

TWO-WORD VERBS IN ENGLISH

J.N. Hook

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PREFACE

Teachers of English as a second language have long realized the need for supplementary materials, especially on idiomatic English. The aim of this book is to fill that need.

Two-Word Verbs in English instructs students in an aspect of English that is especially difficult for learners of English as a second language. The book is for intermediate and advanced students—those with moderate reading skills and a grasp of basic English grammar. It aims to help them to speak and write in English in an idiomatic and natural way. Two- and three-word verbs are an indispensable tool to speaking English naturally.

These verbs are sometimes also called phrasal verbs, merged verbs, and verb-adverb or verb-preposition combinations. Between three and four thousand such verbs exist in modern English, and more continue to be added to the language. Some of these verbs are among the most commonly used verbs in English. Students may have difficulty learning them because, although each part of a two- or three-word verb is simple and ordinary, their combination often turns out to have an unpredictable and unexpected meaning.

Consider the verb *turn out*, in the preceding sentence. The student may know the meaning of *turn*, but here nothing seems to be “turning.” Neither is anything going “out” in the usual sense. Students need help in learning that the meaning is “to result” or “to be found to be.” For another example, consider the three-word verb *put up with*, as in “Both teachers and students must *put up with* many problems.” In that sentence, nothing seems to be “put” or “up” or “with.” English speakers must learn to attach the meaning “tolerate” to that unlikely combination of words.

Two-Word Verbs in English attempts to help students to *understand* and *use* many of the most common two- and three-word verbs in English. At the same time, it gives them *practice in other phases of English*. Here are the book's special features:

1. While teaching over 400 widely used two- and three-word verbs, it simultaneously provides practice in such other skills as silent and oral reading, forming questions and answers, using irregular verbs (*break*, *write*, etc.), using present and past participles (*going*, *gone*, etc.), forming imperative sentences, using negatives, and using the passive voice.
2. At the beginning of each of the fifteen chapters, a short narrative provides a focus for most of the exercises that follow. These 300- to 500-word narratives all concern members of one

family, the Jacksons: George and Edna Jackson; their college son, Tom; and the twins in high school, Jane and Jim. The readings thus offer more human interest than would unrelated sentence drills. The reader observes, for instance, college and school activities of the young people and also observes the members of the family as they get up in the morning, go about their work, talk about their financial problems, set out on a short trip, and attempt to start a small business. These stories show how to use many of the two-word verbs that are common in school, the home, travel, physical activity, and business. About twenty-five to thirty such verbs are used in each narrative.

3. Following the narrative, a glossary defines and again illustrates the newly introduced two-word verbs, giving the principal parts of each. It also indicates whether each verb is intransitive (like *sit down*), separable (like *find . . . out . . .*), or nonseparable (like *wait on _____*). These distinctions are important for accurate use, and such simple graphic devices as ellipses and blank lines help the student to remember them.
4. The exercises in each chapter begin with silent and oral reading of the narrative and end with the construction of original sentences using the two- and three-word verbs introduced in the chapter. In between, the varied exercises include substituting two-word verbs for their synonyms, forming questions, using different tense forms, and pantomiming. In all, some twenty different sorts of exercises are included, but they always culminate in the requirement that students *use* the verbs in sentences that they themselves must construct.
5. Following the fifteen chapters, a cumulative review section provides a review of all the verbs that have been covered in the earlier chapters. Through doing these exercises, students can test themselves on their retention and use of the verbs that have been presented earlier.

The aim of the book is to teach students to *use* these verbs, not only in this book, but in their daily interactions with people at school and at work. The student who has mastered the verbs treated here should have little difficulty using the two- and three-word verbs that he or she is certain to run into when reading or speaking English anywhere.

J. N. HOOK

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Introduction

WHAT TWO-WORD VERBS ARE

TWO-WORD VERB	MEANING	EXAMPLES
give up	stop trying, surrender	Ali and Dave are working on a problem, but Dave <i>gives up</i> .
stand for	represent, mean	In the problem, D <i>stands for</i> the diameter of the circle.
pick up	lift, gather into one's hands or arms	Dave <i>picks</i> his books <i>up</i> and goes to class.

Give up, *stand for*, and *pick up* are examples of two-word verbs. English has many such verbs.

The two words together often have the same meaning as a one-word verb. Each of the two words often does not have its usual meaning, however. For example, in *give up*, nobody “gives” and nothing goes “up.”

