

Basic actions

fall down

If someone or something falls down when they have been in an upright position, they drop to the ground.

He tripped and fell down.

get off

If you get off something that you are on, you move your body from it, usually onto the ground.

He got off his bicycle.

get out

If you get out, you leave a place or a vehicle.

We got out of the car.

get up

- 1 When someone or something gets up or gets up something, they move from a lower position or level to a higher one.

By the time we'd got up to the top of the hill, we were exhausted.

I knew he would have difficulty getting up those steps.

- 2 If you get up, you rise to a standing position after you have been sitting or lying down.

He got up off the floor.

- 3 When you get up, or when someone gets you up, you get out of bed.

She decided it was time to get up.

We had to get the children up and dressed.

go back

If you go back, you return to a place where you were before.

I have to go back to the US next week.

It started to rain so I went back for my umbrella.

go in

When you go in, you enter a building.

Let's go in and have some coffee.

I pushed open the door of the office and went in.

NOTE The opposite of go in is go out.

go into

When you go into a room, building, or area, you enter it.

She went into the bedroom and shut the door.

go off

If you go off somewhere, you leave the place where you were, usually in order to do something.

He's gone off to work.

keep down

If you keep down or if you keep your head down, you stay in a lying or low position in order to avoid being seen or attacked.

The soldier signalled to him to keep down.

lay down

If you lay something down, you put it down on a surface.

He laid the baby gently down on the changing table.

move up

If someone or something moves up or moves up a place, they go from a lower position to a higher one.

The sun had moved up in the sky.

We moved up the hill a few metres.

NOTE The opposite of move up is move down.

run in

If someone runs in from outside a room or building, they enter it, moving fast.

I'll run in and get them.

run into

To run into a place means to enter it running.

They had run into the nearest apartment and asked for help.

run on

If you run on, you continue to run in the same direction.

I ran on ahead.

run out

- 1 If you run out of a room or building, you leave it, running.

He ran out of the room and down the stairs.

- 2 If a substance runs out from somewhere, it flows from there.

Water was running out from under the front door of the house.

sit down

If you sit down or sit yourself down, you lower your body until you are sitting on something.

We were both looking for a place to sit down.

She sat herself down beside me.

NOTE The opposite of sit down is stand up.

stand up

If you stand up, you change your position so that you are standing rather than sitting or lying.

The pupils stand up when the teacher comes into the room.

NOTE You can also use get up.

turn back

If you turn back or are turned back, you stop a journey and return towards the place you started from.

It was getting dark, so we turned back.

We were turned back by heavy snow.

Actions with an object

let in

If you let someone in, you allow them to come into a place, usually by opening the door for them.

We rang the doorbell and someone came and let us in.

light up

To light something up means to shine light on or in it, so that it is bright and easy to see.

The match lit up her face.

look for

If you look for something or someone, you try to find them.

Someone came to the office looking for you.

pick up

If you pick something or someone up, you lift them up from a surface.

The baby was crying so I picked her up.

NOTE You can also use lift up.

put back

If you put something back somewhere, you put it in the place it was in before it was moved.

Shall I put it back in the box for you?

put down

If you put down someone or something that you are holding or carrying, you put them on the floor or on a table, bed, etc.

He put the basket down and looked inside it.

She put down her case and kissed him.

NOTE You can also use set down.

NOTE The opposite of put down is pick up.

put in

If you put something in or put one thing in another, you put one thing inside another thing.

I need to put a new battery in.

He stood at the slot machine and put in a coin.

put together

If you put together an object or its parts, you join its parts to each other so that it can be used.

It's very interesting to see how they put together these huge structures.

I have all the parts here – I just need to put them together.

NOTE The opposite of put together is take apart.

put up

If you put something up, you move it to a higher position.

He put up the collar of his jacket.

Anna put her feet up on the desk.

take away

If you take something away from a place or position, you remove it from a place and put it somewhere else.

She took her hands away from her eyes and looked.

A waiter came to take away the plates.

NOTE The opposite of take away is put back.

take back

When you take something back, you take it to the place where you were before or where it was before.

I filled a plastic bottle with water and took it back to the car.

take into

If you take someone or something into a place, you go with them there.

I'll take you into town if you like.

throw at

If you throw an object at someone or something, you try to hit them with the object by throwing it.

He threw a dart at the board.

throw away

If you throw something away, you get rid of it because you no longer want or need it.

I can make soup with the leftover chicken, so don't throw it away.

throw in

If you throw something in or throw it in something, you casually put or drop it into something such as a container or mixture.

Add a teaspoonful of salt, and throw in the rice.

'Have you got room for my bag in your car?' – 'Sure, throw it in.'

I threw it in a drawer and forgot about it.

throw out

- ① If you throw out something, you throw it so that it moves quickly away from you.

The fishermen threw the net out and could not pull it back in.

She threw out handfuls of corn for the chickens.

- ② If you throw out something you no longer want, you get rid of it.

They threw out their rubbish.

NOTE You can also use throw away.

turn off

If you turn off a device or machine, you make it stop working using its controls. If it turns off, it stops working.

George came in and turned off the radio.

The heating turns off automatically at night.

NOTE You can also use switch off.

NOTE The opposite of turn off is turn on.

turn on

If you turn a device or machine on, you make it start working using its controls. If it turns on, it starts working.

Shall I turn the lights on?

The tap won't turn on.

NOTE You can also use switch on.

Movement and change

bring up

If you **bring up** a child, you look after it until it is grown up and you try to give it particular beliefs.

His parents brought him up to believe it was possible to achieve anything.

come along

- 1 When someone **comes along** or **comes along** a road or other area of ground, they move along somewhere towards you.

They're coming along behind us, I think.

- 2 When something or someone **comes along**, they start to happen or exist.

This was the greatest advance until X-rays came along in the 1890s.

- 3 If something or someone is **coming along**, they are making progress or developing in the way you want.

The arrangements are coming along nicely.

NOTE You can also use **come on**.

come back

When someone or something **comes back**, they return to the place where they were before.

I've just come back from the hairdresser's.

come down

When someone or something **comes down** or **comes down** something, they move from a higher position to a lower one.

We met them as they were coming down the hill.

come in

When someone **comes in**, they enter the room or building where you are.

She came in and sat on the edge of the bed.

come off

If someone or something **comes off** or **comes off** an area, place, or vehicle, they leave it.

Their goalkeeper had to come off with an injury.

She saw him come off the plane.

come out

When someone **comes out** of their house or room, or a place where they were hidden, they leave it or appear from it.

I saw them go into the building and come out five minutes later.

come through

When someone **comes through**, they move out of one room and enter another.

The doctor can see you now if you would like to come through.

come up

When someone or something **comes up** or **comes up** something, they move from a lower position to a higher one, or move towards the place where you are.

I could hear him coming up the stairs.

get back

- ① If you **get back**, you return somewhere after being in another place.

What time do you usually get back from work?

- ② If you **get something back**, you get it again after losing it or giving it to someone else.

I'm going to return it to the shop and get my money back.

go over

When you **go over**, you move towards someone or something and reach them.

I went over to congratulate the parents.

grow up

- ① When a child **grows up**, they gradually change into being an adult.

I grew up in New York.

- ② If you tell an adult to **grow up**, you are telling them in an angry way to stop behaving in a silly or childish way.

[INFORMAL]

You're upset because she's giving the baby more attention than you? Grow up, Gene!

leave behind

If you **leave** someone or something **behind**, you do not take them with you when you go somewhere.

The box wouldn't fit in the car, so we had to leave it behind.

make for

If you **make for** a place, you move towards it in a quick or determined way.

The best thing would be to make for high ground.

[NOTE] You can also use head for.

move in

When you **move in**, you begin to live in a house or place.

I've got the keys and I'm moving in on Saturday.

[NOTE] The opposite of move in is move out.

return to

When you **return to** a place, you go back there after you have been away.

I returned to my hotel.

run down

To **run down** somewhere means to run to a lower level or away from a place.

She ran down the steps.

start out

- ① If you **start out**, you begin to move and go somewhere.

They started out early the next morning.

[NOTE] You can also use set off, set out, and start off.

- ② To **start out** means to begin something in a particular way or by doing a particular thing.

He started out in his early twenties with a small shop.

[NOTE] You can also use start off.

[NOTE] The opposite of start out is end up.

Communication

ask for

- ① If you ask for something, you say that you would like to have it.
She asked for a drink of water.
- ② If you ask for someone when you are making a phone call, you say that you would like to speak to them.
He rang the office and asked for Cynthia.

call back

- ① If you call back, you go to see someone briefly for a second time.
I'll call back tomorrow and collect the shoes.
 - ② If you call back, you telephone someone for a second time.
I'll call back when you're not so busy.
 - ③ If you call someone back, you telephone them again in return for a telephone call they have made to you.
Can I call you back later?
- [NOTE]** You can also use ring back. This is mainly British.

call up

If you call up or call someone up, you telephone someone.

Paul often calls me up just for a chat.

She called up an old boyfriend to invite him out for dinner.

The radio station had an open line on which listeners could call up to discuss various issues.

[NOTE] You can also use phone up and ring up.

come back to

If you come back to a particular subject, you mention or start to discuss it again.

