

# English Phrasal Verbs **in Use**

70 units of  
vocabulary  
reference and  
practice

Self-study and  
classroom use

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Cambridge University Press  
978-0-521-52727-9 - English Phrasal Verbs in Use  
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Frontmatter  
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CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS  
Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo

Cambridge University Press  
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 2RU, UK

[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)  
Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9780521527279](http://www.cambridge.org/9780521527279)

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First published 2004  
5th printing 2006

Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library*

ISBN-13 978-0-521-52727-9 paperback  
ISBN-10 0-521-52727-9 paperback

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## Acknowledgements

This book, like all our other books in the *In Use* series, is the result of the work of many people. Cambridge University Press editors, reviewers, designers, marketing staff, sales and publicity staff have all contributed their advice and expertise, and there are just too many to name individually here. Particular thanks must, however, go to the following two people at Cambridge University Press: Nóirín Burke, whose expertise and vision have guided us throughout the writing of this book, and Martine Walsh, who has steered the project from its beginnings through to publication with consistent insight and thoroughness. We are very grateful to them both. We also owe a great deal to the Cambridge University Press lexicographers who worked with the Cambridge International Corpus to produce the *Cambridge International Dictionary of Phrasal Verbs*. We drew heavily on the database of this dictionary when selecting verbs to include in this book and when compiling the Mini dictionary at the back of this book.

We have also received invaluable feedback from both teacher and student reviewers. Their comments have had a great influence on the final manuscript and we are very grateful to them. In particular we would like to thank the following teachers, students and institutions from all over the world who reviewed and piloted the material throughout its development:

Kristi Alcouffe, Bonelles, France  
 Margarida Busatto, Sao Paulo, Brazil  
 Philippa Dralet, Paris, France  
 Gill Hamilton, Valencia, Spain  
 Olga Vinogradova, Moscow, Russia  
 Marilyn Woolff, London, UK  
 Kevin Rutherford, Warsaw, Poland  
 Julie Moore, Cambridge, UK  
 Eilwen David, Munich, Germany  
 Ewa Modrzejewska, Gdynia, Poland  
 Yuri Hara, Tokyo, Japan

Finally, as always, we would like to thank our domestic partners and loved ones for their unflinching support while we were taken up with this project.

Michael McCarthy and Felicity O'Dell

*Development of this publication has made use of the Cambridge International Corpus (CIC). The CIC is a computerised database of contemporary spoken and written English, which currently stands at 600 million words. It includes British English, American English and other varieties of English. It also includes the Cambridge Learner Corpus, developed in collaboration with the University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations. Cambridge University Press has built up the CIC to provide evidence about language use that helps to produce better language teaching materials.*

*The publisher has used its best endeavours to ensure that the URLs for external websites referred to in this book are correct and active at the time of going to press. However, the publisher has no responsibility for the websites and can make no guarantee that a site will remain live or that the content is or will remain appropriate.*

## Using this book

### Why was this book written?

It was written to help you improve your knowledge of phrasal verbs in English. Phrasal verbs are verbs which have a main verb and a particle which, together, create one meaning (e.g. a plane *takes off* from the airport; an adult *looks after* a child). You will come across a great many phrasal verbs when you listen to and read English, and so it is important that you learn about their meanings and about how they are used. You can use this book either with a teacher or for self-study.

There are more than 5,000 phrasal verbs and related noun and adjective forms in use in English. This book focuses just on those phrasal verbs which you need to know for everyday spoken and written communication in English, and it aims to provide the information and practice which will help you understand and use them correctly.

### How were the phrasal verbs in the book selected?

The approximately 1,000 phrasal verbs and related noun and adjective forms which are presented in this book were all selected from those identified as significant by the CANCODE corpus of spoken English, developed at the University of Nottingham in association with Cambridge University Press and the Cambridge International Corpus of written and spoken English. The phrasal verbs selected are also to be found in the *Cambridge International Dictionary of Phrasal Verbs*, where additional example sentences and usage notes will also be found. You can search this dictionary online by going to the following website: [dictionary.cambridge.org](http://dictionary.cambridge.org)

### How is the book organised?

The book has 70 two-page units. The left-hand page explains the phrasal verbs that are presented in the unit. You will usually find an explanation of the meaning of each phrasal verb, an example of it in use and, where appropriate, any special notes about its usage. The right-hand page checks that you have understood the information on the left-hand page by giving you a series of exercises that practise the material just presented. The exercises pay particular attention to checking understanding of the phrasal verbs and how they are used, so that you will be able to use them accurately and appropriately.

The units are organised into different sections:

First we start with important information about phrasal verbs in general (Units 1–5): what they are, how their grammar works, and so on. This is an important training section, and we recommend you do these units first.

After the introductory units, there are units on the most common verbs which are used to form phrasal verbs (Units 6–12) and units on the most common particles found in phrasal verbs (Units 13–21).

The rest of the book teaches you the phrasal verbs which are associated with particular concepts (e.g. time), functions (e.g. giving and getting information) and topics (e.g. business, feelings, student life).

The book also has a key to all the exercises so that you can check your answers. At the back of this book you will find a useful Mini dictionary. This provides clear definitions of all the phrasal verbs and related noun and adjective forms that appear in this book. The Mini dictionary also indicates the unit number where you can find a particular phrasal verb.

### How should I use this book?

It is strongly recommended that you work through Units 1–5 first so that you become familiar with the way phrasal verbs operate and with the terminology that is used in the rest of the book. After that, you may work on the units in any order that suits you.

### What else do I need in order to work with this book?

You need a notebook or file in which you can write down the phrasal verbs that you study in this book as well as any others that you come across elsewhere.

You also need to have access to a good dictionary. We strongly recommend the *Cambridge International Dictionary of Phrasal Verbs* as this gives exactly the kind of information that you need to have about phrasal verbs. Your teacher, however, may also be able to recommend other dictionaries that you will find useful.

So, we hope that this book will help you understand and use new or difficult phrasal verbs that **crop up** (see Unit 44 – Student life: reading and writing) in your reading and listening in English and that, by the time you finish the units, you'll be saying: 'English phrasal verbs? Show me a new one and I'll **figure out** what it means in seconds!' (see Unit 69 American and Australian phrasal verbs).