

42. FOCUS ON: phrasal verbs with *get*, 1

Many phrasal verbs are based on the verb *get*, and it is important to understand that the meaning of *get* in these verbs is not the same as the nonphrasal form of *get*, meaning *receive*. Instead, *get* has a meaning similar to *become* or *change to*:

I got up at 6:00. (I was not up before, and then I became up — I changed from not being up to being up.)

Many phrasal verbs with *get* that relate to a change in physical location might seem identical in meaning to a variety of phrasal verbs using *come*, *go*, and other verbs that describe physical movement, such as *walk*, *run*, *move*, and so on, and often they can be used with little difference in meaning:

I came back last night. I got back last night.

But there is a difference: *get* emphasizes the change in location; *come*, *go*, and so on, emphasize the movement from one location to another.

It is very common to use the adverbs *right* and *back* with *get* phrasal verbs. To review the adverb *right*, see Sections 19 and 22. To review the adverb *back*, review Section 26 (and do not confuse the adverb *back* with the particle *back*).

Note that two forms of the past participle of *get* are shown: *gotten* and *got*. *Gotten* is more common in American English, but *got* is occasionally used. Both are correct.

Infinitive

	present tense	-ing form	past tense	past participle
get back	get back & gets back	getting back	got back	gotten/got back

1. get back (to) p.v. When you return to a level or place where you were before, you **get back** or **get back** to that place.

*We left three weeks ago, and we didn't **get back** until yesterday.*

*Where are you going? **Get right back** here!*

*Mark lost a lot of weight when he was sick, and it took him a long time to **get back** to his old weight.*

2. get... back (to) p.v. When you **get** something **back** or **get** something **back** to a person or place, you return it to that person or place.

*Jim uses his mother's car in the morning, but she needs it to go to work at 4:30, so he has to **get it back** before then.*

*I have to **get** these books **back** to the library — they're overdue.*

3. get... back (from) p.v. When you **get** something **back** or **get** something **back** from someone or someplace, you have something that you had before.

*I couldn't believe I **got** my stolen car **back**.*

*Jim borrowed a book from me three years ago, and I still haven't **gotten it back** from him.*

4. get back (from) p.v. When you **get back** or **get back** from something that is very hot or dangerous or that you should not be near, you move away from it so that there is more distance between you and it.

Get back from the edge of the cliff! You might fall.

As the President came closer, the police told the crowd to **get back**.

Infinitive

	present tense	-ing form	past tense	past participle
get	get behind & gets behind	getting behind	got behind	gotten/got behind

1. get behind (in) p.v. When you are in a group that is studying or working, and so on, and they learn faster or get more work done because you are learning or working more slowly than the others, you **get behind** or **get behind** in your studies or work. When you do not complete work as fast as originally planned and expected, you **get behind** schedule. **Keep up** is the opposite of **get behind**. **Fall behind** is similar to **get behind**.

Linda had some problems last semester, and she **got behind** in her studies.

With all the bad weather we've been having, the construction project has **gotten** way **behind** schedule.

get by

get by & gets by	getting by	got by	gotten/got by
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1. get by p.v. When you **get by** or **get by** something, you pass something or someone while you are walking or driving even though it may be difficult because there is not enough room.

Can you move all that junk in the hallway please? It's hard for people to **get by**.

There was an accident on the highway, and no one could **get by**.

2. get by (on) p.v. When you **get by** or **get by** on a certain amount of money, you continue with your work or continue with your life even though it may be difficult.

Don't worry about me; I'll **get by** somehow.

It's not easy **getting by** on \$250 a week.

3. get by p.v. When something, such as a mistake or a problem, **gets by** you, you do not notice it.

I've got a great editor; no mistakes **get by** her.

I checked this report twice. How did all these misspellings **get by** me?

Infinitiv

	present tense	-ing form	past tense	past participle
get down	get down & gets down	getting down	got down	gotten/got down

1. get down (to) p.v. When you move to a lower level or place or from north to south, you **get down** or **get down** to that level or place. **Get up** is the opposite of **get down**. **Go down** is similar to **get down**.

You're going to fall out of that tree and break your neck. **Get down** right now!

The first thing I did after I **got down** to Miami was go to the beach.

2. get... down (from) *p.v.* When you **get** things or people **down**, you move them from a higher level or place to a lower one.

