A SHORT DICTIONARY OF PHRASAL VERBS:
Verbs paired with a preposition or adverb

Separable: you may insert a noun or pronoun between these verbs and their prepositions/adverbs.

Correct: Sam passed on the news to Jay.
Correct: Sam passed the news on to Jay.

add up - add
back up - cause to move backwards; support; blow up;
cause to explode; destroy by explosives
break down - analyze; list the parts of separately
break into - go into a house or room forcibly; suddenly;
begun; bring about - cause to happen
bring off - accomplish
bring on - cause
bring out - publish; emphasize
bring over - bring
bring to - revive
bring up - raise; care for from childhood
brush out - brush the inside of
burn down - destroy by burning
burn up - consume by fire
buy out - by the other person's share of a business
buy up - buy the whole supply of
call off - cancel; order away
call up - telephone; summon for military service
calm down - become calm
carry on - continue
carry out - fulfill; complete; accomplish; perform
carry over - carry; continue at another time or place
cheer up - cause to become cheerful
chew up - chew thoroughly
chop up - chop into small pieces
clean off - clean the surface of
clean out - clean the inside of
clean up - clarify; tidy
clear out - clear the surface of
clear up - clear the inside of
close down - close permanently
close up - close temporarily
count in - include
count out - exclude
count up - calculate; count; add to a total
cross out - eliminate
cut off - interrupt; sever; amputate
cut out - eliminate; delete
cut down - reduce in quantity
draw up - write; compose (a document)
dress up - put clothes on; adorn
dust out - dust the inside of
eat up - eat completely
figure out - interpret; understand
figure up - compute
fill in - complete (a printed form)
fill out - complete (a printed form)
fill up - fill completely (a container)
find out - discover
fix up - repair; arrange in a suitable manner
get across - cause to be understood
give back - return
give out - distribute; announce
give up - surrender something
hand down - deliver; pronounce formally; leave as an inheritance
hand over - yield control of
hang up - suspend
have on - be dressed in
have over - entertain someone informally at one's home
hold off - delay; restrain
hold up - delay; rob; threaten with a weapon
keep up - continue; keep the same pace
leave out - omit
let down - disappoint
let out - release from confinement; make larger (in sewing)
light up - light; illuminate thoroughly
live down - live in such a way as to cause something to be forgotten
make over - remake
move over - move to the side
pass out - distribute
pass up - not take advantage of (as an opportunity)
pass on - transmit
pay back - repay
pay off - discharge a debt completely; give someone his final pay
pick up - come to meet an escort; lift with hands or fingers; learn casually;
initiate an association publicly
play down - minimize
play up - emphasize
point out - indicate
pull down - pull in a downward direction; raze
push across - cause to be understood or accepted
put off - postpone
put on - dress in; deceive or fool
put up - preserve (food); receive as an overnight guest
quiet down - be quiet
ring up - the telephone
rinse off - rinse the surface of
rinse out - rinse the inside of
rule out - eliminate
run down - trace; disparage; hit with a vehicle
run off - cause to depart; reproduce mechanically
save up - accumulate
see through - complete; in spite of difficulties
see off - accompany someone to the beginning of a trip
send back - send to a place where formerly located
send over - send to where someone is
set up - arrange
show off - exhibit ostentatiously
shut off - cause to cease functioning
slow up - cause to move more slowly
spell out - enumerate; state in detail
stand up - fail to keep an appointment with
sweep out - sweep the inside of
take back - return; retract a statement
take down - remove from a high position; write from
dictation
take in - understood; fool; deceive; make smaller
(in sewing)
take over - take; assume command of
tear down - destroy
tear up - tear into small pieces
tell off - scold; reprimand
think over - consider
think through - consider from beginning to end
think up - create; invent
throw away - discard
throw over - reject
tie up - tie securely or tight
tire out - cause to be exhausted
touch up - repair
try on - put on a garment to verify the fit
try out - test
turn down - refuse; lower the volume
turn out - produce; force into exile, extinguish (a light)
wash off - wash the surface of
wash out - wash the inside of
wear out - use until no longer usable; tire greatly
wind up - finish, tighten the spring of a watch or machine
wipe off - wipe the surface of
wipe out - wipe the inside of; decimate
work out - solve
write down - record
write out - write down every detail; spell out
write up - compose; prepare (a document)

