

PHRASAL VERB

A

abide by

Respect or obey (the law, a decision, a rule...)
"If you want to stay at this school, you must **abide by** the rules."

account for

Give a reason or an explanation.
"I hope you can **account for** all the money you spent!"

ache for

Want someone or something very much.
"He was so lonely he **ached for** the sound of a human voice."

act on

Take action as a result of something.
"The police decided to **act on** the anonymous call they received."

act out

Demonstrate something with gestures and actions.
"The children **acted out** the scene in the classroom."

act up

Cause pain or annoyance by functioning badly.
Dad's poor knee is **acting up** again."

add up

Make sense; seem reasonable.
"She explained what happened but the details she gave just don't **add up**."

adhere to

Support; follow; act in accordance with.
"All contestants must **adhere to** the rules."

advise against

Recommend *not* to do something.
The doctor **advised** him **against** carrying heavy loads.

agree with

Have the same opinion as some else.
"I **agree with** you. I think she deserves the award too."

aim at

Direct towards a target.
"The policeman **aimed** his gun at the hijacker."

allow for

Take into consideration; include in a calculation.
"It will take longer. You have to **allow for** heavy traffic at rush hour."

"We must **allow for** food expenses too. Let's add 20€ per person."

allude to

Mention or make reference to something in an indirect way.
"I don't understand. What problem is she **alluding to**?"

amount to

Reach; be equivalent to.

"The total repair work will **amount to** 1200€.

"His statement **amounted to** a confession."

angle for

Try to obtain something by hinting or suggesting.
"From the way he's speaking I suspect Tom is **angling for** a free ticket."

answer back

Reply rudely to someone in authority when you are expected to remain silent.

"I'm your teacher. Don't **answer back**!"

answer for

Be held responsible for something.
"Normally parents have to **answer for** their children's behaviour."

Speak on behalf of someone.

"I agree to your proposal, but I can't **answer for** my associate."

answer to

Be responsible to/be controlled by (someone)

"Who do you **answer to** in your job?"

appeal to

Plead or make an earnest request.

"The organisers **appealed to** the crowd to stay calm."

Be attractive or interesting.

"The idea of camping in the woods doesn't **appeal to** me at all."

apply for

Make a formal request for something (job, permit, loan, etc.)

"When he saw the advertisement he decided to **apply for** the job."

arrive at

Reach (an agreement, a decision, a conclusion)

"It is hoped that they will **arrive at** an agreement at the end of the meeting."

ask after

Enquire about someone's well-being.

"My mother is always **asking after** you."

ask around

Mention it to people you see or meet.

"I'll **ask around** and see if anyone has seen your cat."

ask in

Invite someone to come inside.

"I couldn't leave her standing outside in the cold so I **asked her in**."

ask out

Invite someone to lunch, dinner, the cinema ...

"John has **asked Mary out** several times."

attest to

Prove to be true; bear witness to

*"The number of visitors **attest to** the popularity of the website."*

avail (oneself) of

Take advantage of something (an opportunity)

*"When the sales begin you should **avail yourself of** the opportunity and buy that coat."*

average out at

Result in an average (amount)

*"The price of lunch **averages out at** 10€ per person."*

B

back away

Move backwards, in fear or dislike

*"When he saw the dog, he **backed away**."*

back down

Withdraw; concede defeat.

*"Local authorities **backed down** on their plans to demolish the cinema."*

back off

Retreat, abandon an intention.

*"The thugs **backed off** when they saw the police."*

back out

Withdraw from an agreement.

*"We made a deal. You can't **back out** now!"*

back out of

Drive out of a place in reverse gear.

*"She **backed the car out of** the garage."*

back into

Drive into a space in reverse gear.

*"He **backed his car into** a parking space."*

back up

Give support or encouragement

*"If I tell the boss we've got too much work, will you **back me up**?"*

Make a copy of (file, document, program...)

*"It is recommended to **back up** all files for safety."*

bail out

Pay money to secure someone's release from jail.

*"When he was arrested his family refused to **bail him out**."*

Rescue from financial difficulties.

*"The government **bailed out** the bank."*

band together

Unite in a group.

*"Consumers **banded together** to protest against the measures."*

bank on

Base your hopes on something/someone.

*"Don't forget the date. I'm **banking on** your help."*

bargain for

Expect; be prepared for.

*"The interview was more difficult than he had **bargained for**."*

bear out

Confirm.

*"The other witnesses will **bear out** my testimony."*

bear with

Be patient.

*"Please **bear with** me please while I finish my explanation."*

beef up

Improve or make more substantial.

*"He **beefed up** his presentation with diagrams and statistics."*

black out

Faint; lose consciousness.

*"When he fell off the horse, he **blacked out**."*

block off

Separate using a barrier.

*"The area was **blocked off** during the demonstration."*

blow up

Explode.

*"The terrorists said the bomb would **blow up** at 9 o'clock."*

Be destroyed by an explosion.

*"The car **blew up** but luckily there was nobody in it."*

bog down

Get caught up in something and be unable to make progress.

*"Try not to get **bogged down** with/in unimportant details."*

boil down to

Be reduced to the main reason or the essential part.

*"The problem **boils down to** a lack of money."*

boot up

Start a computer by loading an operating system or program.

*"Just give me a few minutes to **boot up** the computer."*

break away

Escape from captivity.

*"The horses were enclosed in a paddock but a few of them managed to **break away**."*

break away from

Leave and become independent.

*"He **broke away from** the organisation and set up his own agency."*

break down

Go out of order; stop functioning.

*"John's car **broke down** on the way to the airport."*

Lose control of one's emotions.

*"The parents **broke down** when they heard the news."*

break something down

Divide into smaller or simpler parts.

"The lesson will be easier to learn if you break it down into small sections."

break free

Detach from a physical hold.

*"He **broke free** from his attacker's grasp."*

break in/into

Enter by force in order to steal something.

*"I saw a man outside the shop trying to **break in**."*

*"The burglars **broke into** the house around midnight."*

break in on

Interrupt unexpectedly.

*"An operator suddenly **broke in on** our telephone conversation."*

break off

Stop, discontinue.

