

Phrasal verbs 1

This unit (and Grammar 20 and 21) assume that a wide range of phrasal verbs, and their grammatical types, are already known. These units focus on multiple meanings, and less well-known meanings of common phrasal verbs. Note that there may be other meanings for the verbs listed here.

Add up (make sense)

*His evidence just **doesn't add up**.*

Ask after (inquire about)

*Jim was **asking after** you.*

Back down (yield in an argument)

*Sheila was right, so Paul had to **back down**.*

Bargain for (take into account)

*We **hadn't bargained for** there being so much traffic, and we missed the plane.*

Bear (something) out (confirm the truth)

*Helen's alibi was **borne out** by her sister.*

Break down (lose control of the emotions)

*David **broke down** and wept when he heard the news.*

Break off (stop talking)

*He **broke off** to answer the phone.*

Break up (come to an end)

*The party **finally broke up** at 3.00 am.*

Bring (something) about (cause to happen)

*The crisis was **brought about** by Brenda's resignation.*

Bring (something) off (succeed in doing something)

*The team tried for years to win the competition and they finally **brought it off**.*

Bring (something) on (cause the onset of an illness)

*Sitting in the damp **brought on** his rheumatism.*

(cause trouble to happen to oneself)

*You have **brought this on / upon** yourself.*

Bring (someone) round (influence someone to your point of view)

*After much discussion, I **brought the committee round** to my point of view.*

Bring (something) up (mention)

*I feel I ought to **bring up** another small matter.*

Carry (something) off (complete successfully – perhaps despite a problem)

*Jane had a difficult role to play, but she **carried it off**.*

Carry out (complete a plan)

*The attack was successfully **carried out**.*

Catch on (become popular – colloquial)

*This new hair style is beginning to **catch on**.*

- Come about (happen)
*Let me explain how the situation **came about**.*
- Come down to (be in the end a matter of)
*It all **comes down to** whether you are prepared to accept less money.*
- Come in for (receive – especially criticism, blame)
*The government has **come in for** a lot of criticism over the decision.*
- Come off (take place successfully)
*I'm afraid that deal didn't **come off** after all.*
- Come out (appear)
*All the flowers **have come out**.*
*When the news **came out**, everyone was shocked.*
*Kate's new book **comes out** next month.*
- Come up (occur – usually a problem – colloquial)
*Look, something **has come up**, and I can't meet you.*
- Come up against (meet a difficulty)
*We've **come up against** a bit of a problem.*
- Come up to (equal – especially expectations, standard)
*The play didn't **come up to** expectations.*
- Come up with (think of – especially an answer, a plan, a solution)
*We still haven't **come up with** a solution to the problem.*
- Count on (rely on)
*Don't worry, you can **count on** me.*
- Crop up (happen unexpectedly – colloquial)
*I can't come to your party, something **has cropped up**.*
- Do away with (abolish – colloquial)
*Dog licences **have been done away with**.*
 (murder – colloquial)
*What if they **do away with** the old man?*
- Do (something) up (decorate – colloquial)
*We are **having** our living room **done up**.*
- Draw up (come to a stop)
*A white sports car **drew up** outside the door.*
- Draw up (organize – especially a document)
*The contract **is being drawn up** at the moment.*
- Drop in (pay a visit – colloquial)
***Drop in** any time you're passing.*
- Drop off (fall asleep – colloquial)
*The baby **has just dropped off**.*
- End up (finish in a certain way, or place)
*We **ended up** staying there for lunch.*
*The car **ended up** in a ditch.*
- Face up to (have courage to deal with – especially responsibilities)
*You have to **face up** to your responsibilities.*
- Fall about (show amusement – especially laughing – colloquial)
*Everyone **fell about** when Jane told her joke.*

LANGUAGE PRACTICE FOR ADVANCED

Fall back on (use as a last resort)

*If the worst comes to the worst, we've got our savings to **fall back on**.*

Fall for (be deceived by – colloquial)

*It was an unlikely story but he **fell for** it.*

(fall in love with – colloquial)

*I **fell for** you the moment I saw you.*

Fall out with (quarrel with)

*Peter has **fallen out with** his boss.*

Fall through (fail to come to completion)

*The plan **fell through** at the last minute.*

Feel up to (feel capable of doing)

*Old Mr Smith didn't **feel up to** walking all that way.*

Follow up (act upon a suggestion)

*Thanks for the information about that book. I'll **follow it up**.*

(take more action)

*We'll **follow up** this lesson next week.*

Get (something) across (be understood – especially get an idea across)

*I had the feeling I wasn't **getting** my meaning **across**.*

Get at (imply – about personal matters – colloquial)

*What **are** you **getting at** exactly?*

Get (someone) down (make to feel depressed – colloquial)

*This cold weather really **gets me down**.*

Get down to (begin to seriously deal with)

*It's time we **got down to** some real work.*

Get off (with something) (avoid punishment)

*Susan was punished but Alice **got off**.*

*They were lucky to **get off with** such light sentences.*

Get on for (approach a certain age / time / number)

*He must be **getting on for** seventy.*

Get on (make progress – especially in life)

