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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)

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

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

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

Inseparable

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

*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](#)