

PHRASAL VERBS

A phrasal verb is an idiom which consists of a verb followed by a preposition, a verb followed by an adverb, or a verb followed by an adverb, followed by a preposition. The phrasal verbs in the following examples are printed in bold type.

e.g. I **ran into** an old friend.

We **put off** washing the dishes.

They all **look up to** him.

In these examples, the phrasal verb **to run into** consists of the verb **to run** followed by the preposition **into**, the phrasal verb **to put off** consists of the verb **to put** followed by the adverb **off**, and the phrasal verb **to look up to** consists of the verb **to look** followed by the adverb **up**, followed by the preposition **to**.

Many phrasal verbs are used more often in informal English than in formal English. In most cases, the ideas expressed by such phrasal verbs may also be expressed by other phrases which are more likely to be used in formal English.

For instance in the table below, the phrasal verbs used in the preceding examples are listed in the left-hand column and other phrases with the same meanings are listed in the right-hand column.

Informal

to run into

to put off

to look up to

Formal

to meet unexpectedly

to postpone

to admire

It should be noted that the use of many phrasal verbs varies among the different dialects of English. For instance, in order to express the idea of contacting someone by means of the telephone, the expression **to ring someone up** is frequently used in British English; whereas the expression **to call someone** is frequently used in American English.

Because of differences in dialect, the forms of the verbs and the meanings given may vary from one dictionary to another. In addition, some phrasal verbs have more than one meaning. The meanings provided in this chapter are samples of meanings which are used in North American English.

1. Phrasal verbs consisting of a verb followed by a preposition

Some phrasal verbs consist of a verb followed by a preposition. As has been seen in previous chapters, it is very common for English verbs to be followed by prepositions. However, in the case of a phrasal verb, the verb followed by the preposition forms an expression with an idiomatic meaning.

For instance, the phrasal verb **to come across** is an idiomatic expression with the meaning **to find**. Similarly, the phrasal verb **to frown on** is an idiomatic expression with the meaning **to disapprove of**. e.g. We **came across** an old diary while we were cleaning out the attic.

The workers **frowned on** the practice of smoking in the office.

It should be noted that some phrasal verbs consisting of a verb followed by a preposition can be used in the Passive Voice.

e.g. The practice of smoking in the office **was frowned on** by the workers.

The children **were looked after** by their aunt.

In these examples, the phrasal verbs **to frown on** and **to look after** are used in the Passive Voice.

The following are examples of phrasal verbs which consist of a verb followed by a preposition. Each phrasal verb is followed by its meaning and an example of its use.

Verbs Followed by Prepositions

abide by: adhere to
account for: explain
ask for: request
bank on: depend on
bear with: be patient with
border on: be near, be next to
break into: enter by force
build on: develop from
burst into: suddenly enter
call for: demand
call on: ask, order
come across: find accidentally
come upon: discover
confide in: share a secret
count on: depend on
cut across: use a short route
dawn on: realize
deal in: stock, sell
deal with: handle successfully
decide on: settle on
dispense with: proceed without
dispose of: get rid of
 dwell on: emphasize
enlarge on: say more about
enter into: begin, commence
expand on: say more about
frown on: disapprove of
get at: reach
get into: become involved with
get over: recover from
get through: survive, finish
go against: oppose
go over: review
go through: examine in detail
go with: look good with
grow on: become more attractive to
guard against: take precautions
hinge on: depend on
inquire into: investigate
keep to: adhere to
laugh at: mock, make fun of
launch into: start
leaf through: turn the pages
live on: survive using
look after: take care of
look into: investigate
look through: examine quickly
part with: give up reluctantly
pick on: be unkind to
prey on: hunt and eat; disturb
provide for: prepare for
reason with: try to persuade

We **abided by** the rules.
 He **accounted for** the discrepancy.
 They **asked for** an extension.
 We are **banking on** good weather tomorrow.
 Please **bear with** the delay.
 Their excitement **bordered on** hysteria.
 Thieves **broke into** the store.
 We want to **build on** our success.
 He **burst into** the room.
 This **calls for** an investigation.
 We will **call on** you to give a speech.
 She **came across** some old papers.
 We **came upon** a small lake.
 The two friends **confided in** each other.
 We are **counting on** you.
 I **cut across** the parking lot.
 Finally the truth **dawned on** him.
 He **deals in** gold and jewels.
 She can **deal with** any situation.
 They **decided on** a course of action.
 The chairman **dispensed with** formalities.
 If he moves, he will have to **dispose of** his furniture.
 He **dwelt on** the risks involved.
 Please **enlarge on** your proposal.
 The brothers **entered into** an agreement.
 Please **expand on** what you said before.
 Absenteeism is **frowned on**.
 The store was so crowded, it was hard to **get at** the food.
 I don't want to **get into** an argument.
 Have you **got over** the flu yet?
 I don't know how I can **get through** all this work.
 Don't **go against** the rules.
 I would like to **go over** the report again.
 Have you **gone through** the evidence?
 Those shoes don't **go with** that outfit.
 I'm sure the idea will **grow on** you.
 We must **guard against** possible attack.
 Everything **hinges on** her decision.
 Please **inquire into** the alternatives.
 The train will **keep to** the schedule.
 Don't **laugh at** me!
 He **launched into** an explanation.
 She **leafed idly through** the book.
 What did you **live on**?
 I will **look after** the children.
 He will **look into** the situation.
 We **looked through** the magazines while we were waiting.
 She refused to **part with** her necklace.
 Because he was the youngest, the other boys **picked on** him.
 Ospreys **prey on** fish; the idea **preys on** my mind.
 We have **provided for** any emergency.
 It is hard to **reason with** an angry person.