*Why do you always put the dishes on the top shelf? I can't **get** them **down**.*

*The fire fighters **got** the people **down** from the roof of the burning building.*

3. get down *p.v.* When you bend your body and lower your head to avoid danger or to prevent people from seeing you, you **get down**.

*When the enemy soldiers started shooting, the sergeant ordered his men to **get down**.*

***Get down!** If the police catch us here we'll be in a lot of trouble.*

4. get... down *p.v.* When things or people **get** you **down**, they make you sad or depressed.

*Don't let your troubles get you **down**. Everything will be all right.*

*Jim's marriage problems are really getting him **down**.*

get in

**get in & gets in
in**

getting in

got in

**gotten/got
in**

1. get in/into *p.v.* When you **get in** or **get into** a place, building, room, car, boat, and so on, you enter it.

***Get in** the car! We're going now.*

*We'd better **get into** the school — the bell's going to ring soon.*

2. get... in/into *p.v.* When you **get in** or **get into** a place, building, club, restaurant, meeting, and so on, you obtain permission to enter. When you **get** other people **in** or **get** other people **into** a building, club, restaurant, meeting, and so on, you arrange for them to enter.

*We'll never **get into** that club; we don't know the right*

people.

*I didn't have an invitation to the party, but Nancy **got** me*

***in**.*

3. get... in/into *p.v.* When you **get** something **in** or **get** something **into** a place, building, room, container, enclosure, and so on, you get the object inside even though it is difficult.

*The shoes are too small — I can't **get** my feet **in**.*

*How did they **get** that elephant **into** its cage?*

4. get... in/into *p.v.* When you **get in** trouble or **get into** a difficult situation or a mess (a mess is a confused or difficult situation), you become involved in it. When you **get** people **in** trouble or **get** them **into** a difficult situation or a mess, you cause them to become involved in it.

*Susie **got in** a lot of trouble at school today.*

*I don't see any solution to this problem. How did I ever **get into** this mess?*

5. get in/into p.v. When you **get in** or **get into** a place, you arrive. When the vehicle you are in **gets in** or **gets into** a place, it arrives. **Come in** is similar to **get in**.

*I'm exhausted. I **got in** really late last night.*

*I'll be waiting for you at the station when your train **gets into** the station.*

6. get... in p.v. When a store **gets** something **in**, it receives a delivery of something that it will offer for sale.

*Karen asked the sales clerk when the store was going to **get** some summer dresses **in**.*

*I wanted to buy that new book, but the bookstore hasn't **gotten it in** yet.*

7. get... in p.v. When you **get** an activity **in**, you find the time for it or make the time for it.

*Dinner isn't until 7:30, so we've got time to **get** a tennis game **in**.*

*Whenever I go to San Francisco on business, I try to **get** a baseball game **in**.*

Infinitive

	present tense	-ing form	past tense	past participle
get out	get out & gets out	getting out	got out	gotten/got out

1. get out (of) p.v. When you **get out** or **get out** of a place, building, room, car, boat, and so on, you leave or escape from it.

*When Bob heard his car's engine making a strange noise, he **got out** and looked under the hood.*

*We smelled gas and **got out** of the building just seconds before it exploded.*

2. get out (to) p.v. When you go to a place that is west of where you are or to a place outside a large city, you **get out** or **get out** to that place.

*I love it here in the city. I almost never **get out** to the suburbs anymore.*

*I told my friend in New York, "If you ever **get out** to California, please visit me."*

3. get... out (of) p.v. When you **get** people **out** or **get** them **out** of a place, you take them out or you arrange for them to leave.

*The soldiers were surrounded, so they called for a helicopter to **get them out**.*

*After Hank was arrested, his lawyer **got him out** of jail.*

4. get... out (of) p.v. When you **get out** or **get out** of a dangerous, awkward, or difficult situation, you avoid it. When you **get** people **out** of a dangerous, awkward, or difficult situation, you help them to avoid it.

*Erik made a date with two girls for the same night. How is he going to **get out of** this mess?*

*You got me into this mess — you **get me out**!*

5. get... out (of) p.v. When you **get** something **out** or **get** something **out** of a container or place, you remove it.

*Mother's coming for dinner tonight, so let's **get** the good china **out**.*

*The videotape is jammed; I can't **get it out** of the VCR.*

6. get... out (of) p.v. When you **get** dirt or a stain **out** or **get** dirt or a stain **out** of a material, you remove it by cleaning.

