

## TWO-WORD VERBS

### GROUP I

**In this group belong transitive two-word verbs whose objects may either follow the combination or separate it into two parts, in which case the verb comes before the object and the adverb after it. We call these separable transitive two-word verbs. When a pronoun is used as the object, the phrasal verb will always be separated.**

bring back	a. recall	That song brings back pleasant memories.
	b. return	You can borrow the books if you promise to bring them back.
bring up	a. mention or introduce subject	Why do you always bring up that subject? Why bring that up?
	b. rear or rise	His parents both died when he was very young, and he was brought up by his aunt.
call back	return or repeat a telephone call	If he calls when I'm gone, tell him to call back.
call down	scold or reprimand	We were called down for walking on the grass. His father called him down for staying out so late.
call in	summon for a particular purpose	They called in a medical specialist We called Jim in to help settle the argument.
call up	telephone	I'll call you up when I return
carry out	complete an action	I was unable to carry out my plan because of illness
check in	return item for which one of responsible	Check the books in the library before you leave.
check off	mark items in a list	Check off the names on the list as I read them to you.
check out	a. receive items for which one of responsible	May I check this book out for two weeks?
	b. make s/o familiar with operation of; usually with on	I'll check you out on the new computer tomorrow.
	c. Inspect and determine suitability for use	Will you check this airplane out and tell me if it is safe to use?
cheer up	put s/o in a better mood	I tried to cheer him up by buying him a gift
cross off	remove an item from a list	I asked them to cross my name off their list. I asked them to cross it off
do over	a. do again	There are several spelling mistakes in his letter, but I'm too tired to do it over.
	b. redecorate	We plan to do over our guest bedroom in time for Aunt Mary's visit.
drop off	leave a person or thing in a particular place	If you go by cleaners, would you mind dropping off this pair of pants? I'll drop you off on the corner of Houston and Texas Street.
figure out	solve a problem by reasoning	I can't figure out why he didn't. We can't figure it out.
get across	make one's ideas or arguments clear and acceptable to another or others	If I could only get across to you how important it is to get plenty of sleep and daily exercise.
get back	regain	I loaned him five dollars, but I don't expect to get it back
give up	surrender, quit trying	The man persuaded the criminal to give himself up to the police
hand in	submit, turn in	Time's up! Please hand in your test papers. I've finished my report,- but I haven't handed it in yet.
hang up	put in a hanger	You can hang up your coat in that closet You can hang it up to dry in the bathroom.
keep on	continue to wear a garment	It's too cold in here I'm going to keep my coat on.
look over	examine	Here are the plans for our new house. I wish you'd look them over and tell me that you think of them
look up	a. locate and visit	When you get to Paris, I want you to look up a friend of mine. If you visit Houston, be sure to look me up.
	b. search for- in a dictionary, directory, or reference book	If I'm not sure of the meaning of a word, I always look it up in the dictionary.
pay back	return a loan of money	You never pay back the \$5 I loaned you last month. I'll pay it back next week.
pick out	a. select	The children were told to pick out any prize they wanted
	b. see clearly among others	He tried to pick his brother in the crowd. Can you pick him out

pick up	a. learn at random	Where did you pick up that expression; it's not very good English.
	b. get, buy, collect	Do you mind stopping at the drug store? I want to pick up some cigarettes.
point out	call attention to	As we drove around to city, the guide pointed out many places of historical interest. I would like to point out that I've decided to resign as president of the company.
put across	make one's ideas or arguments clear and acceptable to another or others	The instructor tried to put across his ideas to his class You may have a good idea, but you won't be able to put it across unless you understand your audience.
put aside	a. save money for a purpose	I put aside part of my salary every month. I'm putting it aside so I can buy a house.
	b. to interrupt and postpone an activity	Can't you put aside what you're doing for a minute?
put away	withdraw from immediate use; store in drawer, closets, etc.	I'll join you as soon as I can put away all this stuff on my desk. I put it away in a drawer, and now I can't find it!
put off	a. postpone	I've put off writing to him for a while. I know The longer you put something off, the harder it's to do.
	b. postpone fulfilling one's obligation to another person or persons	I've asked him to direct answer, but he keeps putting me off.
put on	a. wear clothing, a hat, gloves etc.	You'd better put on something warm; it's cold outside.
	b. put in operation, turn on	Put on the lights. It's getting dark. I don't like that station; put on something with faster music.
put out	extinguish a light or fire	You'll put out your cigarette They don't allow smoking here. Put out the lights when you leave.
take back	return something	My new radio doesn't work properly. I'm going to take it back and make them give me another one.
take off	a. remove	In some countries people take off their shoes when they enter a house. They take them off to avoid getting the rug dirty.
	b. depart	The plane takes off at noon.
take on	accept responsibility for	I'm up to my ears in work now. I can't take on anymore.
take out	a. remove from pocket, wallet, purse etc.	He took out a large, gold watch and looked at it attentively.
	b. remove in a general sense	He took it out of the box and laid it on the table.
take out on	c. transfer anger or impatience to someone not responsible for the unfavorable situation; used with the preposition on	Whenever he is unhappy, he takes it out on his friends I know you lost some money, but why take it out on me?
take over	assume control of	When his father retired, John took over the family business. You've been driving long enough; how about letting me take over for a while?
take up	a. begin to practice a new sport, art, etc.	I need to get some exercise; I think I'll take up jogging.
	b. discuss a problem, business matter, etc.	We took that up at our last meeting.
	c. begin to consider	Today we're going to take up the subject two-word verbs in English.
talk over	discuss	Let's talk over a little more before we make up our minds.
think over	consider carefully	Don't be in a hurry to decide. Think it over and give me your answer tomorrow.
think through	think about until a reasonable conclusion is reached	If you'll think it through, You'll see that I'm right.
throw away	discard	Don't throw those old magazines away; I haven't read them yet.
try on	test the appearance or fit of clothing by putting it on	Try this hat on for size! I tried it on, and it fits OK, but I don't like the color.
try out	test by using	I'm really interested in buying your car, but I want to try it out on the road.
turn down	refuse, reject	He turned down an excellent job in New York because he prefers to live here He applied for the job, but was turned down.

