

Phrasal verbs

In academic English phrasal verbs are not as common as in spoken and less formal written English. For example, *We **found out** that the internal structure was stronger afthis treatment* would be written not only in the passive voice but also the verb would be changed. *It was **found/ascertained/discovered** that the internal structure was stronger after this treatment.*

Sometimes it does not matter if you use a phrasal verb or not. For example, the very commonly used phrasal verbs *turn on* and *turn off* can be replaced by *activated* and *deactivated* but it is not necessary.

Below is a list of phrasal verbs commonly used in informal English and their formal equivalents. Study the list carefully before you do the exercises.

break down	fail	go down	decrease
break down	categorize	go on (with)	continue
bring about	cause	go up	increase
call off	cancel	go through	be approved
carry out	conduct	go up	increase
come out	be published	make up	constitute
come up with	design/invent/originate/	make up for	compensate
come up with	present/produce/propose	mix up	confuse
cut down (on)	reduce	pick up	receive
cut off	disconnect	put off	postpone
find out	find/discover/ascertain	set up	arrange/organize
get hold of	contact	take on	employ
get hold of	acquire	turn on/switch on	activate
get in	be admitted	turn off/switch off	deactivate
get in touch	contact	turn up	arrive
get round	avoid	work out	calculate

EXERCISES

I. Substitute the phrasal verbs in the following sentences with their more formal equivalents.

1. We took on three new members of staff and they all *turned up* late on their first day.

.....

2. The results *were broken down* into four groups .

.....

3. We must *cut down on* our expenses.

.....

4. The destruction of the rain forest *has brought about* environmental damage.

.....

5. The first edition *came out* in 2000.

.....

6. We *found out* that the new equipment cost £2,500.

.....

7. It took a long time to *get hold of* the supplier.

.....

8. The equipment *broke down* after three months.

.....

9. Only 40% of the applicants *got in*.

.....
10. The equipment *turned up* 3 weeks late.
.....

11. The results *were worked out* using our own software.
.....

12. If you have any problems, please *get in touch*.
.....

13. The conference *has been called off*.
.....

14. We need to *carry out* more research.
.....

15. With the new method we were able to *get round* that problem.
.....

II. Use phrasal verbs instead of their formal equivalents in the following sentences.

1. The temperature *decreased* to 10°C.
.....

2. They *continued* their research in spite of the lack of funding.
.....

3. Their grant application *was not approved*.
.....

4. They had their electricity *disconnected* because they did not pay the bill.
.....

5. Prices *have increased*.
.....

6. We *designed* a new arrangement for the system.
.....

7. These losses *constitute* about 30% of the total loss.
.....

8. The machine *was deactivated* after completing 14 cycles.
.....

9. What are you going to do to *compensate for* the losses?
.....

10. You should not *confuse* these two issues.
.....

11. We *arranged* a meeting for the end of January.
.....

12. The grant allows us to *employ* two new researchers.
.....

13. After isolating the circuit, the system *was activated*.
.....