**Phrasal Verbs**

A phrasal verb is a special kind of verb that consists of two (or three) parts. The first part is always a verb. The next part is a word such as across, after, away, back, down, in, into, off, on, out, over, or up. In a phrasal verb, this second part is called a particle. . A phrasal verb must have at least two parts: VERB + particle.

(verb) + (preposition)**/** (verb) + (adverb)**/** (verb) + (adverb) + (preposition)

Eg. I need to write an essay by next week, but I keep postponing it.1

I need to write an essay by next week, but I keep putting it off.

 We looked up at the plane as it flew above us.

 Why did you run away from me?

 You’re walking too fast. I can’t keep up with you.

 Are you looking forward to your trip?

Phrasal verbs present a huge vocabulary challenge because most phrasal verbs are idioms. As such, the meaning of a phrasal verb as a unit is usually very different from the meanings of the individual verb and the particle: the meaning of come across is not equal to the meaning of come and across.

**Look** direct your eyes in a certain direction You must look before you leap.

**Look up**. search for and find information in a reference book You can look up the word in a dictionary.

**Look after** take care of Who is looking after the baby?

**Look forward** to anticipate with pleasure. I look forward to meeting you.

Like other common words, a phrasal verb can have more than one meaning:

Eg. The airplane took off is not the same as Their business took off or I took off my shoes.

**Transitive phrasal verbs**

A phrasal verb can be transitive or intransitive. The best way to understand the difference between these two types of verbs is by trying to find the direct object. The direct object is a noun or noun phrase referring to a person or thing which is receiving the action of a transitive verb. To sum up, Transitive phrasal verbs have a direct object:

E.g. I will set up a meeting with the manager. What is being ‘set up’? The meeting with the manager.

John gave up smoking 5 years ago. What did John ‘give up’ 5 years ago? Smoking

I turned on the light. (the light is the object)

**Separable Phrasal Verb**

Usually there are two possible positions for the object. We can say:

I turned on the light. or I turned the light on.

Ali wrote down some important notes during the lesson.

Ali wrote everything down during the lesson.

But if the object is a pronoun (it/them/me/him etc.), only one position is possible:

I turned it on. (not I turned on it)

In the same way, you can say:

 I am going to take off my shoes. OR I’m going to take my shoes off. But:

 These shoes are uncomfortable. I’m going to take them off. (not take off them)

Separable phrasal verbs often use these nine particles: up, down, on, off, in, out, away, back, over. (An easy way to remember the first six is that they are pairs of opposites: up ≠ down, on ≠ off, in ≠ out.)

ONE-MINUTE LESSON

When the object of a separable phrasal verb is a noun, you can separate the phrasal verb and particle (or not). In formal language, we usually keep the verb and particle together. However, we must separate the verb and particle when the object is a pronoun:

He called off the meeting OR He called the meeting off.

**Inseparable Phrasal verbs**

E.g. run into

We always run into Daniel at parties. Correct :)

We always run Daniel into parties. Incorrect :(

**Intransitive Phrasal Verbs**

There are some phrasal verbs that do not have an object because they are intransitive

verbs. Verbs in this group consist of the verb and a particle. These two words express a

complete meaning, and no object is possible. For example, pass away means “to die.” It

is possible to say, Mr. Riley passed away, but it is not possible to say, Mr. Riley passed away

him or Mr. Riley passed him away.

Some students find this group the easiest because they do not have to worry about separating or not separating the phrasal verb. Because there is never an object, separating is not a problem.

E.g. Francesco said he would meet us at 6pm, but he never showed up.

Katy grew up in Brighton, England.

Examples of phrasal verbs that do not take an object:

 to break down = to stop working (when talking about machinery)

 to hurry up = to move, go, do something faster

 to look out = to take care

 to take off = to go into the air

 to get by = to manage

**Transitive and intransitive**

Some phrasal verbs can be both intransitive (no object) and transitive (object

required). The meaning may be different.

make up = become friendsagain

After the argument, they madeup. no object

make up = invent, create

They made up that story. object = that story