reckon on: calculate on
rise above: be superior to
run across: find accidentally
run into: meet accidentally
run over: injured by a vehicle
see through: not be deceived by
send for: ask to be sent
settle for: reluctantly accept
side with: support in a dispute
sit through: sit and endure
stand by: support
stand for: represent
stick to: adhere to
stumble across: find accidentally
survive on: survive using
take after: resemble an ancestor
tamper with: interfere with
touch on: mention
verge on: approach
wade through: slowly peruse
watch over: guard

I hadn't **reckoned on** being the center of attention.
 He **rose above** his circumstances and managed to succeed.
 They **ran across** some interesting information.
 I **ran into** my cousin downtown.
 Children must be careful not to be **run over** by cars.
 I instantly **saw through** the disguise.
 You will have to **send for** your transcripts.
 Since there was no kale, we had to **settle for** cabbage.
 Why did you **side with** him?
 It was all I could do to **sit through** the lecture without falling asleep.
 I hope you will **stand by** me.
 What does the abbreviation etc. **stand for**?
 We shall **stick to** the original plan.
 He **stumbled across** an interesting fossil.
 During the winter, we had to **survive on** turnips and parsnips.
 He **takes after** his grandfather.
 Someone has **tampered with** the lock.
 She **touched on** many important subjects.
 His behavior **verges on** rudeness.
 We had to **wade through** a pile of documents.
 The shepherd **watched over** the sheep.

a. The position of the object of the preposition

The object of a preposition usually follows the preposition, whether the object is a noun or a pronoun. In the following examples, the objects are underlined.

e.g. We have **launched into** a new project.
 We have **launched into** it.

In these examples, the noun **project** and the pronoun **it** are the objects of the preposition **into** of the phrasal verb **to launch into**. Both the noun object and the pronoun object follow the preposition.

b. The position of an adverb of manner modifying the verb

If a verb is followed by a preposition, an adverb of manner may be placed between the verb and the preposition. In the following examples, the adverbs of manner are underlined.

e.g. We **reasoned** patiently **with** the little girl.
 I **leafed** quickly **through** the book.

In the first example, the adverb of manner **patiently** is placed between the verb **reasoned** and the preposition **with** of the phrasal verb **to reason with**. In the second example, the adverb of manner **quickly** is placed between the verb **leafed** and the preposition **through** of the phrasal verb **to leaf through**.

c. Stress in spoken English

When a verb followed by a preposition occurs at the end of a clause, it is usually the verb which is stressed in spoken English. In the following examples, the words which are stressed are printed in bold type.

e.g. No one likes to be **laughed** at.
 I need someone to **confide** in.

In the first example, the verb **laughed** followed by the preposition **at** occurs at the end of a clause, and the verb **laughed** is stressed. In the second example, the verb **confide** followed by the preposition **in** occurs at the end of a clause, and the verb **confide** is stressed.

It should be noted that, when used in a phrasal verb at the end of a clause, the prepositions **after**, **into**

and **over** are often pronounced with somewhat greater emphasis than the verb. In this case, both the verb and the preposition are stressed. For example:

The twins are easy to **look after**.

The building would be difficult to **break into**.

You'll never guess whom I **ran into**.

I heard that someone was **run over**.

The prepositions **above**, **across** and **through** are also occasionally emphasized in this way. For example:

The research papers were difficult to **wade through**.

d. Expressions in which the verb has an object

In the case of some phrasal verbs consisting of a verb followed by a preposition, the verb and the preposition may each have an object. In the following examples, the objects are underlined.

e.g. I can **make** nothing **of** the situation.

We **talked** my sister **into** agreeing.

In the first example, the verb **make** of the phrasal verb **to make of** has the object **nothing**, and the preposition **of** has the object **situation**. In the second example, the verb **talked** of the phrasal verb **to talk into** has the object **sister**, and the preposition **into** has the object **agreeing**.

