

# **500 MOST POPULAR PHRASAL VERBS**

**MEANINGS AND EXAMPLES**

*FREE PREVIEW*

**LEARZING**

# A

## ACCOUNT FOR

**Meaning 1:** To explain.

*Example 1:* He was unable to account for the error.

**Meaning 2:** To be the cause of something.

*Example 2:* These new features account for the smartphone's higher price.

**Meaning 3:** To make up or form a part of something.

*Example 3:* Women account for only 25 percent of our employees.

## ACT AS

**Meaning:** To do the job of a particular kind of person or thing.

*Example:* You speak German - will you act as interpreter?

*Example:* He acts as head of department when his boss is away.

## ACT FOR

**Meaning:** To represent someone.

*Example:* If you don't have a lawyer, the state will appoint one to act for you.

*Example:* In a democracy, the people elect representatives to act for them in parliament.

# ACT ON

**Meaning:** To do something because you have been given information, advice, or orders.

*Example:* I should act on my doctor's advice and try to eat less.

*Example:* Police say they acted on information received.

# ACT OUT

**Meaning 1:** To express your thoughts or emotions through your words or actions.

*Example 1:* Children's negative feelings often act out in bad behavior.

**Meaning 2:** To represent in action, especially on stage.

*Example 2:* The actors were acting out the story of the birth of Jesus.

# ACT UP

**Meaning 1:** To behave badly. (About children)

*Example:* The kids have been acting up again.

*Example:* I could hear Jonathan acting up downstairs.

**Meaning 2:** To function improperly. (About a machine or part of the body)

*Example:* My car always acts up in cold weather.

*Example:* I hope my back doesn't start acting up again.

*Example:* My computer's acting up - I think I might have a virus.

## **ADD UP**

**Meaning 1:** To add two or more numbers in order to find the total amount.

*Example:* Could you add up these amounts and let me know the total?

*Example:* Jane has a good head for figures. She can add up really quickly, and she always gets the answer right.

**Meaning 2:** To increase gradually until there is a large amount.

*Example:* The changes in air quality are small, but after a while they add up and affect people's health.

*Example:* When you're feeding a family of six the bills soon add up.

**Meaning 3:** To seem reasonable or consistent.

*Example:* Well, I could be wrong, but it all seems to add up.

*Example:* Jack claimed he was at home at the time of the murder, but police said his story didn't add up.

## **ADVISE OF**

**Meaning:** To inform someone of something.

*Example:* A policemen advised me of my rights and then he arrested me.

*Example:* Please advise us of any change of address or contact details.

## **ALLOW FOR**

**Meaning:** To consider something when you are planning something.

*Example:* You should allow for delays when planning a journey.

*Example:* All these factors must be allowed for.

## **ANSWER BACK**

**Meaning:** To reply rudely to someone in authority.

*Example:* Her mother was shocked when she started answering her back.

*Example:* Don't answer me back, young man!

## **ANSWER FOR**

**Meaning:** To be responsible for something bad.

*Example:* The prime minister will have to answer for all the bad decisions he has made.

*Example:* I expect parents to answer for their children's behaviour.

## **ARRIVE AT**

**Meaning:** To reach an agreement about something.

*Example:* We argued about it for hours and eventually arrived at a decision.

*Example:* They spent time arriving at a solution on the correct software.

## **ASK AFTER**

**Meaning:** To ask for news about someone.

*Example:* I met Clara and she asked after you.

*Example:* Amy asked after Kathleen's health.

## **ASK FOR**

**Meaning 1:** To try to obtain by requesting.

*Example:* If you don't know where to go, ask for directions.

*Example:* There's someone at the door asking for dad.

**Meaning 2:** To provoke a negative reaction.

*Example:* The boy is asking for trouble playing with a dog like that - he might be bitten by it.

*Example:* Anyone who drives while they're drunk is just asking for it.

## **ASK OUT**

**Meaning:** To invite someone for a date.

*Example:* Finally, he asked her out.

*Example:* She's asked Steve out to the cinema this evening.

## **ASK OVER**

**Meaning:** To invite people to your house.

*Example:* We have asked some friends over for barbecue on Saturday.

*Example:* Bob has asked us over for drinks.

## **ASSOCIATE WITH**

**Meaning:** To spend time with someone.

*Example:* If Terry associates with those criminals, he'll be sent back to jail again.

*Example:* I don't want my children associating with drug addicts and alcoholics.

## **ATTEND TO**

**Meaning 1:** To deal with something or someone.

*Example:* Nurses tried to attend to the worst injured soldiers first.

*Example:* We have some urgent business to attend to.

**Meaning 2:** To serve a customer in a shop, restaurant, etc.

*Example:* (British English) Are you being attended to, sir?

## **AUCTION OFF**

**Meaning:** To sell something in an auction.

*Example:* In order to pay his debts, my friend had to auction off his collection of paintings.

*Example:* Some of the land was auctioned off last year.

# B

## BAIL OUT

**Meaning 1:** To help out someone or something that's in serious trouble, especially financial trouble.

*Example:* Just when we thought we might have to close the business, my uncle bailed us out with a loan.

*Example:* Some local businesses have offered to bail out the museum.

**Meaning 2:** (American English) To escape from a plane, using a parachute, esp. because the aircraft is about to have an accident.

*Example:* The pilot barely had time to bail out.

*Example:* The pilot bailed out and parachuted into the sea.

**Meaning 3:** To pay for someone's release from jail.

*Example:* His father got a lawyer and bailed him out.

*Example:* How much will it cost to bail her out?

## BANK ON

**Meaning:** To rely on somebody or something.

*Example:* I've really been banking on a holiday bonus this year.

*Example:* They're banking on Robert to finish the job on time.



## **BASE ON**

**Meaning 1:** To use particular ideas or facts to make a decision or develop something.

*Example:* Doctors usually base the decisions they make on test results and a patient's symptoms.

*Example:* Prices are based on two people sharing a room.

**Meaning 2:** To use something as source material.

*Example:* He bases his designs on Roman mosaics.

*Example:* The film is based on a true story.

## **BEAR ON**

**Meaning:** To be connected or related to something.

*Example:* Do you have any information bearing on his disappearance?

*Example:* These are matters that bear on the welfare of the community.

## **BEAR OUT**

**Meaning:** To support the truth of something.

*Example:* Scientific evidence bears out the claim that vitamin C helps the body's immune system.

*Example:* The facts don't bear out your fears.

## **BEAT UP**

**Meaning 1:** To attack violently.

*Example:* He threatened to beat me up if I didn't give him my wallet.

*Example:* Her boyfriend got drunk and beat her up.

**Meaning 2:** To blame or criticize yourself or someone else.

*Example:* It's time you stopped beating yourself up over this.

*Example:* If you do your best and you lose, you can't beat yourself up about it.

## **BEEF UP**

**Meaning:** To make or become greater or stronger.

*Example:* The government decided to beef up police force to after a big protest.

*Example:* The company has plans to beef up its production.

## **BEND DOWN**

**Meaning:** To lower the top half of your body.

*Example:* She bent down to pluck rice.

*Example:* Bend down as you go into the cave, or you'll bang your head.