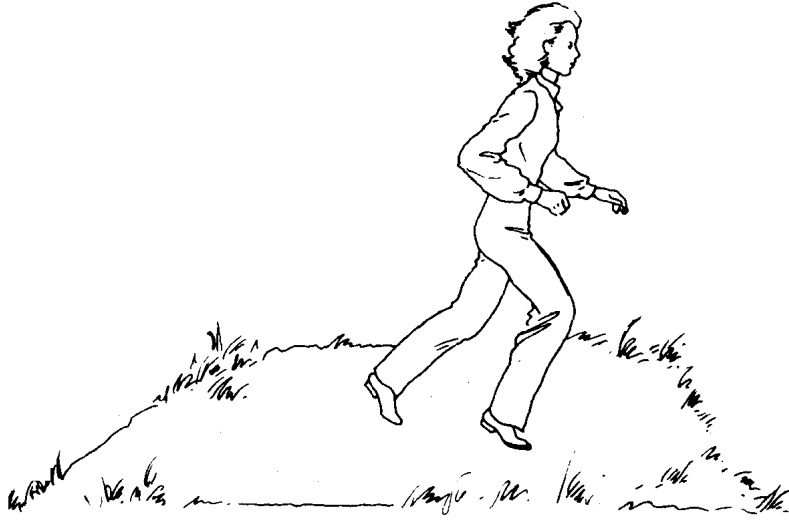
A few verbs that you will study have three words rather than two:

catch up with	come to (someone) from behind, overtake	Sam <i>catches up with</i> Roy.
brush up on	study again, review	Tom is <i>brushing up on</i> his science.

Two-word verbs are not the same as a simple verb with a preposition.

Simple Verb and a Preposition

SUBJECT	SIMPLE VERB	PREPOSITION	OBJECT OF PREPOSITION
Jane .	ran	across	the grass.



Two-Word Verb

SUBJECT	TWO-WORD VERB	OBJECT OF VERB
Jane	ran across	an old friend.



In the first sentence Jane really *ran*. She really moved *across* the grass. But in the second sentence she did not *run*, and she did not move *across* her friend. *Ran across* in the second sentence means “met” or “happened to see.” The two words act together as a single verb would act.

KINDS OF TWO-WORD VERBS

NAME OF VERB

EXAMPLES

I (Intransitive)	give up	The baby tried to walk out then <i>gave up</i> .
Has no object of the verb.	get along	"We'll <i>get along</i> well," Tom said.
NS (Nonseparable)		
Has an object at the end.	go after _____	Pedro <i>goes after</i> a BOOK.
May not be separated by an object.	look for _____	Helen <i>looked for</i> an ARTICLE.
	catch up with _____	Dave <i>caught up with</i> LEE.
S (Separable)	hand . . . in . . .	Tom <i>handed in</i> the PAPER.
Has an object at the end or between the parts.		Tom <i>handed</i> the PAPER <i>in</i> .
		Tom <i>handed</i> IT <i>in</i> .
	tear . . . up . . .	Helen <i>tears up</i> some old SHIRTS.
		Helen <i>tears</i> some old SHIRTS <i>up</i> .
		Helen <i>tears</i> THEM <i>up</i> .

Note 1: When a pronoun like *it* or *them* is the object of a separable verb, it always goes between the parts:

Tom *handed* IT *in*. (Not: Tom *handed in* IT.)
Helen *tears* THEM *up*.

Note 2: A few separable verbs have objects in both places:

Maria *tried* her PLAN *out on* DAVE. (*Plan* and *Dave* are the objects.)
(or) Maria *tried out* her PLAN *on* DAVE.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK TO LEARN TWO-WORD VERBS

Each chapter starts with a little story that uses twenty to thirty two-word verbs. Then a glossary tells you what these verbs mean.

Read the story several times. Read it aloud if possible. While you read, try to guess the meaning of each verb in italic type, like this: **heading for**. Use the glossary to find whether you were right.

In each story and in the glossary, one part of each two- or three-word verb is in different type, called boldface italic: **hand . . . in . . .**. Pronounce that part a little more strongly. (See page 12 for more information on pronunciation.)

Several exercises follow each glossary. These exercises will help you to learn and remember the verbs.

The last exercise in each chapter asks you to write or say several original sentences. These will show that you really understand and can use the two- or three-word verbs.

PRONUNCIATION OF PEOPLE'S NAMES

The pronunciations given here are those usually heard in the United States. Stressed syllables are in boldface italic type.