The following are examples of phrasal verbs consisting of a verb followed by a preposition, where the verb may have an object. The objects of the verbs are underlined. Each phrasal verb is followed by its meaning and an example of its use. The last example illustrates the use of the Passive Voice.

Verbs followed by Objects followed by Prepositions

drag into: involve unwillingly

draw into: involve gradually

drum into: teach by repetition

frighten into: control by fear

hold against: blame for

lay before: present to

let into: allow to share

make of: understand

read into: find other meanings

set against: make antagonistic

set on: order to attack

talk into: persuade

thrust upon: force upon

write into: add to in writing

Don't **drag** me **into** this discussion!

We managed to **draw** her **into** the conversation.

We **drummed** the safety rules **into** the children.

The little girl **frightened** her brother **into** obeying her.

Please don't **hold** my mistakes **against** me.

We will **lay** the evidence **before** the court.

Shall we **let** her **into** the secret?

Can you **make** anything **of** this message?

You are **reading** too much **into** her remarks.

She likes to **set** people **against** one another.

We will **set** our dogs **on** any intruders.

Can you **talk** him **into** changing his mind?

We **thrust** the responsibility **upon** the treasurer.

The terms were **written** **into** the lease.

2. Phrasal verbs consisting of a verb followed by an adverb

Many phrasal verbs consist of a verb followed by an adverb. Some of these phrasal verbs are intransitive and some are transitive.

For instance, the intransitive phrasal verb **to show up** is formed from the verb **to show** followed by the adverb **up**. In the following example, the phrasal verb does not have an object.

At ten o'clock, her brother **showed up**.

The following are examples of intransitive phrasal verbs which consist of a verb followed by an adverb. Each phrasal verb is followed by its meaning and an example of its use.

Intransitive Verbs followed by Adverbs

blow over: pass
boil away: disappear by boiling
boil over: overflow by boiling
bounce back: recover
buckle down: work seriously
catch on: be widely accepted
cloud over: become overcast
die down: become less
double up: bend over
drop in: visit
fade away: become less
fall off: become less
get away: escape
get by: barely succeed
give in: admit defeat
go on: continue
grow up: become an adult
keep on: persist in
level off: stop rising
log on: contact a computer
log off: break contact with a computer system
move in: take possession of living quarters
move out: give up possession of living quarters
nod off: go to sleep
pass out: faint
pitch in: help
play along: pretend to agree
pull in: arrive (of vehicles)
pull out: leave (of vehicles)
set off: leave
settle down: become peaceful
settle in: become used to
show up: arrive
stay up: not go to bed
step down: resign
step in: intervene
take off: leave the ground
touch down: land (of planes)
tune in: find a station on the radio
watch out: beware
wear off: gradually disappear

I wonder when the trouble will **blow over**.
 If the water **boils away**, the stew will burn.
 The soup **boiled over**.
 He **bounced back** from his previous defeat.
 You may fail your courses if you don't **buckle down** to work.
 Do you think the idea will **catch on**?
 Although it **clouded over** in the afternoon, the rain held off.
 After a few days, the excitement **died down**.
 We were **doubled up** with laughter.
 Please **drop in** any time.
 The sound gradually **faded away**.
 Attendance at the concerts has **fallen off**.
 I hooked a fish, but it **got away**.
 She studied just hard enough to **get by**.
 I will never **give in**!
 Please **go on**. Don't let me interrupt you.
 What do you want to do when you **grow up**?
 He **kept on** changing the subject.
 Prices finally **leveled off**.
 Do you know how to **log on**?
 The system was overloaded, so I had to **log off**.
 When are you **moving in**?
 He **moved out** yesterday.
 Half the bus passengers **nodded off**.
 It was so hot, I almost **passed out**.
 If everyone **pitches in**, the work will be done in a few minutes.
 Let's **play along** until we find out what his plans are.
 The bus **pulled in** next to the curb.
 The train **pulled out** at ten o'clock.
 They **set off** at six o'clock in the morning.
 After the excitement, the students found it difficult to **settle down**.
 How are you **settling in** to your new job?
 She **showed up** at noon.
 We **stayed up** until midnight.
 He **stepped down** for health reasons.
 The government had to **step in** to save the business.
 The plane **took off** on time.
 The plane **touched down**.
 We **tuned in** to listen to the hockey game.
Watch out! The roads are icy.
 The feeling of excitement gradually **wore off**.

The transitive phrasal verb **to sort out** is formed from the verb **to sort** followed by the adverb **out**. For example:

We **sorted out** the papers.

In this example, the phrasal verb **sorted out** has the object **papers**.

