

21. FOCUS ON: phrasal verbs and **should** and **ought to**

Should and **ought to** have two important meanings in English. One is familiar to most students, but the other is not.

A good idea: **should** and **ought to**

Should and **ought to** can be used to say that doing something is a good idea because it will benefit the person you are speaking about:

You should **zip up** your coat.

You ought to **zip up** your coat.

or because the person you are speaking about is expected, though not required, to do something:

You should **bring in** the groceries for your mother.

You ought to **bring in** the groceries for your mother.

Although **should** and **ought** are modal auxiliary verbs, **ought** must be used with **to**. In other words, **ought** does not equal **should**, **ought to** equals **should**. Never say **should to**.

Very probable: **should** and **ought to**

Both **should** and **ought to** are used to say that something is very probable, very likely, or 90 percent sure to happen — that if everything is normal, as expected, or as planned, a condition will very probably exist or something will very probably happen:

The rebel territory should **settle down** once winter comes.

The rebel territory ought to **settle down** once winter comes.

In the examples above, either **should** or **ought to** can be used — they have the same meaning — however, only **should** is used in questions:

Should Tom **zip up** his jacket?

~~Ought Tom to **zip up** his jacket?~~

and only **should not** or **shouldn't** is used in negative sentences:

Tom should not **zip up** his jacket.

~~Tom ought not to **zip up** his jacket.~~

Should not (or **shouldn't**) is used to say that something is not probable.

It means that something is very improbable, very unlikely, or 90 percent sure not to happen — that if everything is normal, as expected, or as planned, a condition will very probably not exist or something will very probably not happen:

I set the thermostat at sixty-five degrees, and I'm sure it won't get below seventy tonight, so the heat shouldn't **go on**.

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

1. **look around** p.v. When you turn your head to see what is behind you or around you, you **look around**.

I heard a sound, and I **looked around** to see who it was.

Sally **looked around** the room and didn't recognize anyone.

2. **look around** p.v. When you **look around** or **look around** a place, you go to various parts of the place in order to see what it is like or what is there.

You should **look around** before you decide whether you want to buy the house.

Linda **looked around** the bookstore but didn't find anything interesting.

look over

look over & looks over	looking over	looked over	looked over
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1. **look... over** p.v. [usually separated] When you **look** something **over**, you look at it or read it carefully and thoroughly.

He ought to **look** the car **over** before he buys it.

Here's the first chapter of my new book; **look** it **over** and tell me what you think.

pick on

pick on & picks on	picking on	picked on	picked on
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1. **pick on** p.v. When you **pick on** people, you continually tease and criticize them.

Susie, you shouldn't **pick on** your little brother.

The teacher never criticizes anyone else — she **picks** only **on** me.

Infinitive			
present tense	-ing form	past tense	past participle
settle down			
settle down & settles down	settling down	settled down	settled down

1. **settle ... down** p.v. When you **settle down**, you become less active, nervous, or upset. When you **settle** other people **down**, you do something to make them less active, nervous, or upset. **Calm down** is similar to **settle down**.

Why are you so nervous about the test? Just **settle down**; you'll do just fine.

Can't you **settle** the children down? All that noise is driving me crazy.

2. **settle... down** p.v. When a confused or violent situation becomes less confused or violent, it **settles down**. When you **settle** a confused or violent situation **down**, you make it less confused or violent and more calm. **Calm down** is similar to **settle down**.

Rioting and arson continued for three days before the area **settled down**.

The head of the union spoke to the angry strikers to try to **settle** them **down**.

3. settle down p.v. When people **settle** down, they start to live a less active life and perhaps get married, buy a house, and start a family.

Mike led a pretty wild life when he was in his early twenties, but he got married when he was 29 and **settled down**.

My son is forty-one. I wish he'd **settle down** and raise a family.

step on

step on & steps on	stepping on	stepped on	stepped on
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1. step on p.v. When you **step on** something, you place your foot on it.

If the carpenter steps **on** a nail, she'll have to go to the hospital for a tetanus shot.

Sam **stepped on** a cockroach.

2. step on p.v. [informal] When you say "**Step on** it" to someone who is driving a car, you are telling the driver to drive faster.

Hank needed to get to the airport in fifteen minutes, so he told the taxi driver to **step on** it.

Step on it! We have to be at work in ten minutes.

take out on

take out on & takes out on	taking out on	took out on	taken out on
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1. take... out on p.v. When you **take** something **out on** people, you unfairly criticize or punish them because you are angry about something that has occurred or about something that someone else has done.

If you're mad at your boss, you shouldn't **take** it **out** on your wife.

Hey! It's not my fault you got a speeding ticket. Why are you **taking** it **out** on me?

Infinitive

	present tense	-ing form	past tense	past participle
think				
think ahead	S thinks ahead	thinking ahead	thought ahead	thought ahead

1. think ahead p.v. When you **think ahead**, you plan for a future situation or activity so that you will not have a problem.

When we're out camping, there won't be any stores around if you forget something, **so think ahead**.

We **thought ahead** before we drove through the desert; we took forty liters of water.

zip up

zip up & zips up	zipping up	zipped up	zipped up
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1. zip... up p.v. When you **zip up** a coat or other item of clothing, you close it with a zipper.

It's freezing outside — **zip** your coat **up**.

I can't zip my dress **up**. Can you?

zipped up part.adj. After you **zip up** a coat or other item of clothing, it is **zipped up**.

Look at Timmy out there in the snow without his coat **zipped up**.