*Sue is **getting on** very well in her new job.*

Get over (be surprised)

*I **couldn't get over** how well she looked.*

Get (something) over with (come to the end of something, usually unpleasant)

*I'll be glad to **get this awful business over with**.*

Get round to (find time to do – also around)

*Sorry, but I **haven't got round to** fixing the tap yet.*

Get up to (do something – usually bad when about children – colloquial)

*The children **are getting up to** something in the garden.*

*What **have you been getting up to** lately?*

1 Underline the best word or phrase to complete each sentence.

- 1 Jim completely fell for my *joke / story*.
- 2 The *conversation / meeting* didn't break up until late.
- 3 It seems that we've come up against rather a tricky *idea / problem*.
- 4 It must be getting on for *six o'clock / extremely well*.
- 5 The witness's evidence bore out *what Peter had said / as Peter said*.
- 6 I really should get down to my *homework / the weather*.
- 7 Unfortunately my *plan / suggestion* didn't quite come off.
- 8 Mary's new novel doesn't come up to her usual *expectation / standard*.
- 9 Last night I dropped off *at 11.30 / from 11.30 until 7.00*.
- 10 When David started speaking everyone fell about *in laughter / laughing*.



2 Complete each sentence with one word.

- 1 When I give an order I expect it to be*carried*..... out.
- 2 Getting up so early really gets me
- 3 It was a good idea, but I'm afraid it didn't quite off.
- 4 I'm afraid that your story doesn't really up.
- 5 I was so surprised when Harry got the job, I couldn't over it.
- 6 Julia's new book out next week.
- 7 Someone was after you in the club yesterday.
- 8 I tried to get an early night, but just as I was off, the phone rang.
- 9 Neil was too embarrassed to up the question of who would pay.
- 10 The police didn't up Bill's complaint about his neighbours.

LANGUAGE PRACTICE FOR ADVANCED

3 Read the text and decide which option (A, B, C or D) best fits each gap.

The Terrys were sitting calmly having afternoon tea in their lounge when the van (1) up outside. The words 'Reliable Removals – you can (2) us' were printed on the side of the van in large blue capitals. Soon afterwards, an enormous man covered in tattoos appeared on the doorstep. Tim opened the door. 'Sorry we're late, guv,' said the tattoo man. 'We hadn't (3) all the traffic on the motorway, otherwise we'd have been here sooner. Isn't that right, Lester?' His companion, an unshaven man roughly half his size, joined in: 'We didn't budge for a good half hour, and we (4) up coming off the motorway and going through the villages. We took a wrong turning and (5) up in a farmyard. Anyway, we're here now, so let's (6) some serious work.' Tim said, 'Erm, I think there's been some sort of misunderstanding, gentlemen.'

- | | | | |
|------------------|-------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| 1 A drew | B followed | C cropped | D called |
| 2 A ask after | B bear out | C count on | D draw up |
| 3 A got up to | B faced up to | C bargained for | D added up |
| 4 A brought | B ended | C broke | D came |
| 5 A added | B broke | C came | D ended |
| 6 A do away with | B come up against | C fall out with | D get down to |

4 Read the text and decide which option (A, B, C or D) best fits each gap.

When I woke up, it was (1) nine o'clock and I realized that I must have (2), and missed my train. I couldn't (3) how stupid I had been. Now I was the only person at the station, there were no taxis outside, and it was snowing. I certainly didn't (4) carrying my heavy bags back to the hotel, and as the waiting room was well heated, and I couldn't (5) a better plan, I decided to stay there for the night and save money. Unfortunately, there was one thing I hadn't (6) That was the arrival of a large group of drunken soldiers. ✂

- | | | | |
|--------------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| 1 A coming up with | B bringing off | C getting on for | D coming about |
| 2 A dropped off | B fallen through | C followed up | D got across |
| 3 A add up | B catch on | C get over | D fall for |
| 4 A get round to | B feel up to | C bargain for | D come in for |
| 5 A count on | B draw up | C get down to | D come up with |
| 6 A come down to | B bargained for | C got over with | D brought about |

5 Complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence, using the word given. Do not change the word given.

- 1 They didn't punish Karen, only gave her a warning.

GOT

Karen *got off with* a warning.

- 2 What sort of progress are you making in your new job?

GETTING

How are in your new job?

- 3 There were no taxis, so in the end I had to walk home.

UP

Because there were no taxis, I home.

- 4 I didn't expect to be doing so much work.

BARGAINED

I'm doing more work

- 5 Gemma doesn't get on with her next-door neighbour any more.

FALLEN

Gemma has her next-door neighbour.

- 6 I burst into tears when I heard the bad news.

DOWN

I when I heard the bad news.

- 7 The best solution was thought of by Sally.

CAME

Sally the best solution.

- 8 Soon it will be time for lunch.

GETTING

It's lunch time.

- 9 What happened confirmed the truth of Jack's prediction.

BORNE

Jack's prediction by subsequent events.

- 10 Carol has trouble communicating her ideas to others.

HER

Carol has trouble across.

➤ SEE ALSO

Grammar 20 and 21: Phrasal verbs
Consolidation 5: Units 17-21