The following are examples of transitive phrasal verbs which consist of a verb followed by an adverb. Each phrasal verb is followed by its meaning and an example of its use.

Transitive Verbs followed by Adverbs

back up: support	I will back up your story.
bail out: rescue	If you run into difficulties, who will bail you out ?
break in: make something new fit for use	I broke in my new hiking boots.
breathe in: inhale	We breathed in the fresh air.
breathe out: exhale	I breathed out a sigh of relief.
bring back: return	She brought back her library books.
bring around: persuade	We gradually brought her around to our point of view.
bring up: raise	Bringing up children is never easy.
butter up: flatter	We battered him up , hoping that he would agree to our proposal.
call in: ask to assist	I think it is time we called in an expert.
call off: cancel	We called off the meeting.
call up: telephone	Why don't you call him up ?
cheer on: cheer, encourage	I will be there to cheer you on .
chop down: fell	They chopped down the dead tree.
clean up: tidy	The mayor asked everyone to help clean up the city streets.
fend off: repel	The goalie fended off every attack.
ferret out: find with difficulty	We managed to ferret out the information.
figure out: solve, understand	I can't figure out what happened.
fill in: complete	Please fill in this form.
fill out: complete	I filled out the form.
fill up: make full	We filled up the glasses with water.
give back: return	I gave back the bicycle I had borrowed.
give off: send out	Skunk cabbage gives off an unpleasant odor.
hand down: give to someone younger	The tradition was handed down from father to son.
hand in: give to person in authority	The students handed their assignments in to the teacher.
hand on: give to another person	I am not sorry to hand the responsibility on to you.
hand over: transfer	We had to hand the evidence over to the police.
hang up: break a telephone connection	After receiving a busy signal, I hung up the phone.
hold back: restrain, delay	He is so enthusiastic, it is hard to hold him back .
iron out: remove	I am sure we can iron out every difficulty.
knock out: make unconscious	Boxers are often knocked out .
lap up: accept eagerly	The public lapped up the story.
lay off: put out of work	The company laid off seventy workers.
leave behind: leave, not bring	I accidentally left my umbrella behind .
leave out: omit	Tell me what happened. Don't leave anything out !
let down: disappoint	We will let him down if we don't arrive on time.
live down: live so that past faults are forgotten	This will be hard to live down !
look up: find (information)	We looked up the word in a dictionary.
make up: invent	She likes to make up stories.
pass up: not take advantage	I couldn't pass up such an opportunity.
pension off: dismiss with a pension	He was pensioned off at the age of sixty.
phase in: introduce gradually	The new program will be phased in over the next six months.
phase out: cease gradually	The practice will gradually be phased out .
pick up: collect	You may pick up the papers at the office.

pin down: get a commitment

play down: de-emphasize

point out: draw attention to

polish off: finish

pull down: demolish

pull off: succeed

put away: put in proper place

put back: return to original location

put off: postpone

reel off: recite a long list

rope in: persuade to help

rub out: erase

rule out: remove from consideration

scale down: reduce

sell off: dispose of by selling

set back: delay

shout down: stop from speaking by shouting

shrug off: dismiss as unimportant

single out: select from others

size up: assess

sort out: organize

sound out: talk with to learn the opinion of

stammer out: stammer

sum up: summarize

summon up: gather

take in: absorb

take out: invite to a restaurant

take over: assume control

talk over: discuss

tear up: destroy by tearing

think over: consider

think up: invent

track down: search for and find

trade in: give as part payment

try on: test clothes by putting them on

try out: test by using

turn away: refuse admission

turn back: reverse direction

turn off: deactivate by using a switch

turn on: activate by using a switch

water down: dilute

wear out: gradually destroy by wearing or using

write down: make a note

write off: cancel, regard as

write up: compose in writing

When the guest speaker is **pinned down**, we can set a date for the conference.

He **played down** the importance of the news.

She **pointed out** the advantages of the proposal.

We **polished off** the rest of the apple pie.

Many old buildings are **pulled down** to make way for new ones.

Do you think she can **pull off** her plan?

It is time to **put** the toys **away**.

Please **put** the book **back** on the shelf.

We cannot **put off** the meeting again.

She **reeled off** a long list of names.

We **roped in** everyone we could to help with the work.

Be sure to **rub out** all the pencil marks.

None of the possibilities can be **ruled out** yet.

Because of lack of funds, we had to **scale down** our plans.

We **sold off** all the books and furniture.

This could **set back** the project by several years.

The crowd **shouted down** the speaker.

He attempted to **shrug off** the mistake.

You have been **singled out** for special attention.

I quickly **sized up** the situation.

It will take some time to **sort out** this mess.

We attempted to **sound him out**.

They **stammered out** their apologies.

He **summed up** the discussion in a few well-chosen words.

I attempted to **summon up** my courage.