*"It has been decided to **break off** diplomatic relations with that country."*

Stop speaking.

*"She **broke off** in the middle of a sentence."*

break out

Start suddenly or erupt.

*"Rioting **broke out** as a result of the strike."*

*"He was in such a nervous state that sweat started to **break out** on his forehead."*

break out of

Escape from captivity by force.

*"Three prisoners **broke out of** the central prison last night."*

break through

Force a way through something.

*"The car **broke through** the barrier set up by the police."*

break up

Come to an end (marriage, a relationship ...).

*"After her marriage **broke up**, Caroline went to live in London."*

Separate into small pieces.

*"Pablo had to use a fork to **break up** the soil."*

break with

Discontinue something or do something in a different way.

*"He **broke with** tradition and invented new methods."*

bring about

Cause something to happen.

*"The arrival of electricity in rural areas **brought about** a huge change."*

bring off

Succeed in doing something difficult.

*"You pretended to be a journalist and he believed you? I never thought you'd **bring it off!**"*

bring up

Raise (a child).

*"She stopped working for a few years in order to **bring up** her children."*

Mention something.

*"His friends knew he had lost his job but they decided not to **bring up** the subject."*

brush up on

Improve; refresh one's knowledge of something.

*Mary decided to **brush up on** her Spanish before going to South America."*

bump into

Meet by accident or unexpectedly.

*"Rafael **bumped into** his English teacher at the supermarket."*

burn out

Stop (something) working.

*"These electric bulbs seem to **burn out** more quickly than the old ones."*

*"The lawn mower has broken down. I think the motor has **burnt out**."*

Become exhausted from too much work or stress.

*"Tom will **burn himself out** if he doesn't slow down and stop working such long hours."*

butt in (on)

Interrupt impolitely.

*"It's rude to **butt in on** a conversation."*

C

call after

Give a child the same name as someone else.

*"His name is Charles. He's **called after** his grandfather."*

call at

Stop at a place briefly (harbour, port, station...)

*"The train **calls at** Newbridge and Glenville on the way to the capital."*

call back

Return a phone call.

*"I'll **call you back** as soon as possible."*

call for

Go somewhere to get someone.

*"I'll **call for** you at 8 o'clock. Make sure you're ready!"*

Demand that something be done.

*"The opposition has **called for** an investigation into the misuse of public funds."*

Be required or necessary.

*"The job **calls for** excellent computer skills."*

Be an appropriate occasion for something.

*"The happy announcement **calls for** champagne."*

call forth

Produce a reaction or result; evoke.

*"The politician's statement **called forth** a hostile reaction from the crowd."*

*"That song **calls forth** sad memories."*

call in

Make a telephone call to a place.

*"Caroline **called in** to say that her plane had been delayed and that she would arrive late."*

Ask someone to come and do a job.

*"The dishwasher has stopped working. I don't know whether to **call in** an electrician or a plumber."*

call in (on)

Stop and pay a visit to someone.

*"I'm going to **call in** on my parents on my way home from work this evening."*

call off

Cancel.

*"The meeting was **called off** because of the strike."*

call on/upon

Formally request or invite.

*"I now **call upon** the President to address the assembly."*

call out

Shout something.

*"The child disappeared from the playground. His mother **called out** his name but he didn't answer."*

call round

Go to a place to see someone.

*"The nurse said she would **call round** this afternoon to check on my mother."*

call up

Phone someone.

*"The secretary **called up** all the area managers to arrange a meeting."*

Summon someone for military service.

*"My father was **called up** to active duty as soon as the war broke out."*

calm down

Become more relaxed or less angry/upset.

*"He was angry at first, but he eventually **calmed down**."*

carry on

Continue.

*"Charlie **carried on** gardening in spite of the rain."*

carry out

Do something as specified (plan, order, threat...)

*"The plan was **carried out** to perfection."*

Perform or conduct (test, experiment ...)

*"Tests are **carried out** to determine the efficiency of a new drug."*

carry over

Postpone until later.

*"As regards holidays, can we **carry over** days from one year to the next?"*

catch up on

Acquire information you have missed.

*"I must call my mother to **catch up on** the latest family events."*

catch up with

Reach the same stage as someone else.

*"I've missed some classes so I'll have to work hard to **catch up with** the others."*

check in

Register at a hotel or an airport.

*"For security reasons, you have to **check in** two hours before your flight."*

check out

Pay one's bill and leave (a hotel)

*"Is Mr. Brown still at the hotel? No, he **checked out** this morning."*

Investigate or verify something.

*"I don't know if the address is still valid. I'll **check it out**."*

cheer up

Put someone in a better mood.

*"I told her a joke to try and **cheer her up**."*

chip in

Contribute to or participate in something done by a group.

*"Bob has decided to retire and we're going to buy him a present. Do you want to **chip in**?"*

clam up

Refuse to speak.

*"When the police arrived, the boy **clammed up**."*

clamp down on

Act strictly to prevent something.

*"The government decided to **clamp down on** smoking in public areas."*

close down

Stop operating (company, restaurant, cinema ...)

*"When the factory **closed down**, the employees lost their jobs."*

come about

Happen or occur.

*"How did such a complicated situation **come about**?"*

come across

Find by chance, encounter.

*"Julie **came across** some photographs of her grandparents in the attic."*

Appear, seem, make an impression.

*"The candidate **came across** as a dynamic person during the interview."*

come along

Go somewhere with someone.

*"I wanted to watch the parade and Alex decided to **come along** with me."*

Tell someone to hurry.

*"**Come along** Emily. You don't want to be late for school!"*

Arrive, appear.

*"Tony needs a job. If an opportunity **comes along** he's determined to seize it."*

Improve, develop or make progress.

"How's your mother **coming along** since she broke her leg?"

come apart

Separate into pieces.

"I need to get my glasses repaired. They **came apart** when they fell off the table."

come before

Be more important.

"She always says that her family **comes before** her career."

come by

To get, especially something that is difficult to obtain or find.

"How did you **come by** such a beautiful location to build your house?"

come down with

Become ill with.

