

Unit 23 Phrasal verbs 1

Explanations

This unit (and Units 24 and 25) assume that a wide range of phrasal verbs, and their grammatical types, are already known. These units focus on multiple meaning, and other meanings of known 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 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 3.00am.*

Bring about (cause to happen)

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

Bring off (succeed in doing something)

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

Bring 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 round (influence someone to your point of view)

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

Bring up (mention)

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

Call up (mobilise for military service)

*Mark was **called up** when the war broke out.*

Carry 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.*
*My photos didn't **come out** very well.*
- 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 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 (organise – 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.*
- 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 across (be understood – especially *get an idea across*)
*I had the feeling I wasn't **getting across**.*
- Get at (imply – about personal matters – colloquial)
*What are you **getting at** exactly?*
- Get 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 (avoid punishment)
*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 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?*