We always come back to the same point.

get back to

- ① If you get back to what you were doing or talking about before, you start doing it or talking about it again.
I couldn't get back to sleep.
- [NOTE]** You can also use go back to.
- ② If you get back to someone, you contact them again after a short period of time.
Leave a message and I'll get back to you.

hang on

If you hang on, you wait for a short time. [INFORMAL]

Hang on a minute, I'm not ready.

[NOTE] You can also use hold on.

hear from

If you hear from someone or hear something from them, you receive a phone call, email, or other message from them.

I don't hear from my sister very often.

Have you heard anything from Oliver since he went to university?

hold back

If you hold back, or if something holds you back, you do not do or say something that you want to do or say.

She always says exactly what she thinks, without holding back.

She wanted to ask his name, but something held her back.

hold on

- 1 If you hold on, you wait or stop what you are doing for a short time.

Hold on! I can't hear you if you all talk at once!

NOTE You can also use hang on.

- 2 If you ask someone you are speaking to on the phone to hold on, you want them to wait for a short time.

Hold on a moment, please, I'll put you through.

make out

- 1 If you make something out, you manage to see or hear it.

He could just make out the number plate of the car.

She was mumbling something but I couldn't make it out.

NOTE You can also use pick out.

- 2 If you make something out, you manage to understand it.

I can't make out if Lily likes him or not.

The essay was full of complex ideas and we struggled to make them out.

NOTE You can also use work out.

- 3 If you make out that something is true, you try to make people believe it.

He tried to make out he'd forgotten, but I knew he hadn't.

put to

If you put something to someone, you say it to them in order to find out how they react to it.

These are the sort of questions that I'll be putting to the politicians.

talk to

If you talk to someone, you have a conversation with them.

I just wanted to talk to you.

NOTE You can also use talk with.

talk with

If you talk with someone, you have a conversation with them. [mainly AMERICAN]

I'd like to talk with you about your husband.

turn down

If you turn something or someone down, you refuse a request or offer.

She applied for a job in a restaurant, but was turned down.

He asked me to help and I couldn't really turn him down.

Giving information

base on

If you **base** one thing on another thing, or if it is **based on** another thing, it takes its general form, subject or ideas from that other thing.

I based my novel on my experiences as a nurse.

Many educational systems are based on this model.

NOTE You can also use **base upon**. This form is more formal.

begin with

- ① If you **begin with** something, you deal with it or do it first.

We should perhaps begin with the issue of staffing.

- ② If something that is printed or written **begins with** a particular letter, word, or sentence, this letter, word, or sentence is its first part.

Think of all the names beginning with D.

bring up

If you **bring up** a particular subject, you start talking about it.

I advised her to bring the matter up at the next meeting.

I am sorry to bring up the subject of politics yet again.

come up with

If you **come up with** a plan, idea, or solution, you think of it and suggest it.

It didn't take her long to come up with a very convincing example.

cut out

If you **cut out** part of something that someone has written, you remove it from the text and do not print or broadcast it.

He cut out all references to the prince being ugly.

Her publishers had cut several stories out of her memoirs.

deal with

If something such as a book, film or discussion **deals with** a particular topic or idea, it discusses, explains or expresses it.

These questions will be dealt with in Chapter 7.

fill in

- ① If you **fill in** a document or the information on a document, you write all the information that is needed on it. [BRITISH]

We will fill the invoices in with all the necessary information.

Fill in your name and address here.

NOTE You can also use **fill out**.

- ② If you **fill** someone **in**, you give them information about something.

I'll fill you in on the details now.

leave out

If you **leave out** someone or something out, you do not include them in something.

One or two scenes in the play were left out of the film.

I invited the whole class because I didn't want to leave anyone out.

move on to

If you **move on to** a topic, you start talking about it after talking about something else.

By the time I returned, the conversation had moved on to other matters.

NOTE You can also use **move onto**, **turn to** and **come on to**.

put forward

If you **put forward** an idea or plan, you state it or publish it so that people can consider it and discuss it.

The theory was first put forward by scientists in the US.

She planned to put her suggestions forward at the next meeting.

NOTE You can also use **set out**.

refer to

If you **refer to** a particular subject or person, you talk about them or mention them.

In his letters to Vita he rarely referred to political events.

start off

To **start something off** means to cause it to begin.

It was Terry who started off the argument.

I asked a simple question to start the interview off.

sum up

- ① If you **sum something up**, you briefly describe its most important aspects.

I can't sum up his whole philosophy in one sentence.

To sum all this up: what we need is a reform of the system.

- ② If someone **sums up**, they briefly repeat the main points of a speech or debate as a conclusion.

At the end of the discussion, he summed up, and added a few points.

write in

- ① If you **write in**, you send a letter to an organization.

We are offering a half-price holiday to the first person to write in with the correct explanation.

- ② If you **write in** a piece of information on a form or document, you add the information by writing it in the correct place.

Don't forget to write in your name and address on the form.

He arranged the meeting for Tuesday and wrote it in on the calendar in red pen.

Planning and organizing

aim at

- 1 If you **aim at** something, or if something that you do is **aimed at** having a particular effect, you hope to achieve it.

They are aiming at a higher production level.

The research is aimed at developing treatments for the disease.

- 2 If an action or activity is **aimed at** someone, it is intended to influence them or be of interest or help to them.

Many of the devices are aimed at people with hearing problems.

NOTE You can also use **be directed at**.

count on

If you **count on** something, you expect it to happen and include it in your plans.

These workers can now count on a regular salary.

NOTE You can also use **count upon** and **rely on**.

end up

If you **end up** in a particular place or situation, you are in that place or situation after a series of events, even though you did not originally intend to be.

If we go on in this way, we'll end up with millions of people unemployed.

NOTE You can also use **wind up** and **finish up**.

fit in

If you manage to **fit in** a person or task, you manage to find time to deal with them.

I'm on holiday next week, but I can fit you in on the 9th.

NOTE You can also use **squeeze in**.

follow up

- 1 If you **follow something up**, you try to find out more about it and perhaps do something about it.

When I heard the rumours, I tried to follow them up.

- 2 If you **follow up** one action or thing with another, you do or have the second action or thing soon after the first.

They must attend the course, and this is followed up by personal visits.

The President followed up the first round of voting by challenging his opponent to a public debate.

go about

If you **go about** a task or problem in a particular way, that is the way you start to deal with it.

I'd been wondering how to go about it.

line up

If you **line** something or someone **up** in preparation for an event or activity, you arrange for them to be ready and available.

We've lined someone up to present the show.

I had plenty of questions lined up for him.

plan for

If you **plan** for a particular thing or event, you consider it when you are making your arrangements.

Why didn't I plan for this possibility?

pull off

If you **pull** something **off**, you succeed in doing something difficult.

They pulled off a deal with an Australian firm.

She had succeeded, triumphantly: she had pulled it off.

rule out

If you **rule** out something or someone, you decide that they are impossible or unsuitable or that they are not responsible for something.

The government has not ruled out military action.

You have to be under thirty, so that rules me out.

run into

If you **run** into problems or difficulties, you unexpectedly begin to experience them.

He ran into trouble with his economic policies.

set out

- ① If you **set** out to do something, you intend and begin to do it.

They had failed in what they had set out to do.

- ② If you **set** something out, you explain facts or ideas clearly in writing or in speech.

His conclusions were set out in his article.

start on

If you **start** on something, you begin doing it or doing something with it.

You clean the kitchen while I start on the bathroom.

turn out

If something **turns** out a particular way, it happens in that way.

It turned out to be a really great evening.

NOTE You can also use **work out**.

wind up

- ① When you **wind** up an activity or event, or when an activity or event **winds** up, it ends.

When my turn came to wind up the debate, I felt very nervous.

Perhaps we should wind it up there.

- ② If you **wind** up in a particular place or situation, you are in it as the end result of a series of events or processes.

After a great night out we wound up at a Chinese restaurant.

This plan might wind up costing us more money.

NOTE You can also use **finish up** and **end up**.

Discussions

agree with

If you **agree with** an action or suggestion, you approve of it.

*You didn't ask anybody whether they **agreed with** what you were doing.*

back down

If you **back down**, you start to accept someone else's opinion or demand, even though you do not want to.

*Eventually he **backed down** on the question of pay.*

NOTE You can also use **give in**.

back up

If you **back up** a statement, you give evidence to prove that it is true or reasonable.

*You need some statistics to **back up** your claim.*

*Supporters of this theory offer no evidence to **back it up**.*

bring into

- 1 If you **bring** someone into an event or group, you ask them to take part in it or be part of it.

*Greece has got to be **brought into** the talks.*

- 2 If you **bring** a subject into a discussion or situation, you introduce it or start talking about it.

*They always **bring** money into it.*

come down to

If a problem, question, or situation **comes down to** a particular thing, that is the most important thing about it.

*It all **comes down to** what sort of education you received.*

give in

- 1 If you **give in**, you finally agree to do what someone wants you to do even though you do not want to do it.

*He can say what he likes – I won't **give in**.*

- 2 If you **give in**, you finally accept that someone else has defeated you and you stop competing.

*All right, I **give in** – what's the answer?*

go back on

If you **go back on** a promise, agreement, or statement, you do not do what you promised or agreed, or you say something which is the opposite of what you said earlier.