"The architect planned to attend the inauguration but unfortunately he **came down with** the flu yesterday."

come forward

Present oneself; volunteer.

"The police have asked any witnesses to **come forward**."

come out

Become known.

"The truth will **come out** sooner or later. It's just a matter of time."

come to

Regain consciousness.

"She fainted when the news was announced but she **came to** quite quickly."

come up against

Be faced with or opposed by.

"The plan to demolish the old theatre **came up against** a lot of criticism."

come up with

Produce an idea or plan.

"Sacha **came up with** a great idea for the party."

come upon

Find or discover.

"The police came upon a stock of firearms in a disused mine."

conk out

Stop working.

"The car **conked out** on the motorway."

Fall asleep (from exhaustion).

"He was so exhausted, he **conked out** in front of the television."

consist in

Have something as its principal or only feature.

"The elegance of the building **consists in** its simplicity."

consist of

Be composed or made up of.

"The jury consists of five members."

count on

Rely or depend on.

"I'm **counting on** the taxi driver to find the theatre."

cross out

Remove by drawing a line through.

"In some exercises you are asked to **cross out** the incorrect word."

cut across/through

Go across to shorten one's route.

"I usually **cut across** the park on my way to work."

cut back

Reduce or decrease.

"It was decided to **cut back** production."

cut down

Strike down, cut at the base.

"A number of trees were **cut down** before the construction work started."

Kill or cause to die.

"He was **cut down** by pneumonia."

cut down on

Reduce in number or size.

"The doctor told him to **cut down on** cigarettes."

cut in

Interrupt somebody speaking.

"During his presentation of the project a journalist **cut in**."

cut off

Discontinue; interrupt.

"The operator **cut off** our conversation before we had finished."

Be separated or isolated.

"Our group was **cut off** from the others so we got lost!"

cut out

Remove using scissors.

"She **cut out** a picture of the actor in a magazine."

Stop doing something.

"I'm going to **cut out** eating sweet food."

D

deal with

Handle, take care of, address (problem, situation).

"The manager is good at **dealing with** difficult customers."

deck out (in/with)

Dress; decorate.

"The women were all **decked out** in beautiful dresses."

"The exhibition hall will be **decked out** in the colours of Europe."

die down

Calm down, become less strong.

"When the applause **died down**, she started to sing."

dig into

Plunge your hands deep inside something, especially to look for something.

*"He **dug into** his pocket and found the key."*

Press hard into something.

*"The strap of her bag **dug** painfully **into** her shoulder."*

Start to do something.

*"It was time to **dig into** the work that had accumulated on her desk."*

Take from something.

*"Dad had to **dig into** his savings to repair the roof."*

dig up

Break up the soil/remove by digging.

*"Tom tried to **dig up** the tree by its roots."*

Discover or reveal information.

*"Some newspapers often try to **dig up** scandalous information."*

dish out

Distribute or give away a lot.

*"He spent the day **dishing out** invitations to tourists."*

dispense with

Decide to do without something.

*"They've **dispensed with** the paper version so you'll have to download it."*

do away with

Get rid of; abolish.

*"Some people think it's time to **do away with** the monarchy."*

do over

Clean or redecorate.

*"My parents will need to **do over** their living-room soon. The paintwork needs refreshing."*

do up

Fasten (a garment).

*"Good boy Charlie! You know how to **do up** your coat now!"*

do without

Manage without.

*"The shops are closed so I'm afraid we'll have to **do without** sugar."*

drag on

Last longer than expected.

*"We expected a short speech but it **dragged on** and on!"*

drag out

Make something longer than necessary.

*"Let's decide quickly and not **drag out** this discussion."*

Make someone reveal information that they are unwilling to give.

*"The police finally **dragged out** a confession from the suspect. "*

draw up

Write (contract, agreement, document).

*"An agreement was **drawn up** and signed by the two parties."*

dress up

Wear elegant clothes.

*"Do people **dress up** to go to the opera in your country?"*

Disguise oneself.

*"You know how children love to **dress up** at Halloween. It's part of the fun!"*

drift apart

Become less and less close.

*"We were childhood friends but we **drifted apart** over the years."*

drift off

Gradually fall asleep.

*"Once he was on the train he sat back, closed his eyes and **drifted off**."*

drive at

Insinuate; be trying to say.

*"I'm not sure I understand. What exactly are you **driving at**?"*

drop behind

Fall into a position behind others.

*"Our sales have **dropped behind** those of our competitors."*

drop by/in

Pay a brief visit, usually on the way somewhere.

*"I don't see her often but she promised to **drop by** one day for a cup of coffee."*

*"Jimmy sometimes **drops in** to see his grandparents on his way home from school."*

drop off

Deliver someone or something.

*"I'll **drop you off** at the bus stop if you like. I'm going that way."*

Fall asleep.

*"Granddad often **drops off** in front of the television."*

drop out

Stop going to classes before finishing a course of study or the school year.

*"Emily decided to go to art school, then **dropped out** after the first term."*

drown out

Be louder in order to cover another sound.

*"They turned up the music to **drown out** the noise of the children outside."*

E/F**ease off/up**

Reduce, become less severe or slow down (pain, traffic, work ...)

*"After Christmas, the workload generally **eases off**."*

egg on

Encourage someone to do something.

"Egged on by his friends, the boy climbed over the wall"

embark on/upon

Start or engage in something.

"Lily embarked on a career that lead her to fame."

end in

Finish in a certain way/result in.

"Their tumultuous marriage ended in divorce."

end up

Finally reach a state, place or action.

"If Jack continues his misconduct, he'll end up in prison."

even out

Eliminate differences of opinion.

"After a long discussion they managed to even out their differences."

Become level or regular.

"The old road was evened out to make it safer."

explain away

Find an excuse or plausible explanation.

"How are you going to explain away the missing money?"

face up (to)

Accept to deal with something unpleasant.

"Sam will have to face up to the fact that Jenny is not in love with him."

factor in

Include when calculating or trying to understand something.

"We must factor in the age of the patients."

fall apart

Disintegrate; break; fall into pieces.

"My car is so old it's falling apart."