*This detergent's ad claims it'll **get dirt out** even in cold water.*

*Do you think bleach will **get this wine stain out** of my white blouse?*

7. get out p.v. When information **gets out**, it becomes known to people who are not supposed to know it.

*Be careful — we'll be in a lot of trouble if this information **gets out**.*

*There was a huge scandal after the news **got out**.*

8. get out (of) p.v. When you leave your house and do things that are relaxing and fun, you **get out** or **get out** of the house.

*You work too hard; you should **get out** more.*

*Ned doesn't **get out** of the house much; he prefers to stay home and play computer games.*

Infinitive

	present tense	-ing form	past tense	past participle
get over	get over & gets over	getting over	got over	gotten/got over

1. get over (to) p.v. When you **get over** to a place, you go there. When you tell people to **get over** here, you want them to come where you are.

*Francisco called and he said he needs you to help him with something, so **get over** to his house right way.*

*Susie, **get over** here and clean up this mess immediately!*

2. get over p.v. When you **get over** a problem, illness, or emotionally painful experience, you stop letting it affect you and continue with your life.

*I've got a bad cold. I've been sick for a week, and I still haven't **gotten over** it.*

*You can't feel sorry for yourself forever — you've got to **get over** it and get on with your life.*

3. get over p.v. When something happens that surprises you or makes you angry, and you cannot stop thinking about it, you cannot **get over** it.

*I can't **get over** seeing my ex-wife with her new husband.*

*The coach couldn't **get over** losing the state championship 47 to 0.*

Infinitive

	present tense	-ing form	past tense	past participle
get up	get up & gets up	getting up	got up	gotten/got up

1. get up (to) p.v. When you move to a higher level or place, or from south to north, you **get up** or **get up** to that level or place. **Get down** is the opposite of **get up**. **Go up** is similar to **get up**.

*Tom, your brother is in the basement. Please go tell him to **get right up** here and start doing his homework.*

*I haven't **gotten up** to my brother's house in Canada for a long time.*

2. get... up p.v. When you **get up** or someone **gets** you **up**, you rise from your bed. When you **get** people up, you cause them to rise from their beds.

*I don't usually **get up** until 11:00 on weekends.*

*I make breakfast; **getting** the children **up** and ready for school in the morning is Bill's job.*

3. get up p.v. When you change from a sitting or lying position to a standing position, you **get up**. **Stand up** is similar to **get up**.

*The teacher told the sleeping students to **get up**.*

*After he hit me, I **got** right **up** and hit him back.*

EXERCISE 42a — Complete the sentences with phrasal verbs from this section. Be sure the phrasal verbs are in the correct tense.

1. That bomb might explode. Maybe we should _____ a little.
2. As soon as the car stopped, I _____ right _____ and went inside the house.
3. I'll lose my job if this information _____, so don't tell anyone.
4. _____ Jim's death took me a long time.
5. Now the police are outside. Look at all the trouble you've _____ me _____!
6. I thought these pants were ruined after I got ink on them, but this detergent _____ the ink right _____.
7. I was working in my office on the third floor, and my boss called from his office on the sixth floor and told me to _____ there immediately.
8. Work, work, work — that's all you do. You need to _____ more often.
9. It's 4:10. If we hurry, we might _____ a round of golf _____ before it gets dark.
10. I was trying to leave work a little early, but my boss said, "You can't go home until 5:00. _____ back _____ here!"
11. Would you like to go shopping at Wal-Mart tomorrow? They just _____ some new stuff _____.
12. The game is sold out, but I know someone who might be able to _____ us _____.
13. What time did your plane _____ last night?
14. Hank is in a lot of trouble. If he _____ of it, it'll be a miracle.
15. Nicole does her work very carefully and never makes mistakes. Nothing _____ her.
16. Your sister's upstairs sleeping. Go tell her to _____ right _____ here and eat breakfast.
17. Look, there's a bear! _____ — it might see us.
18. My husband spent his whole paycheck on beer and lottery tickets. I don't know how we're going to _____ this month.
19. I wish I hadn't _____ late. I missed the bus, and now I have to walk to school.
20. This is a very difficult class. If you don't study hard, you'll _____.
21. The teacher said, "Your midterm score wasn't very good, but I'm sure if you study hard, you'll do a lot better on the final. Don't let it _____ you."
22. Excuse me, could you move? I can't _____.
23. Mike usually leaves around 8:00 in the morning and _____ around 5:30.
24. My cat has been in that tree for three days. Can you help me _____ her _____?
25. It's amazing. I can't _____ how great Tom looks. I'll bet he's lost forty pounds.
26. If you lose your receipt, _____ your money _____ for something you bought is usually impossible.

