

# What are Phrasal Verbs?

## Worksheet

A phrasal verb is a verb + particle (preposition/adverb) with a meaning that differs from the component words. For example: 'look up' (search) vs. 'look.' Register variation means informal 'give up' (phrasal) = formal 'abandon' (single verb) — same idea, different formality levels.

## Questions

1. Which is a correct phrasal verb usage?

- A) I put up the decoration with that.
- B) I put up with the noise.
- C) I put up the noise with.
- D) I put the noise up with.

2. Formal synonym for 'find out'?

- A) discover
- B) look
- C) seek
- D) search

3. Which context prefers phrasal verbs?

- A) Legal contracts
- B) Academic papers
- C) Casual conversation and informal writing
- D) Scientific reports

4. Register variation means...

- A) Different meanings of the same verb
- B) Grammar errors in phrasal verbs
- C) Stylistic differences in formality between phrasal and single verbs
- D) Verbs that have no particles

5. Use the phrasal verb 'figure out' in a sentence and provide its formal synonym.

6. Contrast 'look after' (phrasal) with its formal equivalent.

7. Provide three phrasal verbs and their formal register equivalents.

8. Define: What is a phrasal verb?

9. Define: What is register variation?

10. Define: Phrasal verb example: 'come across'

## Answer Key

1. B) I put up with the noise. — 'Put up with' means tolerate. The correct phrase is 'I put up with the noise' (meaning: I tolerate the noise).
2. A) discover — Phrasal 'find out' (informal) = formal 'discover' — same meaning, different register.
3. C) Casual conversation and informal writing — Phrasal verbs are preferred in casual, everyday contexts — formal writing typically uses single, Latinate verbs.
4. C) Stylistic differences in formality between phrasal and single verbs — Register variation refers to formal (single verb) vs. informal (phrasal verb) styles expressing similar ideas.
5. Phrasal verb: I need to figure out the answer to this problem. Meaning: understand, solve, determine Formal synonym: I need to determine/ascertain the answer to this problem. Register: informal (figure out) vs. formal (determine)
6. Phrasal (informal): She looks after her elderly mother. Meaning: take care of Formal (sophisticated): She tends to her elderly mother. OR She cares for her elderly mother. Register difference: casual vs. professional contexts
7. 1. put up with → tolerate 2. bring up (a child) → raise/rear 3. run into → encounter Each pairs has the same meaning but different formality levels for different writing contexts.
8. A phrasal verb is a verb + particle(s) creating a meaning different from the verb alone; e.g., 'put up with' = tolerate.
9. Register variation is the stylistic difference between informal phrasal verbs and formal single verbs — same meaning, different formality contexts.
10. Meaning: discover by chance. Formal: encounter. Informal: come across, run into.

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