We tried to **take in** the new information.

May I **take you out** for supper?

They will **take over** at the beginning of June.

Let us **talk it over** before we decide.

She **tore up** the letter.

I need some time to **think it over**.

What will they **think up** next?

We finally **tracked him down** at the bookstore.

Why don't you **trade in** your old vacuum cleaner for a new one?

I **tried on** the new suit, but it didn't fit me.

Would you like to **try out** my fountain pen?

The event was so popular that many people had to be **turned away**.

Every fall the clocks must be **turned back** by one hour.

I **turned off** the radio.

Please **turn on** the light.

The soup has been **watered down**.

My jacket is **wearing out**, although it is only a year old.

I **wrote down** the instructions.

They were forced to **write off** several irretrievable debts.

I used my notes to **write up** the report.

a. The position of the object of the verb

In the case of transitive phrasal verbs consisting of a verb followed by an adverb, if the object of the verb is a noun, the object can usually either follow or precede the adverb. In the following examples, the objects are underlined.

e.g. I **called off** the meeting.

I **called** the meeting **off**.

In the first example the object **meeting** follows the adverb **off**, while in the second example the object **meeting** precedes the adverb **off**.

However, in the case of a few phrasal verbs, a noun object must usually follow the adverb.

e.g. We attempted to **smooth over** the disagreement.

In this example, the phrasal verb **to smooth over** is followed by the noun object **disagreement**. In this case, the object **disagreement** cannot be placed before the adverb **over**.

The following are examples of transitive phrasal verbs where a noun object must usually follow the adverb. Each phrasal verb is accompanied by its meaning and an example of its use. The objects of the verbs are underlined.

Verbs followed by Adverbs followed by Noun Objects

drum up: raise

She has **drummed up** support for the plan.

paper over: repair superficially

They attempted to **paper over** their differences.

smooth over: improve

We tried to **smooth over** the situation.

In the case of transitive phrasal verbs consisting of a verb followed by an adverb, if the object of the verb is a pronoun, the object must usually precede the adverb. In the following examples, the pronoun objects are underlined.

e.g. I **called** it **off**.

We attempted to **smooth** it **over**.

In these examples, the pronoun object **it** precedes the adverbs **off** and **over**.

Most transitive phrasal verbs may be used in the Passive Voice.

e.g. The meeting was **called off** by me.

The disagreement was **smoothed over**.

In these examples, the phrasal verbs **to call off** and **to smooth over** are used in the Passive Voice.

b. The position of an adverb of manner modifying the verb

In the case of a phrasal verb consisting of a verb followed by an adverb, the verb and the adverb usually may not be separated by an adverb of manner. In the following example, the adverb of manner is underlined.

e.g. I hurriedly **called off** the meeting.

In this example, the adverb of manner **hurriedly** precedes the phrasal verb **called off**. The adverb **hurriedly** may also be placed at the beginning or the end of the sentence, but may not be placed between the verb **called** and the adverb **off**.

c. Stress in spoken English

When a phrasal verb consisting of a verb followed by an adverb occurs at the end of a clause, it is usually the adverb which is stressed in spoken English. In the following examples, the words which are stressed are printed in bold type.

e.g. How did that come **about**?

Please drop **in** whenever you have time.

In the first example, the verb **come** followed by the adverb **about** occurs at the end of a clause, and the adverb **about** is stressed. In the second example, the verb **drop** followed by the adverb **in** occurs at the end of a clause, and the adverb **in** is stressed.

d. Ergative verbs

It should be noted that there are a few phrasal verbs consisting of a verb followed by an adverb, which have the same meaning whether they are used transitively or intransitively. For example:

The engineer **slowed down** the train.

The train **slowed down**.

In the first example, the phrasal verb **to slow down** is used transitively, with the object **train**. In the second example, the phrasal verb **to slow down** is used intransitively, without naming the originator of the action. In these two examples, it can be seen that the object of the transitive verb is the subject of the intransitive verb. However, the general meaning of the two sentences is the same. Verbs which can be used in this way may be referred to as **ergative verbs**.

The following are examples of expressions which can function as ergative phrasal verbs. Each ergative phrasal verb is followed by its meaning and examples of its use.

Ergative Phrasal Verbs

blare out: make a loud sound	The loudspeakers blared out the music. The music blared out .
blow up: destroy by an explosion	Troops blew up the bridge. The bridge blew up .
break up: break into pieces	The icebreaker broke up the ice. The ice broke up .
burn down: destroy by fire	We burned down the old barn. The old barn burned down .
calm down: become calm	I calmed down the child. The child calmed down .
dry out: become dry	The sun dried out the earth. The earth dried out .
get across: transmit	We got our point across to the audience. Our point got across to the audience.
liven up: become lively	He livened up the party. The party livened up .
pull through: recover from, survive	The doctor pulled her through the illness. She pulled through the illness.
roll up: wrap into a cylinder	I rolled up the window blind. The window blind rolled up .
shut down: close, stop working	They shut down the factory. The factory shut down .
wake up: stop sleeping	I woke her up . She woke up .
wash out: remove by washing	We washed out the dye. The dye washed out .
wear away: gradually remove	Water wore away the rock. The rock wore away .
wear out: gradually destroy by using	I wore out the sweater. The sweater wore out .

