



Phrasal Verbs: a Grammar Explanation and a Worksheet

1. *Separable vs. Non-Separable Phrasal Verbs*
2. *Literal vs. Idiomatic Phrasal Verbs*
3. *Transitive vs. Intransitive Phrasal Verbs*

1. Separable vs. Non-Separable Phrasal Verbs

Separable Phrasal Verbs

These phrasal verbs allow the object to come between the verb and the particle. If the object is a pronoun, it must come between the verb and the particle.

- **Examples:**
 - I turned *on* the light.
 - I turned *it* on. (With a pronoun, "it" must come between "turn" and "on.")

Non-Separable Phrasal Verbs

These phrasal verbs do not allow the object to come between the verb and the particle. The object always follows the whole phrasal verb.

- **Examples:**
 - She ran *into* an old friend.
 - She ran *into* him. (No separation of "ran" and "into.")

2. Literal vs. Idiomatic Phrasal Verbs

Literal Phrasal Verbs

These are phrasal verbs where the meaning of the verb and particle together is the same as the meanings of the individual words.

- **Examples:**
 - *Pick up* the book. (literal: physically pick something up)
 - *Look after* your belongings. (literal: take care of them)

Idiomatic Phrasal Verbs

These phrasal verbs have a meaning that is different from the individual meanings of the verb and the particle.

- **Examples:**
 - *Give up* smoking. (idiomatic: stop doing something)
 - *Run out of* time. (idiomatic: finish something completely)



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3. Transitive vs. Intransitive Phrasal Verbs

Transitive Phrasal Verbs

These phrasal verbs need a direct object to make sense. You cannot use them without an object.

- **Examples:**
 - *Turn off* the lights. ("The lights" is the object)
 - *Call back* the client.

Intransitive Phrasal Verbs

These phrasal verbs do not need a direct object. They make sense on their own.

- **Examples:**
 - The plane *took off*. (No object required)
 - He *grew up* quickly.



Worksheet

Instructions

Fill in the blanks with the correct phrasal verb and use the correct form.

to break up
to bring up
to call off
to come up with
to fill out
to find out
to give away
to give up

to grow up
to hand out
to knock over
to look after
to look forward to
to look into
to pick up
to put off

to run away
to run into
to run out of
to sort out
to stand up
to take off (x2)
to think over
to turn up

1. I _____ the meeting because we weren't ready for the presentation.
2. He _____ his neighbor yesterday They hadn't spoken for a long time.
3. They _____ the volume because it was too loud.
4. We're _____ the vacation. It's going to be wonderful!
5. She _____ smoking last year. I had to do it for my health.
6. The cat _____, and now we don't know where she is.
7. Please _____ this form. We can't proceed without this information.
8. They _____ in the countryside before moving to the city a few years ago.
9. He _____ his younger brother last year during summer vacation every day while their parents were at work.
10. We _____ sugar. Can you go to the store to get some more?
11. She _____ her jacket because she got hot.
12. The plane _____ at noon. It should land in a few hours.
13. Can you _____ the meeting until next week? We aren't prepared yet.



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14. The teacher _____ the worksheets and told the students to complete them.
15. I'll _____ the groceries after I get off work. Which grocery store should I go to?
16. They _____ a great idea. Have they told it to you yet?
17. She is _____ the issue. She will let us know her conclusions tomorrow.
18. We need to _____ this problem. It has been confusing us for a week now!
19. They _____ last month. They had been having lots of problems.
20. He _____ an important point during the meeting. I'll email it to you later.
21. We're going to _____ more about the case. We can't solve it until we do.
22. The dog _____ the vase and it broke into a bunch of pieces!
23. I need to _____ your proposal. Can I email you later?
24. He _____ when she entered the room. He wanted to show respect.
25. They _____ all their old furniture, because they didn't want it anymore.



Suggested Answer Key

1. called off
 2. ran into
 3. turned up
 4. looking forward to
 5. gave up
 6. ran away
 7. fill out
 8. grew up
 9. looked after
 10. ran out of
 11. took off
 12. took off
 13. put off
 14. handed out
 15. pick up
 16. came up with
 17. looking into
 18. sort out
 19. broke up
 20. brought up
 21. find out
 22. knocked over
 23. think over
 24. stood up
 25. gave away
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