

# MAIRO VERGARA

## ADVANCED PHRASAL VERBS COURSE

### Lesson 42 | Transcript

Hi, I'm Sonja Berger. The setting for today's phrasal verb video is Paarl Mountain. I'm standing on top of the mountain. It forms the backdrop to the town in which I live. Paarl is the Dutch word for 'pearl' which is what the Communists called the mountain, and the Indigenous people called it 'Tortoise mountain'. Both those names, I think are very fitting. Our three phrasal verbs are 'break through', 'take off' and 'take over'.

'Breakthrough' has two different meanings. One is literal and one is figurative. Let's start with the literal meaning. When you break through, you force your way through something that is trying to stop you; through a barrier. A barrier is an obstacle that prevents you from going from one place to the other. Some barriers cannot be broken through; this mountain behind me for instance. You can't break through that. You'll have to go round; but you can break through things like fences. Cattle can break through fences, for example. That was a sample sentence but let's do an official first sample sentence from the world of rugby. Here it is:

***The goal in rugby is to break through the defense of the opposition.***

Can you see how the guys in blue broke through the defense of the opposition? The opposition tried to create a barrier with their bodies but they were not successful. The other team managed to force their way through that barrier and hence the guy lying on the ground. That was the amount of force that the blue team used. So this guy is left lying on the ground because they had broken through his defense.

The second sample sentence that illustrates the literal meaning of 'break through' is the following:

*The magnificent granite domes that gave Paarl Mountain its name, were formed 500 million years ago when molten rock started pushing upwards into cracks and in some cases, broke through the rocks above.*

You can imagine the force of those geological processes. I also want you to note the tense usage here. It breaks through, it broke through (that's the past tense), it had broken through. That's the past perfect tense.

Let's talk about the figurative meaning of 'break through'. It's to force yourself through a situation that is preventing you from making progress. In this case there's a metaphorical meaning. There are no real physical barriers. The barriers that you have to force yourself through are things like race, class and gender. I'll give you a sample sentence that illustrates this metaphorical or figurative meaning of 'break through'.

*For years, women struggled to break through the glass ceiling.*

For those of you who don't know what the 'glass ceiling' is, it is a metaphorical, invisible barrier that women find difficult to break through in order to reach positions of power. The idea is that society is structured in such a way that it's difficult for women to get those elite positions of power. Those who know Shonda Rhimes, the famous African American producer of shows such as 'Grey's Anatomy' might have seen the speech in which she says that she didn't actually break through the glass ceiling, but that thousands of women before her ran into that ceiling, bruised themselves, had shards of glass in their heads (metaphorically speaking) trying to make the holes through which her generation could break through. In other words, they could penetrate it, they could improve their position; they could make progress.

Those of you who've been paying attention to the landscape will have noticed that I have been leading you into the forest between the two granite outcrops, slowly but surely. And this is where I'll talk to you about

the phrasal verb 'take off'. 'Take off' has five different meanings. The first meaning is literal, to take something off. For instance, your clothes or your scarf because it's getting hot. Here's another sample sentence, which the girls might enjoy:

***The rugby players took off their shirts after the game.***

'Take off' also means to take flight. For instance, a plane takes off. Or a bird takes off. Just now, I was trying to film a few sparrows taking off from the granite rocks up here but unfortunately they were too quick for me so I couldn't catch them in the act of taking off; of becoming airborne.

The third meaning of 'take off' is to depart, usually quite suddenly. For instance:

***He took off before he paid his rent.***

In other words, here's a sense of taking off very quickly, in fact there's a sense of fleeing. This guy did not want to pay his rent so he took off, he ran away. Another example would be:

***She took off for Turkey, after her son's death. She simply couldn't stand being at home anymore.***

So in this case, the woman departed. She left because her son had died and she was sad and she went somewhere else.

The fourth meaning of 'take off' is to become successful or popular. Usually a product becomes successful or popular. Example sentence:

***During the 80s when cell phones or mobiles came out, I never thought they would take off. How wrong can you be.***

Billions of people use cell phones now and I'm one of them. So when a product takes off it, becomes successful.

The fifth meaning of 'take off' is to discontinue a product. To take it off the shelf, to take it off the market. Sample sentence: ***They took the painkiller off the market after it had been linked to almost 28,000 heart attacks between 1999 and 2003.***

So this product proved to be very, very harmful and therefore, they discontinued it. They removed it from the shelves of shops, supermarkets etcetera.

Our third phrasal verb is 'take over'. The first meaning is to start doing something that someone else had been doing up to that point. Sample sentence:

***I wish someone else could take over the camera work so I can focus on talking to you.***

In other words, I'd like somebody else to start doing the filming while I concentrate on the lesson.

The second meaning of 'take over' is to take control of something. And the first sample sentence once again comes from the rugby scenario I've been using on and off in this video. Here it is:

***Number 14 has just taken over as captain of the team.***

So, number 14, rugby player number 14 has now become the captain. He has taken over as captain. He is now in control of the team. You can also use that sense of 'take over' in a sentence such as:

***The new Dean has just taken over. The Dean of engineering has just taken over.***

In other words, he is now in control of the Engineering Faculty. Or you could use it in an economic sense where one company takes over another company. They take control of the other company, very often by buying enough shares to give them the controlling share.

Well, that's the end of today's phrasal verb video. I hope that you will manage to break through any barriers that are preventing you from mastering English phrasal verbs. I'm about to take off and I will let nature and her silence take over this magnificent mountain again. Thanks for making the journey with me today.