3. Distinguishing between verbs followed by prepositions and verbs followed by adverbs

It has been seen that the position of pronoun objects, adverbs of manner and stress in spoken English varies according to whether a verb is followed by a preposition or by an adverb.

These differences are summarized in the following table. The verbs **to sit** and **to turn** are used as

examples. The verb **to sit** is followed by **on** used as a preposition, whereas the verb **to turn** is followed by **on** used as an adverb.

Verb followed by Preposition

Pronoun object is placed after the preposition:

I sat **on it**.

Adverb of manner may be placed between verb and preposition:

I sat **quietly** on it.

Verb is stressed:

This is what I **sat** on.

Verb followed by Adverb

Pronoun object is placed before the adverb:

I turned **it** on.

Adverb of manner may not be placed between verb and adverb:

I **quietly** turned it on.

Adverb is stressed:

This is what I turned **on**.

Because of the differences summarized above, it is important to be able to distinguish between a verb followed by a preposition, and a verb followed by an adverb.

a. Adverb phrases of location compared with phrasal verbs followed by objects

In many cases, it is necessary to distinguish between an ordinary verb followed by an adverb phrase of location, and a phrasal verb followed by an object.

e.g. I turned up the street.

I turned up the volume.

In the first example, the verb **turned** is followed by the adverb phrase of location **up the street**. In the second example, the phrasal verb **turned up** is followed by the object **volume**. In this example, the phrasal verb **turned up** has the meaning **increased**.

In the first example, **street** is the object of the preposition **up**. If the object is changed to a pronoun, the pronoun must follow the preposition:

I turned up the street.

I turned up it.

In the second example, **volume** is the object of the phrasal verb **turned up**. If the object is changed to a pronoun, the pronoun must precede the adverb **up**.

I turned up the volume.

I turned it up.

In the first example, if the verb is modified by an adverb of manner, the adverb of manner may precede the adverb phrase of location:

I turned up the street.

I turned quickly up the street.

In the second example, if the verb is modified by an adverb of manner, the adverb of manner may not be placed between the two parts of the phrasal verb:

I turned up the volume.

I quickly turned up the volume.

b. Words used as prepositions or adverbs

It is also necessary to be able to distinguish between a phrasal verb consisting of a verb followed by a preposition, and a phrasal verb consisting of a transitive verb followed by an adverb. In many cases it is possible to make the distinction by means of the preposition or adverb following the verb.

For example, the following words are used in phrasal verbs as prepositions, but are not usually used in phrasal verbs as adverbs following transitive verbs:

after	against
at	before
by	for
from	into
of	to
toward	with
without	

In contrast, the following words are used in phrasal verbs as adverbs following transitive verbs, but are not usually used in phrasal verbs as prepositions:

along	aside
away	back
behind	down
forward	out
together	up

It should be noted that of these words, **aside**, **away**, **back**, **forward**, **out** and **together** are usually never used as prepositions. In contrast, the words **along**, **behind**, **down** and **up** are often used as prepositions, but are not usually used as prepositions in phrasal verbs.

The following words present more difficulty, since they can be used in phrasal verbs both as prepositions and as adverbs following transitive verbs:

across	around or round
in	off
on or upon	over
through	

Thus, it is advisable to study which phrasal verbs use these words as prepositions, and which phrasal verbs use these words as adverbs. The following table gives examples of phrasal verbs containing each of these words. The left-hand column gives phrasal verbs consisting of verbs followed by prepositions, while the right-hand column gives phrasal verbs consisting of transitive verbs followed by adverbs.

