# 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

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

## 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