

VOCABULARY WORKBOOK

CHECK YOUR ENGLISH
VOCABULARY FOR

PHRASAL VERBS AND IDIOMS



All you need to pass your exams

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AND

IDIOMS

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Introduction

If you want to practise and develop your knowledge of phrasal verbs and idioms, you will find this book very useful. The various exercises contain many of the most common phrasal verbs and idioms, together with some useful spoken expressions that you might expect to hear or use in an English-speaking environment.

You should not go through this book mechanically from beginning to end. It is better to choose one particular verb or topic, do the exercise(s), make a record of any new words and expressions that you learn, then practise using these in sentences or situations of your own. When you feel you have a good command of these, move to another verb or topic and do the same. You should also review the things you have learned on a regular basis, so that they remain 'fresh' in your mind and become part of your 'active' vocabulary.

The meanings of most of the phrasal verbs and idioms are explained in the book, either in the exercises themselves, or in the answer key at the back. This key also provides you with lots of similar or alternative expressions, together with examples of how they are used. However, we recommend that you keep a good dictionary with you, and refer to it when necessary. In particular, we recommend the A & C Black *Easier English Intermediate Dictionary* (ISBN 0-7475-6989-4) or the *Macmillan English Dictionary* (ISBN 0-333-96482-9), from which many of the definitions and sample sentences in this book have been taken.

No vocabulary book can possibly contain all of the thousands of English phrasal verbs and idioms that you are likely to come across or need, so it is important to acquire new ones from other sources. If you have access to English-language newspapers, popular magazines, television and radio programmes, films and albums of popular music, you will find that these are excellent resources.

We hope that you enjoy doing the exercises in this book. Before you begin, we suggest that you read this important information about phrasal verbs and idioms.

What is a phrasal verb?

A phrasal verb is a verb formed from two (or sometimes three) parts: a *verb* and an *adverb* or *preposition*. These adverbs and prepositions are often called *particles* when they are used in a phrasal verb.

Most phrasal verbs are formed from a small number of verbs (for example, *get*, *go*, *come*, *put* and *set*) and a small number of particles (for example, *away*, *out*, *off*, *up* and *in*).

Phrasal verbs sometimes have meanings that you can easily guess (for example, *sit down* or *look for*). However, in most cases their meanings are quite different from the meanings of the verb they are formed from. For example, *hold up* can mean 'to cause a delay' or 'to try to rob someone'. The original meaning of *hold* (for example, *to hold something in your hands*) no longer applies.

There are five main types of phrasal verb. These are:

1. Intransitive phrasal verbs (= phrasal verbs which do not need an object).
For example: *You're driving too fast. You ought to **slow down**.*
2. Transitive phrasal verbs (= phrasal verbs which must have an object) where the object can come in one of two positions:
 - (1) Between the verb and the particle(s).
For example: *I think I'll **put my jacket on**.*
or
 - (2) After the particle.
For example: *I think I'll **put on my jacket**.*

However, if the object is a pronoun (*he, she, it*, etc), it must usually come between the verb and the particle.

For example: *I think I'll **put it on**.* (NOT *I think I'll **put on it**.*)

3. Transitive phrasal verbs where the object must come between the verb and the particle.
For example: *Our latest designs **set our company apart** from our rivals.*
4. Transitive phrasal verbs where the object must come after the particle.
For example: *John **takes after** his mother.*
*Why do you **put up with** the way he treats you?*
5. Transitive phrasal verbs with two objects, one after the verb and one after the particle.
For example: *They **put their success down to** good planning.*

Some transitive phrasal verbs can be used in the passive, but the object *cannot* come between the verb and the particle.

For example:

Active: *The soldiers **blew up** the bridge / The soldiers **blew** the bridge **up**.*

Passive: *The bridge was **blown up** by the soldiers.*

Active: ***Switch** the lights **off** before you leave / **Switch off** the lights before you leave.*

Passive: *The lights must be **switched off** before you leave.*

Active: *It's time they **did away with** these silly rules.*

Passive: *It's time these silly rules were **done away with**.* (where the subject is either not known or not needed).

A dictionary such as the *Bloomsbury Easier English Intermediate Dictionary* or the *Macmillan English Dictionary* will clearly show you the way you should use each phrasal verb.

What is an idiom?

An idiom is an expression where the meaning is different from the meaning of the individual words.

For example, *to have your feet on the ground* is an idiom meaning 'to be sensible': "*Tara is an intelligent girl who **has both** her **feet** firmly **on the ground**.*"

A lot of idioms are formed using phrasal verbs.

For example: *After he left me, it took me a long time to **pick up the pieces*** (= It took me a long time to return to a normal life).

Many idioms are *colloquial*, which means that they are used in informal conversation rather than in writing or formal language.

For example: "*I won't tell anyone your secret. **My lips are sealed**.*"

In this book, you will find a lot of colloquial idioms, together with some examples of *slang* (very informal words and expressions that are often used by particular groups of people, such as teenagers). If an idiom that is being practised is informal or very informal, the book will tell you this.