

Lesson 1: Phrasal Verbs for Romantic Relationships

Read and listen to the dialog

Emily: Who was that guy you were talking to at the bar? It looked like he was **hitting on you**.

Sarah: Yeah, we struck up a conversation, and eventually he **asked me out**. I gave him my number, but I'm not sure if I'll actually go out with him.

Emily: Oh? How come?

Sarah: He's nice, but I just don't feel like we have much chemistry – so I don't want to **lead him on**.

Emily: Well, don't be too quick to judge. My last boyfriend and I didn't **hit it off** right away – I only started to **fall for him** after we went out a few times and I got to know him better. We were together for 3 years.

Sarah: So why'd you **split up**? (If you don't mind my asking)

Emily: Not at all. We just started to **drift apart** – different interests, different plans for the future. The **breakup** was mutual.

Sarah: Ah, that's great. My last relationship was a nightmare – I **hooked up with** a guy at a New Year's party and we were together for six months – but we were constantly fighting and **making up**. I don't know how I **put up with him** for so long.

Emily: How'd it end?

Sarah: He **cheated on me** – I caught him **making out with** his ex. He begged me for another chance, but I know he was just trying to **jerk me around** – so I said no.

Emily: Ugh! Good for you.

Sarah: Heh, thanks. So how about you – are you **going out with** anyone at the moment?

Emily: Oh, I've gone on a few dates here and there, but nothing serious. To be honest, I'm not really interested in **settling down** just yet – I'm enjoying the single life too much!

Explanation

Let's learn the phrasal verbs from the dialog.

First, Emily says it looked like the guy was **hitting on** Sarah. To hit on someone is to say or do things that demonstrate romantic or sexual interest in that person. It's usually a combination of comments and gestures as well as the way you look at the other person. Another way to say this is that the guy was **flirting with** Sarah.

Sarah says the guy **asked her out** – to ask someone out is to invite the person to go on a date (a romantic encounter). We often say “asked her out for...” and then the activity:

- He asked her out for lunch / dinner.
- He asked her out for coffee.
- He asked her out for drinks.
- He asked her out for a movie.

Sarah then says she's not sure if she likes the guy, and she doesn't want to **lead him on** – this means to provide false hope or expectation to the other person. So if she pretended to be romantically interested even though she really wasn't, this would be **leading him on**.

Emily then says that she and her last boyfriend didn't **hit it off** right away – this means they didn't have a special connection immediately. If you **hit it off** with someone, it means you like each other and you have great social connection from the first moment you meet.

However, with time she began to **fall for him** – the phrasal verb “fall for” means “fall in love with.”

Sarah then asks why Emily and her last boyfriend **split up** – this means to separate, to end the romantic relationship. You can say **split up** or **break up** – and **breakup**

can also be used as a noun. Emily says that the **breakup** was because she and her boyfriend **drifted apart** – this means they slowly started to go in different directions over time.

Sarah's last relationship was a nightmare (which means it was really terrible). It started when she **hooked up with** someone at a party. The phrasal verb **hook up with someone** can be used as a slang expression meaning to have sex with that person, especially someone you just met, or someone you only stay with for one night.

However, in Sarah's case she stayed with the boyfriend for six months, when they were constantly fighting and **making up** – that means reconciling and restoring peace in the relationship after a fight. It was a difficult relationship, and Sarah says she doesn't know how she **put up with him** for so long. The phrasal verb "put up with" someone means to tolerate a difficult, annoying, or unpleasant person.

The relationship ended when the boyfriend **cheated on** Sarah – that means he was kissing or having sex with another woman. Sarah discovered him **making out with** his ex-girlfriend (kissing her very passionately).

The boyfriend wanted another chance with Sarah, but Sarah knew he was trying to **jerk her around** – that means to manipulate her or use her for his own advantage – so she **broke up with** him (ended the relationship).

Sarah asks Emily if Emily is **going out with** anyone at the moment. The phrasal verb **go out with** can mean to go out on a date with someone once, or it can mean to be in a relationship for an extended period of time. In this second case, we usually use it in the present continuous – so Sarah is asking if Emily is currently in a relationship.

