Phrasal Verbs Activity Pack

Everything you need for six of the eight activities in our post on teaching phrasal verbs: a particle cheat sheet, a rewrite task, 24 question cards, an odd-one-out puzzle and talk cards. Built for adults, B1 to B2.

LEVEL	STUDENTS	GROUPING	TIME
B1 to B2	Adults and older teens	Pairs or threes	10 to 20 minutes

What's inside, in the order of the blog post

1	**Particle sort**	What each small word adds, to check the groups against.	**Page 2**
2	**From formal to phrasal**	Two stiff messages to rewrite, with a word bank. Answers at the foot.	**Page 3**
3	**Ask and answer**	24 question cards: work, home, people. Answer with the verb, follow up with the pronoun form.	**Pages 4-5**
4	**Guess the verb**	The same cards: read only the meaning, your partner names the verb.	**Pages 4-5**
5	**Odd one out**	Six sets of four. In one verb the small word means something else.	**Page 6**
6	**Tick-the-verb talks**	Eight topic cards. Talk for two minutes; your partner ticks each verb you use.	**Page 7**

Activities 7 and 8 in the post need nothing printed. Print pages 4, 5 and 7 once per pair, the rest once per student.

Language for the task

ANSWERING

To be honest, I always ...
It depends on ...
I used to ..., but now I ...

FOLLOWING UP

Why do you think that is?
How long have you ...?
What happened after that?

CHECKING

Is it put it off or put off it?
What's the past form?
Does it need an object?

Which errors to fix

FIX THESE, THEY ARE THE POINT

~~I always put off it.~~ → **I always put it off.**

~~She let down me.~~ → **She let me down.**

~~I gave up to smoke.~~ → **I gave up smoking.**

LET THESE GO

A one-word verb instead: *postpone* for *put off*.

It is correct, just more formal. Praise the answer, then model the phrasal verb in your follow-up question.

The small word often carries the meaning. Learn what it adds, and new phrasal verbs start to make sense before anyone explains them.

up

finished, all of it	use up, eat up, tidy up
more, higher	turn up, speed up, cheer up
appear	come up, show up, bring up

out

find or solve	figure out, find out, work out
none left	run out, sell out
remove	throw out, cross out

off

leave or start	set off, take off
stop or cancel	call off, turn off
delay	put off

down

less	cut down, slow down, calm down
refuse or disappoint	turn down, let down
on paper	write down, note down

on

continue	carry on, go on, keep on
start or accept	take on, turn on, put on

away

go or get rid of	throw away, give away, run away

back

return	come back, pay back, call back

over

think or check	think over, look over
visit	come over, pop over

Where the pronoun goes

Most two-part verbs split. The pronoun goes in the middle: **put it off**, never ~~put off it~~.

Some never split. The pronoun goes at the end: **look into it**, **count on them**.

Three-part verbs never split: catch up on it, **get on with them**.

Every card shows its verb with a pronoun, so students see the pattern each time.

Each message sounds like a report. Rewrite it the way you would really write to these people: swap every highlighted verb for a phrasal verb from the bank, in the right form.

TO YOUR TEAM

Dear team,
Unfortunately, we must **postpone** Friday's meeting. I will **investigate** the delay with the supplier and **contact** you when I have **discovered** the cause. Please **continue** with your current tasks, and **raise** any concerns at Monday's call. We will also need to **reduce** our spending until the end of the month.

YOUR VERSION

TO A FRIEND

Hi Mia,
I'm afraid I have to **cancel** our dinner on Saturday. My sister has **arrived** without warning, and I need to **collect** her from the station. I will **tolerate** her three children for a week! Could we **arrange** another evening? I will **return your call** on Monday.

YOUR VERSION

WORD BANK

bring up · put up with · look into · call you back · cut down on · pick up · put off · turn up · carry on · get in touch with · find out · call off · set up

Answers: postpone: put off · investigate: look into · contact: get in touch with · discovered: found out · continue: carry on · raise: bring up · reduce: cut down on · cancel: call off · arrived: turned up · collect: pick up · tolerate: put up with · arrange: set up · return your call: call you back

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WORK — delay

put off

What do you always put off until the last minute?

WITH A PRONOUN
put it off

WORK — accept extra work

take on

Have you ever taken on more work than you could handle?

WITH A PRONOUN
take it on

WORK — do what you missed

catch up on

What do you need to catch up on this week?

WITH A PRONOUN
catch up on it

WORK — understand or solve

figure out

What is something at work you still haven't figured out?

WITH A PRONOUN
figure it out

WORK — have none left

run out of

When did you last run out of time on a task?

WITH A PRONOUN
run out of it

WORK — think of an idea

come up with

What's the best idea you've ever come up with at work?

