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Grammar in Context: Telephone Phrasal Verbs

1 The following are common phrasal verbs we often use while on the telephone. Match the correct meaning with each phrasal verb.

1. g hold on

2. e put (a call) through

3. j get through

4. a hang up

5. l call up

6. m hang on

7. b call back

8. c pick up

9. d get off (the phone)

10. k get back to (someone)

11. i cut off

12. f switch off/turn off

13. h speak up
- a. put the receiver down

b. return someone’s call

c. answer a call, lift the receiver to take a call

d. stop talking on the phone

e. connect one caller to another

f. deactivate (a cell phone)

g. wait

h. talk louder

i. to be disconnected abruptly during a telephone conversation

j. to be connected to someone on the phone

k. return someone’s call

l. make a telephone call

m. wait

2 Some phrasal verbs are separable (e.g., *call someone back*); others are not. Complete the chart below by putting the phrasal verbs above in the correct column.

Separable	Not separable
<i>Put a call through</i>	<i>hold on</i>
<i>call back</i>	<i>get through</i>
<i>get back to (someone)</i>	<i>hang up</i>
<i>pick up</i>	<i>hang on</i>
<i>switch off/ turn off</i>	<i>get off (the phone)</i>
<i>call up</i>	<i>cut off</i>
	<i>speak up</i>

3 | Fill in the blanks with the correct phrasal verbs.

1. **Caller:** Hello. Could I speak to Lucia Rodriguez, please?
Receptionist: She's not in the office at the moment. Can I put you through to her voice mail?
Caller: Yes, thank you.
2. **Caller:** Could I speak to Emma, please?
Emma's mother: Sure. Hold on a second and I'll get her.
3. **Automated Operator:** Please hang up and try your call again. This is a recording.
4. **Mother:** Magdalena, could you get off the phone? I need to call Dad.
Daughter: Okay, mom.
5. **Chairperson of a meeting:** I would appreciate if everyone could switch off their cell phones. We have a lot of important things to discuss and we don't want to be interrupted.
6. **Caller:** Hi, it's Ahmed Mohamed calling. Could I speak to Martin Switzer please?
Receptionist: I'm sorry. He's not in at the moment. Can I take a message?
Caller: Yes, could you ask him to call me back when he gets in?
It's urgent.
Receptionist: Certainly.
7. **Voice mail recording:** Hi, you've reached Josh Wills in Accounting. I will be out of the office until July 2 but will be picking up my messages while I'm away. So please leave yours at the sound of the tone. Thanks and have a great day!
8. **Voice mail recording:** You've reached Julia and Ben. We're not available to take your call right now, but if you leave a message, we'll get back to you as soon as we can. Thanks.
9. **Caller:** I can't seem to get through. The line is always busy.