*It wouldn't be fair to **go back on** all those promises.*

go back to

If you **go back to** a point in a discussion or conversation, you start talking about it again.

***Going back to** what you said earlier, we simply don't have the budget for this.*

go into

If you go into a particular subject, you describe it fully or in detail.

He went into the matter in some detail.

insist on

If you insist on something, you ask for it firmly and refuse to accept anything else.

He insisted on paying for the meal.

NOTE You can also use insist upon.

listen to

- ① When you listen to someone or something, you give your attention to a sound or to what someone says.

You need to sit quietly and listen to the teacher.

- ② If you listen to someone or to what someone says, you pay attention to them and let them influence you.

He never listened to his mother.

point out

- ① If you point out an object or person, you tell someone that they are there or use your hand to show them.

Dino had pointed her out at the party.

They walked up the street, and she pointed out the café.

- ② If you point something out, you give people an important piece of information that they did not know.

Critics were quick to point out the weaknesses in these arguments.

I pointed this fact out to him in the meeting.

stand by

If you stand by something, you continue to believe that it is correct or true.

I said I could do it and I stand by that.

NOTE You can also use abide by and adhere to. These are more formal.

NOTE The opposite of stand by is go back on.

talk into

If you talk someone into doing something, you persuade them to do it.

She talked me into taking a week's holiday.

NOTE The opposite of talk into is talk out of.

talk out of

If you talk someone out of doing something, you persuade them not to do it.

He tried to talk me out of buying such a big car.

win over

If you win someone over, you persuade them to support or agree with you or you make them like you.
[mainly BRITISH]

I was completely won over by the courtesy and decency of the people.

His directness and obvious honesty were winning people over.

Advice or warnings

come on

- ① You say **come on** to someone when you want to encourage them.

Come on, you're doing fine. Lean on me and I'll get you home.

- ② You say **come on** to someone when you want them to come somewhere more quickly.

Come on, Sophie, we're going to be late.

NOTE You can also use **come along**.

give up

If you **give up** or **give up** something, you stop doing an activity that you often used to do.

Philip has given up smoking.

I used to jog but I gave it up because it was hurting my knees.

I used to smoke, but I gave up a couple of years ago.

keep from

- ① **keep someone from** doing something, or **keep something from** happening means to stop them doing it or stop something from happening.

Dad tried to keep me from going.

We tied up the bags to keep the rubbish from falling out.

- ② If you **keep from** doing something, you manage to stop yourself doing it, but it is difficult.

Did you manage to keep from telling the secret?

keep out

- ① To **keep someone or something out** means to stop them from entering a place or being there.

There is a guard dog to keep out intruders.

The net keeps mosquitoes and other insects out.

- ② If a sign says **Keep Out**, it is warning you not to go onto that piece of land.

'Private property. Keep out.'

look down

If you **look down**, you lower your eyes to see what is below.

He paused on the narrow ledge and looked down.

look out

You say **look out** to warn someone about something that you have noticed, especially danger.

'Look out,' I said. 'There's someone coming.'

NOTE You can also use **watch out**.

mess up

If you **mess something up**, you spoil it or do it badly.

One mistake will mess up the whole project.

You've messed the printing up – it's printed on the same side twice.

pull over

- 1 When a vehicle or driver **pulls over**, they move closer to the side of the road, and stop.
Drivers need safe places to pull over when feeling tired.
- 2 If the police **pull a car or driver over**, they signal to the driver to drive the car to the side of the road and stop.
We saw a police car pulling over a lorry.
A police car pulled them over.

run to

If you **run to** someone, you go to them for help, advice or protection.
We must learn to trust our own intuition and judgment, and not always run to the experts.

settle down

If people **settle down** or if you **settle them down**, they become calm or quiet.
Settle down, children. You're making too much noise.
It took the teacher several minutes to settle the class down.

NOTE You can also use calm down.

step up

If you **step up** something, you increase its speed, amount, or intensity.
You're going too slowly. Step up the pace a little.
The candidate is stepping his campaign up as the election approaches.

stick to

- 1 If you **stick to** something, you continue to do what you have decided or what is expected.
The diet won't work unless you stick to it.
NOTE You can also use keep to.
- 2 If you **stick to** something or someone, you stay close to them.
It's best to stick to well-lit roads.
- 3 If you **stick to** a subject, you talk only about it, and not about anything else.
Don't give your opinions, just stick to the facts.
NOTE You can also use keep to.

stick with

- 1 If you **stick with** something, you continue to use it or do it, rather than changing.
Should they stick with the business or try to start something else?
NOTE You can also use stick at and stick to.
- 2 If you **stick with** someone, you stay close to them.
Stick with me and you'll be okay, don't you worry.

try for

If you **try for** something, you make an effort to get it or achieve it.
The school advised me to try for Oxford University.

turn to

If you **turn to** someone, you ask them for help or advice.
I have no other friend to turn to.

watch out

If you tell someone to **watch out**, you are warning them to be careful because something unpleasant might happen to them.
If you don't watch out, he might cause trouble for you.
NOTE You can also use look out.

Thinking and knowing

bring back

If something **brings back** an event or memory from your past, it makes you think about it.

The death of a friend can bring back memories of childhood loss.

These photos bring it all back.

come back

If something that you had forgotten **comes back**, you remember it, often quite suddenly.

I hadn't thought about it for years and then it all came back to me when I saw him in the street.

figure out

- ① If you **figure out** the solution to a problem, the answer to a question, or the reason for something, you work it out and understand it. [INFORMAL]

I've figured out what the trouble is.

Nancy couldn't figure it out.

- ② If you **figure someone out**, you understand why they behave in the way they do. [INFORMAL]

He won't let anyone help him. I just can't figure him out.

go back

- ① If something **goes back** to a particular time in the past, it has existed since that time.

These customs go back a long way.

NOTE You can also use *date back*.

- ② If you **go back**, you consider things that happened at a time in the past.

To trace its origins, we have to go back some thirty million years.

go by

If a period of time **goes by**, it passes.

Eight years went by.

hear about

If you **hear about** something or someone or **hear something about** them, you get news or information about them.

They heard about a new restaurant that was opening in town.

I've heard lots of good things about him.

hear of

- ① If you **hear of** something, you find out something about it or find out that it exists for the first time.

How did you first hear of his work?

- ② If you have **heard of** someone or something, you are aware that they exist.

I have never heard of the writer they are talking about.

know about

If you **know** about a subject, you have studied it and understand part or all of it.

You ought to ask John, he knows about photography.

look back

If you **look back**, you think about something that happened in the past.

The past always seems better when you look back on it.

pass on

- ① If you **pass** something on, you give or tell it to someone else.

If you hear any tips, do pass them on.

I could pass on a message if you like.

- ② If things such as stories, traditions, or money are **passed on**, or you pass them on, they are taught or given to someone who belongs to a younger generation.

Skills such as this should be passed on.

They pass on their traditions through storytelling.

NOTE You can also use **hand down**.

remind of

- ① If you **remind** someone of something, you tell them about it so that they remember it.

May I remind you of something you said earlier?

- ② If one person or thing **reminds** you of another, they make you think of the other person or thing, because they are similar in some way.

You remind me of my friend Baxter.

stick in

If something **sticks** in your mind or memory, you continue to remember it very clearly.

Some things stick in your memory for ever.

think of

- ① If you can **think of** something or someone, you know them and can therefore suggest them to other people.

Can you think of anyone who could help us?

- ② If you **think of** an idea, you create it.

I began to think of new methods.

- ③ If you **think of** doing something, you consider the possibility of doing it.

I'm thinking of buying him a present.

work out

- ① If you **work out** the answer to a mathematical problem, you calculate it.

I've worked it out, and it's 3,171.875 tons.

The weekly rate is worked out by dividing by 52.

- ② If something **works out** at a particular amount, it is found to be that amount after all the calculations have been made.

The cost of the fuel worked out to be higher than they had expected.

- ③ If you **work out** a solution or a plan, you think about it carefully and find a solution or decide what to do.

We should try to work out the best ways to help these young people.

I've been trying to find a solution and I think I've finally worked it out.

- ④ If you manage to **work out** something that seems strange, you think about it and manage to understand it.

I'm trying to work out what's wrong.

I'm not sure what's missing yet, but I'll work it out.

NOTE You can also use **figure out**.

Feelings

calm down

- ① If you calm down or if someone or something calms you down, you become less upset, excited, or angry.

'Please, Mrs Green,' said Brandon. 'Calm down. Let me explain.'

One of the speakers tried to calm the crowd down.

'I wouldn't like to see you really lose your temper,' he remarked, trying to calm down the man.

- ② If a situation calms down or if you calm it down, the people involved in it become less upset, excited or angry.

He told me that things appeared to be calming down a bit.

Dad managed to calm things down.

NOTE You can also use settle down.

care for

- ① If you care for someone or something, you look after them and keep them in a good state or condition.

She has to care for her elderly parents.

- ② If you care for someone, you love them.

At last she had found a man that she cared for and who cared for her.

cheer up

When you cheer up or when someone or something cheers you up, you stop feeling sad and become happier.

He cheered up a little at the prospect of dinner.

