much pepper.

get around vs. get along

Get around is used for mobility and transportation. For example, New York City has an extensive subway system, so it's easy to **get around**. You could also say that it was difficult to **get around** on crutches after you broke your leg.

Get along is used for interpersonal relationships. Two people with a good relationship **get along** well. Two people who don't like each other **don't get along**. "Not get along" is often used as a diplomatic way to express the fact that you hate or have major problems with another person.

back off vs. back out vs. back down

All of these phrasal verbs are related to stopping an activity or not doing something, but there are some key differences in their meaning and use.

If you **back off**, you stop attacking someone (physically or verbally). For example, a robber might **back off** if he sees a policeman coming. **Back off** can also be used for "attacks" in terms of pressuring a person - if a friend is insisting that you eat a bacon cheeseburger, and you say no, but he keeps insisting, you could then tell him that you can't eat it for religious reasons - and he might **back off** (stop insisting).

Back down means to withdraw from a position, opinion, or proposal. For example, if you are in a meeting and you are arguing in support of a particular position, but you see that everyone else is against you, you could **back down** (stop holding to that position) so that the meeting can proceed.

Back down is used more for desisting from opinions, claims and ideas (which are not necessarily aggressive), whereas **back off** is used more for desisting from attacks.

Finally, **back out** means you don't do something you had previously committed to doing. If you promised to help your friend move to a new apartment, but then you call her later and say you're not available, then you are **backing out**. You can also use this phrasal verb when a company **backs out** of a business deal or potential contract, agreement, or partnership.

grow up vs. bring up

Both of these phrasal verbs are associated with children. However, a child **grows up** (becomes older); and the parents **bring up** (take care of and educate) the child. With **grow up**, the child is the subject; with **bring up**, the child is the object.

fill in vs. fill out vs. fill up

All of these phrasal verbs are related to completing something.

Both **fill in** and **fill out** are used for completing information on paper – we typically say **fill in** the blanks or the missing information, but **fill out** the form or application.

Fill up is used for three-dimensional spaces - for example, you can fill up a bottle with water. You can also say a place filled up with people - for example, "The nightclub really **filled up** after 11 PM."

put off vs. hold off

Both of these phrasal verbs mean to delay doing a task. The difference is that you **hold off** for some good reason, whereas you **put a task off** because you are lazy or procrastinating. The phrasal verb **hold off** is often followed by "until (the reason)." For example, if you need to make a major decision, but you want to talk to your husband before finalizing anything, you could say, "Let me **hold off** until I can talk to my husband about this."

tear up vs. tear down

Both of these phrasal verbs are related to destruction, but you **tear up** a piece of paper - a letter, article, etc. - and you **tear down** a three-dimensional structure like a building or a wall.

take out vs. take off

Both of these phrasal verbs relate to removing an object - but you **take something out** of an enclosed space, and you **take something off** of a surface. You would **take a plate off** the table, but you would **take a spoon out** of the drawer. To use examples from clothing and accessories, you can **take an object out** of your pocket or bag, but you would **take your shirt or shoes off** (remove the shirt or shoes from your body).

pass out vs. pass away

If a person **passes out**, they lose consciousness temporarily. If a person **passes away**, they die. It's definitely important not to get these two phrasal verbs mixed up!

You've finished Lesson 29 on confusing pairs of phrasal verbs. Take the practice quiz (there are no writing exercises today) - and log in tomorrow for Lesson 30.

Quiz – Lesson 29

Question 1

I'll need directions to the restaurant. Let me grab a pen and paper to _____.

- A write them down
- B write them up

Question 2

I _____ a few times while giving the presentation - there were one or two ideas I didn't explain well, and a few things I forgot to mention.

A messed up

B mixed up

Question 3

If you give me a map, I should be able to _____ the area without any help.

A get along

B get around

Question 4

You can't depend on Jerry for anything. He always says he's definitely going to things... and then _____.

A backs down

B backs off

C backs out

Question 5

I _____ in Russia, but I've been living in Canada since I was 20.

A brought up

B grew up

Question 6

To mail this package internationally, you'll need to _____ a customs form.

A fill in

B fill out

C fill up

Question 7

We should _____ on buying food for the party until we know how many people are coming.

A hold off

B put off

Question 8

That bridge is unsafe, so they're going to _____ and build a new one.

A tear it down

B tear it up

Question 9

Please take those books _____ of the boxes and put them on the shelf.

A off

B out

Question 10

My father remarried ten years after my mother _____.

A passed away

B passed out

Answers – Quiz 29

1. A
2. A
3. B
4. C
5. B
6. B
7. A
8. A
9. B
10. A

Image source: Nicolas [VIGNERON](#)

Lesson 30: Phrasal Verbs as Nouns

During this course, you've seen a few phrasal verbs that have both a noun and a verb form. One example is "work out" meaning "to do exercise." The noun form, "workout" means one session of exercise.

For example, you can say:

- I **work out** (do exercise) every Monday morning.
- That was a great **workout** (one session of exercise) last night!

As in this example, the verb form refers to the action, and the noun form often refers to one specific instance of that action.

