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**Phrasal verbs** are multi-word verbs that have two parts: a verb and one or two adverb particles or *prepositions* which create a meaning different from the original verb. The most common adverb particles or prepositions are: **at, down, in, off, out, over** and **up**.

- The alarm **went off** at 6:30. (make a sound)
- My professor can **go on** for hours about astrology. (continue)
- The price of gas **has gone up** over 50%. (increase)
- We like to **go out** on Friday nights. (go to a bar or club)

Many phrasal verbs **take an object**. Some of these phrasal verbs are **separable** (the verb and the preposition can be separated, *putting the object in the middle*), while others are **inseparable** (the object must come at the end because the verb and the preposition *must stay together*).

## Separable phrasal verbs

If a phrasal verb is separable, it means you can separate the two words and put the direct object in the middle.

'Write down' is an example for a separable verb.

- His students **write down** everything he says.
- His students **write** everything he says **down**.



via <https://www.really-learn-english.com/separable-inseparable-phrasal-verbs.html>

## Inseparable phrasal verbs

Some phrasal verbs cannot be separated. This means that when we want to use an object (a noun or a pronoun), it must always come after the complete phrasal verb.

'*Run out of*' is an example for an inseparable verb. We use it when we had something, but we have used it all, and now it is all gone.

- *Chet was having a lovely afternoon drive until he **ran out of** gas!*



via <https://www.really-learn-english.com/separable-inseparable-phrasal-verbs.html>

Here are some examples of separable and inseparable phrasal verbs.

### Separable

When are you going to **ask Melissa out**?  
(ask someone to go on a date)

### Inseparable

We need to **check out** of the room by 1:30.  
(leave a hotel room)

I am need to **drop a package off** at the post office.  
(leave something somewhere)

Do **you get along with** your parents?  
(have a good relationship with)

I need you to **fill this form in** before your appointment.  
(complete spaces on a form)

She is just starting to **get over** the flu.  
(recover)

You should **put your clothes away** after you fold them.  
(put in the correct place)

She **passed away** after a long battle with cancer.  
(die)

It is hot in here. I am going **to take my sweater off**.  
(remove)

I have decided to **take up** skydiving.  
(start a new activity)

Let's **think this over** before making a decision.  
(consider)

Please don't **throw up** in here.  
(vomit)

Please **turn the lights off** when you leave.  
(switch off)

Can you **look after** my dog while I am away?  
(care for)

## Word order for phrasal verbs

There is no rule that makes a phrasal verb separable or inseparable, but here are some **general tips** to take into consideration.

1. **Longer** objects go **after** the preposition or particle.

- *I don't want to **take on** more than I can handle right now.*

2. For separable phrasal verbs, objects that are **personal pronouns** (me, you, him, her, us, them) always go **between the verb and particle**.

- *Do you want to **take them off**?*

3. Phrasal verbs that have **two** particles/prepositions are always **inseparable**.

- *I don't **get along with** my sister.*
- *I will **catch up with** you later.*
- *She has to **put up with** a lot of trouble from her boss.*

4. There are some **phrasal verbs** that cannot take an **object**, so these are always **inseparable**.

- *The alarm **goes off** at 7:30.*
- *I **wake up** at 8:30.*

Phrasal verbs are a common part of spoken English and informal written English, so it is necessary to learn them a little bit at a time.

## Common phrasal verbs

### Separable

**Write down** - to make a note of something with a pen and paper, for example.

- *Jane has so many ideas! She wants to **write** them all **down** before she forgets them!*

**Pick up** - to go and get someone in your car. It can also mean to lift something up with your hands.

- *Ron is driving to the airport. He's going to **pick** his daughter **up** at 8pm.*

**Put on** - used for clothing. Once we have put something on, we are now wearing it.

- *Henry was in such a rush before work this morning that he left without **putting** his jacket **on**!*

**Turn down** - to refuse an offer.

- *Doug proposed to Claire! He sure hopes she won't **turn** him **down**.*

**Make up** - to invent a story or an excuse.

- *She always has some excuse for arriving late, but I think she **makes** them **up**.*

### Inseparable

**Get on/off** - to enter or exit a bus, a boat, a plane, a bike, etc.

- ***Get off** that motorcycle if you don't have a helmet!*

**Run into** - to meet someone by chance when you were not expecting to.

- *I'm always amazed when I **run into** someone I know on the street.*

**Run out of** - when we had something, but we have used it all, and now it is all gone.

- *Oh no, it looks like we've run out of yogurt. What will I have for breakfast now?*

**Look after** - to take care of.

- *Lisa and Matthew are going to **look after** the kids this weekend.*

**Put up with** - to endure a person or situation that we don't like.

- *Alfred smokes outside so that his co-workers don't have to **put up with** the smell of his cigarettes.*

Check out this video on separable and inseparable phrasal verbs:

See also:

[Phrasal Verbs: Overview](#)

[Prepositions: Overview](#)