

5. FOCUS ON: pronunciation of two-word phrasal verbs

Nonseparable phrasal verbs

Intransitive nonseparable phrasal verbs (verbs that do not allow an object) are usually accented on the particle:

The barn got hit by lightning, and it **burned DOWN**.

Ned drank so much that he **passed OUT** on the bathroom floor.

Transitive nonseparable phrasal verbs (verbs that require an object) are usually accented on the verb:

Hank's been **CHEATING on** his wife for years.

I told the teacher my dog ate my homework, but she didn't **FALL for** it.

Separable phrasal verbs

Separable phrasal verbs (which are always transitive) are usually accented on the particle:

The British soldiers tried to **burn DOWN** the White House.

The teacher passed them **OUT**.

As the examples above show, a single phrasal verb can belong to more than one category depending on its meaning.

Infinitive			
present tense	-ing form	past tense	past
break down			
break down S breaks down	breaking down	broke down	broken down

1. breakdown p.v. When something mechanical **breaks down**, it **does** not function.

/ was late for work because my car **broke down**.

This photocopier is a piece of junk — it **breaks down** every day.

broken-down part.adj. When something is old, in bad condition, or not functioning properly, it is **broken-down**.

My car is a **broken-down** piece of junk.

breakdown n. A **breakdown** is a situation in which something mechanical has **broken down**.

After that last **breakdown**, I decided it was time for a new car.

2. breakdown p.v. When an arrangement, agreement, negotiation, plan, or marriage **breaks down**, one or more persons involved is not cooperating or participating because of a disagreement or problem.

After he started drinking heavily, their marriage started to **break down**.
The peace negotiations **broke down** because neither side was willing to compromise.

breakdown n. A situation in which an arrangement, agreement, negotiation, plan, or marriage has **broken down** is a **breakdown**.

Neither side would give an inch, and there was a **breakdown** in the negotiations.

3. breakdown p.v. When you **break down**, you lose self-control and become emotionally or mentally confused.

When the judge sentenced Jones to life in prison, he **broke down** and begged for mercy.

Tom **breaks down** whenever he thinks of the tragedy.

breakdown n. A situation in which someone has **broken down** and is very upset or confused is a **breakdown**.

Marvin had a complete mental **breakdown** and started to see invisible people.

4. break down p.v. When something decomposes or reduces to its smallest parts or is reduced by someone to its smallest parts, it **breaks down**.

After the poison **breaks down**, it's quite harmless.

Anticoagulant drugs are used to **break down** blood clots.

5. break... down p.v. When you reduce a process, situation, problem, plan, or idea to its basic parts to make it easier to understand, you **break it down**.

The professor's plan seemed really complicated, but after he **broke it down** for us, we understood it a little better.

If you **break** the manufacturing process **down** into steps, it's easier to train new workers.

6. break ... down p.v. When you use force to go through a door that is locked, you **break it down**.

The police **broke** the door **down** and arrested the bank robbers.

A door had to be **broken down** to rescue the people trapped by the fire.

Infinitive

	present tense	-ing form	past tense	past participle
burn	burn down & burns	burning down	burned down	burned down

1. burn ... down p.v. When a building or other structure **burns down** or someone **burns** it **down**, it is completely destroyed by fire.

Though most of Chicago **burned down** in 1871, a few buildings survived.

The owner was arrested for deliberately **burning** his factory **down**.

call in**call in & calls in****calling in****called in****called in**

1. **call in** p.v. When you call your place of employment to say you cannot work that day because you are sick, you **call in** or **call in** sick.

The manager was angry when her secretary **called in** three days in a row.

Calling in sick too often is a good way to get fired.

2. **call... in** p.v. When you request the help of people or of an organization with more experience, power, or knowledge to help with a problem or difficult project, you **call** them **in**.

When the local police couldn't handle the riot, the National Guard was **called in**.

The local police chief considered **calling** the FBI **in** to help solve the crime.

find**find out & finds out****finding out****found out****found out**

1. **find ... out** p.v. [not usually separated — the object can be a noun, a noun clause, or a complete sentence] When you **find out** information or a fact, you learn or become aware of that information or fact.

If you don't know when the movie starts, look in the newspaper to **find out**.

