

Lesson Plan: Phrasal verbs with make

Level	Intermediate (B1–B2)
Time	60–75 minutes
Skills	Vocabulary, speaking, writing
Focus	Make up, make out, make for, make do, make off with, make over, make up for, make of

OBJECTIVES

By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- Learn and use 10+ make phrasal verbs accurately in context
- Understand multiple meanings: make up (invent / reconcile / apply cosmetics)
- Use make phrasal verbs naturally in spoken and written English
- Distinguish subtle meaning differences between related make phrasal verbs

TARGET LANGUAGE & EXAMPLES

Movement / obtaining phrasal verbs

- make for — move towards; contribute to
- make off (with) — steal and escape quickly
- make away with — similar to make off with (slightly formal)

Creating / resolving phrasal verbs

- make up — invent (a story); apply cosmetics; reconcile after an argument
- make over — transform someone's appearance
- make up for — compensate for something missed or wrong

Understanding / managing phrasal verbs

- make out — manage to see/hear; claim/assert; (AmE informal) kiss
- make do (with) — manage with something less than ideal
- make of — understand or have an opinion about

In natural context

- She made up an excuse for being late. / They made up after the argument.
- Can you make out what it says? The handwriting is terrible.
- We'll have to make do without a projector — the screen is broken.
- He made off with the entire contents of the cash register.
- I can't make him out — one minute friendly, the next he ignores everyone.

Meaning & Nuance

Phrasal verb	Primary meaning	Secondary/idiomatic meaning
make up	invent / fabricate	reconcile after a fight / apply cosmetics
make out	claim / write a document	manage to see or hear / (AmE informal) kiss

make for	head towards	contribute to / lead to
make do with	manage with less than ideal	—
make up for	compensate for something	'make up for lost time' = work hard to catch up
make of	form an opinion about	'What do you make of this?' = what do you think?

LESSON PROCEDURE

1. Warm-up: Context clues (10 min)

Task: 5 sentences with make phrasal verbs. Students guess the meaning from context.

- 'She made up a story about being stuck in traffic.' → made up = invented?

→ *Discuss: how did you work out the meaning?*

2. Presentation (15 min)

Task: Introduce each phrasal verb with at least two example sentences.

- Focus extra time on make up and make out — both have multiple meanings.
- Drill: 'Which meaning is used in this context?'

3. Gap-fill in short stories (15 min)

Task: Two short texts. Students identify and explain all make phrasal verbs.

- Text 1: A story about a con artist who makes off with valuables.
- Text 2: A workplace story about making do with a small budget.

→ *Authentic-feeling context makes meaning memorable.*

4. Speaking: Tell a story (15 min)

Task: Students tell a short anecdote using at least 3 make phrasal verbs.

- Prompts: a time something went wrong / an argument resolved / a difficult situation managed.
- Others note which phrasal verbs were used.

TEACHER NOTES

- Make up is by far the most versatile — plan extra time on its multiple meanings.
- 'What do you make of it?' is a great expression to teach alongside — very high frequency in natural speech.

EXTENSION / HOMEWORK

Choose one or more:

1. Write a short story (100–120 words) using at least 5 make phrasal verbs.
2. Find 5 make phrasal verbs in a news article or website and explain their meaning in context.
3. Write 3 pairs of sentences showing two different meanings of make up, make out, and make for.