Phrasal Verbs for Work and Projects

- **Goal:** move from passive understanding to confident, active workplace use
- **Covered:** meetings, deadlines, handovers, email follow-ups, team coordination
- **Key challenges:** separable vs. inseparable forms, register, choosing the right particle
- **Success:** accurate recall, correct word order, and appropriate tone in real tasks



Why Phrasal Verbs Matter at Work

- Phrasal verbs are the default informal register in stand-ups, calls, and chat.
- Learners use fewer phrasal verbs than native speakers, often choosing single-word synonyms.
- The same verb changes meaning with a new particle: 'push back' a deadline vs. 'push back' on a proposal.
- Latin-based verbs can sound stiff in everyday professional conversation.



Your Core Starter Set

Useful phrasal verbs for everyday work conversations.



Meetings

bring up, go over, kick off, wrap up, follow up, point out, touch on.



Timing

put off, push back, bring forward, call off, set up.



Progress and problems

run into, hold up, fall behind, sort out, look into.



Communication

reach out, get back to, loop in, run by, fill in.



Tip: learn these by situation, not as an alphabetical list.

Separable vs. Inseparable: Getting Word Order Right

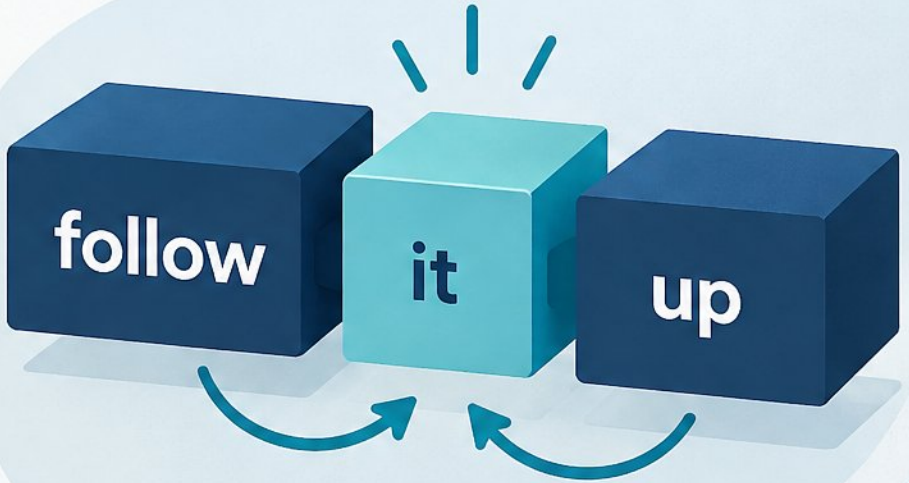
1. Separable verbs accept two orders with a noun: **“follow up the client”** or **“follow the client up”**.

2. Pronoun objects must sit in the middle: **“follow it up”**, never **“follow up it”**.

3. Inseparable verbs keep the object after the particle: **“look into the issue”**, not **“look the issue into”**.

4. Three-part verbs are always inseparable: **“put up with it”**, **“follow up on it”**.

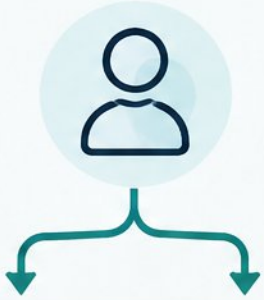
5. Tie-break: long objects stay after the particle; stressed particles pull the object forward.



A Quick Decision Routine for Word Order

1

pronoun object?



Separate it — follow it up, not follow up it.

2

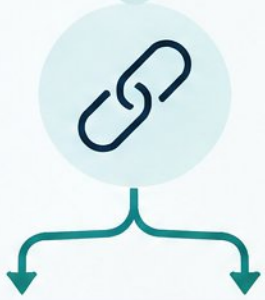
long or complex object?



Keep verb and particle together.