I met a nice man at the party, but I never **found out** his name.

I met a nice man at the party, but I never **found out** what his name was.

I was surprised when I **found out** that he can speak fourteen languages.

I was surprised when I **found out** he can speak fourteen languages.

I tried to get the information, but I couldn't **find it out**.

hand**hand back & hands****handing back****handed back****handed back**

1. **hand... back** (to) p.v. When you return things to people by holding them in your hand and extending your arm, you **hand** them **back** or **hand** them **back** to them.

The teacher will **hand** the tests **back** in third period.

The guard **handed** my ID card **back** to me.

Infinitive

	present tense	-ing form	past tense	past participle
look at	look at & looks at	looking at	looked at	looked at

1. **look at** p.v. When you focus your eyes on people or things, you **look at** them.

/ **looked at** her and told her I loved her.

Look at me when I talk to you!

2. look at p.v. When you examine something or a situation and decide what to do about it, you **look at it**.

The mechanic **looked at** my car but couldn't find anything wrong with it.

Your finger might be broken; you should have Dr. Smith **look at** it.

3. look at p.v. When you think a certain way or have an opinion about something, that is the way you **look at** it.

The way I **look at** it, Congress is to blame for this mess, not the President.

What should be done about this situation depends on how you **look at** it.

4. look at p.v. [informal — always continuous] When you say that people are **looking at** an amount of money or a length of time, you mean that this is how much they think something will cost or how long something will take.

That was a serious injury. You're **looking at** months and months of physical therapy.

Putting a new roof on this house isn't going to be cheap. You're **looking at** at least \$15,000.

pile

pile up & piles up

piling up

piled up

piled up

1. pile... up p.v. When things increase in number and start to form a pile, they **pile up**. When people add things to a pile, they **pile** them **up**.

The **snow piled up** so high that I couldn't open my door. In the fall we **pile** the dead leaves **up** in the driveway and burn them.

piled up part.adj. When things are in a pile, they are **piled up**.

A lot of dirty laundry is **piled up** in the basement.

2. pile up p.v. When work or something else that must be done increases faster than you can do it, it **piles up**.

I'm really worried about money. My bills are **piling up** faster than I can pay them.

My work really **piled up** while I was on vacation.

setup

set up & sets up

setting up

set up

set up

1. set... up p.v. When you arrange the parts of something so that they are in their proper position and can function, you **set it up**.

The kids got a swing set for Christmas, and Dad had to **set it up** in the snow.

When you're camping, be sure to **set** your tent **up** before it gets dark.

set up part.adj. After the parts of something are in their proper position and function properly, they are **set up**.

The party is starting in one hour. Are the tables **set up**?

setup n. A collection or arrangement of parts or equipment necessary for a certain procedure or task is a **setup**.

The nurse prepared **setups** for the hospital emergency room.

2. set... up p.v. When you plan and organize an activity or project, you **set it up**.

I set up a 4:00 meeting with Jones and his lawyer.

Setting up a meeting of all fifty governors took a lot of planning.

set up part.adj. When an activity or project is planned, arranged, or organized, it is **set up**.

The arrangements for the wedding were very complicated, but everything is **set up** now.

setup n. How an activity or project is planned or arranged is the **setup**.

What's the **setup** for the Fourth of July picnic?

3. set... up p.v. [informal] When you commit a crime but make it appear that another, innocent person is guilty of the crime, you **set** the innocent person **up**.

Joe robbed the bank and tried to **set me up** by leaving some of the stolen money in my apartment and then telling the police about it. The detective didn't believe me when I told him I was **set up**.

setup n. [informal] An attempt by someone to make it appear that an innocent person is guilty of a crime is a **setup**.

/ told the detective it was a **setup** and that I could prove I had been at the racetrack when the bank was robbed.

EXERCISE 5a — Complete the sentences with phrasal verbs from this section. Be sure the phrasal verbs are in the correct tense.

