



Wall Street English
PHRASAL VERBS

Foreword

Phrasal verbs are key to a mastery of the English language. Like idioms, their meanings are not always predictable, and they can prove difficult for learners of English as a foreign language. Wall Street English Phrasal Verbs contains 500 useful phrasal verbs. It is the perfect complement for students of English or professionals to improve their knowledge of English.

Clear layout, simple and straightforward definitions are especially written for English learners. Phrasal verbs in context: two examples of use per phrasal verb (1000 examples), providing students with frequently used expressions.

Guide to the Lexicon

The lexicon, which makes up the main body of this dictionary, consists of 500 entries. It is arranged alphabetically by the verb of each phrasal verb.

Each entry starts with a phrasal verb, followed by its definition and two example sentences of current usage.

- *phrasal verb*
abide by
- *definition*
to obey a rule or law
- *example sentences*
 - People who refuse to **abide by** the law will be punished.
 - He is reliable and will **abide by** his promise.

abide by

to obey a rule or law

- People who refuse to abide by the law will be punished.
- He is reliable and will abide by his promise.

account for

to give a reason or explanation for (st)

- He couldn't account for the missing money and the police were therefore called in.
- When asked by his mother, Tommy couldn't account for the missing cakes.

add up

1. *to calculate the total of several figures* 2. *to make sense; to be credible*

- If you add up all the money you spend on chocolate every month you'll be surprised.
- This budget doesn't add up and needs to be redone.

aim for

1. *to work towards (a goal)* 2. *to go towards*

- We all aim for happiness but sometimes it's easier said than done.
- Our company is aiming for an increase in turnover this year of 50%.

allow for

to consider additional, unforeseen factors

- You need to allow for traffic jams when traveling in rush hour.
- When planning one must allow for delays due to unforeseen circumstances.

apply for

to offer one's services for (a job, a vacancy...)

- I want to apply for a credit card.
- Don't apply for that job if you are not qualified.

ask after

to enquire about (sb's health, or a piece of news)

- The student anxiously asked after her exam results but the teacher told her to wait.
- My best friend asked after my mother who had just had an operation.

ask for

to request

- When I asked for a pay raise my boss said that the company had introduced a pay freeze.
- My sister asked me for a loan but I refused as she didn't pay me back last time.

ask out

to invite (sb) to go out

- I asked my teacher out to lunch as I was so happy with my exam results.
- I was worried when my best friend asked my girlfriend out to dinner.

bank on

to trust (sb), or to expect that (st will happen)

- He is very trustworthy- you can bank on him keeping his word.
- Don't bank on passing your exam if you don't study hard.

barge in

to suddenly intrude or interrupt

- My friend barged in on me when I was doing my homework and I told him to go away.
- It's rude to barge in on people- knock on the door first.

**barge in**

be against

to oppose (st or sb)

- I am against tobacco companies as they sell harmful products.
- My brother is against me getting married - he says I am too young.

be away

to have left one's residence temporarily

- My mother is away at the moment and will be back next Thursday.
- My cat missed me when I was away- she is so sweet.

be back

to have returned from somewhere

- My teacher is back at school today after three month's absence.
- Give me a call when you're back and we'll do lunch.

be behind

to be late (with st)

- I am behind at the moment at work and can't spend time chatting.
- The post office is behind with the mail right now.

be fed up (with)

to be tired (of); to be bored (with)

- My boss is fed up with me because I am always behind.
- I am fed up with my boyfriend and am thinking of splitting up.

be for

to favor or agree with (st or sb)

- I am for banning smoking in public areas as this will reduce passive smoking.
- Most people in China are for policies to increase energy efficiency.

be keen on

to like; to have an interest in

- I am keen on English as it's essential nowadays in order to get a good job.
- My sister is keen on the piano but plays very badly.

be on

1. to be connected (of a light, an electrical device...) *2. to run according to schedule* *3. to be on duty*

- The flight is on time today - that's a surprise as it's usually late.
- On Monday I am on but on Tuesday I'm off.

be out of

to have exhausted one's supply of

- We are out of milk and need to buy some more.
- The gas station is out of gas as there is a gas shortage.

be over

to have finished (of a performance, event...)

