

## Advanced Reading / Second Stage

### Chapter Eight

#### Building Vocabulary: **Understanding Phrasal Verbs**

##### **✚ What is a phrasal verb?**

- Phrasal verbs are a rather complex piece of language, and language learners often have trouble connecting some phrasal verbs to their meanings. Why is that?
- A phrasal verb has a different meaning to that of the original verb. In other words, the meaning of a phrasal verb is different from the meaning of its separate parts.
- Phrasal verbs have two or three parts: a verb and one or two particles. Particles are small words which you already know as prepositions or adverbs like *down, up, in, out, after, with, or of...*

##### **Let's take a look at the structure of a phrasal verb:**



- Phrasal verbs are used quite often in everyday speech, usually in place of a more formal expression. Here are a couple of examples:
  - I need to write an essay by next week, but I keep postponing it.  
I need to write an essay by next week, but I keep putting it off.
  - She was seen exiting the car at 7 pm .  
She was seen getting out of the car at 7 pm.

In terms of word order, there are two main types of phrasal verb: **separable** and **inseparable**.

##### **✚ Separable**

- With separable phrasal verbs, the verb and particle can be apart or together.

They've **called** the meeting **off**.

OR

They've **called off** the meeting.

- However, separable phrasal verbs must be separated when you use a personal pronoun.

The meeting? They've **called it off**.

- Here are some common separable phrasal verbs:

I didn't want to **bring** the situation **up** at the meeting.

(bring up = start talking about a particular subject)

Please can you **fill** this form **in**?

(fill in = write information in a form or document)

I'll **pick** you **up** from the station at 8 p.m.

(pick up = collect someone in a car or other vehicle to take them somewhere)

She **turned** the job **down** because she didn't want to move to Glasgow.

(turn down = to not accept an offer)

## **Non-separable**

- Some phrasal verbs cannot be separated.

Who **looks after** the baby when you're at work?

- Even when there is a personal pronoun, the verb and particle remain together.

Who **looks after** her when you're at work?

- Here are some common non-separable phrasal verbs:

I **came across** your email when I was clearing my inbox.

(come across = to find something by chance)

The caterpillar **turned into** a beautiful butterfly.

(turn into = become)

*It was quite a major operation. It took months to **get over** it and feel normal again.*

*(get over = recover from something)*

*We are aware of the problem and we are **looking into** it.*

*(look into = investigate)*

- Some multi-word verbs are inseparable simply because they don't take an object.

*I **get up** at 7 a.m.*

## **With two particles**

Phrasal verbs with two particles are also inseparable. Even if you use a personal pronoun, you put it after the particles.

*Who **came up with** that idea?*

*(come up with = think of an idea or plan)*

*Let's **get rid of** these old magazines to make more space.*

*(get rid of = remove or become free of something that you don't want)*

*I didn't really **get on with** my stepbrother when I was a teenager.*

*(get on with = like and be friendly towards someone)*

*Can you hear that noise all the time? I don't know how you **put up with** it.*

*(put up with = tolerate something difficult or annoying)*

*The concert's on Friday. I'm really **looking forward** to it.*

*(look forward to = be happy and excited about something that is going to happen)*