WITH A PRONOUN
come up with it

WORK — say no to an offer

turn down

Have you ever turned down a job or an offer? Why?

WITH A PRONOUN
turn it down

WORK — find out more about

look into

Which problem at your work should your manager look into first?

WITH A PRONOUN
look into it

HOME — put in the bin

throw away

What is something you can never throw away?

WITH A PRONOUN
throw it away

HOME — make a place neat

tidy up

How often do you tidy up your home, honestly?

WITH A PRONOUN
tidy it up

HOME — start a journey

set off

What time do you usually set off in the morning?

WITH A PRONOUN
no object

HOME — manage with little

get by

Could you get by without your phone for a week?

WITH A PRONOUN
no object

HOME — stop doing a habit

give up

What habit have you given up, and how did you do it?

WITH A PRONOUN
give it up

HOME — do or use less

cut down on

What would you like to cut down on this year?

WITH A PRONOUN
cut down on it

HOME — organise or fix

sort out

What is one thing at home you need to sort out?

WITH A PRONOUN
sort it out

HOME — learn without trying

pick up

What skill have you picked up without really trying?

WITH A PRONOUN
pick it up

PEOPLE — have a good relationship

get on with

Who in your family do you get on with best?

WITH A PRONOUN
get on with them

PEOPLE — admire

look up to

Who did you look up to when you were a teenager?

WITH A PRONOUN
look up to her

PEOPLE — argue and stop talking

fall out with

Have you ever fallen out with a friend over something small?

WITH A PRONOUN
fall out with him

PEOPLE — be friends again

make up

How do you usually make up after an argument?

WITH A PRONOUN
no object

PEOPLE — disappoint

let down

When did a friend or a company last let you down?

WITH A PRONOUN
let them down

PEOPLE — rely on

count on

Who can you always count on?

WITH A PRONOUN
count on them

PEOPLE — meet and talk again

catch up with

Which friend would you most like to catch up with this month?

WITH A PRONOUN
catch up with her

PEOPLE — start talking about

bring up

What topic do you avoid bringing up at family dinners?

WITH A PRONOUN
bring it up

All four verbs in each set share the small word. In three of them it means the same thing. Find the odd one out and say why, then add one new verb that fits the other three.

1 · UP

use up · eat up · drink up · look up

Odd one out _____ because _____

2 · OFF

call off · put off · turn off · set off

Odd one out _____ because _____

3 · OUT

figure out · find out · work out · run out

Odd one out _____ because _____

4 · DOWN

cut down · slow down · calm down · let down

Odd one out _____ because _____

5 · BACK

come back · pay back · call back · hold back

Odd one out _____ because _____

6 · ON

carry on · go on · keep on · put on

Odd one out _____ because _____

Answers: 1 look up: search, the others mean finished · 2 set off: leave, the others mean stop or delay · 3 run out: none left, the others mean solve or discover · 4 let down: disappoint, the others mean less · 5 hold back: stop yourself, the others mean return · 6 put on: wear, the others mean continue

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Your last weekend

What did you actually do?

Talk for two minutes. Your partner ticks each verb you use.

- ☐ set off
- ☐ catch up with
- ☐ put off
- ☐ end up
- ☐ chill out

A job you would love

What would a normal day look like?

Talk for two minutes. Your partner ticks each verb you use.

- ☐ take on
- ☐ come up with
- ☐ look into
- ☐ turn down
- ☐ get on with

Your home

What works, and what drives you mad?

Talk for two minutes. Your partner ticks each verb you use.

- ☐ tidy up
- ☐ throw away
- ☐ sort out
- ☐ put up with
- ☐ run out of

A habit you changed

How did you do it?

Talk for two minutes. Your partner ticks each verb you use.

- ☐ give up
- ☐ cut down on
- ☐ take up
- ☐ keep up
- ☐ pick up

A friend who matters

How did you meet, and what keeps you close?

Talk for two minutes. Your partner ticks each verb you use.

- ☐ get on with
- ☐ look up to
- ☐ fall out with
- ☐ make up
- ☐ count on

A trip that went wrong

What happened, step by step?

Talk for two minutes. Your partner ticks each verb you use.

- ☐ set off
- ☐ break down
- ☐ turn up
- ☐ run out of
- ☐ put up with

Learning English

What has helped, and what hasn't?

Talk for two minutes. Your partner ticks each verb you use.

- ☐ pick up
- ☐ look up
- ☐ figure out
- ☐ keep up with
- ☐ give up

A busy week

How did you get through it?

Talk for two minutes. Your partner ticks each verb you use.

- ☐ catch up on
- ☐ put off
- ☐ sort out
- ☐ get through
- ☐ wind down