Words used as Prepositions or Adverbs

Verb + Preposition

come **across**
cut **across**
run **across**
stumble **across**

Transitive Verb + Adverb

get **across** (an idea)
put **across** (an idea)

Verb + Preposition

hang **around**
louge **around**
mill **around**
pass **around**
rally **round**
show **around**

Transitive Verb + Adverb

bring **round**

Verb + Preposition

confide **in**

Transitive Verb + Adverb

break **in**

deal **in**
join **in**

breathe **in**
call **in**
fill **in**
hand **in**
phase **in**
rope **in**
take **in**
trade **in**

Verb + Preposition

glance **off**
keep **off**
warn **off**

Transitive Verb + Adverb

call **off**
fend **off**
give **off**
lay **off**
pair **off**
pension **off**
polish **off**
pull **off**
put **off**
reel **off**
sell **off**
shrug **off**
turn **off**
write **off**

Verb + Preposition

bank **on**
border **on**
build **on**
call **on**
come **upon**
count **on**
dawn **on**
decide **on**
dwell **on**
enlarge **on**
expand **on**
frown **on**
grow **on**
hinge **on**
live **on**
pick **on**
prey **on**
reckon **on**
survive **on**
thrust upon
touch **on**
verge **on**

Transitive Verb + Adverb

cheer **on**
hand **on**
try **on**
turn **on**

Verb + Preposition

get **over**
go **over**
run **over**
watch **over**

Transitive Verb + Adverb

take **over**
talk **over**
think **over**
paper **over**
smooth **over**

Verb + Preposition

break **through**
get **through**
go **through**
leaf **through**
look **through**
sail **through**
scrape **through**
see **through**
sit **through**
wade **through**

Transitive Verb + Adverb

pull **through**

4. Phrasal verbs consisting of a verb followed by a word which may function either as an adverb or as a preposition

Some phrasal verbs consist of an intransitive verb followed by a word which may function either as an adverb or as a preposition. For example:

We **passed by**.

We **passed by** the library.

In the first example, the word **by** of the phrasal verb **passed by** functions as an adverb. In the second example, the word **by** of the phrasal verb **passed by** functions as a preposition which has the object library.

The following are examples of phrasal verbs which contain words which may function either as adverbs or as prepositions. Each phrasal verb is followed by its meaning and examples of its use. The objects of the prepositions are underlined.

Intransitive Verbs followed by words which may function either as Adverbs or Prepositions

break through: appear

The sun **broke through**.

The sun **broke through** the clouds.

do without: survive without

We had to **do without**.

We had to **do without** electricity.

glance off: hit and bounce off

The ball **glanced off**.

The ball **glanced off** the wall.

go without: not have

They **went without**.

They **went without** food.

hang around: stay near

We **hung around**.

We **hung around** the movie theater.

join in: become involved in

I **joined in**.

I **joined in** the game.

lounge around: relax in

We **lounge around**.

We **lounge around** the living room.

mill around: (of a crowd) move randomly

The students **milled around**.

The students **milled around** the lobby.

pass by: pass

I **passed by**.

I **passed by** the house.

rally round: gather to give support

We **rallied round**.

We **rallied round** our class president.

sail through: succeed easily

She **sailed through**.

She **sailed through** the exam.

scrape through: barely succeed

They **scraped through**.

turn off: leave a road

They **scraped through** the course.
We **turned off**.
We **turned off** the main highway.

a. Expressions in which the verb has an object

There are a few phrasal verbs consisting of a verb followed by a word which may function either as an adverb or as a preposition, where the verb may have an object. In the following examples the objects are underlined.

e.g. We **passed** the candies **around**.

We **passed** the candies **around** the class.

In each of these examples, the verb **passed** of the phrasal verb **to pass around** has the object **candies**. In the first example, the word **around** functions as an adverb, while in the second example, the word **around** functions as a preposition with the object **class**.

The following are examples of phrasal verbs consisting of a verb followed by a word which may function either as an adverb or as a preposition, where the verb may have an object. Each phrasal verb is followed by its meaning and examples of its use. The objects of the verbs and prepositions are underlined. The last example illustrates the use of the Passive Voice.

Verbs followed by objects followed by words which may function either as Adverbs or Prepositions

cross off: put a line through

I **crossed** his name **off**.

pass around: distribute

I **crossed** his name **off** the list.

show around: conduct on a tour

I **passed** the papers **around**.

tide over: provide for temporarily

I **passed** the papers **around** the class.

warn off: warn to leave

We **showed** the visitors **around**.

We **showed** the visitors **around** the city.

This money will **tide** me **over**.

This money will **tide** me **over** the weekend.

We were **warned off**.

We were **warned off** the premises.

5. Phrasal verbs consisting of a verb followed by an adverb followed by a preposition

There are several commonly used phrasal verbs which consist of a verb, followed by an adverb, followed by a preposition. For example:

I **went along with** the idea.

In this example, the phrasal verb **went along with** consists of the verb **to go**, followed by the adverb **along**, followed by the preposition **with** which has the object **idea**.

The following table gives examples of phrasal verbs which consist of a verb, followed by an adverb, followed by a preposition. Each phrasal verb is followed by its meaning and an example of its use.