3

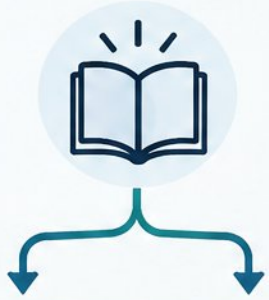
preposition particle
(look into, deal with, follow up on)?



Never separate.

4

unsure?



Check the dictionary construction, not how it sounds.

Meetings and Discussions

Better Conversations Stronger Teams

Starting and steering:
kick off, bring up, go over, move on, wrap up

Disagreeing politely:
push back on a point, weigh in on a proposal

Back up your argument
with data or clear evidence

Checking understanding:
run through the main points, spell out the details

Practice:
turn stiff single-verb sentences into natural phrasal-verb versions



Deadlines, Tasks, and Progress

Scheduling:
put off, push back, bring forward, set up.

Completing:
carry out, get through, follow through on.

Catching up:
catch up on the tasks you missed.

Problems:
run into, come up against, fall behind, hold up.

Practice:
describe a delayed milestone with four target verbs.



Email, Chat, and Handovers

Follow-up language:
“follow up on”, “get back to”, “loop in”, “reach out to”

Delegating and handing over:
“take over”, “hand over”, “sort out”, “fill in”

Tone check:
“loop in” and “reach out” suit internal email; formal clients may prefer “copy” and “contact”.

Practice:
rewrite a short status email using three appropriate phrasal verbs



I’ll **follow up on** this and **get back to** you soon.



Great — I’ll **loop in** the team so they’re aware.



I’ll **hand over** this part to you, and you can **sort out** the next steps.

Tone check



“loop in” and “reach out” suit internal email; formal clients may prefer “copy” and “contact”.

Problem-Solving and Teamwork

Investigating:
look into, figure out, track down, flag up

Collaborating:
team up with, back someone up, pitch in, step in

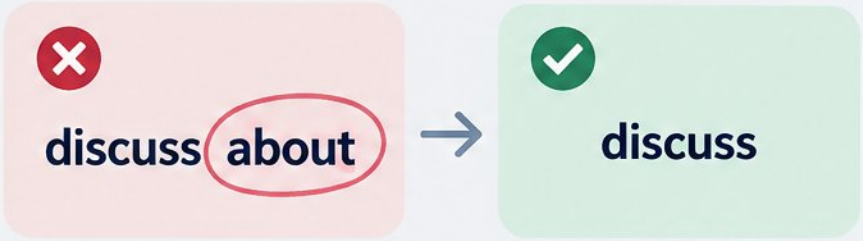
Resolving:
iron out, clear up, work out, deal with

Practice:
role-play a short troubleshooting conversation with a colleague

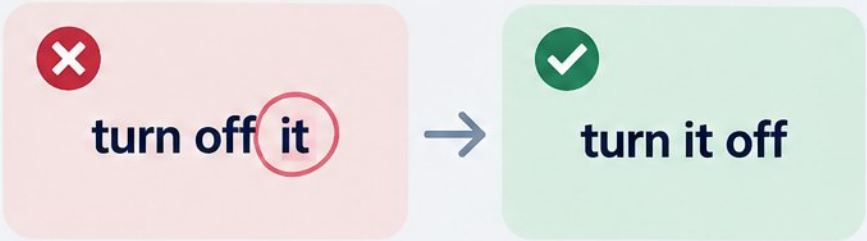


Common Mistakes and Quick Fixes

- Extra particle: 'discuss about', 'voice out', 'list out' — just drop it.