ā as in <i>day</i>	ōō as in <i>moon</i>
ă as in <i>ran</i>	û as in <i>fur</i> or <i>her</i>
ā as in <i>father</i> or <i>hot</i>	ə as in <i>across</i> or <i>sofa</i>
ē as in <i>see</i>	ch as in <i>child</i>
ě as in <i>red</i>	th as in <i>thin</i>
ĩ as in <i>hill</i>	th as in <i>they</i>
ō as in <i>go</i>	oi as in <i>boy</i>
ô as in <i>order</i>	

Names of Principal Characters

Dave <i>dāv</i>	Jim <i>jīm</i>
Edna <i>ěd nə</i>	Lee (often a Chinese name) <i>lē</i>
George <i>jōrj</i>	Maria (often Spanish) <i>ma rē ə</i>
Helen <i>hěl ən</i>	Pedro (often Spanish) <i>pā drō</i>
Jane <i>jān</i>	Tom <i>tōm</i>

Other Names Mentioned

Ahmed (usually Arabic) <i>ā mēd</i>	Henry <i>hěn rē</i>
Ali (usually Arabic) <i>ā lē</i>	Jack <i>jāk</i>
Andy <i>ān dē</i>	Joanna <i>jō ān ə</i>
Betty <i>bět ē</i>	Nina <i>nē nə</i>
Bill <i>bīl</i>	Rachel (often Jewish) <i>rā chəl</i>
Billy <i>bīl ē</i>	Roy <i>roi</i>
Brendan (often Irish) <i>brěn dən</i>	Sally <i>sāl ē</i>
Cynthia <i>sīn thē ə</i>	Sam <i>sām</i>
Don <i>dōn</i>	Sigrid (usually Scandinavian) <i>sig rəd</i>
Ella <i>ěl ə</i>	Suki (usually Japanese) <i>sōō kē</i>
Fernando (often Spanish) <i>fūr nān dō</i>	Susan <i>sōō zən</i>
Fred <i>frěd</i>	Wanda <i>wān də</i>
Hedda (usually German or Scandinavian) <i>hěd ə</i>	Yuki (usually Japanese) <i>yōō kē</i>

1. School Life

Getting Along in One's Schoolwork

Tom Jackson and Dave Page were *heading for* the library. Lee Choy and Pedro Garcia *caught up with* them.

"Are you *going after* a book?" Lee asked Tom.

"Yes," said Tom. "I need to *look for* another book about airplanes. I was *checking* my paper over, and I *found out* that I had *put in* some wrong information."

"I have to *look up* an article," Dave added. "My history teacher asked us to *read through* a long article. *Keeping up with* that course is difficult for me. I'm always *falling behind*. That's because I *put off* doing my assignments."

"So do I," said Pedro. "Right now I'm writing a paper for my science class. I *tore* the first paper *up* because it was bad. Now I have several new ideas, and I've been *trying* them *out on* my friend Maria. I have to *hand* the paper *in* on Monday. I also need to *brush up on* my mathematics, but I can't *figure out* the meanings of some of those strange-looking signs."

"I know what you mean," Dave told him. "I don't know what some of the signs *stand for*, either."

"I need to *make up* a test," Tom said. "I missed it when I was sick. But I'll wait until I have *turned in* my paper on airplanes. I keep a list of things I should do, and I *cross* them *off* one by one as I do them."

"You're so systematic, Tom," Dave said, smiling. "You always plan everything. I should *put together* a list, too, but it would be too long. I would just *give up*."

"I sometimes want to *give up*, too," said Tom, "but then I think that I'll *pull through* somehow. Studying so much is hard, but usually we *get along* rather well. We just have to *keep at* it."

"Yes," Lee said, "we do. But sometimes I'd like to *get away* from it all."

GLOSSARY

Notes: When a blank follows a verb in this glossary, it means that an object is used in that place:
get away from ____ .

When there are two short dotted lines with the verb, an object is used in one place or the other:
hand . . . **in**

The definitions given here are those you need for the story you are reading in this chapter. The same verb may also have other, somewhat different meanings. Sometimes other definitions will be given later. In some glossaries you will notice "See ____" or "See also ____." "See ____" gives the chapter where the verb was defined earlier. "See also ____" shows that a different definition has been given earlier.

The abbreviations I, NS, and S have been explained on page 3.