Verbs followed by Adverbs followed by Prepositions

add up to: amount to

It is hard to see what that **adds up to**.

back down from: withdraw, avoid

She never **backs down from** a challenge.

back out of: not fulfill

I wish I could **back out of** the agreement.

boil down to: can be reduced to

All his arguments **boil down to** a belief in the supernatural.

bow out of: withdraw

He **bowed out of** the race.

brush up on: refresh knowledge of

I must **brush up on** my English.

carry on with: continue with
catch up to: overtake
clean up after: tidy for
come down to: can be reduced to
come down with: become ill with
come out in: develop
come up against: meet an obstacle
come up with: produce
creep up on: approach undetected
cry out for: urgently require
cut back on: reduce
do away with: abolish
face up to: accept and deal with
fall back on: turn to for help
fit in with: be suited to
fool around with: not be serious, have as a hobby
get away with: not be punished
get down to: begin dealing seriously with
get in on: manage to participate in
give up on: stop trying
go along with: agree, not resist
go back on: break a promise
go through with: fulfill, carry out
grow out of: become too big for
hold out for: not compromise
keep up with: be on the same level as
lead up to: be a preparation for
live up to: maintain a standard
log on to: contact a computer
look down on: regard as inferior
look forward to: anticipate
look out for: watch for
look up to: admire
make up for: compensate for
pull out of: leave (of vehicles)
push on with: go ahead, continue
put up with: endure, tolerate
read up on: read about
rub off on: acquire from someone
run up against: meet
send away for: order by mail
stick up for: defend, support
stock up on: lay in supplies
talk down to: speak patronizingly
walk away with: win easily
watch out for: beware of
wriggle out of: avoid
zero in on: focus on

We **carried on with** our conversation.
 The boy ran quickly to **catch up with** his friends.
 She spent half her time **cleaning up after** the children.
 Your choices **come down to** these.
 She **came down with** a cold.
 He **came out in** a rash.
 They **came up against** many difficulties.
 She **came up with** a solution to the problem.
 Old age tends to **creep up on** one.
 The education system is **crying out for** improvement.
 The government has **cut back on** spending.
 We want to **do away with** delays.
 It is best to **face up to** one's problems.
 Because of unexpected expenses, we had to **fall back on** our savings.
 You don't **fit in with** this group.
 He likes to **fool around with** computers.
 He **got away with** being late for school.
 It is time to **get down to** business.
 I want to **get in on** the planning for the new school.
 I've **given up on** the situation.
 I'm willing to **go along with** your idea.
 He never **goes back on** his word.
 Are you going to **go through with** your plan to conduct a survey?
 My son has **grown out of** most of his clothes.
 We want to **hold out for** better conditions.
 She has a hard time **keeping up with** her brother.
 The first thirty chapters of the book **lead up to** the dramatic conclusion.
 She has **lived up to** her reputation as a great singer.
 She **logged on to** the new system.
 He **looks down on** his classmates.
 I'm **looking forward to** the holidays.
Look out for fallen branches.
 We **looked up to** her.
 She tried to **make up for** her past mistakes.
 The train **pulled out of** the station.
 I must **push on with** my work.
 Bus passengers must often **put up with** crowded conditions.
 Whenever I travel, I like to **read up on** the place I am going to visit.
 Some of his enthusiasm has **rubbed off on** me.
 One **runs up against** many different kinds of people.
 We **sent away for** warm winter boots.
 Will you **stick up for** me?
 We should **stock up on** bananas.
 He always **talks down to** people younger than he is.
 They **walked away with** all the prizes.
Watch out for snakes.
 She always tries to **wriggle out of** her responsibilities.
 Let us **zero in on** the heart of the problem.

a. Expressions in which the verb has an object

There are a few phrasal verbs consisting of a verb, followed by an adverb, followed by a preposition, where the verb may have an object. In the following example, the objects are underlined.

e.g. We **played** them **off against** each other.

In this example, the verb **played** of the phrasal verb **to play off against** has the object **them**, while the preposition **against** has the object **each other**.

The following are examples of phrasal verbs consisting of a verb, followed by an adverb, followed by a preposition, where the verb may have an object. Each phrasal verb is followed by its meaning and an example of its use. The objects of the phrasal verbs are underlined.

Verbs followed by Objects followed by Adverbs followed by Prepositions

get over with: undergo, finish

If I must visit the dentist, I prefer to **get it over with** as soon as possible.

let in on: allow to share

We **let them in on** the secret.

play off against: encourage to fight

In the last century, the British weakened their enemies by **playing them off against** one another.

put down to: attribute to

We **put** his bad temper **down to** fatigue.

put up to: urge to do wrong

She **put me up to** playing a trick on the teacher.

take out on: vent bad feelings on

She **took** her dissatisfaction with her job **out on** her neighbors.

take up on: accept an offer

I would like to **take you up on** your offer.

talk out of: dissuade from

We tried to **talk him out of** retiring.