27. Timmy's mother said, "Who said you could leave the table? _____ back _____ here and finish your vegetables!"
28. Our neighbor called and said, "Your dog is in my garden. _____ it _____!"
29. The situation in that country is very dangerous, so Washington is making plans to _____ its embassy staff _____.
30. David was so sick he couldn't even _____ of bed.
31. It isn't easy to _____ this big car _____ that small garage.
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EXERCISE 42b — Write answers to the questions using phrasal verbs from this section. Be sure the phrasal verbs are in the correct tense.

1. My father came into my bedroom, shook my shoulder, and told me that breakfast was almost ready.
What did my father do?
2. I live in New Orleans, and it's difficult to find the time to travel to Minnesota to visit my sister. What is difficult?
3. After you were arrested for drunken driving, you were in a lot of trouble. What did you do?
4. You need to return to your home very quickly. What do you need to do?
5. After Judy pays her bills, she just barely has enough money to survive until the end of the month. What can Judy just barely do?
6. If Heather doesn't work harder in her math class, she will not be able to stay at the same level as the other students. What will happen to Heather if she doesn't work harder?
7. It's been five years, but Frank is still sad about his brother's death. What hasn't Frank done yet?
8. I was trapped in my car after an accident, but a rescue worker removed me from my car. What did the rescue worker do?
9. Alex is removing his toy train from the closet. What is Alex doing to his toy train?
10. Carlos is standing on a table so that he can get the toy airplane that he threw on top of the refrigerator.
What is Carlos doing?
11. The sofa was too big, and the movers couldn't bring it inside our new house. What couldn't the movers do?
12. There is a huge truck in front of us, and we can't pass it. What can't we do?
13. Lydia left the building when she heard the fire alarm. What did Lydia do?
14. After getting out of her car, Janice entered it again. What did Janice do?
15. Erik's bicycle was stolen, but now he has it again. What did Erik do?
16. The pilot had mechanical problems with her airplane, but the controllers on the ground helped her land. What did the controllers do to the pilot?

17. Bill called and asked me to come to his house very quickly. What did Bill ask me to do?

EXERCISE 42c, 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.

brush off, 37	float around, 34	punch in, 30	sneak out, 41
call back, 28	go in/into, 41	punch out, 30	start up, 26
call up, 28	leave behind, 35	run around, 40	
clear out, 32	pick up, 39	sell out, 39	
cross off, 39	plug in/into, 41	sneak in/into, 41	

1. There's nothing to eat for dinner tonight. Can you _____ some takeout food _____ when you come home from work tonight?

2. My brother wants to store some of his stuff in my attic, so tonight I'm going to _____ some of the junk up there _____ to make more room.

3. If you want to get a ticket for the Superbowl, you'll need to hurry — they're _____ fast.

4. When I go on vacation, I want to relax at the beach and _____ my worries _____.

5. Ned is worried. There's a rumor _____ that someone is going to get fired.

6. I can't find the toy my daughter wants for her birthday anywhere. I've been _____ all day looking for it.

7. I'm going to be late for work. Would you mind _____ me _____?

8. Dan must still be here in the office somewhere. He hasn't _____ yet.

9. I haven't talked to Nancy in a long time. I think I'll _____ her _____ tonight.

10. Nancy was in the shower when I called, but her brother said she'd _____ me right _____.

11. Are you sure this is the right key? It won't _____ the lock.

12. Margaret Cummings decided to leave her job with a big company and _____ her own company.

13. _____ the theater was easy. One of our friends went inside and opened the fire exit for the rest of us.

14. My father won't let me go to the dance, so I'm going to _____ after he goes to bed.

15. None of the bad things people say about Charles bother him. He just _____ it _____.

16. I made a list of people to invite to my wedding, but after I heard all those nasty things Sarah said about my fiancé, I _____ her name _____ the list.

17. Well, I think I've fixed the vacuum cleaner. Let's _____ it _____ and see if it works now.