"Their marriage fell apart after they both lost their jobs."

fall back on

Be able to use something in an emergency.

"We were lucky to have some tinned food to fall back on."

fall behind

Fail to maintain a certain level.

"As a result of the accident she fell behind at school and had to study harder."

fall through

Fail ; not happen.

"Our planned boat trip fell through because of the storm."

fall out

Become loose and drop.

"When you grow old your hair starts to fall out."

Stop being friends because of a disagreement or argument.

"Emma is not speaking to Julie anymore. They fell out during the school trip."

figure out

Understand; find the answer.

"I've bought a new oven. Now I'm trying to figure out how to set the timer."

fill in for

Temporarily substitute for another person.

"Eva is absent this morning and Julie is going to fill in for her."

fill out

Complete (a form/application).

"Please fill out the enclosed form and send it back as soon as possible."

find out

Discover or obtain information.

"I'm going to call the cinema to find out what time the film starts."

fire away

Ask questions in quick succession.

"May we ask some questions? Sure, fire away!"

fire back

Shoot back.

"The policemen fired back at the robbers."

fit in (with)

Feel comfortable or be in harmony with.

"He has difficulty making friends. He just doesn't seem to fit in with the others."

fix up

Repair or renovate.

"They're going to fix up the house before moving in."

fizzle out

Gradually end.

"They used to be very close but over the years their friendship fizzled out."

focus on

Concentrate on something.

"The advertising campaign will focus on the quality of the product."

fold in

Mix one ingredient with another.

"Beat the eggs then fold in the sugar."

freak out

Panic or go crazy.

"She nearly freaked out when she saw the colour of her hair. It was a disaster!"

frown on/upon

Disapprove.

"My parents always frowned on smoking."

fuss over

Pay excessive attention to somebody or somebody.

"She's forever fussing over her grandson. It's just too much!"

G

get about/around

Move from place to place.

*"It's not easy to **get around** the city without a map."*

Spread, circulate.

*"News of their separation soon **got about**."*

get along (with)

Be on good terms; work well with.

*"I must say I **get along** (well) **with** my mother-in-law."*

get at

Imply; insinuate.

*"I don't understand. What exactly are you trying to **get at**?"*

get away

Escape.

*"According to the news report, the robbers **got away** in a black car."*

get by (on)

Manage to cope or have enough to survive.

*"It's difficult to **get by on** a low salary."*

get down to

Start to actually do something.

*"That's enough chatting. It's time to **get down to** some serious work!"*

get into

Enter a place.

*"How did the burglar **get in**?"*

get off

Leave (bus, train, plane).

*"Your best option would be to **get off** the bus at Trafalgar Square."*

Leave work (at the end of the day).

*"I'll pick you up after work. What time do you **get off**?"*

Remove something (clothes, stains).

*"I don't know how I'm going to **get this stain off** my dress!"*

get off with

Receive almost no punishment.

*"He was lucky. He **got off with** a small fine."*

get on

Board (bus, train, plane).

*"You can pay when you **get on** the bus."*

get on with

Continue to do something ; make progress.

*"Be quiet and **get on with** your homework."*

get on (well) with

Have a good relationship with.

*"Do you **get on well with** your colleagues?"*

get out

Spend some free time out of the house.

*"Her husband is very ill so she doesn't **get out** much."*

Leave or go away.

*"We don't want you here. **Get out!**"*

get out of

Leave a place.

*"The window was closed. How did he **get out of** the house?"*

Avoid doing something.

*"Some husbands manage to **get out of** doing any housework."*

Receive; learn; gain from something.

*"What are you hoping to **get out of** the seminar?"*

get over

Recover from (illness, disappointment).

*"Charlie had the 'flu but he **got over** it."*

get rid of

Eliminate.

*"It's difficult to **get rid of** old habits."*

get round/around (to)

Finally do something.

*"He finally **got round** to tidying the garage."*

get together

Meet each other.

*"Let's **get together** for lunch one day next week."*

get up

Rise; leave bed.

*"Tony usually **gets up** at 7 o'clock."*

give away

Give something free of charge.

*"The artist **gave away** most of his paintings."*

Reveal something.

*"The names of the witnesses will not be **given away**."*

give back

Return something to its owner.

*"He promised to **give back** the book he borrowed."*

give in

accept defeat; surrender

*"The authorities refused to **give in** to the demands of the population."*

give over!

Stop doing something irritating

*"**Give over** complaining! It doesn't help at all!"*

give up

Stop doing something.

*"Sarah **gave up** smoking five years ago."*

Admit defeat; capitulate.

*"Have you found the answer? No, I **give up**."*

gloss over

Treat something briefly (make it seem unimportant).

*"The director **glossed over** the recent drop in sales."*

go after

Pursue (an object or a goal).

*"She **went after** her dream and is now an actress."*

go along (with)

Agree with; accept.

"Alex tends to **go along with** anything his wife says."

go away

Leave a place.

We decided to **go away** for a few days.

Disappear; fade.

"I've washed it twice but the stain still hasn't **gone away**."

go back

Return.

"Children **go back** to school after the holidays."

go by

Pass.

"A bus **went by** without stopping."

"Time goes by so quickly!"

go down

Decrease, reduce.

"The price of property has **gone down** a bit."

go down with

Become ill with an infectious disease.

"The match will be difficult. Half of the team has **gone down with** the flu."

go for

Try to gain or attain.

"He trained hard and **went for** the gold medal."

go in

Enter.

"There's a nice restaurant. Let's **go in** and book a table for tonight."

go into

Go inside.

"**Go into** the bakery and see if they sell croissants."

go in for

Have something as an interest or hobby.

"She doesn't really **go in for** sports."

go off

Explode.

"A bomb **went off** in a crowded restaurant"

Ring or make a loud noise.

"The alarm clock was set to **go off** at 6 a.m."

Stop working

"The heating has **gone off**. It's freezing!"

No longer be good to eat or drink.

"The milk has **gone off**. Don't drink it."

No longer like or enjoy.

"My grandmother has **gone off** crosswords."

go on

Continue.