INFINITIVE	PAST TENSE	PAST PARTICIPLE	
brush up on ____ study again, review, refresh one's memory about Tom is <i>brushing up on</i> his chemistry.	brushed up on	[have] brushed up on	(NS)
catch up with ____ come to someone from behind, overtake Pedro <i>caught up with</i> Maria.	caught up with	[have] caught up with	(NS)
check . . . over . . . take another look at, try to find mistakes in, examine One should <i>check over</i> an examination paper.	checked over	[have] checked over	(S)
cross . . . off . . . mark out, cancel (<i>Cross out</i> is often used for the same meaning.) Some people <i>cross off</i> each day on a calendar.	crossed off	[have] crossed off	(S)
fall behind fail to do work, etc., by a certain time; move more slowly than (someone else) Dave <i>fell behind</i> in his history class. In a race, Tom <i>fell behind</i> . (Also may be NS with an object after <i>behind</i> : He <i>fell behind</i> the other students.)	fell behind	[have] fallen behind	(I)
figure out find (an answer or a solution), decide, learn, understand Helen <i>figured out</i> the answer.	figured out	[have] figured out	(S)
find . . . out . . . discover, learn Helen's friend told her a lie, but Helen <i>found out</i> the truth.	found out	[have] found out	(S)
get along do (one's work, etc.) well enough, manage, succeed fairly well In schoolwork some students <i>get along</i> better than others.	got along	[have] got or gotten along	(I)
get away escape, leave (something dangerous or bad) (often followed by <i>from</i>) "Get away from me," Yuki said to the growling dog. "Get away!"	got away	[have] got or gotten away	(I)

INFINITIVE	PAST TENSE	PAST PARTICIPLE	
give up stop trying, surrender The problem was difficult, but Tom would not <i>give up</i> . (Also S, stop doing something: Helen's father <i>gave up</i> smoking. He <i>gave it up</i> .)	gave up	[have] given up	(I)
go after _____ go to get (something) Ali <i>went after</i> some ice cream.	went after	[have] gone after	(NS)
hand ... in ... give to a teacher, etc., pass in, submit (= <i>turn in</i>) "You should <i>hand</i> your papers <i>in</i> on Friday," the teacher said.	handed in	[have] handed in	(S)
head for _____ go toward Ahmed <i>headed for</i> his next class.	headed for	[have] headed for	(NS)
keep at _____ continue to try (especially something difficult or tiresome), persist in Dave could solve the problem if he <i>kept at</i> it.	kept at	[have] kept at	(NS)
keep up with _____ stay even with, stay beside (in a race, etc.), do what is necessary for (the opposite of <i>fall behind</i>) Pedro <i>kept up with</i> Maria.	kept up with	[have] kept up with	(NS)
look for _____ try to find, seek Suki was <i>looking for</i> a present for her mother.	looked for	[have] looked for	(NS)
look ... up ... search for and find (especially in printed matter) Helen <i>looked up</i> some facts about early American history.	looked up	[have] looked up	(S)
make ... up ... take or do (an examination, a paper, etc.) that one has missed If you miss a test, you must <i>make it up</i> .	made up	[have] made up	(S)
pull through succeed or recover after some difficulty, get well after an illness, survive, come to a good ending The final examinations were hard, but most students <i>pulled through</i> . (Also S: The doctor said, "I'll <i>pull</i> her <i>through</i> .")	pulled through	[have] pulled through	(I)
put ... in ... include, add Rachel likes to <i>put in</i> many details when she writes.	put in	[have] put in	(S)
put ... off ... delay doing, postpone, avoid doing Sigrid sometimes <i>puts off</i> studying.	put off	[have] put off	(S)

INFINITIVE	PAST TENSE	PAST PARTICIPLE	
put . . . together . . . bring separate parts together, compile, assemble Dave <i>put</i> the pieces of a puzzle <i>together</i> .	put together	[have] put together	(S)
read . . . through . . . read all of, read completely Nina <i>read through</i> two chapters.	read (řd) through	[have] read (řd) through	(S)
stand for mean, represent, symbolize “Let x <i>stand for</i> the father’s age,” the mathematics teacher said.	stood for	[have] stood for	(NS)
tear . . . up . . . tear into pieces, destroy by tearing into pieces Dave <i>tore</i> some old papers <i>up</i> .	tore up	[have] torn up	(S)
try . . . out on . . . get (someone else’s) opinion of (Requires two objects. One of the objects may be after <i>out</i> .) Maria <i>tried out</i> her idea <i>on</i> Pedro. Maria <i>tried</i> her idea <i>out on</i> Pedro.	tried out on	[have] tried out on	(S)
turn . . . in . . . give to a teacher, etc., pass in, submit. (= <i>hand in</i>) Two students <i>turned</i> their papers <i>in</i> late.	turned in	[have] turned in	(S)