turn in	hand in, submit	Don't forget to turn in your homework before you live.
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turn off	shut off, stop the operation of	Be sure to turn of the heater before you leave the house
turn over	a. move so that top and bottom surfaces exchange places	After the meat becomes brown, turn it over and cook it for ten more minutes.
	b. transfer goods, power, or responsibility	Upon reaching the age of retirement he turned over the business to his son.
wake up	arouse from sleep	You'd better wake Jim up. It's getting late. Wake up him. We're about to land.

### **GROUP II**

**In this group are transitive two-word verbs whose parts are never separated by an object. We call these inseparable transitive two-word verbs. Also included in this group are two-word prepositional verbs. These are transitive two-word verbs with three parts that are never separated.**

call for	go to get, pick, up	The movie starts at seven o'clock. I'll call for you about six
call on	a. pay a visit	I call on him whenever I'm in New York
	b. request someone to speak or recite	The teacher should call on each student t at least once during each class period. And now I'd like to call on our guest speaker to say a few words to us.
catch up with	overtake	This student got so far behind in his work that he was never able to catch up with the rest of the class.
check out of	end stay in hotel, collage, military base etc.	I checked out of the hotel at eleven, but my plane didn't leave until four.
check up on	investigate the background, record etc.	The police are checking up on the recent activities of all four men
chip in	contribute something, usually money	If we all chip in a dollar a piece, we'll be able to buy a nice gift.
come across	find	When I was cleaning out a drawer, I came across some interesting old photographs
come along with	accompany	Why don't you come along with us? There's plenty of room in the car.
come to	total	The hotel bill came to \$ 71, 42.
drop in on	visit informally	Our neighbor from up the street drops in on us from time to time
drop out of	stop attending or participating in; quit	A few students have drop out of school. They'll probably have trouble finding a good job.
get along with	maintain a good relationship with	I understand he's getting along better wsth his mother-in law than he used to
get behind in	delay in meeting some obligation	They had so much sickness in the family that they got behind in playing their bills.
get in/get out (of)	enter or leave a car, taxi, boat, or other small vehicle or conveyance	Get in the front seat; the back full of stuff! He got out the taxi at Times Square
get on/get off	enter or leave a bus, train, ship, plane, or other large vehicle or conveyance	Get on the bus at the next corner I got off the ship at Naples
get on with	continue	Let's get on with our math lesson
get over	recover from illness, surprise, etc	It took me two months to get over that cold I caught at Christmas. I can't get over how much weight he's gained
get through with	finish, complete	I'd like to read that book when you get through with it.
go on with	continue	Go on with your story; I'm enjoying it!
go over	review	Let's go over the last two pages of the lesson again. I don't think you quite understand it yet.
go through	a. endure	That was the worst experience I ever went through
	b. look through, search in	Would you mind going through this box of old clothing to see if there's anything worth keeping?
keep on	continue to	I kept on walking, though I no longer knew where I was going.
keep up with	a. remain equal with	You'll have to keep up with us. If not, you'll get lost She works so fast that I can hardly keep up with her.
	b. remain informed about a developing series of facts	I subscribe to several news magazines. I like to keep up with what's happening in the word.