"Sorry for interrupting. Please **go on**."

go out

Leave one's home to attend a social event.

"Many young people **go out** a lot."

go out

Stop burning; be extinguished

"The lights **went out** before we got to the door."

go out

Be sent

"The letter **went out** yesterday."

go (out) with

Have someone as a boyfriend/girlfriend.

"Is Julie **going (out) with** Tom?"

go over

Review.

"Please **go over** your answers before handing in your test."

go through

Experience or undergo something.

"Pete **went through** a lot of pain after the accident."

Examine or study carefully.

"I need time to **go through** the contract before I sign it."

go through with

Proceed with something difficult.

"Bill and Amy finally **went through with** the divorce."

go up

Increase, rise.

"According to the news report the price of petrol is likely to **go up**."

go together/with

Match; look good or combine well with

"The curtains don't **go with** the carpet."

"The curtains and carpet don't **go together**."

go without

Abstain from something; not have something.

"I had to **go without** lunch to finish the report."

"Camels can **go without** water for many days."

grow up

Spend one's childhood; become an adult.

"He **grew up** in a small village."

"Don't be so childish. You need to **grow up**!"

H**hand back**

Return.

"She read the article and then **handed it back**."

hand down

Pass on (by tradition, inheritance...).

"My clothes were **handed down** to me by my older sister."

hand in

Submit (report, homework).

"All application forms must be **handed in** before the end of the month."

hand out

Distribute.

"Samples will be **handed out** at the end of the demonstration."

hand over

Give to someone in authority.

*"The boy was forced to **hand over** the mobile phone he had stolen."*

hang back

Be reluctant to do something.

*"All the children rushed towards the clown except one boy who **hung back**."*

hang on

Wait.

"Hang on a minute. I'm nearly ready."

hang on to

Keep a hold on something.

*"Be careful. **Hang on to** that rope and you'll be ok."*

hang out

Spend time in a particular place or with a group of friends.

*"Where does Danny **hang out** these days?"*

*"Who does he **hang out** with?"*

hang up

End a telephone conversation.

*"Please don't **hang up**. I haven't finished yet."*

head off

Start to go somewhere.

*"The group of tourists **headed off** to the train station."*

head for

Go towards or move in a certain direction.

*"We all started to shout because the boat was **heading for** the rocks."*

hit at

Aim a blow at something.

*The customer **hit at** the wasp with a newspaper."*

hit back

Retaliate; reply to an attack.

*"When he was attacked, the boy **hit back** with all his strength."*

hit on/upon

Find unexpectedly or by inspiration.

*"As she watched the news she **hit upon** an idea for her new collection."*

hold on

Wait for a short time.

"Hold on a moment please. I'll put you through to Mr. Brown."

Grip tightly.

*She **held on** to the railing as she crossed the bridge."*

hold up

Show as an example.

*"The teacher **held up** the diagram for all to see."*

hook up

Fasten (a garment).

*"Can you help me to **hook up** my dress? It's a bit complicated."*

hook up (with)

Link broadcasting facilities.

*"Many networks are **hooked up** by satellite."*

hurry up

Be quick; act speedily.

*"Come on Harry. **Hurry up!** We're going to miss the bus!"*

I/J/K

idle away

Waste time doing nothing much.

*"He **idles away** hours every day watching television."*

iron out

Resolve by discussion; eliminate differences.

*"The meeting tomorrow will be an opportunity to **iron out** difficulties."*

impose on/upon

Ask too much of someone.

*"Is it alright if I stay? I don't want to **impose upon** your hospitality."*

improve on/upon

Make better.

*The runner trained regularly to **improve** on his previous performance."*

indulge in

Allow yourself to enjoy something.

*"I've been dieting all week but today I'm going to **indulge in** a dessert."*

insure against

Guarantee compensation for damage, injury, etc.

*"The passengers on the boat are all **fully insured**."*

invite out

Ask someone to join you for lunch, dinner, etc.

*"Harry **invited** her **out** for dinner."*

join in

Participate in something.

*"We couldn't persuade Eva to **join in** the game. She was too shy."*

join up

Engage in, become a member of.

*"John was in the army and Tom **joined up** as soon as he left school."*

Meet and unite with.

*"The two groups of tourists **joined up** at the hotel."*

jot down

Take quick notes.

*"I **jotted down** the address while watching a documentary on television."*

keep at

Persevere.

*"His father encouraged him to **keep at** his studies."*

keep back

Retain; force to stay back.

*"A barrier will be installed to **keep back** the fans."*

keep on

Continue doing something.

"I told the children to be quiet but they **kept on** making noise."

keep up with

Stay at the same level as someone or something.

"Bill walks so fast it's difficult to **keep up with** him."

kneel down

Go down on your knees.

"Most people **kneel down** to pray."

kick off

Begin; start.

"The football match is planned to **kick off** at 3 p.m."

knock back

Drink quickly (usually alcohol).

"He **knocked back** a pint of beer and then went home."

knock down

Strike someone or something to the ground.

"The child was **knocked down** by a car on the way to school."

"The tree was **knocked down** during the storm."

knock out

Cause someone to fall unconscious.

"The boxer was **knocked out** in the first round."

know of

Have heard of; have knowledge about.

"Do you **know of** anyone else attending the conference?"

L**laugh off**

Make light of something; minimise.

"The author **laughed off** the unflattering review of his latest book."

lay off

Fire, dismiss, let go.

"Many factories have had to **lay off** workers."

leaf through

Turn over pages quickly.

"Sophie **leafed through** a magazine in the waiting room."

leak out

Become known to the public unofficially (information).

"News of the planned merger **leaked out** before the end of the negotiations."

leave out

Omit; not mention.

"Tom's name was **left out** of the report so he got no credit for his work."

let down

Disappoint.

"You promised to come to the party, so don't **let me down!**"

Lengthen (skirt, pants).

"The skirt is too short? We can have it **let down** for you if you like."

light up

Illuminate.

"I watched the floodlights **light up** the castle."

"Her face always **lights up** when she sees her grandson."

"The screen **lights up** when you turn on a computer."

line up

Stand in a row.