1. When he heard that his brother had been killed, he _____ and cried.

2. We're expecting company. Can you _____ the card table in the dining room?

3. Can you help wash the dishes, please? They're really beginning to _____.

4. I gave the cashier my credit card, and then she _____ it _____ to me.

5. I don't know the answer, but I'll try to _____.

6. We were very busy at work today. Two people _____ sick.

7. Raul _____ his watch and told me he had to leave.

8. My car is a real piece of junk. It _____ at least once a week.

9. I'm a little confused about your theory. Would you mind _____ it _____ for me?

10. I'll tell the judge that I'm innocent and that Ned Kelly _____ me _____.

11. Hey, any way you _____ it, one thing's for sure — we have to get more crooks off the streets and into the jails.

12. This is the FBI — open the door or we'll _____ it _____!

13. Maybe I can fix your computer. I'll _____ it after dinner.

14. The family doctor has never seen a case of malaria before, so he is _____ a specialist.

15. Some chemical compounds start to _____ after only a few hours.

16. The arsonist tried to _____ several houses in the neighborhood.

17. The secretary is _____ a meeting.

18. The civil war started again after the peace talks _____.

19. Jim buys a newspaper every day, but he never puts it in the garbage when he is finished.

Newspapers are slowly _____ in his basement.

20. The mechanic said, "To fix a car after an accident that bad, I'd say you're _____ at least \$4,000."

EXERCISE 5b — Review the explanation at the beginning of this section of how two-word phrasal verbs are pronounced. Then, say each sentence in Exercise 5a aloud and circle the verb or particle that is accented.

EXERCISE 5c — Write three sentences using the objects in parentheses. Be sure to put the objects in the right place.

1. The firefighters **broke down**. (the door, it)

_____.

2. They **burned down**, (the old barn, it)

_____.

3. **He called in**. (Dr. Shapiro, her)

_____.

4. Our teacher **handed back**. (the papers, them)

_____.

5. I **set up**. (the ironing board, it)

_____.

EXERCISE 5d — Write answers to the questions using phrasal verbs, participle adjectives, and nouns from this section. Be sure the phrasal verbs are in the correct tense.

1. Jane arranged a baby shower. What did she do?

2. In Question 1, how would you describe the baby shower after Jane arranged it?

3. I get magazines in the mail faster than I can read them. What are my magazines doing?

4. In Question 3, how would you describe my magazines?
5. Todd returned the pen to Mark. What did Todd do?
6. Uncle Fred's car had a mechanical problem, and it stopped running. What did it do?
7. In Question 6, how would you describe Uncle Fred's car?
8. In Question 6, what did Uncle Fred have?
9. The soldiers destroyed the building with fire. What did the soldiers do?
10. The soldiers destroyed the building with fire. What did the building do?
11. When the detective told Jake he could get the death penalty, he became very nervous and upset.
What did Jake do?
12. In Question 11, what did Jake have?
13. The boss was angry because you didn't call to say that you were sick and couldn't work. Why was the boss angry?
14. Judy took her new computer out of the box, connected all the cables, and got it ready to use. What did she do to her computer?
15. In Question 14, after Judy took her new computer out of the box, connected all the cables, and got it ready to use, how would you describe it?
16. The door was locked, but Hank forced it open and got inside. What did Hank do?
17. I learned that Ali's excuse was a big lie. What did I do?

EXERCISE 5e, Review — Complete the sentences with these phrasal verbs from previous sections. Be sure the phrasal verbs are in the correct tense. To check their meanings, review the section number given after each one.

come off, 2	go in for, 3	talk down to, 3
feel up to, 3	look forward to, 3	throw up, 2
get over with, 3	put up with, 3	
go along with, 3	stay off, 2	

1. Her husband is a real jerk. How does she _____ him?
2. I wasn't sure if Charles _____ going scuba diving again so soon after the shark attack.
3. I'm telling you for the last time! _____ the grass!
4. Can you help me with this jar? The top won't _____.
5. I've never been to Italy, and I'm really _____ going there.
6. I'm sorry I can't agree with you Dad, but I have to _____
_____ Mom.
7. When I had food poisoning I _____ all night long.
8. You can be sure Paul will take his vacation out west. He really _____ outdoor stuff like camping and mountain climbing.
9. Can you believe the nerve of that guy in the meeting yesterday? He _____
_____ me as if I was the stupidest guy on Earth!
10. I'm tired of arguing about the divorce settlement. I just want to _____ it.