- My lesson is over at nine pm and I can meet you at the bar after that.
- My girlfriend and I are over after three years together.

be up against

to face a formidable problem

- We are up against some severe weather today and this will cause some delays.
- Beijing is up against Shanghai football team next week.

be up to

1. to be doing [(often) st naughty] 2. to be fit for and equal to 3. to be one's responsibility

- What are you up to today? I am free and wonder if we could meet.
- It's up to you what you do with your life but if you choose badly you will regret it later on.

beat down

to obtain a lower price by bargaining

- He wanted \$700 for the painting but I beat him down to \$500.
- When you go to a supermarket you can't usually beat down the price of items.

become of

to have happened to (sb or st)

- What became of David Beckham after he left Manchester United?
- What becomes of the massive piles of rubbish after they are collected?

bend down

to stoop

- I hurt my back when I bent down this morning and need to go to hospital.
- When people get old they sometimes find it difficult to bend down.

black out

to temporarily lose consciousness

- I blacked out after I was hit by the car and was rushed to hospital
- If you black out, it's wise to go to see a doctor and get yourself examined.

blast off

to leave the ground and rise into the air

- The rocket blasted off at six am from the space station in Florida.
- The missile exploded as it was blasting off but thankfully no one was injured.

blow out

to extinguish by blowing

- It's a good idea to blow candles out when you leave a room.
- The gas heater stopped working because someone blew out the ignition flame.

blurt out

to say suddenly

- Don't tell my mother any secrets unless you don't mind her blurting them out to everyone.
- I blurted out my bad exam results to my father as soon as I saw him.

bounce back

to become well and happy again (after an illness or other setback)

- The stock market is weak now but it will bounce back.
- I am sick now but will hopefully bounce back soon and be back at work next week.

bow out

to leave or retire from an important position

- Some politicians never want to bow out but are often eventually forced to step down.
- My boss bowed out yesterday after 40 years at the company.

branch out

to diversify; to start a new line of business

- Many companies get into trouble when they branch out into areas outside their expertise.
- My father's business is branching out into selling cars not just repairing them.

break away

1. to break ties 2. to detach or separate from

- Scotland will never break away from the UK as it is economically dependent on it.
- Croatia was part of Yugoslavia until it broke away.

break in(to)

1. to interrupt 2. to burglarize; to force one's way in(to) 3. to tame

- It's very difficult to break in wild stallions but it can be done with patience.
- My home was broken into last year six times- I'm so fed up.

break out

1. to escape (from captivity) 2. to start or arise (of war, a disease...)

- War broke out in Europe in 1939.
- A violent criminal broke out of my local prison yesterday and everyone is on the lookout.

**break out**

bring about

to cause to happen

- What brought about your change of mind? I thought you were totally set on going to America to study.
- Smoking doesn't bring about any health benefits.

bring back

1. to return 2. to prompt recollections

- Please bring back my books as I need them for my forthcoming exam.
- Seeing my best friend after twenty years absence brought back many fond memories.

bring down

1. to carry downstairs 2. to reduce in price 3. to humble; to precipitate one's downfall

- Many banks have been brought down by poor management.
- I will buy your car if you bring the price down by at least 30%.

bring off

to accomplish successfully

- You did well to bring off such a great dinner party and I look forward to the next one!
- It takes a lot of patience, determination and hard work to bring off success in business.

bring on

to cause (as a side-effect)

- Excess work can bring on stress and office workers need to relax.
- Smoking can bring on cancer and other diseases.

bring out

1. to emphasize (a quality) 2. to publish, to launch (a product)

- Auto manufacturers regularly bring out new car models.
- Wearing pink brings out the color of my face.

bring up

1. to mention or touch on (an issue) 2. to raise or rear (a child) 3. to vomit

- I am eternally grateful to my parents for bringing me up so well.
- Don't bring up the stock market when you meet him or he will bore you for hours.

brush aside

to ignore; to take no notice of

- I told my cousin not to buy that coat but she brushed my advice aside.
- People who drink too much are brushing aside the health advice of doctors.

build on

*to further develop or grow (an idea, a project...)
from an established base*

- A good education is the ideal foundation upon which to build a successful career.
- We have made a lot of investment in brand awareness and we will build on this to increase our revenue and profits in future years.

bump into

to meet by chance

- I bumped into my old teacher this morning in the supermarket.
- I dislike bumping into ex-girlfriends- I never know what to say.

bump off

to murder; to kill

- He was bumped off for his money but the police caught the culprit.
- A very evil doctor in England bumped off many of his patients.

bump up

to increase or raise (prices, sales...)