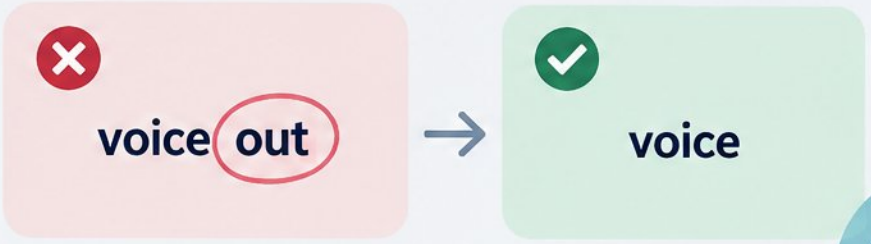
- Pronoun objects go in the middle: 'turn it off', not 'turn off it'.



- Keep the preposition in three-part verbs: 'get back to you', not 'get back you'.



- Match register: swap casual verbs for formal ones in client emails.



Self-Check Before You Speak or Send

Meaning: does the particle change the meaning you intend?

Order: pronoun in the middle; long objects stay after the particle

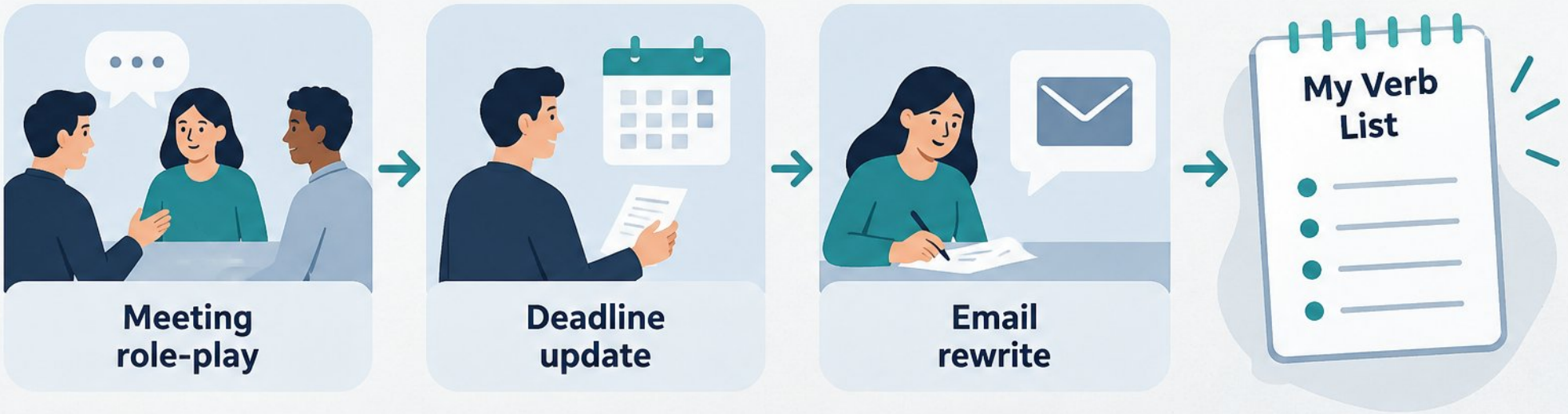
Register: chat, internal email, or client-facing — does this verb fit?

Collocation: does this verb normally pair with this noun at work?



Four questions, ten seconds — then speak or hit send

Practice Lab: Put Them to Work



- Three short tasks: meeting role-play, deadline update, email rewrite
- Produce target verbs — don't just recognize them
- Peer feedback checklist: meaning, word order, register
- Wrap-up: list five phrasal verbs to use this week
- Swap papers and check each other's verb choice



Your Action Plan

- Pick five high-value phrasal verbs for your role; write one example each
- Capture log: situation, verb, sentence, feedback
- Review weekly; aim for one real use every day
- Next: add project- and industry-specific phrasal verbs



Key Takeaways and Next Steps

Phrasal verbs are the working register of meetings, chat, and project updates.

Three rules cover most errors: pronoun in the middle, preposition particles never split, long objects stay after the particle.

Register awareness matters more than volume: one well-chosen phrasal verb beats three forced ones.

Continue by collecting the verbs you actually hear in your own team's meetings and messages.



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