I took some cake into work to try to cheer up my colleagues.

She bought strawberries to cheer herself up.

deal with

If you deal with a negative emotion or a situation that causes negative emotions, you manage to control your feelings and continue your normal life.

She saw a psychiatrist who used hypnotism to help her deal with her fear.

NOTE You can also use cope with.

face up to

If you face up to a difficult situation, you accept it and deal with it.

We have to face up to the fact that this relationship isn't going to work.

get over

- ① If you get over an illness or another unpleasant experience, you recover from it.

He's had a shock but he's getting over it.

- ② If you get over a problem or difficulty, you find a way of dealing with it.

We could get over the problem by hiring more staff.

get to

If an experience gets to you, it upsets or annoys you. [INFORMAL]

She can be quite rude sometimes but don't let it get to you.

go through

If you go through an event or period of time, especially an unpleasant one, you experience it.

She's going through a busy period in her life.

hope for

If you hope for something, you want it and expect to have it.

The team is hoping for a big win today.

let down

If someone or something lets you down, they fail to do something that you expected or wanted them to do.

He would never let a friend down.

I feel guilty about letting down my parents.

look forward to

If you look forward to something, you are happy it is going to happen because you expect to enjoy it.

I was not looking forward to my meeting with the manager.

We are really looking forward to our skiing holiday.

open up

If someone opens up, they start to relax and talk about personal things.

It can be hard to get teenagers to open up and talk to their parents.

play on

If you play on people's feelings, attitudes, or weaknesses, you deliberately use them in order to achieve what you want.

He played on their prejudices and their fears.

Try to find your opponent's weaknesses and play on them relentlessly.

NOTE You can also use play upon.

relate to

- 1 If you can relate to other people, you can understand how they feel and communicate with them easily.

Children need to learn to relate to other children.

- 2 If you relate to something, you understand it because you have had a similar experience or emotion or have a similar opinion.

These people have a way of looking at the world that most of us find hard to relate to.

Attitudes

believe in

- ① If you believe in things such as fairies or miracles, you are sure that they really exist or happen.

Do you believe in ghosts?

- ② If you believe in an idea or policy, you support it because you think it is right.

He's very conservative and believes in personal responsibility.

- ③ If you believe in someone, you have confidence in them and think that they will be successful.

I won't give up on you, because I believe in you.

NOTE You can also use *have confidence in*.

go for

- ① If you go for a particular thing, you choose it or try to achieve it.

They urged the Chancellor to go for the first option.

- ② If you go for someone or something, you like them very much.

I don't really go for that kind of food.

live up to

If someone or something *lives up to* what is expected, they are as good as they were expected to be.

The film didn't live up to my expectations.

NOTE You can also use *match up to*.

look at

If you *look at* a situation in a particular way, you judge it or consider it in that way.

I tend to look at things in a very different way from my parents.

look up to

If you *look up to* someone, you respect and admire them.

She looks up to her father.

object to

If you *object to* something, you do not like it or approve of it.

Local residents have objected to the plan.

oppose to

If you are *opposed to* something, you disagree with it or disapprove of it.

We are opposed to plans to build more houses here.

pick on

If you pick on someone, you treat them badly or in an unfair way, often repeatedly.

Maria had complained that the teacher was picking on her.

NOTE You can also use get at.

put down

If you put someone down, you criticize them and make them feel stupid.

Another thing that upsets me is the way Alex tries to put me down in public.

I hate the way she puts down people in meetings.

put off

To put someone off something or someone means to make them not want to do something or not like something or someone.

The country's high prices have put off many tourists.

The disgusting smell put me off my breakfast.

put up with

If you put up with something or someone, you accept them, even though you do not like them.

Don't put up with Howard's bad behaviour.

see as

If you see someone or something as a particular thing, you believe that they are that thing or have that quality.

He saw her as the perfect woman.

settle for

If you settle for something, you choose or accept it even though it is not what you really want.

Don't settle for second best.

show off

If you show off, you try to impress people by showing them what you can do or telling them what you have done, usually in a way that is annoying.

He's always showing off about how important his job is.

stand for

The things that someone stands for are the ideas or values that they support or represent.

Our organization has always stood for individual liberty.

walk out

If you walk out, you leave a place or a performance as a way of showing that you are angry or that you do not like something.

Many of the audience walked out through boredom.

Relationships

break down

When an arrangement, relationship or discussion **breaks down**, it fails because of a problem or disagreement.

It is always very sad when a marriage breaks down.

depend on

- ① If you **depend on** someone or something, you need them in order to be able to survive physically, financially, or emotionally.

I feel that he depends on me too much for a social life.

NOTE You can also use **depend upon** and **rely on**.

- ② If you can **depend on** someone or something, you know that you can trust them to do something.

I knew I could depend on you.

NOTE You can also use **depend upon** and **rely on**.

do with

- ① If someone **has something to do with** something else, they are involved in doing it or making it happen.

I suspect she had something to do with Tom's disappearance.

- ② If something is **nothing to do with** or **has nothing to do with** someone, that person has no reason to know about it or become involved with it.

What I do in my free time is nothing to do with him.

Just forget about it. It has nothing to do with you.

- ③ If one thing is **to do with** or **has to do with** something else, the two things are related in some way.

So what was the discussion about? Was it to do with the new project?

I don't know what he does exactly but it has to do with computers.

fall apart

If an organization, activity, system or relationship **falls apart**, it fails or ends.

Their marriage began to fall apart.

fall for

If you **fall for** someone or something, you start to love them or like them very much.

He fell for her the moment he first saw her.

fall out

If people **fall out**, they have an argument and are no longer friendly.

I've fallen out with certain members of the band.

finish with

- ① If you finish with someone or something, or are finished with them, you stop dealing with them or end your involvement with them.

I haven't finished with you yet.

He decided he was finished with marriage.

- ② If you finish with someone, you end your romantic relationship with them. [BRITISH]

We were together for three months but it was not a good relationship and I finished with him.

get on

If two people get on, they have a friendly relationship. [mainly BRITISH]

Mark and Jason don't get on.

NOTE You can also use get along.

get together

If two people get together, they start a romantic relationship. [INFORMAL]

Lara and Pete got together after meeting at Ann's party.

go out

If two people go out, they have a romantic relationship with each other.

My parents wouldn't let me go out with boys.

make up

If two people make up, they become friends again after they have had an argument.

The two actors have now made up after a very public disagreement.

make up for

If you make up for something, you do something to show that you are sorry or to make someone less unhappy.

She tried to make up for her rudeness earlier by being extra nice to me.

rely on

- ① To rely on something or someone means to need them in order to survive or be successful.

She is forced to rely on her mother's money.

NOTE You can also use rely upon and depend on.

- ② If you can rely on someone or something to work or behave in a particular way, you trust them to do this.

You can always rely on him to be polite and do the right thing.

NOTE You can also use rely upon.

NOTE You can also use count on. This is more informal.

settle down

If someone settles down, they start living in one place, often with a partner, and intend to stay there for a long time.

Your parents want you to get a job and settle down.

walk out

If you walk out, you leave the person or people you live with and do not come back.

His father walked out when he was a baby.

Socializing and leisure time

call for

If you **call for** someone or something, you go to the building where they are, to collect them.
I'll call for you about eight.

call on

If you **call on** someone, you visit them for a short time.
Shall we call on Charlotte since we're so near?

catch up

If you **catch up**, you talk to a friend, finding out what has happened in his or her life since you last met.
It would be really nice to catch up over a cup of coffee sometime.

come along

If someone **comes along**, they go somewhere with you or go to the same place as you.
We're going out for dinner. Why don't you come along with us?

come out

If someone **comes out**, they go somewhere with someone socially.
Would you like to come out with us to the cinema?

come over

- ① When someone **comes over**, they move across a room or other place towards you.

The waiter came over and put her drink down in front of her.

- ② When someone **comes over**, they visit your house to see you for a short time.

Come over and have lunch with us tomorrow.

NOTE You can also use **come around**.

drop in

To **drop in** means to visit someone informally, usually without having arranged the visit.

I thought I'd just drop in and see how you were.

NOTE You can also use **drop by** and **drop round**.

NOTE You can also use **pop in**. This is a more informal British form.

eat out

When you **eat out**, you have a meal at a restaurant instead of at home.

Do you eat out a lot in London?

NOTE The opposite of **eat out** is **eat in**.

get in

- ① When a person or a vehicle **gets in**, they arrive at a place where people are expecting them to be.

I'll tell him you called when he gets in.

- ② If you **get in**, you succeed in entering a building.

We went to a museum and it cost ten euros to get in.

get together

When people get together, or when someone gets people together, two or more people meet in order to discuss something or to spend time with each other.

We should all get together and go out for a drink.

He got a bunch of people together who wanted to help out.

go out

When you go out, you leave your house and go somewhere else.

I thought we could go out somewhere for a picnic.

NOTE The opposite of go out is stay in.

go over

If you go over, you go to someone's house and visit them for a short time.

There was a phone message from Jeremy, asking me to go over the next evening.

Can we go over to Ella's today?

NOTE You can also use go round.

hang out

If you hang out somewhere or hang out, you spend a lot of time in a place, often not doing very much.
[INFORMAL]

I don't hang out at the park any more.

