

CORSO DI LAUREA IN COMUNICAZIONE INTERLINGUISTICA APPLICATA ALLE PROFESSIONI GIURIDICHE

Modulo di Lingua Inglese 1 2019-20

Lesson 10 – 04 May 2020

- Prepositional and Phrasal Verbs

Prepositional Verbs

Prepositional verbs often produce the logical meaning of the verb + the preposition:

- I went to the head office.
- She cares about the company.
- They believe in the project.
- He was thinking about the suggestion.
- She dealt with the problem.
- This sale results in a loss

These verbs are generally formed of an intransitive root verb together with a preposition, and so become transitive, i.e. they have an object. The object is part of the prepositional phrase and must always stand after the preposition.

Therefore, prepositional verbs are not separable, and the object cannot stand between the verb and the preposition):

- I went to the head office. **NOT: I went the head office to.**
- She cares about the company. **NOT: She cares the company about.**

Prepositional Verbs

An adverb can stand between the verb and the preposition:

- She cares **deeply** about the company.

The preposition can stand at the beginning of a question:

- **About** what was he thinking?

A relative pronoun can be used after the preposition:

- The problem with **which** she was dealing was very complex.

The sentence stress (accent/emphasis) falls on the verb not the preposition:

- I **went** to the head office.

Phrasal Verbs

Phrasal verbs have 'semantic coherence', so the meaning is not always the combination of the verb and the particle. If the phrasal verb is transitive, the object is the object of the complete verb (root verb + particle):

- They took up the offer.
- They put off the decision.
- She worked out a solution.

The object can also stand between the verb and the particle (i.e. the verb is separable):

- They took the offer up.
- They put the decision off.
- She worked out a solution out.

However, if the object is a pronoun it must stand between the verb and the particle:

- They took **it** up. **NOT: They took up it.**
- They put **it** off. **NOT: They put off it.**
- She worked **it** out. **NOT: She worked out it.**

Phrasal Verbs

A phrasal verb can also be intransitive (without an object):

- The building blew up.
- Supplies have run out.
- Prices are going down.

With both transitive and intransitive phrasal verbs, an adverb cannot stand between the verb and the particle:

- Supplies have slowly run out. **NOT: Supplies have run slowly out**
- She quickly worked out a solution. **NOT: She worked quickly out a solution.**

With both transitive and intransitive phrasal verbs, the sentence stress (accent/emphasis) falls on the particle not on the verb:

- Prices are going **down**.
- They put the decision **off**

Phrasal-Prepositional Verbs

Some verbs have three parts (a multi-part verb): the main verb, a particle and a preposition:

- I cannot put up with this.
- We look forward to hearing from you.
- He gets on very well with us.
- You will have to face up to the consequences.

Prepositional and Phrasal Verbs: Origins

Prepositional and phrasal verbs often have a Germanic origin.

To wait for	Prepositional verb
To go up	Phrasal verb (intransitive)
To look at	Prepositional verb
To put off	Phrasal verb (transitive)
To give up	Phrasal verb (intransitive)
To give up	Phrasal verb (transitive)

Prepositional and Phrasal Verbs: Origins

These verbs can often be replaced by a single Latinate verb. The distinction in use is a question of register.

To wait for

To expect

To go out

To increase

To look at

To observe

To put off

To postpone

To give up

To surrender

To give up

To quit

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Prepositional Verbs: Usage

Some **prepositional verbs** use the Germanic verb + preposition form with a Latinate verb.

- The government acceded to the request to modify the law.
- Who will preside over the meeting?
- The law discriminates against older people.
- The company will sue for damages.
- The decision resulted in a disaster.

Phrasal/Prepositional Verbs: Collocations

Collocation means the way words combine with each other. For example:

- To have lunch
- Black and white
- A beautiful view
- Absolutely disgusting

So the possible combinations of phrasal and prepositional verbs are also elements of collocation:

- I went over the plan.
- She hit upon a great idea.

- Profits went down.
- The price shot up.

- They carried out the programme. - They carried the programme out.
- We must fill in (out) the form. - We must fill the form in (out).

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- They carried out the programme.

Phrasal/Prepositional Verbs: Connotations

Connotation means that words have a particular interpretation in a given cultural environment. For example:

- 9/11
- Once upon a time
- On the ball

So the possible combinations of phrasal and prepositional verbs are also elements of connotation:

- The meeting kicked off at 10.00. (to begin)
- The curtain has gone up. (to start)
- The ticked off the items on the order form. (to check and verify)

Phrasal/Prepositional Verbs: Metaphors

- Following the debate, he hit out at his opponents.
- The problem has been blown up!
- The supporters flooded into the stadium.
- The programme was so interesting I was glued to the TV.
- Stop nosing around; don't be so inquisitive.
- I cannot find the file at the moment, but I will fish it out.

Phrasal/Prepositional Verbs: Neologisms

- You can find further information if you scroll down/up.
- You need to check how many people of clicking through.
- Watch out for people phishing for personal information.
- The exercise needs to be dumbed down, it is too difficult.
- The presentation needs to be sexed up, it is too boring.
- I need to top up my phone.
- We just need to relax and chill out for a few moments.
- This impacts on the result of the analysis. (American English)

Phrasal Nouns

Like phrasal verbs, phrasal nouns consist of a verb combined with a particle. The particle may come before or after the verb.

<i>phrasal noun</i>	<i>example</i>	<i>meaning</i>
standby	My wife's a pilot and she's on standby over the weekend. We're keeping the old equipment as a standby , in case of emergencies.	ready to be used if necessary
letdown	I had been looking forward to the concert for weeks but it turned out to be a terrible letdown .	disappointment
back-up	Neil can provide technical back-up if you need it.	support
warm-up	The comedian who did the warm-up for the studio audience before the TV programme started was excellent.	preparation
onset	The match was halted by the onset of rain.	start (of something unpleasant)
input	Try to come to the meeting – we'd value your input .	contribution
overkill	Shall I add some more decorations to the cake or would that be overkill ?	more of something than is needed

Phrasal Nouns

Sometimes the phrasal noun does not have a corresponding phrasal verb:

- Their exaggerated reaction was an overkill. *to overkill
- The onset of the problem was unexpected. * to set on

The spelling may differ between the phrasal verb and the phrasal noun:

- We will set up the system tomorrow.
- When will you do the system set-up?

Or the form may differ:

- I am standing in for the inspector who is away.
- I am the stand-in.

Phrasal Adjectives

<i>phrasal verb</i>	<i>adjective</i>	<i>example</i>	<i>meaning</i>
go on	ongoing	We've had an ongoing problem with the computer system.	one which continues
wear out	worn out	She was wearing old, worn-out shoes.	weak, damaged through much use
break down	broken-down	In our garage we've got an old broken-down fridge.	one that has stopped working

However, this is not the case for all such adjectives. We can say 'that way of thinking is very **outdated**', but there is no related verb to **date out**; we can say 'the restaurant was really **overpriced**', but there is no phrasal verb to **price over** (the verb is 'to overprice').