

The Meaning of Prepositions and Adverbs in Phrasal Verbs

In some cases, the lexical meaning of a [phrasal verb](#) can be understood if the influence of the used [preposition](#) or [adverb](#) upon the meaning of the verb in other phrasal verbs is known.

About

In particle phrasal verbs⁽¹⁾, along with ["round"](#), ["around"](#) ↓:

- *around; everywhere:*
 - *I looked about the room, and noticed it was lightsome enough.*
- *close, not far:*
 - *She is somewhere about.*

(A)round

In particle phrasal verbs, along with ["about"](#) ↑ (see also [difference between "around" и "round"](#)):

- *around; everywhere:*
 - *I looked round the garden and just instantly fell in love with it.*
- *close, not far:*
 - *she is somewhere round.*
- indicates aimlessness of action, idleness or wasted time doing something:
 - *He just sits around all day doing nothing.*

Back

In particle phrasal verbs:

- *return; towards the starting position :*
 - *I will be back soon.*
 - *I think back to what you said.*
 - *Your hair will grow back.*
- *retention; restriction of forward movement; limitation of development:*
 - *The failure held the work back.*
- *outside the base of the event; aside:*
 - *Don't stay back from meeting this time, we will wait for you.*

Down

In prepositional phrasal verbs⁽²⁾:

- along with the preposition "*up*" ↓ (see [Down vs. Up](#)): *along something; deep into something*:
 - *to walk down the street*
 - *to travel down the country*

On

In particle phrasal verbs:

- *wearing, dressing (of clothes, jewelry)*:
 - *She had on a sweater.*
 - *He threw on a hat and ran away.*
 - *Try it on.*

Up

In particle phrasal verbs:

- *upward*:
 - *to look up at the stars*
 - *to get up (rise, lift, hoist)*
- *increase, rise*:
 - *Our sales went up.*
 - *to turn up the heat (add heat)*
- *completeness*:
 - *The time is up.*
 - *Drink up your coffee. (Finish your coffee.)*
 - *Why did you use up all the money?*
- *bringing to the proper form (to settle, repair, wrap, tie, etc.)* :
 - *I need to dress up to impress my coworkers.*
 - *I will fix you up. (I will put you in order.)*
 - *Do up your coat. (Zip your coat.)*
 - *You must wrap up your books.*
- *approaching*:
 - *Move up to me.*

In prepositional phrasal verbs:

- *climbing something; towards the source, center, etc:*
 - *to go up the hill*
 - *to get up the tree*
- along with the preposition "[down](#)" ↑ (see "[Up vs. Down](#)"): *along something; deep into something, somewhere:*
 - *to walk up the street*
 - *to move up the forest*

Up and Down

In prepositional phrasal verbs:

- *back and forth, along something:*
 - *to walk up and down the street*

See also

- [Dictionary of English Phrasal Verbs](#)

Notes

^{1), 2)} About the difference between a prepositional and a particle phrasal verb, see "[Phrasal Verbs](#)".

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