

# PHRASAL VERBS: TRANSITIVE AND INTRANSITIVE, SEPARABLE AND INSEPARABLE



**INSEPARABLE**

VERB + PARTICLE

What time do you get up?  
I'd like to go out  
Energy prices will go up

**SEPARABLE**

VERB +  
PARTICLE  
+ OBJECT

VERB +  
OBJECT +  
PARTICLE

VERB + OBJECT  
PRONOUN +  
PARTICLE

**TRANSITIVE  
NEED AN OBJECT**

Put your jacket on  
I took my shoes off  
Put on your jacket  
I took off my shoes

Put it on  
I took them off  
Put on it X  
I took off them X

**INSEPARABLE**

VERB +  
PARTICLE +  
OBJECT/  
OBJECT  
PRONOUN

I am looking for my keys  
I'm looking for them  
I'm looking them for X

**Phrasal verbs** consist of a **verb + a preposition or an adverb**. When we add the preposition or the adverb to the verb, the original meaning of this verb changes. The adverb or preposition we add to the verb is called **the 'particle'**. Verb + particle = **phrasal verb**.

wake + up = wake up

sit + down = sit down

throw + away = throw away

pick + up = pick up

take + off = take off

Some phrasal verbs consist of a verb + two particles; for example:

I am **looking forward to** my holiday.

I **get on with** my father.

## TRANSITIVE AND INTRANSITIVE VERBS

**Transitive verbs** are verbs that **need an object**. The object is the receiver of the action, and it goes after the verb. For example, in the sentence "I bought a T-shirt", the verb is "buy", and "a T-shirt" is the object because it tells us what was bought. If you use a transitive verb without an object, the verb does not make sense because it needs an object; for example:

- I **bought.** X
- I **bought a T-shirt.** ✓
- They **wrote.** X
- They **wrote a letter.** ✓

**Intransitive verbs**, on the other hand, are verbs that **do not have an object**. They describe an action or occurrence that does not involve a direct object. Here are a few examples of intransitive verbs:

- He **slept.**
- She **laughed.**
- They **danced.**

The action described by these verbs is NOT done to anything or anybody; we do NOT **\*sleep something**; we just **sleep**.

## Intransitive phrasal verbs – Inseparable

As we said, **intransitive phrasal verbs** have **no object**, and this means the verb and the particle are always together; they cannot be separated. For this reason, intransitive phrasal verbs are called inseparable. Here are some examples:

- I like to **get up** late. ✓
- Joe isn't here. He's **gone out**. ✓
- The price of oranges has **gone up**. ✓

## Transitive phrasal verbs – Separable

**Transitive phrasal verbs** need **an object**, and they can be **separable** or **inseparable**. When a phrasal verb is separable, we can use either **verb + particle + object** or **verb + object + particle**.

- You need to **put on** your jacket. ✓
- You need to **put** your jacket **on**. ✓
- I **took off** my shoes. ✓
- I **took** my shoes **off**. ✓

We can also replace the object with a pronoun, but then the object **MUST** go between the verb and the particle.

- You need to **put it on**. ✓
- You need to **put on it**. ✗
- I **took them off**. ✓
- I **took off them**. ✗

## Transitive phrasal verbs – Inseparable

Some other transitive phrasal verbs can **NEVER** be separated, even if the object is replaced by a pronoun.

- I am **looking for my notebook**. ✓
- I am **looking for it**. ✓
- I am **looking my notebook for**. ✗
- I am **looking it for**. ✗

# PHRASAL VERBS: TRANSITIVE AND INTRANSITIVE, SEPARABLE AND INSEPARABLE - QUIZ

## 1. Choose the correct phrasal verb forms to complete the sentences below.

1 I'm really \_\_\_\_\_.

- a. looking my holiday forward to
- b. looking forward to my holiday
- c. Both A and B are correct

6 She closed the door and \_\_\_\_\_.

- a. turned up the music
- b. turned the music up
- c. Both A and B are correct

2 He \_\_\_\_\_ because he fell in love with another woman.

- a. called the wedding off
- b. called off the wedding
- c. Both A and B are correct

7 I didn't know the meaning of the word, so I \_\_\_\_\_.

- a. looked up it
- b. looked it up
- c. Both A and B are correct

3 My shoes were uncomfortable, so I \_\_\_\_\_.

- a. took off them
- b. took them off
- c. Both A and B are correct

8 I have a good relationship with my cousins. I \_\_\_\_\_ very well.

- a. get on them with
- b. get on with them
- c. Both A and B are correct

4 I helped Joe \_\_\_\_\_.

- a. look for his keys
- b. look his keys for
- c. Both A and B are correct

9 The food didn't smell good, so I \_\_\_\_\_.

- a. threw it away
- b. threw away it
- c. Both A and B are correct

5 The teacher gave us a form and told us to \_\_\_\_\_.

- a. fill in it
- b. fill it in
- c. Both A and B are correct

10 As soon as I left the classroom, I \_\_\_\_\_.

- a. turned my phone on
- b. turned on my phone
- c. Both A and B are correct

2. Choose the correct verb forms for the gaps below.

1 Judy  and pushed her chair under the table.

2 I finished the apple, then I .

3 A: "And your phone?" B: "I am ."

4 He gave me his number, and I .

5 Anna .

6 I really like these shoes. Is it okay if I ?

7 The price of gas has  a lot recently.

8 I .

9 Cara is our babysitter. She .

10 I .