Shall we go to town and just hang out?

put off

- 1 If you put off something, you delay it or arrange to do it at a later time than planned.

She used tiredness as an excuse to put off things she didn't want to do.

I know I've got to call him but I keep putting it off.

- 2 If you put a person off, you delay seeing them or doing what they want you to do.

She'll be here soon, unless I can put her off somehow.

show up

If you show up, you arrive at a place where people are expecting you.

I waited for half an hour, but she didn't show up.

NOTE You can also use turn up.

stay in

If you stay in, you remain at home rather than going out.

We stayed in the whole evening.

NOTE You can also use stop in.

NOTE The opposite of stay in is go out.

take up

If you take up an activity or job, you start doing it.

I thought I'd take up fishing.

You're good at art. You should take it up professionally.

Sport and fitness

catch up

If you **catch up** or **catch someone up**, you reach someone who is in front of you by walking faster.

Simon tried to catch up with the others.

cut down

If you **cut something down** or **cut down**, you reduce the amount of something you use or eat, or do something less often.

We need to cut down the amount of fat in our diets.

You can cut the calories down a bit by adding less sugar.

fall behind

If you **fall behind** or **fall behind someone** when moving with a group of people, you move more slowly than them, so they get ahead of you.

Schumacher was strong throughout the race, but fell behind ten laps from the end.

[NOTE] You can also use lag behind.

get into

- ① If you **get into** a particular habit or way of behaving, you start to have that habit or behave in that way.

I really need to get into a fitness routine.

- ② If you **get into** a subject, you start being interested in it. [INFORMAL]

She got into healthy eating and doing exercise.

go through

- ① If someone **goes through** a series of actions or movements, they perform it.

The music started and we went through a series of warm-up exercises.

- ② In sport, if a person or team **goes through**, they win one stage of a competition and go on to the next stage.

Serbia beat Russia 3–1 and look set to go through to round two.

go up

- ① When someone or something **goes up** or **goes up something**, they move from a lower position to a higher one.

We saw a party of mountaineers going up the mountain.

[NOTE] The opposite of go up is go down.

- ② If a cheer, shout, or other noise **goes up**, a lot of people cheer, shout, or make that sound at the same time.

A huge cheer went up as the players walked out onto the court.

join in

If you **join in** or **join in an activity**, you start to do something with other people who are already doing it.

We joined in with the celebrations.

keep up

- ① If you keep up an activity, you continue to do it and do not let it stop or end.

I can run fast over a short distance but I can't keep it up.

- ② If you keep up, you move at the same speed as someone else.

Howard had to hurry to keep up with us.

slow down

- ① If something or someone slows down, or if something or someone slows them down, they start to move or happen more slowly.

The driver slowed down and then stopped.

NOTE The opposite of slow down is speed up.

- ② If someone slows down, or if something slows them down, they become less active or energetic.

You're working too hard. You need to slow down.

He had an injured leg, which was slowing him down a little.

speed up

If something speeds up or if you speed it up, it moves or travels faster.

The driver sped up as he approached the lights.

wake up

When you wake up, or when someone or something wakes you up, you become conscious again after being asleep.

In the morning I wake up and feel refreshed.

wear out

If something wears you out, it makes you become so tired that you cannot continue what you were doing.

There is no point in wearing yourself out.

work on

If you work on something, you spend time and effort trying to improve it.

He has been working on his game all season.

NOTE You can also use work at.

work out

If you work out, you do physical exercises in order to make your body healthy and strong.

She worked out in a gym class three hours a week.

work up

- ① If someone works up a feeling, the energy to do something, or an appetite, they gradually develop it and increase it until they have what they need.

She went for a run to work up an appetite.

- ② When you are doing something regularly, if you work up to a particular amount or level, you gradually increase or improve what you are doing until you reach that amount or level.

Repeat movements 1, 2 and 3 four times at first and gradually work up to about six repetitions.

NOTE You can also use build up.

Travel and tourism

check in

- ① When you check in or when someone checks you in at a hotel, you arrive at the hotel, collect the key to your room, and fill in any forms which are necessary.

I checked in at the Grand Hotel.

- ② When you check in at an airport or when someone checks you in, you show your ticket before getting on the plane.

He checked in without baggage for a flight to Rome.

The remaining passengers were still being checked in.

check out

When you check out, you pay the bill at a hotel where you have been staying and leave.

She checked out of the hotel and took the train to Paris.

come across

If you come across someone or something, you find or meet them by chance.

As they walked round the lake they came across a bridge.

come from

If you come from a particular place, you were born there or grew up there.

Nuria comes from Madrid.

drop off

When you are driving, if you drop off a person or thing, you take them somewhere and leave them there, usually on your way to somewhere else.

I can drop her off on my way home.

I need to drop off some books at the office.

get away

- ① If you get away, you succeed in leaving a place or person.

If I'm lucky I might get away by midnight.

- ② If you get away, you go somewhere to have a holiday.

Is there any chance of you getting away this summer?

get back

If you get back, you return somewhere after being in another place.

We didn't get back till midnight last night.

get in

- ① If you get in or get in a place such as a car, house, or room, you go inside it.

She got in and started the car.

I got in a taxi and went to the airport.

[NOTE] The opposite of get in is get out.

- ② When a person or a vehicle gets in, they arrive at a place where people are expecting them to be.

Her train should get in at 6:30 p.m.

get into

- ① If you get into a place such as a car, house, or room, you enter it.

They got into the back of a taxi.

- ② If a person or vehicle gets into a place, they reach it.

We got into London at one o'clock.

get off

- ① If you get off or get off a bus, train, or plane, you leave a bus, train, or plane.

I slipped as I was getting off the train.

NOTE You can also use get out.

NOTE The opposite of get off is get on.

- ② When you get off, you leave somewhere, often to start a journey.

I plan to get off before the traffic gets bad.

NOTE You can also use get away.

go around

- ① If you go around or go around a group of people or places, you visit or go to see people or places, one after the other.

I want to go around the art galleries while I'm in London.

NOTE You can also use go round. This is mainly British.

- ② If you go around or go around a country or other place, you travel in a country or other place and visit a lot of different things.

I'd like to go around Africa myself.

NOTE You can also use go round. This is mainly British.

go away

- ① If you go away, you leave somewhere.

She went away to think about it.

- ② If you go away, you leave your home and spend time somewhere else, especially as a holiday.

What did you do over the summer? Did you go away?

head for

If you head for a place, you start moving towards it.

We had decided to head for Miami.

NOTE You can also use make for.

move on

If someone moves on, they continue a journey after stopping for a short time.

After three weeks in Hong Kong, we moved on to Japan.

NOTE You can also use carry on.

set off

When you set off, you start a journey.

What time do we need to set off tomorrow?

NOTE You can also use set out.

Clothing and fashion

do up

- ① If you do something up, you fasten it.

She showed her son how to do up his shoes.

I can't do my top button up.

- ② If a piece of clothing does up in a particular place, it is fastened there.

The top does up at the back.

- ③ If a woman does her hair up, she arranges it so that it is fastened close to her head rather than hanging loosely.

She did her hair up in a pony tail.

Her hair was done up in a neat bun at the back of her head.

dress up

- ① If you dress up or dress someone up, you put special, smart clothes on yourself or someone else, usually for a social occasion.

It's fun to dress up for a party.

I like to dress my little girl up in pretty clothes.

- ② If you dress up or dress someone up, you put special costumes or unusual clothes on yourself or someone else, usually for fun, often at a party where everyone does this.

Maisie loves to dress up in her Grandma's clothes.

We dressed Alex up as Superman for Amelia's party.

get on

If you get a piece of clothing on, you dress yourself in it.

Get your coat on.

NOTE You can also use put on.

go with

If one thing goes with another, they suit each other or are pleasant or attractive together.

Those shoes go with your dress.

have on

If you have clothing on, you are wearing it.

I can't wait to take these shoes off – I've had them on all day.

She had on an old jacket.

pick out

If you pick out one thing, you choose it from a group.

Christina picked out a nice pair of shoes to wear.

She picked a skirt out that she thought Ellie would like.

pull off

When you pull a piece of clothing off or pull a piece of clothing off someone else, you take it off quickly.

I managed to pull my boots off.

James pulled off his socks.

I pulled Tom's boots off his feet.

pull on

When you pull on your clothes, you put them on quickly.

Still sitting, he pulled his shirt and trousers on.

put on

- ① When you put on a piece of clothing, you put it over a part of your body and wear it, or you put it over a part of someone else's body so they are wearing it.

She put her coat on.

NOTE The opposite of put on is take off.

- ② When you put on make-up, a cream, or perfume, you spread or spray it on your skin.

Make sure you put some sunscreen on before you go out.

show off

If you show off something that you own, you show it to a lot of people because you are proud of it.

They held out their arms, showing off their jewellery.

He bought her a ring and she has been showing it off to everyone.

take in

If you take something in, you make an item of clothing smaller and tighter.

He lost so much weight that he had to take in all his trousers.

NOTE The opposite of take in is let out.

take up

If you take up a piece of clothing, you make it shorter.

I can take up those trousers for you.

NOTE The opposite of take up is let down.

try on

If you try on a piece of clothing, you put it on to see if it fits you or if it looks nice.