- Many restaurants bump prices up at Chinese New Year.
- Excess demand is bumping up the price of gas.

burn down

to destroy by fire

- The new factory was burned down by terrorists.
- You shouldn't smoke in bed if you don't want to burn your home down.

burn out

1. to burn until nothing is left 2. to tax one's nerves and health

- He left his job because he felt burnt out and needed a break.
- The candle burnt out after five hours.

burst out

to show emotions suddenly and forcefully

- Children are always bursting out with their ideas. They need to learn to hold their tongues!
- I burst out in the meeting at my boss and regretted it immediately.

butt in

to interrupt (a conversation)

- It's very rude to butt in on people when they are having a private conversation.
- Children should not butt in when their teacher is talking as this is very rude.

butter up

to flatter

- My friend always butters me up before asking me for a loan.
- It's no use trying to butter him up- he won't change his mind.

buzz off

to (tell sb to) go away

- After I asked my father for a new bicycle he told me to buzz off.
- If you butt in on a private conversation you may very well be told to buzz off.

call away

to call (sb) to another place

- The doctor was called away to an emergency twenty miles away.
- I was called away from the meeting to deal with a customer.

call back

1. to call sb, asking them to return
 2. to return sb's telephone call; to telephone sb who has telephoned you earlier
- I called my sister back from meeting her old boyfriend.
 - Please call me back when you have time as I have an urgent matter to discuss with you.

call for

1. to urge or demand (action) 2. to fetch (sb)

- The government called for people to do more physical exercise.
- I called my local restaurant for a pizza and they delivered it with ten minutes.

call in

1. to visit (informally) 2. to make a stopover 3. to hire (the services of sb)

- If you have a problem with rats, you need to call in the experts.
- We called in on our grandparents on Sunday afternoon to have a chat with them.

care for

1. to look after 2. to want; to feel like

- My sister cares for her kids very well. They are the light of her life!
- I don't care for ice cream in the winter as it chills me.

carry on

1. to perform (an activity) or manage (a business)
2. to continue (doing st) 3. to misbehave

- Even if you don't feel like it, you must persevere and carry on.
- WSE has carried on the business of English training for more than 35 years.

carry out

1. to conduct; to perform 2. to put in practice; to implement

- The scientists have carried out a lot of research on how to cure cancer.
- We need to carry out our plan to increase revenue and reduce costs.

carry through

to achieve or sustain (often in the face of difficulty)

- Sometimes when one is sick or unhappy, it's only the love of our friends that carries us through.
- Yesterday was really tough and I needed a drink at the end of the day to carry me through.

catch on

1. to become popular (of a trend, music...) 2. to understand

- Wearing flares was a fashion that caught on in the 1960's but it's no longer popular.
- Sometimes it's difficult to catch on to what your teacher really means.

catch up (with)

to manage to reach (sb)

- I caught up with Tom in the car park and he gave me a lift home.
- Andy runs so fast that no one in his class can catch up with him.

cater for

to provide a service for

- The business caters for high end customers who value service and quality.
- H&M caters for younger people in the clothing industry.

chase up

to inquire about or demand delivery of (work, payments)

- My bank manager called me to chase up the lack of money in my account.
- We need to chase up the late delivery of the new printer.

check in

to register one's arrival (at a hotel, the airport)

- One should check in at the airport at least two hours before take-off.
- I checked into the Sheraton hotel for two weeks and they upgraded me for free into a larger room.

check out

1. to register one's departure (at a hotel) 2. to verify 3. to have a look at

- Check out the latest song from Robbie Williams- it's great.
- I checked out of the hotel at 3pm and proceeded to the airport.

check up

to verify; to make sure

- Check up on Bill please and see if he is working or playing.
- We need to check up on our customers more before we give them credit.

cheer on

to encourage by cheering

- We cheered on our school football team but they still lost.
- Most Chinese cheer Yao Ming on when he plays basketball

cheer up

to become or make happy

- Cheer up! You are healthy and have lots of friends- don't sulk all the time.
- A cup of coffee cheers me up in the morning- I find it indispensable.

chew over

to meditate on; to think over

- I had to chew the problem over for a few days before coming up with a solution.
- Julia had to chew over her decision to resign before telling her boss.

chop up

to chop into small pieces

- I chopped up the carrots before boiling them for twenty minutes.
- One lettuce can be chopped up into thousands of pieces.

clean out

1. to clean thoroughly 2. to divest (sb) of their money

- The stock market crash has really cleaned me out.
- The wardrobe needs to be cleaned out before the guests arrive for Christmas.

clean up

to clean and tidy

- My housekeepers a godsend. She cleans up every morning and evening.
- My mother asked me to clean myself up before having dinner as I was dirty from playing football.

