

PHRASAL VERBS WITH 'BREAK'

a list and explanations

IN THE VIDEO

BREAK AWAY FROM

inseparable + transitive

DISTANCE ONESELF FROM SOMETHING

To 'break away from something' means to distance oneself from something that is perhaps negative.

I broke away from the group when they began smoking.

BREAK DOWN

inseparable + intransitive

STOP WORKING — TRANSPORT, MACHINES

CRY SUDDENLY

When referring to big machines or transport, to 'break down' means to stop working. When you talk about most household items, you say 'it's not working'. However, for bigger industrial machines you would use 'break down'. If your car stops working, you might use the phrase "I've broken down" even though you yourself are fine!

*Oh no! We've broken down! We need to walk down to the garage to get some petrol.
The oven in Unit 6 has broken down. Can you send an engineer over, please?*

It can also be used to describe when someone starts to cry suddenly. In this instance, it may be accompanied by 'in tears'.

When I told her the news, she broke down in tears.

BREAK IN

inseparable + intransitive (transitive as 'break in to...')

ENTER SOMEWHERE WITHOUT PERMISSION OR KEYS

separable (optional) + transitive

USE NEW PRODUCTS TO MAKE THEM COMFORTABLE

To 'break in' means to enter somewhere either without permission or without keys, or both! For example, a burglar would 'break in' to a house. However, if you live there and have forgotten your keys and need to break a window or door to enter, you could also describe that with 'break in'.

Greg had to break in to his own home last week because he forgot his keys.

It can also be used to describe the process of making new products comfortable. This is normally used with shoes.

Look at these heels! I'm wearing them around the house to break them in.

BREAK INTO

inseparable + transitive

START DOING SOMETHING SUDDENLY

SPEND SAVINGS

To 'break into' is used to describe many different things when they start suddenly. For example: you might 'break into song', 'break into a run', 'break into a sweat', 'break into tears' ('Burst into tears' and 'break down in tears' are more common).

Terry suddenly broke into a run and ran across the field.

Sandra broke into tears when she saw the fire.

The audience will break into song when they hear me singing!

It can also mean that you have to start spending savings, normally out of urgency.

We had to break into our savings this much because the bills were so high.

BREAK OUT

inseparable + intransitive

START - WAR

To 'break out' means for something to start suddenly. It normally refers to war or other conflicts.

War has broken out again.

BREAK OUT IN

inseparable + transitive

SKIN PROBLEMS OR SWEAT HAPPENING A LOT OR SUDDENLY

To 'break out in something' is normally used with 'a sweat', 'a rash', or 'spots'. It is used to describe a sudden or dramatic occurrence of these things.

Too much chocolate makes my face break out in spots.

Phew! I'm breaking out in a sweat.

BREAK OFF

separable (optional) + transitive

BREAK A PIECE FROM SOMETHING**END A RELATIONSHIP**

To 'break something off' means to snap a piece from something – perhaps a chunk from a chocolate bar, or a tag from new clothes..

Penny broke the tags off her new dress because she couldn't find any scissors.

It can also be used to describe ending a relationship in a similar way to 'break up'.

Jack broke it [his relationship] off with Marie.

BREAK THROUGH

inseparable + transitive

PASS A BARRIER SUCCESSFULLY

To 'break through something' means to have a barrier, physical or metaphorical and to succeed through it rather than be stopped by it.

*The crowds broke through the barriers to see the boy band.
It's time to break through this negative patch in her life and move on.*

BREAK UP

inseparable + intransitive (transitive as 'break up with...')

END A RELATIONSHIP

To 'break up' means to end a relationship. Who does the breaking up is important here! If you decide to end the relationship, you break up with someone. If they decide to end it, they break up with you. There is a third option – deciding mutually to end the relationship. This would become 'we broke up', implying that the decision was mutual.

*I think we should break up
Steve broke up with Rachel last week.
Tilly and Dave are over! Do you know who broke up with who?*

OTHER PHRASAL VERBS IN THE VIDEO**GIVE IN**

inseparable + intransitive

STOP TRYING

separable (optional) + intransitive
SUBMIT A FORM, HOMEWORK ETC

To 'give in' means to stop trying to do something. You can say this on its own, for example: "I give in!" or give more detail, for example: "This test is so hard. I'm thinking of giving in."

I can't do this anymore. I give in.

It can also be used as a way to say you are submitting something such as homework or an application. This is used more when you physically hand the homework etc to someone.

I gave my homework in yesterday.

HANG UP
 inseparable + intransitive
END A PHONE CALL

To 'hang up' means to end a phone call. It's enough to say it as it is, but you could add more information such as 'hang up on someone' or 'hang up the phone'.

Kelly hung up on me!
Hello? Hello? They've hung up the phone!
I was fed up of listening to him lie so I hung up.

MOVE ON
 inseparable + intransitive
END SOMETHING AND BEGIN SOMETHING NEW

To 'move on' means to end something and begin something new. This could be small, such as a subject of conversation, or big, such as forgetting a past relationship and beginning to look for a new one.

I don't want to talk about this. Can we move on please?
She's ready to move on with her life now Darren has broken up with her.