

Transitive and intransitive

Just as with other verbs, some phrasal verbs are transitive (= they need an object) and others are intransitive (= they do not need an object). There is also a group of phrasal verbs that can be both transitive and intransitive. In the *Collins COBUILD Phrasal Verbs Dictionary*, this group of phrasal verbs are shown in the following way:

This phrasal verb can be used with an object...

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

give up something □ Philip has given up smoking.

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

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

...and also without an object.

In these exercises, we look at phrasal verbs which sometimes need an object and sometimes do not.

- 1 Read Sophie's message to her friend, Jen. Find six phrasal verbs and write the infinitive form of each. Write *T* (transitive) if the verb is used with an object and *I* (intransitive) if it is not.

1 *trip over* *T*

2

3

4

5

6



Hi Jen,

Hope you're okay.

(Sorry, this is a bit of a moan, but things here are driving me mad!!!)

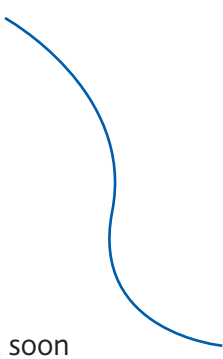
I've just tripped over a shoe that Helen left in the middle of the floor and hurt my ankle. H is so lazy – she never tidies up after herself and she very rarely clears up after meals, unless I ask her to. Also, she chats loudly till two or three in the morning with her mates. Last night they woke me up at two o'clock with their laughing and shouting. I asked them to be a bit quieter but Helen just laughed and told me to join in. (You can probably imagine what I said at this point!)

This is such a cold apartment – I'm drinking a cup of hot chocolate as I write just to warm myself up. ☹

Hope you're doing better,

Love, Sophie x

2 Match the sentence halves. Write *T* (transitive) if the verb is used with an object and *I* (intransitive) if it is not.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 My mum asked me to tidy up | a and hurt her ankle. |
| 2 I usually wake up | b the dishes, please? |
| 3 She tripped over in the street | c the celebrations! |
| 4 Adrian, come and join in | d warm up. |
| 5 Put this sweater on and you'll soon | e my bedroom. <i>T</i> |
| 6 Could you clear up | f at around seven o'clock. |
- 

3 Underline the correct verb. Write *T* (transitive) if the verb is used with an object and *I* (intransitive) if it is not.

- 1 It takes about five minutes for the oven to heat up / hot up. *I*
- 2 I've *saved up* / *kept up* three thousand dollars towards a new car.
- 3 Terrorists *exploded up* / *blew up* the whole building.
- 4 They were walking so fast that I couldn't *catch up* / *level up*.
- 5 If the company doesn't make enough money, they'll *end it down* / *close it down*.
- 6 The organization was failing, so the board had to *wind it down* / *run it down*.

Transitive and intransitive – Answer key

Exercise 1

- 1 trip over (T)
- 2 tidy up (I)
- 3 clear up (I)
- 4 wake up (T)
- 5 join in (I)
- 6 warm up (T)

Exercise 2

- 1 e (T)
- 2 f (I)
- 3 a (I)
- 4 c (T)
- 5 d (I)
- 6 b (T)

Exercise 3

- 1 heat up (I)
- 2 saved up (T)
- 3 blew up (T)
- 4 catch up (I)
- 5 close it down (T)
- 6 wind it down (T)