"The books were **lined up** neatly on the shelves."

live through

Experience something and survive.

"My grandparents **lived through** two wars and learned to survive."

liven up

Make something livelier or more attractive.

"We've got to find a way to **liven up** the presentation somehow."

log in/on (to)

"Access a program or database using a password."

"You need to **log in to** your account before you can use our services."

log off

End access to a database.

"First **log off** the system and then turn off the computer."

look after

Take care of.

"A baby sitter **looks after** the children when their parents go out."

look ahead

Think of the future.

"Don't keep thinking about the past. It's time to **look ahead** and plan the future."

look at

Pay attention to something you see.

"**Look at** this picture of my grandfather when he was young."

look at

Read in order to give an opinion.

"Have you got time to **look at** my business plan?"

look at

Examine closely.

"That's a nasty bruise. You should ask a doctor to **look at** it."

look at

Examine or study carefully.

"We are going to **look at** all possible options."

look away

Turn your head away so as not to see.

"The scene was so horrible that I had to **look away**."

look back on

Remember the past.

"My parents and their friends like to **look back on** the good old days."

look down on

Consider as inferior.

"He tends to **look down on** anyone who is not successful."

look for

Try to find something.

"Jane went shopping to **look for** an outfit for the wedding."

look forward to

Await or anticipate with pleasure.

"I **look forward to** seeing you next week-end."

look into

Examine or investigate.

"Our after-sales service will **look into** the matter and call you back."

look on

Be a spectator at an event.

"Billy didn't take part in the fight. He just **looked on**."

look out

Be careful; pay attention.

"**Look out!** There's a car coming."

look over

Examine; review.

"The editor will **look over** the article before it is published."

look through

Examine, usually quickly.

"I'll **look through** my mail to see if I can find your message."

look up to

Admire.

"He was a wonderful teacher and many students **looked up to** him."

lose out

Be unsuccessful; suffer a loss.

"I'm the one who will **lose out** if our plan goes wrong."

lose out on

Miss or be deprived of something.

"I watched the documentary until the end so as not to **lose out on** anything."

"Because I left before the end of the year I **lost out on** the annual bonus."

lose out to

Be less successful than another.

"Jose was called for an interview but he **lost out to** a candidate who spoke fluent English."

M/N**make for**

Move in the direction of; head for.

"Let's **make for** the exit before the crowd starts to leave."

make fun of

Laugh at ; make jokes about.

"The old lady dresses so strangely that the children **make fun of** her."

make (something) into

Convert or change into.

"We're going to **make** our garage **into** a playroom."

make of

Have an opinion about something.

"What do you **make of** his latest suggestion?"

make off with

Steal and hurry away.

"A young man **made off with** my briefcase while I was checking the timetable."

make out

Be able to hear or read something.

"I need glasses! I can't **make out** what's written on the board."

Fill in the details (e.g. cheque).

"Please **make out** the cheque to ABC Wizards."

make oneself out (to be)

Claim to be.

"In an attempt to find more details, he **made himself out to be** a journalist."

make up

Invent (excuse, story).

"Some employees **make up** excuses when they arrive late for work."

Prepare a bed for use.

"You can stay here tonight. I'll **make up** a bed for you in the spare room."

Form, constitute.

"In your opinion what qualities **make up** his character?"

Put on powder, lipstick, etc.

"Cynthia spends ages **making herself up/putting on make-up**

make up (with)

End a quarrel and become friends again.

"Come on you two! It's time to shake hands and **make up**."

make up for

Compensate for.

"If I work longer the next few days I can **make up for** the time I was absent."

mark down

Reduce the price.

"The coat was **marked down** by 40% - a real bargain!"

miss out on

Lose an opportunity to do something.

"What a shame. If you leave before Saturday you'll **miss out on** the party."

mix up

Mistake one thing or person for another.

"I don't know the members' names yet. I tend to **mix them up**."

move in

Arrive in a new home or office.

"You've bought a new house? When are you **moving in**?"

move out

Leave your home/office for another one.

"My neighbour is leaving. He's **moving out** next Saturday."

nail down

Make someone say something precisely.

"Alex promised to come for a week-end but we'll have to **nail him down** to a date."

name after

Give the same name as another person.

"My husband wanted William to be **named after** his grandfather."

narrow down

Reduce a list or a number of options.

"The list of suspects has been **narrowed down** to three people."

nod off

Fall asleep.

"My grandfather very often **nods off** in front of the television."

nose about/around

Try to discover by searching.

"The boss hates people **nosing around** his desk."

note down

Write something down.

"I'll call the station and **note down** the departure times."

O/P/Q

opt out (of)

Leave a system or decide not to participate.

"I enjoy tennis but I'm so busy I had to **opt out of** the tournament."

own up

Admit or confess something.

"The boy **owned up**. He said he kicked the ball through the window."

pass away

Die.

"The old lady **passed away** peacefully."

pass on

Transmit.

"Don't forget to **pass on** the information to all the members."

pass out

Faint; lose consciousness.

"She **passed out** when she received confirmation that the plane had crashed."

pay back

Reimburse.

"I will lend you 20€ provided you **pay me back** before the end of the week."

phase in/out

Introduce or discontinue something gradually.

"The government decided to **phase in** the new regulations."

pick on

Choose someone to blame, punish, bully, etc.

"The other children were always **picking on** Charlie because of his red hair."

pick out

Select; choose.

"Will you help me **pick out** a handbag to go with my outfit?"

pick up

Learn.

"Children are quick to **pick up** a new language."

Collect somebody/something; give someone a lift.

"James is coming to **pick me up** at the station."

play up

Cause pain or discomfort.

"My stomach is starting to **play up** again after all that heavy food."

Emphasise the value or make something seem more important.

"Donald always **plays up** his achievements."

play down

Minimise the value or make something appear less important.

"The government tried to **play down** the gravity of the situation."

pop across/over/down/out

Come or go quickly in the direction specified.

"She **popped over** to the shop to buy a sandwich."

pop in

Make a brief visit.

"My daughter sometimes **pops in** for a cup of coffee."

pop up

Arise, occur.