She tried on several dresses but couldn't find any she liked.

wear out

When something wears out or when you wear it out, it is used so much that it becomes weak or broken and unable to be used any more.

Sooner or later the soles of your favourite shoes are going to wear out.

He did not want them walking up and down the stairs and wearing out the stair carpet.

wrap up

- ① When you wrap something up, you fold a piece of paper, cloth, or other material round it so that it is completely covered.

We wrapped the glasses up in tissue paper.

My hair is wrapped up in a towel because I've just washed it.

NOTE You can also use do up.

- ② If you wrap up, you put warm clothes on; if you wrap someone, especially a child, up, you put warm clothes on them.

Wrap up well. It's cold outside.

The children came to school wrapped up in coats and scarves.

Studying and learning

catch up

If a person or thing **catches up** or **catches** someone or something up, they reach the same standard or level.

Once you become so behind with your studies, it's really hard to catch up.

They did well early on, but other businesses are catching them up now.

cut out

If you **cut out** part of something, you remove it by cutting it.

She had cut out pictures of animals and stuck them on the wall.

I cut an article out of the paper and sent it to her.

drop out

If you **drop out**, you leave something that you are involved in before it is finished.

She had dropped out of college in the first term.

He dropped out of school and went to work in the supermarket.

fall behind

If someone or something **falls behind** or **falls behind** someone or something, they do not reach the standard or level of similar people or things.

These children often fall behind with their reading.

His salary has fallen behind those of many of his colleagues.

find out

If you **find out** something, you learn something that you did not already know.

I'm only interested in finding out what the facts are.

I used the Internet to find their names out.

go over

If you **go over** something, you examine or discuss each part of it, especially to make sure that someone understands it or that it is correct.

I'll go over the main points of what she said.

hand in

If you **hand in** a piece of work, you give it to someone so that they can read it or deal with it.

At half-past eleven they handed their exam papers in.

Don't forget to hand in your homework.

hand out

If you **hand things out**, you give them to people in a group so that each person has one or some.

They handed out questionnaires to the audience.

The teacher asked me to hand the books out.

look at

- ① If you look at something or someone, you turn your eyes towards them.

Everyone turned to look at the painting.

- ② If you look at something, you quickly read it or read parts of it.

I've looked at your essay and I think it's very good.

NOTE You can also use look through.

- ③ If you look at a subject, problem, or situation, you consider or study it.

His research looked at the way language is acquired.

look up

- ① If you look up, you raise your eyes.

She did not even look up from her work when he came in.

- ② If you look something up, you find a piece of information by looking at something such as a book or website.

He used a dictionary to look up the word 'apotheosis'.

Nowadays you can look almost anything up on the Internet.

miss out

If you miss out something or someone, you fail to include them in something. [BRITISH]

The brochure had missed out the fact that the hotel was right by a busy road.

He missed some important details out of his report.

NOTE You can also use leave out. [mainly AMERICAN]

mix up

If you mix things or people up, you are confused about which one is which.

I think you're mixing up the American Civil War with the English Civil War.

Do you have a tendency to mix the digits up when trying to remember numbers?

opt for

If you opt for a particular thing, you decide to do or have that thing.

Unsure what to study at university, she eventually opted for Law.

relate to

If something relates to a particular subject, it is about that subject or is connected with it.

I wanted to ask you a question that relates to electricity.

run through

If you run through something, you explain it or read it quickly, in order to practise it, check it or make sure that people understand it.

Some of you won't know this so I'll just briefly run through it.

NOTE You can also use go through and run over.

sign up

If you sign up, you sign an agreement to do a job or course of study, or join an organization.

She signed up to do a Masters degree after graduating from Columbia.

take in

If you take something in, you pay attention to it so that you understand, remember, or experience it fully.

I didn't take in everything that he was saying.

Alex had been the perfect pupil, listening and watching and taking it in.

Jobs and careers

carry out

If you **carry out** a task, you do it.

*They have to **carry out** a number of administrative duties.*

*The team **carried** a survey out and its findings were interesting.*

fit in

If you **fit in**, you are happy and accepted in a group of people because you are similar to the other people in it.

*You have to learn how the company works in order to **fit in**.*

*We're looking for someone who will **fit in** with our team.*

get out of

- ① If you **get** something good, especially pleasure or satisfaction, out of something that you do or experience, you enjoy it or find it useful.

*I **get** a lot of satisfaction out of my job.*

- ② If you **get out of** doing something, you avoid doing it.

*If there was work to be done around the house, Alec would always **get out of** it.*

*He'll do anything to **get out of** going to visit his grandparents.*

NOTE You can also use wriggle out of.

lay off

If workers are **laid off** or if their employer **lays** them off, they are told that they have to leave their jobs for a period of time or permanently, because there is no work for them to do.

*City workers are being **laid off** at the rate of 100 a week.*

*Her employer **laid** her off eight months later.*

*Factories are warning that they may have to **lay off** workers.*

make up

If people or things **make up** something, they form it. If something is made up of people or things, they form it.

*Women now **make up** two-fifths of the work force.*

*The EU's budget has to be agreed by the member states that **make it up**.*

*Nearly half the Congress is **made up of** lawyers.*

move into

If people **move into** a particular activity or area of business, they start to be involved in it.

*She later **moved into** the field of education.*

move out of

If people **move out of** a particular activity or area of business, research, etc., they stop being involved in it.

*People are **moving out of** the public sector and into the private sector.*

set up

If you **set** something up, you make the necessary arrangements for it to start.

*The software billionaire **set up** a development agency to work in Africa.*

*She **set** a meeting up for me with the Managing Director.*

settle in

If you settle in or you are settled in, you become used to a new place or new job.

How is he settling in to his new job?

My colleagues were very helpful while I was getting settled in.

shut down

- ① If someone shuts down a factory or business or if it shuts down, it closes and stops working.

They shut down the water plants and told residents to buy bottled water.

The company would be forced to shut the whole factory down.

More than 50 businesses in the town have shut down this year.

NOTE You can also use close down.

- ② If a machine or an engine shuts down or if it is shut down, it stops working for a short time.

His computer overheated and shut down.

There was supposed to be an emergency mechanism for shutting down the system.

The reactor's automatic controls shut it down.

NOTE You can also use shut off.

stay on

If you stay on, you remain in a place or continue to attend it regularly. [BRITISH]

After his contract finished, he agreed to stay on for another three months.

step down

If you step down, you leave an important job or position.

The CEO stepped down last month because of illness.

NOTE You can also use step aside and stand down.

stick out

- ① If something or someone sticks out, they are very obvious or noticeable, especially because of being very different from things or people around them.

He wore a dark grey suit that would not stick out in any workplace.

NOTE You can also use stand out.

- ② If you stick something out, you continue in a difficult or unpleasant situation, rather than leaving it.

Sometimes I wonder if I can stick this job out much longer.

take off

If you take time off, you spend it doing something different from your normal activities or job.

I won't be here tomorrow as I'm taking the day off.

Your contract entitles you to take off twenty days a year.

take on

- ① If you take on a job, task, or responsibility, you accept it and try to do what is required.

She takes on more work than is good for her.

It's a big responsibility and it's nice of him to take it on.

- ② If someone takes you on, they employ you.

They took me on because I was a good mathematician.

In the current climate, employers are taking on less people.

walk out

If workers walk out, they suddenly stop working and leave the place where they work as a protest.

Up to 60,000 staff will walk out next month in support of a 40 per cent pay rise.

Business

bring out

When a person or company brings out a new product, they produce it and sell it.

The company is planning to bring out a new range of financial products later this year.

The singer has now brought a second album out.

build on

- ① If an activity, organization, system or belief is built on something, it is developed from that thing.

The relationship between a bank and its customer is built on trust.

NOTE You can also use build upon and base on.

- ② If you build on the success of something, you take advantage of it to make further progress.

We must try to build on the success of these industries.

They are building on existing skills and traditions.

come out of

If one thing comes out of something else, the first thing results from the second.

If all you focus on is negative thinking, then nothing good can come out of it.

hand over

- ① If you hand something over, you give it to someone so that they have or own it.

He handed the phone over to me.

People have handed over large sums of money for work that was never done.

- ② If you hand over to someone or hand something over, you give another person responsibility for dealing with something.

The head teacher handed over to his deputy.

He recently handed control of the company over to his son.

keep down

If someone or something keeps the number, size, or amount of something down, they stop it increasing and keep it at a low level.

They employ fewer staff to keep costs down.

We need to keep down production costs.

look into

If you look into something, you find out and examine the facts about a problem or situation.

They hired a financial adviser to look into the firm's accounts.

make up for

To make up for something means to replace something that has been lost or damaged or to provide something instead of it.

There would have to be major cuts to make up for the loss of revenue.

pull out

- ① If you pull out, you decide not to continue with an activity or agreement.

They pulled out of the deal at the last minute.

NOTE You can also use back out.

- ② If you pull someone out, you decide not to continue with an activity or agreement.

The singer's new manager pulled her out of the book deal.

send off

If you send something off, you send it somewhere by post, email, or text message.

I sent off letters of enquiry to all the big firms.