**Inseparable:** you cannot separate these verbs from their prepositions/adverbs with any words.

**Correct:** Becky is reliable; you can count on her.
**Incorrect:** You can count her on.

back out of - desert; fail to keep a promise
bear down on - lean on; browbeat
bear on - have to do with
bear up under - endure
break in on - interrupt
break into - interrupt
call for - come to get; require
care for - like; guard; supervise; maintain
carry on with - continue
catch up with - cover the distance between oneself and
check up on - examine; verify
come across - find accidentally
come along with - accompany; make progress
come by - find accidentally
come down with - become ill with
come out with - utter; produce
come up with - utter; produce
count on - rely on
cut in on - interrupt
disagree with - cause illness or discomfort to
do away with - abolish
do without - deprive oneself of
drop in at/on - visit casually without planning
drop out of - leave; quit
face up to - acknowledge
fall behind in - lag; not progress at required pace
fall back on - use for emergency purpose
fall out with - quarrel with
fill in for - substitute for
get ahead of - surpass; beat
get around - evade; avoid
get away with - do without being caught or punished
get by with - manage with a minimum of effort
get down to - become serious about; consider
get in - enter (a vehicle)
get off - descend from; leave
get on - enter (a vehicle); mount
get on with - proceed with
get through with - terminate, finish
go back on - desert; fail to keep (a promise)
go for - like a great deal
go in for - be interested in; participate in
go on with - continue
go over - review
go with - harmonize with; look pleasing together  
go without - abstain from  
hang around - remain idly in the vicinity  
hear from - receive a communication from  
hear of - learn about (sometimes accidentally)  
hit on - discover accidentally  
hold on to - grasp tightly  
hold out against - resist  
keep at - persevere at  
keep to - persist in; continue  
keep up with - maintain the pace of  
live on - support or sustain oneself by means of  
live up to - maintain the standard demanded of  
look after - take care of  
look back on - remember nostalgically  
look down on - feel superior to  
look forward to - anticipate  
look up to - respect; admire  
make up for - compensate for  
pass on - transmit  
pick on - tease; bully  
play up to - flatter for personal advantage  
put up with - tolerate  
read up on - search out information on  
rerun - compete against in an election  
rerun with - leave; escape from  
see about - consider; arrange  
see to - arrange; supervise  
settle on - decide on; choose  
stand for - represent; permit  
stand up for - support; demand  
stand up to - resist  
stick to - persist  
stick up for - support; defend  
take after - resemble  
talk back to - answer impolitely  
talk over - discuss  
tell on - report misbehavior to authority  
touch on - mention briefly  
turn into - become  
wait on - serve  
wait up for - not go to bed while waiting for  
watch out for - be careful for  

**Intransitive:** these phrasal verbs cannot take a direct object. They may be separated by a noun or pronoun.  

**Correct:** We are having dinner. **Come over.**  
**Incorrect:** **Come over** dinner.  
**Correct:** **Come over for** dinner.  
(“for” makes “dinner” an indirect object)  

back down - retreat from a position in an argument  
back out - desert; fail to keep a promise  
back up - move backwards  
bear up - endure  
blow in - drop in to visit unexpectedly  
blow over - pass without doing harm  
blow up - explode; lose one’s temper  
call up - telephone  
calm down - become calm  
carry on - continue as before; misbehave  
catch on - understand  
catch up - cover the distance between oneself and a moving goal  
check up - investigate  
check out - leave; pay one’s bill  
cheer up - become cheerful  
clear out - leave  
clear up - become clear  
close down - close permanently  
close up - close temporarily  
came about - happen  
come along - accompany; make progress  
come back - return  
come by - visit someone  
come out - appear; make a social debut  
come over - come to someone’s house, to where someone is  
come through - succeed  
come to - regain consciousness  
cut in - interrupt  
die away - fade; diminish  
die down - fade; diminish  
die off/out - disappear; become extinct  
dress up - don fancy or unusual clothes  
drive back - return by car  
drop in - visit someone casually without planning  
drop out - abandon some organized activity; leave; quit  
drop over - visit someone casually  
fall behind - not progress at required pace  
fall off - decrease; lose weight  
fall through - fail; not be accomplished  
fill in - substitute  
find out - learn  
fly back - return by air  
fly over - fly to where someone is  

A version of this list can be found at Purdue University’s OWL: [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/esl/eslphrasal.html](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/esl/eslphrasal.html).
get ahead - make progress
get along - have a friendly relationship
get around - circulate; move about
get away - escape
get by - manage; either just barely or with a minimum of effort
get in - enter
get off - descend from leave
get on - enter (a vehicle); mount (a horse, etc.)
get on/along - progress; be compatible
get up - rise
get through - finish
give out - become exhausted
give up - surrender; fail to finish
go back - return
go off - explode
go on - happen; continue
go out - stop burning; leave one's residence
go over - go; succeed
grow up - mature
hang around - remain idly; dawdle
hang up - replace a telephone receive on its hook
hold on - grasp tightly; persevere; wait while telephoning
hold out - continue to resist; persevere; persist
keep on - continue
keep up - maintain the required pace or standard;
continue
let up - diminish in intensity
lie down - recline
look on - be a spectator
make out - progress; succeed
make up - become reconciled
move over - move to the side
pan out - turn out well; be successful
pass out - become unconscious
pass on - die
pick up - grow; increase
pull in - arrive
pull out - deport
pull through - survive (barely)
ride over - ride to where someone is
run away - escape; leave; leave quickly without permission
run down - slowly lose power so as to stop functioning
run off - depart running; drain
sell out - sell the ownership or responsibility
settle up - pay one's bills or debts
show off - boast by words or actions
show up - arrive; appear unexpectedly
shut up - stop talking
slow up - reduce speed
stand by - wait; be prepared to assist
stand up - stand; rise from sitting; last; endure
stay over - remain at someone's house overnight or longer
step aside - move to one side
take off - leave the ground
take over - assume command
talk back - answer impolitely
throw up - vomit
turn around - turn so that one is facing another direction
turn in - go to bed
turn out - succeed; come; appear, as at a public meeting
turn up - arrive; be found unexpectedly
wait up - remain awake in anticipation
wake up - awaken
walk back - return on foot to where one was
walk over - walk to where someone is
wash out - fade or disappear from washing
watch out - be careful
wear off - fade; disappear through use or time
wear out - become unusable through use; become used up
work out - be successful