

What Are Common Phrasal Verbs?

Worksheet

A phrasal verb is a verb plus a particle (like 'get up', 'put off', 'look after') that together has a specific meaning. For example, 'put off' means 'postpone', not just 'put' + 'off'.

Questions

- 'Give up' means...
 - surrender something
 - offer a gift
 - stop trying
 - all of the above
- Which is correct? 'Turn on the light' or 'Turn the light on'?
 - Only 'turn on the light'
 - Only 'turn the light on'
 - Both are correct
 - Neither is correct
- 'Come across' most likely means...
 - meet by accident
 - move toward
 - approach from ahead
 - stand on top of
- Which phrasal verb is typically inseparable?
 - put off
 - look after
 - turn on
 - pick up
- Explain 'put off': 'Don't put off your homework.' What does it mean here?
- Compare 'look after' vs 'look at'. Are they different?
- Is 'get up' separable? Show both forms.
- Define: What is a phrasal verb?
- Define: Are phrasal verbs literal?
- Define: What are common particles?

Answer Key

1. C) stop trying — 'Give up' idiomatically means 'stop trying' or 'surrender', not offer a gift.
2. C) Both are correct — 'Turn on' is separable; both orders are acceptable.
3. A) meet by accident — 'Come across' idiomatically means 'encounter by chance' or 'find unexpectedly'.
4. B) look after — 'Look after' (care for) is inseparable; 'look after him' is correct, not 'look him after'.
5. 'Put off' is a phrasal verb meaning 'postpone' or 'delay'. Literal: place away. Idiomatic: delay doing something. In context: 'Don't delay your homework' or 'Don't procrastinate.'
6. 'Look after' = 'care for' (separate meaning). 'Look at' = 'see, observe' (different meaning entirely). Same verb 'look', different particles = completely different meanings. This shows phrasal verbs are idiomatic, not compositional.
7. 'Get up' is separable. Inseparable form: 'I got up at 7.' (no object fits) Separable form: 'Get your friend up!' ('up' can move if there's a pronoun). Rule: 'get up' typically means 'wake/rise', so object is rare.
8. A verb plus a particle (preposition/adverb) that creates an idiomatic meaning: get up, put off, look after.
9. No, they're idiomatic. 'Put off' doesn't mean 'place away'; it means 'postpone'.
10. up, down, on, off, away, back, out, in, over, around, through, about.

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