"The question of security **popped up** during the meeting."

pull through

Overcome difficulties or illness.

"My grandmother caught pneumonia last winter but she **pulled through**."

put away

Return something to the place where it is usually kept.

"Please **put away** the dictionary when you've finished using it."

put back

Replace, return to its proper place.

"Please **put** the dictionary **back** on the shelf beside the others."

put forward

Propose or recommend something.

"The chairman **put forward** a proposal to move to bigger offices."

put off

Postpone; delay; arrange a later date.

"The meeting has been **put off** until next week because of the strike."

put on

Turn on / switch on.

Could you **put on** the light please?

Wear a garment or piece of clothing.

"You'd better **put on** your coat - it's cold outside today."

put out

Extinguish.

"It took the fire fighters a long time to **put out** the fire."

put (yourself) out

Go to a lot of trouble; be inconvenienced.

"Please don't **put yourself out** for us."

put (something) out

Leave or place something outside the house.

"Don't forget to **put out** the dustbin this evening".

put through

Connect two people (on the phone).

"Just a moment please. I'll **put you through** to Mr. Brown."

put up

Erect, build.

Danny **put up** a tent in the garden to keep the children happy."

put (someone) up

Accommodate; give someone a bed

"We can **put you up** if you'd like to come for the week-end."

put up with

Tolerate.

"I don't know how you can **put up with** the noise of all that traffic."

point out

Indicate; direct attention to something.

"My mother **pointed out** the house where she grew up."

R/S

reel off

Recite without effort or pause.

"Stella amazed everyone by **reeling off** all the phrasal verbs she had learned."

rely on

Count on; depend on; trust

"Don't worry. You can **rely on** me. I can keep a secret."

rig out (verb)

Dress or equip.

"The old lady arrived all **rigged out** in her best clothes."

ring back (also: call back)

Return a phone call.

"John **rang** this morning and asked if you could **ring him back**."

ring off

End a phone call.

"The caller gave his name and then **rang off**."

rub out

Erase.

Write it in pencil so that you can **rub it out** later if you want to change it.

rule out

Eliminate.

"The police are still investigating but they have **ruled out** political motives."

run away

Escape from a place or suddenly leave.

"He **ran away** from home at the age of fourteen."

run into (also : bump into)

Meet by accident or unexpectedly .

"Sophie **ran into** Maria at the shopping centre."

run out of

Have no more of something.

"What a nuisance! We've **run out of** coffee."

scale back/scale down

Make something smaller than originally intended.

"Due to the crisis the company had to **scale down** the size of the plant."

scrape together/scrape up

Manage to find or collect enough of something you need, usually money.

"We finally **scraped together** enough money to buy an old car."

scrape through

Succeed with difficulty.

"How I **scraped through** the exam is still a mystery to me!"

set off

Start a journey.

"Early Saturday morning we **set off** for the ski slopes."

set up

Start a business.

"Victoria **set up** her own company 10 years ago."

settle for

Accept something not quite satisfactory

"I was hoping for a better proposal but I'll **settle for** the amount you offer."

shop around

Compare prices.

"It's always wise to **shop around** before buying anything."

show off

Brag or want to be admired.

"There's Donald **showing off** in his new sports car!"

show up

Appear; arrive.

"We expected William to come but he didn't **show up**."

shut up (impolite)

Be silent, stop talking.

"Oh shut up you idiot!"

sign away

Give up one's rights or ownership.

"He **signed away** his property and joined a religious community."

sign in

Register (e.g. at a hotel).

"As soon as we've **signed in** we'll go and get something to eat."

sign out

Pay your bill and leave (e.g. a hotel).

"At 9 o'clock he **signed out** and left for the airport."

sign over (to)

Transfer ownership of something.

"He **signed over** the house to his two children."

sign up (for)

Enroll in an activity.

Emma **signed up** for a computer course.

sign up (with)

Sign an agreement to work for somebody.

"Paul has **signed up** with a news agency."

single out

Select for special attention.

"Two of the boys were **singled out** for extra coaching.

sink in

Be fully understood.

"In spite of the detailed news reports, it took a while for the scale of the disaster to **sink in**."

sit down

Take a seat.

"Please come in and **sit down**."

sleep in

Sleep later than usual.

"Tomorrow is Saturday, so I can **sleep in**!"

sleep over

Stay overnight at someone else's home.

"You're welcome to **sleep over** if you don't want to drive in this weather."

slip up

Make a mistake.

"You **slipped up** there! His name is Alex, not Alan!"

slow down

Decelerate; go more slowly.

"George! You're going to cause an accident. **Slow down!**"

sober up

Get rid of the effects of too much alcohol.

"Jack decided to go for a long walk to **sober up**."

sort out

Organise, resolve a problem.

"There was a misunderstanding but Lea **sorted it out**."

"Students should **sort out** their books at the end of the school year."

speed up

Accelerate; go faster.

"We need to **speed up** the registration procedure."

stand for

Represent, mean.

"VAT **stands for** value added tax."

Tolerate.

"There's no way I'm going to **stand for** such bad behaviour!"

stand up

Rise from a sitting position

"The pupils **stood up** when the headmaster arrived."

stand up for

Support or defend someone or something.

"You must learn to be assertive and **stand up for** your personal views."

stick around

Stay somewhere for some time.

"I'll **stick around** until the end of the parade."

stick out

Come out.

"The speaker's shirt was **sticking out** from his trousers."

Become noticeable.

"With that dress you'll really **stick out!**"

stick (something) out

Tolerate, accept to continue.

"Lunch with my girlfriend's colleagues was boring but I had to **stick it out** - I had no choice!"

stick to

Continue without changing anything.

"We must decide on a plan of action and **stick to it**."

stick together

Support each other.

"Good friends always **stick together**."

stick with

Continue using or doing something.

"I'll **stick with** this grammar book because it has everything I need."

T

take after

Resemble in appearance or character.

"Jamie really **takes after** his dad."

take apart

Dismantle or separate the components.

"The technician has to **take the machine apart** in order to repair it."

take away

Cause something to disappear.

