

## Phrasal verbs

Words such as *in* or *on* which are used as prepositions before noun phrases (1) can also be used as particles after verbs (2). We can also use other words such as *away*, *back* or *out* as particles (3).

These verb + particle combinations (*sleep in*, *go out*) are called two-word verbs or phrasal verbs.

- 1 *I usually drink coffee **in the morning**. • He said he left the keys **on the table**.*
- 2 *I **slept in** this morning and missed my bus. • He **put on** his boots and overcoat.*
- 3 *I tried to catch the dog, but it **ran away**. • When will she **come back**? • Did you **go out** last night?*

Other phrasal verbs include: fall over, get through, go ahead, sit down, stand up, take off

Some phrasal verbs are used without an object (4) and others are used with an object. When the object is a noun phrase, we can usually put it before (5) or after the particle (6). When the object is a pronoun, we put it before the particle (7).

- 4 *It's time to **get up**. • I wish these flies would **go away**. • **Watch out!** (NOT ~~Watch out that!~~)*
- 5 *Don't **turn on** the light. You'll **wake up** the baby. • He **took off** his shoes.*
- 6 *Don't **turn** the light **on**. You'll **wake** the baby **up**. • He **took** his shoes **off**.*
- 7 *Don't **turn** it **on**. You'll **wake** him **up**. • He **took** them **off**. (NOT ~~He took off them.~~)*

After a phrasal verb we can also use a gerund (8) or a clause (9). We don't usually put clauses or very long phrases between the verb and the particle.

- 8 *Have you **given up** smoking? • They told us to **carry on** working. (NOT ... ~~to carry on work.~~)*
- 9 *Andy **pointed out** that we didn't have enough time. • You should **read over** what you've written. (NOT ~~You should read what you've written over.~~)*

We can use phrasal verbs with prepositions. These combinations of verb + particle + preposition are sometimes called three-word verbs. We put pronouns after the prepositions.

- 10 *This book is valuable and you should **hold on to** it. (NOT ~~hold on it hold it on to~~) • Go ahead and I'll **catch up with** you later. (NOT ~~I'll catch up you I'll catch you up~~)*

Others include: face up to, get round to, go along with, look forward to, watch out for

We often use phrasal verbs such as *put off* or *leave out* in informal situations (11) rather than other verbs with similar meanings such as *postpone* or *omit* which may sound more formal (12).

- 11 *Let's **put** the meeting **off** till next week. • Don't **leave out** the author's name.*
- 12 *We should **postpone** the meeting until next week. • You must not **omit** the author's name.*

### 15 Using a dictionary if necessary, rewrite these sentences in a more informal style, using appropriate forms of these phrasal verbs.

*cut back on      fill in      give up      go in      send back*  
*do away with      find out      go along with      go up      take off*

- 1 You should complete this form and return it with your payment.  
You have to .....
- 2 My father has abandoned his attempt to get the university to abolish tuition fees.  
My dad .....
- 3 It was necessary to reduce our spending after we discovered that our rent was increasing.  
We had to .....
- 4 Please observe local customs at the temple and remove your shoes before entering.  
Please .....

### 16 Complete this text with appropriate phrasal verbs using these verbs and particles.

*bend*   *breathe* (×2)   *go*   *lift*   *push*   *raise*   *stand*  
*away*   *back*   *down*   *in*   *out*   *up* (×3)

When you have to spend a lot of time sitting at a desk, it is important to take short breaks and stretch your neck and back. You can use this exercise to help you stretch.

(1) ..... your chair ..... to the side and stand up, making sure there is some space in front of you. (2) ..... straight, with your arms hanging loosely by your side.

Breathe in deeply as you (3) ..... your arms ..... over your head. Pause a moment.

Then (4) ..... slowly as you swing your arms forward, letting them fall as you

(5) ..... your whole body ..... until your hands are near your feet. Pause a moment.

Then, (6) ..... as you (7) ..... your body ..... very slowly, beginning with your hips, then your upper body, followed by your head and arms.

Repeat the exercise at least once before you (8) ..... to your desk again.



### 17 Choose A or B or both as appropriate sentences to use each time in creating this dialogue.

Ani: What's the meaning of 'reimburse'?

1 Raz: I don't know. (A) Let's look up it in the dictionary. (B) Let's look it up in the dictionary.

2 Ani: (A) Hand over the dictionary and I'll do it. (B) Hand it over the dictionary and I'll do it.

3 Raz: (A) I left behind it at home this morning. (B) I left it behind at home this morning.

4 (A) I think I put down beside my computer. (B) I think I put it down beside my computer.  
 Okay, so we can't use a dictionary. What's the context?

Ani: It says, 'They reimbursed his tuition fees.'

5 Raz: (A) Maybe it means they worked out what his tuition was.

(B) Maybe it means they worked what his tuition was out.

6 Ani: (A) But then it says he paid off some debts. (B) But then it says he paid off some.

7 Raz: (A) Maybe it means to pay back money to someone.

(B) Maybe it means to pay money back to someone.

8 Ani: (A) So, they gave back him the money for his tuition.

(B) So, they gave him back the money for his tuition.

Raz: Sounds good to me.