look after	watch over, guard, take care of	We have a babysitter to look after our children when we want to go out.
look down on	consider as inferior, feel superior to	She looks down on everyone who has less education than she does.
look forward to	anticipate or await an event usually with pleasure	I look forward to meeting you again in the near future. We're looking forward to your party
look in on	pay a brief visit to	I think I'll look in on my sister on my way home
look into	investigate	While you're in California, you may look into the possibility of finding a job there
look out for	be careful about	When you drive in residential areas, you have to look out for children
look up to	respect, admire	He is trusted by his employers and looked up to by all his fellow workers.
put up with	tolerate, endure	You have to put up with a lot of inconveniences there.
run across	find something by chance	When I was cleaning out a drawer, I ran across some old pictures.
run into	meet by chance	We ran into some old friends at the theatre last night.
run out of	exhaust the supply of	While on vacation, we ran out of money and had to return home.
see about	find out what has to be done and then do it	Will you see about getting plane reservations for the students who are leaving on Wednesday? I have to see about shipping my excess baggage by boat.
send for	a. summon a person by means of another person.	I have to go. The boss just sent for me and wants to see me at once.
	b. order by mail	I had to send for those books
stand by	continue to aid and support during periods of difficulty or danger	I know you'll stand by me no matter how bad things get.
take after	resemble a parent, etc., either in appearance or character	John takes after his father, but Mary doesn't look or act like either of her parents.
take out after	pursue, chase	The policeman took out after the speeding car.
take back to	answer discourteously or without respect	The child talked back to his teacher and was sent to the principal's office
think up	create; event or plan by thinking	He's always thinking up the new ways to get rich quickly, but none of them ever seems to succeed.
wait on	serve	In this store you can never find anyone to wait on you

**There are also a few cases in which a form of the verb BE joins with one or more words. These are used very often in speech. The parts are never separated.**

be behind in	be overdue in meeting an obligation	I'm two weeks behind in my rent. He's way behind in his work
be in on	share or participate in	If you're going to form a volleyball team, I'd like to be in on it.
be out	lack, miss, be deprived of	I lost my bet; now I'm out \$ 10
be out of	have exhausted one's supply of	I have to go to the store, We're out of sugar.
be over	be commanded or controlled by	How many men are under his command?
be up for	be a candidate	He's be up for election, but he'll never make it.
be up on	be well informed about	I'm not really up on modern art, but I enjoy looking at it.
be up to	be on good physical or mental condition for	I'm not up to going out again tonight. I'm too tired.

### **GROUP III**

**This is the smallest group of two-word verbs. The verbs in this group are intransitive. Some of them do occur with object; these have been included in Groups I and II.**

check in	register at a base, school, hotel, etc.	You should check in as soon as you reach a new base
check out	officially terminate stay at hotel, collage, military base etc.	If you check out after two o'clock, you have to pay for another day.
cheer up	become more cheerful	Cheer up! Things could be worse

chip in	contribute	We all chipped in and bought a going-away present for the boss's
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		wife.
come to	become conscious after being unconscious	When I came to, I was in a strange room, and a nurse in a white uniform was taking my pulse.
come over / come on over	come to visit informally	If you aren't busy, why don't you come over (come on over) this evening, and we'll play cards or listen to music.
drop in	pay a casual visit	I happened to be driving by your house and just thought I'd drop in for a minute.
drop off	a. fall asleep unexpectedly	I dropped off to sleep right in the middle of a TV show last night. I guess I was tired/
	b. decrease in number or volume	Attendance at the movies dropped off sharply during the recent cold spell. People just didn't want to go out.
get along / get on	progress	How are you getting along (getting on) in your new job?
get back	return to point of departure	I have to go out of town today. If I don't get back by seven, don't hold dinner for me.
get in	arrive	The rain doesn't get in until midnight.
get through	finish	I have a lot of homework; I don't expect to get through before 10 o'clock.
get up	arise, stand	I get up at seven every morning. When the program was over, they get up and left the theater.
give up	stop trying, surrender	Everyone could see that he was beaten, but he refused to give up. I give up! What is the correct answer?
hang up	end phone connection by putting receiver back in cradle.	You dialed the wrong number. Hang up and dial again
lie down	recline	When we're tired, we frequently lie down to rest
look out	be careful; often an imperative alerting someone to a sudden danger	Look out! Your cigarette's burning your coat.
report in	give official and personal notice of arrival	You should report in HQ as soon as you get to the base
sit down	be seated	The visitors entered the room and sat down.
stand by	remain tuned in to a particular radio or TV broadcast while waiting for additional transmission	Stand by for a special weather report. We're having broadcasting difficulties. Please stand by while they are being corrected.
stand up	get on one's feet	They stood up when the General entered the room.
take off	leave, depart	Our plane took off at 10.30, and at 11:10 we were in Dallas He took off for California without telling anyone he was leaving.
take sides	be a partisan; act with, prefer, or aid one group against another.	I don't mean to take sides in the quarrel, but it does seem to me Jack was the cause of the problem. Settle it between the two of you! I refuse to take sides!
turn up	a. come to light, be found unexpectedly	Don't worry about misplacing that letter; it'll turn up the next time you clean house.
	b. appear in an unexpected place	We thought he was in Europe, but turned up here in San Francisco two nights ago.
wait over	halt one's journey because of some difficulty or delay in transportation	We missed plane connections in Dallas and had to wait over several hours.
wake up	stop sleeping	He wakes up every morning at six o'clock