There are three things to remember about phrasal verbs when used as nouns.

1) The verb form is always two words, and the noun form is always one word (or a hyphenated word).

let (someone) down = disappoint the person

letdown = a disappointing event

rip (someone) off = charge too much money

rip-off = a product that costs more than its fair value

Unfortunately there are no rules for when to use a hyphen and when not to.

2) The verb can take various forms: we can say "I worked out," "I'm working out," etc.

The noun form does not change - it is always workout (singular) or workouts (plural).

3) You can use "a," "the" and other determiners before the noun form, but not the verb form:

- **This workout** is great for your abs.
- The trip was **a letdown**.

- **The breakup** was mutual.
- There were **a lot of layoffs** at the company last year.
- We're making **some cutbacks** to save money.

Phrasal Verbs as Nouns: Dialog

Here's an interview with the owner of a coffeehouse (a café that also has live music) using 16 phrasal verbs as nouns. Listen to the dialog and see how they are used in the context – then watch the video for a quick explanation.

Interviewer: Carrie, I really enjoyed reading the **write-up** about your coffeehouse in the *New York Times*. Could you talk a bit about how you got started?

Carrie: Well, we started out as a tiny local coffee shop - it was mostly a **hangout** for college students and artists. The real **breakthrough** came when we started having live music - more and more people kept coming, and it just grew from there.

Interviewer: What's the average **turnout** like nowadays?

Carrie: Now we get about 50 people on weeknights, and two hundred on weekends. We just got the **go-ahead** from the city to build a second floor, so we'll be able to expand.

Interviewer: Did you have any major **setbacks** along the way?

Carrie: Tons! When we were starting to transition into the music business, money was tight, and that really caused a **buildup** of tension among the café employees. When we announced some **cutbacks** to staff benefits, there was a huge **outcry** and a number of people quit - so we were operating with a skeleton crew for a while.

Interviewer: Tell us about your **upbringing**. Did you always want to be an entrepreneur?

Carrie: No, I had never really considered it. But my parents raised me to work hard; they frowned on taking **handouts**. That's one reason I've funded the coffeehouse entirely with my own money.

Interviewer: So do you have to be rich to start a business? A lot of people would say you had an advantage.

Carrie: Honestly, I think the idea that you need a lot of money to fund a **startup** is a **cop-out**. A lot of super successful entrepreneurs were college **dropouts**, and they founded their companies with practically nothing.

Interviewer: What advice would you give to an aspiring entrepreneur?

Carrie: Be persistent. The first few years are a real struggle, but if you keep going, the **payoff** is incredible. Also, recognize the fact that **screw-ups** are part of the process - you'll make a lot of mistakes, but they're not the end of the world. Try to see them as learning experiences.

Video Explanation

The interviewer liked reading the **write-up** in the New York Times - in this case, **write-up** is equivalent to article.

Carrie's small coffee shop was originally a **hangout** for college students and artists - that means a specific place to spend time in a relaxed way.

She had a **breakthrough** when her café started offering live music. A **breakthrough** is a major success, or when you suddenly overcome an obstacle.

The average **turnout** at the coffeehouse is 50 people on weeknights and 200 on weekends. **Turnout** refers to the number of people who attend an event.

Carrie just got the **go-ahead** from the city to add a second floor to the building - that means she got permission.

The interviewer asks about any **setbacks** - a **setback** is an obstacle or difficulty that stops your progress, or makes you lose some progress.

Carrie then talks about a **buildup** of tension among employees during a time when the company had little money. A **buildup** is an accumulation – in other words, tension was increasing.

She had to announce **cutbacks** – reductions – of benefits for staff.

And there was a huge **outcry** – that's a protest or objection – from her employees.

The interviewer wants to know about Carrie's **upbringing** – that means the training and education she received from her parents/family when she was a child.

Carrie says her parents disapproved of taking **handouts** – a **handout** is something you receive for free.

She doesn't think you have to be rich to fund a **startup** – a new company that is just beginning.

In fact, she says the belief that you need lots of money is a **cop-out** - that means an excuse (usually a bad excuse) for not taking action.

She cites many successful entrepreneurs who are college **dropouts** – a **dropout** is a person who stopped studying and didn't complete the program.

Finally, Carrie encourages new entrepreneurs to be persistent because the **payoff** is great. A **payoff** is the benefit you receive after working hard and making sacrifices.

She also reminds everyone that **screw-ups** – mistakes – are a natural part of learning to run a business.

You've finished Lesson 30 about phrasal verbs as nouns. There's no practice quiz, but I do have some writing exercises for you.

Writing Exercises

1. What's one **setback** you've had in your personal or professional life?
2. What types of things cause an **outcry** in your country or community?
3. What was your favorite **hangout** when you were a teenager?
4. Talk about your **upbringing**. What kinds of values did your family teach you?
5. Describe a time when you were having difficulty, and then you suddenly had a **breakthrough**.

Want to get corrections? [E-mail me](#) your answers!

**Congratulations on finishing
Phrasal Verbs in Conversation!**

**I really enjoyed giving these lessons,
and I hope to see you in a future
course at Espresso English.**



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