It's a good idea to re-read your emails before you send them off.

send out

If you send something out, you send copies of something to a lot of people.

The company sent out questionnaires to 34,000 doctors.

We send regular newsletters out to our customers.

start up

If you start something up, or if you start up, you start a new business or project; if a business starts up, it begins.

She wanted to start up her own business.

There are a lot of additional costs when you are starting up.

NOTE You can also use set up.

take off

If something takes off, it becomes very successful or popular.

If the product takes off, you could make your money back within a year.

take over

To take over a business means to gain control of it by buying it or buying a majority of its shares.

The I.P.C. was taken over by the Reed Paper Group.

He's made a great success of the restaurant since he took it over.

NOTE You can also use buy out.

team up

If two or more people or organizations team up, they join together in order to do something.

That year, NBC teamed up with Microsoft to launch the news channel MSNBC.

try out

If you try out something or try something out, you test it or use it for the first time in order to find out how useful or effective it is.

The company is trying out a new idea to help working parents.

First they tried it out on a small group of people.

turn around

If something such as a plan, project, or business that is failing turns around or if you turn it around, it starts to become successful or profitable.

The project is not going well, but I'm confident I can turn it around.

He believes he can turn around last year's losses and make a profit.

NOTE You can also use turn round. This is mainly British.

Money and spending

amount to

If something **amounts to** a particular sum or number, its total is that quantity.

She lost all her savings, which amounted to a large sum of money.

[NOTE] You can also use **add up to**.

bring in

Someone or something that **brings in** money, or brings money in, makes or earns it.

Tourism is a big industry, bringing in £7 billion a year.

We will have to consider how we can bring funds in.

build up

If something **builds up** or if you **build it up**, it gradually increases in amount, size, or strength.

Money built up in your savings can be used to boost your retirement income.

We helped to build up the wealth of this country.

The city must build its cash reserves up to a more comfortable level.

come into

If someone **comes into** money, property, or a title, they get it when someone in their family dies.

She came into some money on her mother's death.

cut back on

If you **cut back on** the money that you spend on something, you reduce it.

The government has had to cut back on public spending.

get into

If you **get into** a difficult situation, or if someone **gets you into** it, you start to be involved in it, often without intending to be.

Make sure you don't get into debt.

He got himself into such a mess.

give away

If you **give away** something, or **give something away**, you give it to someone without taking money in return.

She has given away jewellery worth millions of dollars.

I couldn't decide whether to keep the money he left me or give it away.

live on

If you **live on** an amount of money, you have that amount of money to buy things.

I don't have enough to live on.

pay for

- ① If you pay for something, you give someone money for it.

We have to have money to pay for the food we eat.

- ② If something that you buy pays for itself, it saves you as much money as you spent on it.

These water heaters are more efficient and will pay for themselves within five years.

pay in

When you pay in money, or pay money in, you put it into a bank account.

Roberto called in at the bank to pay his cheque in.

I paid in £150 this morning.

pay off

If you pay off a debt or bill, you pay all the money that you owe.

The most common reason for borrowing is to pay off existing loans.

She paid her debts off by selling her house.

put down

If you put down money when you are buying something, you pay a part of the money that you owe.

I had put down the first month's rent as a security deposit.

Do you want me to put a deposit down to secure the offer?

sell off

If you sell something off, you sell it to get rid of it, usually for a low price.

They plan to break up the company and sell it off.

The land was sold off to developers.

sell out

If something sells out, or if a shop sells out of it, it has all been sold.

Shops almost immediately sold out of the product.

The toy was so popular, every store in town was sold out.

set aside

If you set aside something, or you set something aside, you keep it for a particular purpose.

Set aside a fixed amount every month towards your pension.

I try to set some money aside in case of emergencies.

Some time should be set aside for preparation.

NOTE You can also use put aside.

take out

- ① If you take out something such as a licence, an insurance policy, or a bank loan, you arrange to get it.

We took out a loan to buy the car.

How much the policy pays depends on when you took it out.

- ② If you take money out, you obtain it from your bank account.

You can take cash out at any ATM.

What is the best way to take out money when travelling abroad?

Reporting in the media

bring about

To bring about something means to cause it to happen.

The Administration helped bring about a peaceful settlement.

We're pressing for more information on what brought the decision about.

call for

If you call for an action, you demand that it should be done.

New safety measures have been called for.

call in

If you call someone in, you ask them to come somewhere to do something for you.

The Army was called in to control the rioting.

They called him in for questioning last night.

call off

If you call off an event or an arrangement that has been planned, you cancel it.

We planned the match for yesterday afternoon but had to call it off because of the weather.

Union leaders have agreed to call off the strike.

come after

To come after a particular event, point in time or person is to happen or exist later than them.

The shock news comes after a series of incidents last month.

come under

If someone or something comes under something difficult or unpleasant from other people, they experience it.

The department has come under fire for wasting public money.

get around

If recent information gets around or gets around a place, a lot of people tell other people about it.

The news got around that he was leaving.

Gossip gets around the film industry much faster than in other places.

NOTE You can also use get round. This is mainly British.

look for

If you look for something, you try to achieve it or get it.

We must look for a peaceful solution.

make up

If you make up something, you invent it.

He was accused of making up some of the stories in his autobiography.

She continued to talk, making it up as she went along.

meet with

- ① If you meet with a particular experience or event, you experience it or it happens to you.

Troops met with strong resistance as they entered the city.

- ② If something meets with a particular reaction or if you meet something with a particular reaction, that is the reaction it gets.

His comments met with great public approval.

They are determined to meet any attack with retaliation.

I told him where I was and was met with silence.

put out

To put out information means to officially tell it to many people.

The company put out a statement saying that the chief executive had resigned.

He's put the story out himself.

result from

If a situation results from an event or action, it is caused by that event or action.

The condition may result from a shortage of vitamins.

result in

If something results in a particular situation or event, it causes that situation or event to happen.

A warming of the earth's surface might result in the melting of the polar ice caps.

run through

- ① If an idea, piece of news, or emotion runs through a place or a group of people, it spreads through the place or group quickly.

A buzz of excitement ran through the crowd.

- ② If a quality or feeling runs through something, it affects every part of it or is present everywhere within it.

There is a prejudice that runs through our society.

set in

If something unpleasant sets in, it begins and seems likely to continue.

By the time he got back, panic had set in.

stem from

If something stems from something, it is caused by that thing.

Attitudes like these stem from ignorance.

step in

If you step in, you get involved in a situation and try to help.

The government sometimes has to step in to protect employees from employers.

turn into

If someone or something turns into another thing, or if something turns them into it, they change and become that other thing.

This situation is turning into a nightmare.

The novel is being turned into a television series.

Political events

bring down

If people or events **bring down** a government or ruler, they cause them to lose their power.

Unofficial strikes had brought down the regime.

A national strike would bring the government down.

bring in

When a government or other organization **brings in** a new law, rule, or system, they introduce it.

We intend to bring in legislation to control their activities.

The government should bring laws in to restrict the sale of unhealthy food.

crack down

To **crack down** is to start to be much stricter with people who are not obeying rules or laws, punishing them more severely.

Their first reaction to the riots was to crack down hard.

NOTE You can also use clamp down.

deal with

When you **deal with** something that needs attention, you do what is necessary in order to achieve the result that is wanted.

They learned to deal with any sort of emergency.

engage in

If you **engage in** an activity, you take part in it.

It was not considered appropriate for a former President to engage in business.

They were engaged in a life and death struggle.

enter into

- ① If you **enter into** an agreement or arrangement, you formally agree to it.

His party entered into an alliance with the Socialists.

- ② If you **enter into** an activity, you start it or become involved in it.

The government refused to enter into negotiations.

fight back

If you **fight back** when someone or something attacks you or causes you problems, you defend yourself and try to beat them or stop them.

Our troops were fighting back desperately.

force into

If you **force** someone into doing something, you make them do it, although they do not want to.

They are trying to force their employers into increasing their wages.

go ahead

When someone goes ahead with something which they planned or asked permission to do, they begin to do it, and when a plan goes ahead, it begins.

They are going ahead with the project.

The meeting is going ahead as planned.

impose on

If you impose something on people, you use your authority to force them to accept it.

The United Nations has imposed sanctions on the country.

The rule was imposed on small businesses.

NOTE You can also use impose upon.

lead to

If something leads to a situation or event, usually an unpleasant one, it causes it.

He warned yesterday that pay increases would lead to job losses.

pull out

If soldiers or an army pull out or if someone pulls them out, they leave a place.

Troops have begun to pull out of the area.

The Prime Minister has said he intends to pull all 10,000 soldiers out by the end of June.

The government has pulled out the army.

push for

If you push for something, you try to persuade other people to help you achieve it.

Unions were pushing for higher wages.

NOTE You can also use press for.

sort out

If you sort something out, you solve a problem, misunderstanding, or disagreement.

It could take months to sort this mess out.

Officials from both sides are meeting today to sort out their differences.

Once this issue has sorted itself out, we'll be ready to start.

stand by

If you stand by, you allow something bad to happen without trying to do anything to stop it.

We cannot stand by and watch while our allies are attacked.

NOTE You can also use sit by.

stand for

- 1 If a letter stands for a particular word or name, it is an abbreviation for that word or name.