Emily says she isn't in a serious relationship because she's not interested in **settling down** yet – in this context, **settle down** means to be in a long-term stable relationship (for example, getting married and having kids, and living a "typical" family life).

You've now learned 16 phrasal verbs about romantic relationships – but wait! It's time for the most important part, which is to practice what you've learned.

Scroll down to the bottom of this lesson and take the quiz to test how well you remember the phrasal verbs. Then do the writing exercise, where you can practice using the phrasal verbs in your own sentences.

Thanks for watching and I'll talk to you tomorrow.

Phrasal Verb	Definition in Context
hit on someone	demonstrate romantic / sexual interest
ask someone out	invite someone for a date (a romantic encounter)
lead someone on	give the person false hope or expectations about the relationship
hit it off with someone	have a great connection from the first moment you meet the person
fall for someone	fall in love with the person
split up / break up	separate, end the relationship
drift apart	slowly go in different directions over time
hook up with	(slang) have sex with
make up	reconcile after a fight
put up with someone	tolerate a difficult, annoying, or unpleasant person
cheat on someone	kiss or have sex with another person (who is not your husband/wife/boyfriend/girlfriend)
make out with someone	kiss the person very passionately
jerk someone around	manipulate the person or use them for your own advantage
go out with someone	1) go on a date with the person once 2) be in a relationship with the person
settle down	be in a long-term stable relationship

Lesson 1 Quiz

Question 1

I _____ my last girlfriend because she wanted kids and I didn't.

- A broke up with
- B fell for
- C put up with

Question 2

My best friend really _____ my cousin - after I introduced them, they spent hours and hours talking.

- A cheated on
- B drifted apart
- C hit it off with

Question 3

My husband and I always _____ pretty fast after an argument - we don't stay angry at each other for very long.

- A lead on
- B jerk around
- C make up

Question 4

I think I'm _____ my co-worker - what should I do? Should I tell him how I feel, or just keep quiet?

- A hooking up with
- B falling for
- C asking out

Question 5

My girlfriend is constantly late - it's annoying, but I love her so I _____ it.

- A hit on
- B make out with
- C put up with

Question 6

Vanessa was furious when she found out that her husband had been _____ her with her sister.

- A cheating on
- B going out with

C settling down

Question 7

Barbara and I _____ a few times, but it never really went anywhere - we're just not very compatible.

A asked out

B broke up

C went out

Question 8

I was very uncomfortable when my friend's father started _____. He's 30 years older than me - and married.

A hitting on me

B putting up with me

C jerking me around

Question 9

Samuel likes to brag about how many women he's _____.

A asked out

B hooked up with

C hit off

Question 10

I've been traveling around the world for the past few years, but I'm starting to think about _____ in one place.

A drifting apart

B making out

C settling down

Writing Exercises

How to get the most benefit from these exercises:

Try to use the phrasal verb in your answer!

For example, question #2 asks “Who is a person that you really hit it off with?”

Don’t just answer, “My friend Nathan.”

Instead, say (or write) – “**I really hit it off with my friend Nathan** – we met at a baseball game and discovered we had a lot in common.”

Why? Because **actually using** the phrasal verb will help you remember it better.

1. Write about a time when someone was **hitting on you**. How did you react?
2. Who is a person that you really **hit it off with**?
3. How did your previous relationship end – why did you **break up**?
4. What should a couple do if they begin to **drift apart**, but they want to save the relationship?
5. What is one thing (or one type of person) that you will NOT **put up with** in a relationship?
6. Do you think it’s possible to save a relationship after one person **cheats on** the other?
7. At the moment, are you enjoying the single life, or are you interested in **settling down**? (Or have you already settled down?)

Want to get corrections? [E-mail me your answers!](mailto:shayna@espressoenglish.net)

Answers - Quiz 1

- 1) A
- 2) C
- 3) C
- 4) B
- 5) C
- 6) A
- 7) C
- 8) A
- 9) B
- 10) C

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