clear out

to remove (st) by discarding it

- The rubbish needs to be cleared out of the car as the trunk is filthy.
- I cleared my desk out after being fired before leaving the office for good.

clear up

1. to tidy 2. to clarify (a misunderstanding...); to solve (a mystery) 3. to become fine (of the weather)

- Children should learn to clear up after themselves.
- The weather has cleared up after two weeks of rain and fog.

climb down

to admit one's error (in an argument)

- The company had to climb down from its decision to start a six-day working week.
- The government climbed down from its decision to ban imports of American beef.

clock in

to register one's arrival at work

- At our company, all staff have to clock in when we arrive at work.
- If we are late clocking in three times in a month we will be fined.

clock out

to register one's departure from work

- I forgot to clock out yesterday and as a result was fined 50 yuan.
- Staff must only clock themselves in and out. Those who clock others in will be given a warning

close down

to close permanently

- Many factories have closed down recently due to bad economic conditions.
- My company closed down its London office to save cash.

close up

1. to close completely or permanently 2. to move closer (of people)

- Stalin's tomb has been closed up after being on display to the public for 50 years.
- If you look at ants close up you can see how intricate their bodies are.

cloud up

to become increasingly more cloudy

- The sky has clouded up and it looks as if it might rain very soon.
- The economic environment is clouding up and growth may be low next year.

clutch at

to grasp desperately for something

- Desperate people will clutch at anything but in the end the inevitable happens
- Don't clutch at straws! Face up to the situation and find a solution.

come about

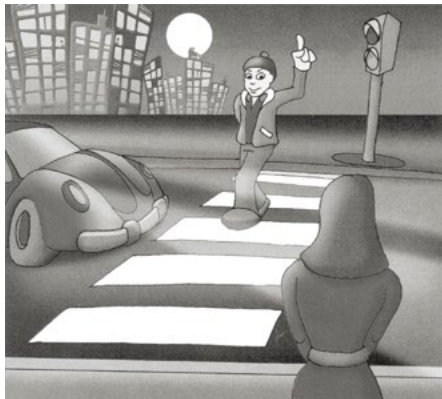
to happen

- I am not sure exactly how IBM came about to be such a big company.
- It's a miracle how my wife and I came about to me married.

come across

1. to find or meet by chance 2. to make a particular impression

- I came across my mother in the supermarket by accident.
- He comes across as being a nasty man and I would avoid him if I were you.



come across

come back

1. to return 2. to become fashionable again

- I will come back at five pm so please wait for me before starting the meeting.
- Your coat is so old that it has gone out and come back into fashion.

come down on

to punish or scold

- My boss comes down hard on laziness and expects all staff to work conscientiously.
- Parents should come down on their children's naughtiness, otherwise they will never learn how to behave.

come down with

to contract or develop (a disease)

- I am coming down with a cold and am feeling pretty dreadful right now.
- He is off work today because he has come down with the flu.

come in

1. to enter (a room...) 2. to become fashionable

- Please knock on the door before you come in, it's rude to barge in.
- Wearing ties came into fashion in the 1940's and has been popular ever since.

come on

1. *to make progress* 2. *to start (of a storm, a movie)* 3. *to encourage or hurry sb*

- My English is coming on really well- it's due to the fact that I practice everyday.
- The movie is coming on TV in five minutes- please hurry up washing the dishes and come and sit down.

come out

1. *to appear* 2. *to become known* 3. *to yield as a result* 4. *to be published*

- I am looking forward to seeing the new Bond movie that comes out soon.
- My skin is coming out in red and white spots- I need to buy some cream.

come out with

to produce or explain (an idea or suggestion...)

- Ford has come out with some great looking cars recently.
- His mother asked him to come out with her which is why he missed his maths class.

come round

1. *to visit* 2. *to regain consciousness*

- Please come round and see us as soon as you have time available.
- He came round after the operation but couldn't speak for two days.

come through

1. to survive (illness or other adversities) 2. to be ready for collection (of a bank transfer...)

- He has come through a lot after being laid off and separating from his wife.
- The money has yet to come through to my account.

come to

1. to amount to; to total 2. to regain consciousness

- Your total bill comes to a thousand dollars, would you like to pay in cash or with a credit card?
- The boxer took a while to come to after being knocked out.

come up against

be faced with (an obstacle)

- Life forces us to come up against many problems- it's par for the course.
- Friends will help us when we come up against bereavement.

come up to

to meet expected standards

- Your work comes up to company standards but doesn't exceed them.
- He was fired because his behavior didn't come up to standard.