EU stands for European Union.

- 2 If someone stands for something, they are a candidate in an election.

No one would stand for election.

Crime

break in

If someone **breaks in**, they get into a building illegally or by force.

A thief broke in and forced open the locked safe in the library.

The police broke in and arrested all the men.

break into

If someone **breaks into** a room or a building, they enter it illegally or by force.

He broke into a shop one night and stole some food.

get away

When someone or something **gets away**, they escape.

The police followed the gang but they got away.

get away with

If you **get away with** something that you should not have done, you are not criticized or punished for doing it.

No one should get away with such a crime.

get off

If you **get off** when you have done something wrong, or if someone **gets you off**, you are not punished or receive only a small punishment for what you have done.

She was sure that she would not get off so easily.

He hired a good lawyer who could get him off.

give up

- ① If you **give yourself up**, you allow yourself to be arrested or captured.

He went straight to the local police station and gave himself up.

- ② To **give someone up** who is wanted by the police means to tell the police where that person is so that they can be arrested.

They questioned her forcefully, but still she wouldn't give me up.

hand in

- ① If you **hand something in**, you give it to someone in authority.

She handed the money in, thinking it was probably stolen.

Someone handed in my phone after finding it on the bus.

- ② If you **hand yourself in**, you go to the police and tell them that you have committed a crime.

He walked into a police station and handed himself in.

hold up

To **hold someone or something up** means to rob them by threatening them with a weapon.

They held up a bank with sawn-off shotguns.

He held me up at gun point.

let out

If you **let people or animals out**, you allow them to leave a place, especially by opening a door.

The prisoners were let out of their cells for an hour a day.

We let out the dogs so that they could get some exercise.

lock in

If you **lock someone in** or **lock them in** a place, you put them somewhere and lock the door so that they cannot get out.

She pushed me into a room and locked me in.

They locked in the prisoners for the night.

The prisoners were locked in their cells for 23 hours a day.

pay for

If someone **pays for** something bad that they have done, they suffer or are punished because of it.

He must pay for all the crimes for which he is responsible.

resort to

If you **resort to** doing something that you do not think is right or acceptable, you do it because you cannot see any other way of achieving what you want.

He had resorted to stealing to feed his children.

rip off

If someone **rips you off**, they cheat you by charging you too much money for something. [INFORMAL]

The local shopkeepers were all trying to rip off the tourists.

The court wastes my time and the lawyers rip me off!

run away

- ① If you **run away**, you leave a place or person by running.

The thief then ran away and jumped into a car.

- ② If you **run away**, you secretly leave a place because you are unhappy.

When she was sixteen, she had an argument with her parents and ran away from home.

take in

- ① If the police **take you in**, they make you go with them to a police station in order to ask you questions or arrest you.

The police took him in for questioning.

- ② If you are **taken in** by someone or if they **take you in**, they deceive or trick you.

I gave him the money before I realized I had been taken in.

I confess he completely took me in.

track down

If you **track down** someone or something, you find them after searching for some time.

The FBI is putting a lot of effort into tracking down the criminals.

Soon the police tracked Charles down and arrested him.

NOTE You can also use **hunt down**

Disaster and destruction

blow away

- ① If something **blows away** or if the wind **blows it away**, the wind moves it away from the place where it was.

There was a massive storm one night and our shed blew away.

The wind blew his papers away.

My hat was blown away.

blow up

If you **blow something up** or if it **blows up**, it is destroyed by an explosion.

He was going to blow the place up.

The gunmen were threatening to blow up the embassy.

One of the submarines blew up and sank.

break down

- ① When a machine or a vehicle **breaks down**, it stops working.

His car broke down on the motorway.

- ② To **break down something** such as a door or wall means to hit it hard so that it breaks and falls to the ground.

Water had flooded their homes and broken down the walls.

Police broke the door down.

NOTE You can also use **smash down**.

break out

If something unpleasant **breaks out**, it begins suddenly.

A fire broke out on the third floor.

cut off

- ① If a person or place is **cut off**, they are separated from other people and places.

The town was cut off by the floods.

- ② To **cut off the supply** of something means to stop it.

The hurricane cut off electricity to at least 3.5 million people.

Gas supplies have now been cut off.

fall down

- ① If someone or something **falls down** when they have been in an upright position, they drop to the ground.

A tree fell down during the storm.

- ② If something such as a building or bridge **falls down**, it breaks into pieces because it is old, weak, or damaged.

That shelter might fall down if the rain comes back.

go off

If a gun goes off, it is fired and if a bomb goes off, it explodes.

Somebody's gun went off by mistake.

knock out

- ① To knock someone out means to cause them to become unconscious or to fall asleep.

The explosion hurt no one, except that it knocked out Colonel Lacour.

He must have fallen and knocked himself out.

NOTE The opposite of knock out is bring round.

- ② To knock something out means to destroy or damage it and stop it from working properly.

A huge storm had knocked all the power out.

Lightning knocked out the city's power grid.

put out

If you put out something that is burning, you cause it to stop burning.

He put the fire out.

The fire was put out very quickly.

reduce to

If something, especially a building or a city, is reduced to a state where it is broken or destroyed or if someone reduces it to this state, someone or something breaks or destroys it.

Every building in the town was reduced to rubble.

The fire reduced the house to dust.

run out

- ① If you run out of something, you have no more of it left.

We were rapidly running out of medical supplies.

- ② If something runs out, it becomes used up so that there is no more left.

There was no water, and food was running out.

run over

If a vehicle or its driver runs over someone or something, the vehicle hits them or drives over them, causing injury or damage.

We almost ran over a cat that was crossing the road.

I'm sure he would have run us over.

NOTE You can also use run down and knock down.

wipe out

To wipe someone or something out means to destroy or get rid of them completely.

Epidemics wiped out the local population.

Illegal hunting could wipe the animals out.

write off

If someone writes off a vehicle or other machine, they damage it so badly that it is not worth repairing. [BRITISH]

She had crashed the car twice, writing it off completely the second time.

He wrote off the car and left a passenger with two broken legs.

Helping and recovering

carry on

- 1 If you **carry on**, you continue doing an activity.

*We are determined to **carry on** with our work.*

NOTE You can also use **go on**.

- 2 If you **carry on** when you are in a difficult or unpleasant situation, you manage to continue with your normal, everyday activities.

*Some people **carry on** as if nothing has happened.*

NOTE You can also use **go on**.

clean up

- 1 If you **clean up** something that is dirty or untidy, you get rid of it by wiping, sweeping, etc.

*Anne **cleaned up** the house and sat at the kitchen table.*

- 2 If you **clean up** or **clean up** a place or person, you clean them.

*Consider for a moment the costs of **cleaning up** rivers and beaches.*

NOTE You can also use **clear up**.

get through

- 1 If you **get through** a task, you succeed in finishing it.

*I **got through** a lot of work this morning.*

- 2 If you **get through** a difficult experience, or someone or something **gets you through** it, you survive it.

*I just have to **get through** the next few months and then it'll be fine.*

help out

If you **help out** or **help someone out**, you do something to help someone.

*My sister **helps out** with the kids a lot.*

hold on

- 1 If you **hold on**, you hold something firmly, especially to stop yourself from falling.

*I **grabbed** the railing and **held on**.*

- 2 If you **hold on**, you manage to continue in a difficult situation.

*If you **hold on**, things will get better eventually.*

NOTE The opposite of **hold on** is **give up**.

hold on to

- 1 If you **hold on to** something that is in your hand, you grip it tightly so that it cannot fall or cannot be taken away from you.

*She **walked** slowly down the steps, **holding on to** the hand-rail.*

NOTE You can also use **hold onto**.

- 2 If you **hold on to** someone, you keep your arms around them.

*She **held on to** him for support.*

NOTE You can also use **hold onto**.

keep on

If you **keep on**, or **keep on** doing something, you continue doing something and do not stop.

My hands were shaking but I kept on.

I kept on running until I had reached the house.

NOTE You can also use **carry on**.

look after

If you **look after** someone or something, you take care of them and make sure they have what they need.

My mother looks after the baby during the week.

leave behind

If you **leave** something behind, you stop having a past feeling or experience and progress to something new.

This is your chance to leave the past behind and make a new start.

It can be hard to leave behind these bad experiences.

live with

If you have to **live with** something unpleasant, you have to accept it and carry on with your life or work.

The job involved a lot of stress, but I learnt to live with it.

NOTE You can also use **put up with**. This is more informal.

protect from

To **protect** someone or something from something bad or harmful means to prevent it from happening or having a harmful effect.

The soldiers were there to protect their country from invasion.

Make sure you cover up and protect yourself from the sun.

NOTE You can also use **protect against**.

settle down

If something **settles down**, it becomes calmer or stops changing.

When things settle down a bit you'll have to come and visit us.

NOTE You can also use **calm down**.

take in

If you **take** someone in, you allow them to live at your house or in your country.

After the hurricane, neighbours offered to take homeless families in.

Governments in the region may have to take in large numbers of refugees.

turn around

If someone or something **turns** your life around or if it **turns around**, it changes completely, usually becoming better.

An opportunity like this could turn your entire life around.

The organization helps people turn around their lives.

My life turned around when I met Tom.