

Different kinds of phrasal verbs

There are mainly four kinds of phrasal verbs. Here is a guide to the basics of phrasal verbs.

Separable and non-separable phrasal verbs

Phrasal verbs are made by putting adverb particles or prepositions after verbs. Phrasal verbs made with prepositions are usually non-separable. That means the verb and the preposition always go together.

We set off for the beach. (NOT We set for the beach off.)

He fell off the ladder. (NOT He fell the ladder off.)

Phrasal verbs made with adverb particles are usually separable. That means the particle can go before or after the object.

I picked up the baby. OR I picked the baby up.

She switched off the light. OR She switched the light off.

The two parts of a separable phrasal verb are always separated when the object is a pronoun.

I picked her up. (NOT I picked up her.)

Phrasal Verbs which Don't Take Objects

Phrasal verbs which take objects are always separable. Some phrasal verbs do not take objects. These are always inseparable.

They have gotten away.

The car broke down on the way to work.

I get up early in the morning.

How do you know whether a phrasal verb is separable or not? Well, there is no easy way of finding it out. But you can do one thing. Use a noun or noun phrase as object and do not separate the phrasal

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verb. In this way, you will always be correct.