*"The doctor gave my father tablets to **take away** the pain."*

Buy food at a restaurant and carry it elsewhere to eat it.

*"Two beef curries to **take away** please."*

take back

Agree to receive back/ be returned.

*"We will **take back** goods only if you can produce the receipt."*

Retract or withdraw something said.

*"I **take back** what I said about cheating. I didn't mean it."*

take care of

Look after.

*"I'll **take care of** your plants while you're away."*

take off

Leave the ground.

*"The plane **took off** at 7 o'clock."*

take in

Allow to stay in one's home.

*"The old lady next door is always **taking in** stray cats and dogs!"*

Note with your eyes and register.

*"Amanda **took in** every detail of her rival's outfit."*

Understand what one sees, hears or reads; realise what is happening.

*"The man immediately **took in** the scene and called the police."*

take on

Hire or engage staff.

*"Business is good so the company is **taking on** extra staff."*

take out

Remove ; cause to disappear.

*"Try this. It should **take out** the stain."*

Extract from somewhere.

*"She **took out** a pen to note down the supplier's address."*

Invite someone to dinner, the theatre, cinema, etc.

*"Her boyfriend **took her out** for a meal on her birthday."*

Obtain a service or document (insurance, mortgage ...).

*"Many homeowners **take out** a mortgage when they buy property."*

take up

Fill or occupy space or time.

*"There's not much space here. The big table **takes up** too much room."*

Adopt as a hobby or pastime.

*"My father **took up** golf when he retired."*

Start something e.g. a job.

*"While writing his first book he **took up** a job as a teacher."*

Make something shorter.

*"That skirt is too long for you. It will need to be **taken up**."*

Continue something interrupted.

*"She **took up** the story where Bill had left off."*

talk into

Persuade someone to do something.

"Caroline talked John into buying a new car."

talk out of

Persuade someone not to do something.

"Her parents tried to talk Amy out of leaving her job."

tear up

Rip into pieces

"Tear up the pizza boxes before you put them in the bin."

tell off

Reprimand; criticise severely

*"The teacher **told her off** for not doing her homework."*

test out

Carry out an experiment.

*"The theory hasn't been **tested out** yet."*

think over

Consider something fully.

*"I'll have to **think over** your proposal before I decide."*

think up

Invent, find, produce by thought.

*"The kids put the cat in the oven because it was cold. What are they going to **think up** next!"*

throw away/out

Discard as useless or unwanted.

*"You can **throw away** that book - it's a load of rubbish!"*

throw up

Vomit ; be sick.

*"I nearly **threw up** when I saw the injured passengers."*

tire out

Exhaust completely.

"The children were so turbulent they tired out their grandmother."

touch down

Land on the runway.

*"There were no delays. The plane **touched down** exactly on time."*

toy with

Think about, without serious intent.

*"I've been **toying with** the idea of walking to work, but it would mean getting up earlier."*

track down

Search until found.

*"The police finally **tracked down** the main suspect."*

trade in

Give as part payment for a new article.

*"I **traded in** my old car for a new model."*

try on

Put on or wear something to see if it suits or fits.

*"I'm not sure about the size. Can I **try it on**?"*

turn away

Refuse entrance to someone.

*"Tickets were sold out and hundreds of fans were **turned away** from the football stadium."*

turn down

Lower the volume.

Please **turn down** the music; it's too loud.

Refuse.

"It would be silly to **turn down** a generous offer like that!

turn off

Stop by turning a switch, tap or knob.

"Please remember to **turn off** the lights before you leave."

turn up

Arrive; appear.

"Her train was delayed so she **turned up** an hour late at the meeting.

Raise the volume.

Could you **turn up** the radio please? I'd like to listen to the news.

U/V/W/X/Y/Z

use up

Finish a product (so that there's none left).

"What a nuisance! The kids have **used up** all the toothpaste. "

veer away from

Avoid, stay away from.

"I **veer away from** hypochondriacs if I can."

vouch for.

Express confidence in, or guarantee something.

"You can give the keys to Andy. I can **vouch for** him. "

ward off

Keep away or repel (something dangerous or unpleasant).

"I take plenty of vitamin C in winter to **ward off** colds."

warm up

Reheat something.

"She didn't have time to cook so she **warmed up** some left-over soup."

Make more lively or more relaxed.

"He told a few jokes to **warm up** the atmosphere."

wash up

Wash the dishes after a meal.

"Who's going to help me **wash up**?"

watch out

Be careful.

"**Watch out!** There's a car coming."

water down

Dilute or make weaker by adding water.

"If you **water down** the medicine it will be easier to take."

Make less severe.

"He **watered down** his remarks so as not to offend anyone."

wear away

Disappear after use or over time.

"The words printed on the cover had **worn away**."

wear down

Make someone feel weary or tired.

"Kim is exhausted. The baby's constant crying is **wearing her down**."

wear off

Gradually disappear.

"The effect of the painkiller began to **wear off**."

wear out

Become unusable.

"During the trip Julie **wore out** her shoes sightseeing.

Become very tired

"At the end of the every day Julie was **worn out**."

whip up

Prepare quickly.

"I can **whip up** something to eat if you're hungry."

wolf down

Eat greedily and quickly.

"The boys **wolfed down** the whole cake in no time!"

work out

Do physical exercise.

"Tanya **works out** twice a week at the gym club."

Find a solution or calculate something.

"It's going to be expensive but I haven't **worked out** the exact cost yet."

wind up

Finish or put an end to something.

"Before **winding up** his speech he thanked everyone for their presence."

"Larry decided to **wind up** his business and retire."

Arrive finally in a place.

"After a long drive we finally **wound up** in a village with a spectacular view."

wipe off

Clean (board, table).

"The teacher asked one of the children to **wipe off** the board."

wrap up

Cover; enclose.

"She's busy right now. She's **wrapping up** her Christmas presents."

Complete (a task, a discussion).

"The salesman hoped to **wrap up** a few deals at the end of the demonstration."

write back

Reply to a letter.

"Lucy and Steve sent me an invitation and I **wrote back** to accept it."

write (something) down

Note something on a piece of paper.

"Richard **wrote down** the address of the hotel."