Before you go to the airport, make sure your suitcases are **zipped up**.

EXERCISE 21 a — Complete the sentences with phrasal verbs from this section. Be sure the phrasal verbs are in the correct tense.

1. It's not your brother's fault you failed the math test. You shouldn't _____ it _____ him.
 2. Timmy left some of his toys on the floor. Be careful not to _____ them.
 3. There's a guy in my class who's really mean and makes jokes about me. I told the teacher that he's always _____ me.
 4. Someone called my name, and I _____ to see who it was.
 5. Jane is already thirty-four, but she's not interested in _____ and having children.
 6. I've _____ your resume, and I think you're the right person for this job.
 7. Timmy and Susie were running around the house like crazy, so I played their favorite videotape to try to _____ them _____.
 8. You should _____ your backpack _____; otherwise all your books are going to fall out.
 9. The two countries have a history of border clashes, but things have _____ in the last few years.
 10. I've never been in your house before; I'd like to _____ and see how you've decorated it.
 11. You don't want to arrive in Tokyo and realize you forgot something important back in Vancouver, so _____.
 12. We're late — _____ it!
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EXERCISE 21 b — Write answers to the questions using phrasal verbs from this section. Be sure the phrasal verbs are in the correct tense.

1. Dan ought to look at the car very carefully before he decides whether to buy it. What should Dan do?
2. You went to a big bookstore and walked around so that you could see what books they have. What did you do in the bookstore?
3. Our neighbors were arguing all evening, but they stopped arguing and got quieter at around 1:00 A.M. What did our neighbors do around 1:00 A.M.?
4. It's freezing outside, so you ought to close the zipper on your jacket. What should you do to your jacket?
5. In Question 4, how would you describe the jacket after it is closed?
6. At the meeting, the boss asked Betty some difficult questions, and Betty wasn't ready with the answers. What didn't Betty do?
7. Frank unfairly criticizes his son. What does Frank do to his son?
8. Mark had a bad day at work, and when he came home he yelled at his wife. What did Mark do to his wife?
9. When Mike was dancing with Heather, he put his foot on her foot. What did Mike do to Heather's foot?

EXERCISE 21 c, Review — Rewrite the underlined words in the sentences using these phrasal verbs from previous sections and **should or **ought to**. Remember that **ought to** is not usually used in negative sentences.**

break through, 18	cool off, 19	hold up, 7
burn out, 8	fall off, 10	pull through, 2
come over, 17	get off, 18	warm up, 19
come through, 15	get through, 16	wind up, 14
come up, 12	go for, 16	

Example: If they go to that restaurant, they will very probably expect to pay \$200.
If they go to that restaurant, they should figure on paying \$200.

or

If they go to that restaurant, they ought to figure on paying \$200.

1. Business in this restaurant will very probably decrease in January.
2. They are very probably finishing the investigation.
3. These cheap shoes will very probably not stay in good condition more than three months.
4. Jim flies from Florida to Boston every year in April, and it's April now. Jim will very probably travel to Boston soon.
5. It almost always gets cooler in October, and it's October 1st today, so it will very probably get cooler soon.
6. Paul's disease is not serious, so he will very probably be well again.
7. Francisco almost never works past 5:00, and it's 4:50 now. He will very probably stop working in a few minutes.
8. Lydia likes skiing a lot, so if you suggest that we go skiing next weekend, she will very probably like the idea.
9. The enemy soldiers have been trying to smash a hole in the wall of the fort for two hours, and they will very probably smash a hole in the wall soon.
10. Sally said she would come to my house at 5:30 and it's 5:40 now. She will very probably come to my house soon.
11. This work normally takes four hours to finish, so if you start at 9:00 you will very probably finish around 1:00.
12. The train almost always passes through town at 3:25, and it's 3:20 now, so the train will very probably pass through town in five minutes.

13. I put a lot of wood on the fire, so it very probably will not stop burning before morning.

14. The car heater is on maximum, so it will very probably get warm soon.

EXERCISE 21 d, 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.

bring back, 19	go around, 20	hand over, 19	pull over, 19
end up, 20	go back, 19	hang around, 20	ring up, 8
fall apart, 17	go off, 20	lie around, 20	start out, 20
get back at, 17	go on, 20	line up, 18	stay up, 20

1. After Mark's father died, Tom _____ the office collecting money to buy some flowers for the funeral.
2. Who said you could use my camera? _____ it _____ right now!
3. The smoke alarm in our kitchen _____ every time I fry chicken.
4. We've been driving for five hours straight. Let's _____ and rest for a few minutes.
5. Our travel agent is trying to _____ a hot air balloon to take us to the top of Mt. Everest.
6. Last night I _____ late watching **Casablanca** on TV.
7. My old bicycle is in very bad condition. I ought to buy a new one before it completely _____.
8. I'm mad at Sarah for telling my husband what happened at the office party. I'll _____ her someday.
9. I _____ thinking it wouldn't cost more than \$300 to fix my car, but I've already spent more than \$700.
10. Jimmy didn't used to get in trouble until he started to _____ with Jake.
11. If you don't quit smoking and lose some weight, you're going to _____ dying before you're fifty.
12. Visiting my old high school last week _____ a lot of great memories.
13. Are you going to do anything today or just _____ watching TV?
14. I'm sorry I interrupted your story. Please _____.
15. The cashier _____ my stuff and said, "That comes to \$47.21."
16. Alfonso left his credit card at the restaurant, so he had to _____ to get it.