

Brighten Up Your Vocabulary: Common Phrasal Verbs for Weather Talk

The English language is rich with phrasal verbs—those delightful combinations of verbs and prepositions or adverbs that add colour and nuance to our conversations. When it comes to discussing the weather, a quintessentially British topic, phrasal verbs come in particularly handy. Below, we'll explore some common phrasal verbs related to the weather, providing examples to help you use them with ease.

1. Clear Up

Meaning: To become brighter or sunnier.

Example: "It's been raining all morning, but it looks like it's starting to clear up now."

This phrasal verb is perfect for describing the transition from cloudy or rainy weather to sunshine. It captures that hopeful moment when the sky begins to brighten, and we anticipate better weather ahead.

2. Cloud Over

Meaning: To become cloudy.

Example: "We were enjoying a sunny day at the beach, but then it suddenly started to cloud over."

Use this phrasal verb when the sky fills with clouds, often hinting at impending rain or a change in weather.

3. Cool Down

Meaning: To become cooler.

Example: "It was scorching hot in the afternoon, but it's starting to cool down now that the sun is setting."

This phrase is useful for describing the drop in temperature, especially after a particularly warm period.

4. Warm Up

Meaning: To become warmer.

Example: "It's quite chilly this morning, but it should warm up by midday."

The opposite of cool down, this phrasal verb signals a rise in temperature, often welcome during the colder months.

5. Dry Up

Meaning: To become dry or stop being wet.

Example: "The rain has finally stopped, and the streets are starting to dry up."

This is particularly useful after a downpour when the ground begins to lose its wetness.

6. Blow Over

Meaning: To pass without causing serious impact.

Example: "The storm was intense, but it blew over quickly, and we were able to go outside again."

This phrasal verb is often used metaphorically as well, to indicate that a problem or conflict has passed.

7. Pour Down

Meaning: To rain heavily.

Example: "We wanted to go for a walk, but it started to pour down, so we stayed inside."

This vividly describes a heavy, relentless rain, typical of British weather.

8. Blow In

Meaning: To arrive suddenly.

Example: "A cold front blew in from the north, bringing with it snow and ice."

This phrase can describe weather changes that arrive abruptly and often dramatically.

9. Fog Up

Meaning: To become covered with fog or mist.

Example: "The windows started to fog up, so we couldn't see outside."

Useful for those moments when visibility drops due to fog or mist, both outdoors and indoors (e.g., fogged-up glasses or windows).

10. Rain Off

Meaning: To cancel an event because of rain.

Example: "The cricket match was rained off, so we went to the pub instead."

A very British experience indeed—plans thwarted by the unpredictable weather!

Weather-related phrasal verbs not only help us describe the atmospheric conditions but also enrich our communication with vivid imagery and precision. Whether you're chatting about the sudden downpour that ruined your picnic or the welcome sunshine after days of gloom, these phrasal verbs will ensure your conversation is both engaging and accurate. So, next time you find yourself talking about the weather (a national pastime in Britain), try slipping in a few of these phrases and watch your English skills brighten up!

After reading this post, take a look at the activities below to test what you have learned today!

Complete following sentences with the correct phrasal verb from the options below:

1. After the storm, the sky started to _____ and the sun came out.

- a) cloud over
- b) cool down
- c) clear up
- d) fog up

2. It was a lovely day until it began to _____ and rain poured down.

- a) dry up
- b) cloud over
- c) warm up
- d) blow in

3. We had to cancel the outdoor concert because it _____.

- a) cleared up
- b) warmed up
- c) cooled down
- d) rained off

4. When the temperatures dropped in the evening, the air began to _____.

- a) cool down
- b) warm up
- c) dry up
- d) pour down

5. A sudden snowstorm _____ from the north, surprising everyone.

- a) blew in
- b) warmed up
- c) fogged up
- d) rained off

6. After the heavy rain, it took a few hours for the streets to _____.

- a) blow over
- b) fog up
- c) dry up
- d) cool down

7. As the evening went on, the windows began to _____ due to the difference in temperature inside and outside.

- a) blow over
- b) fog up
- c) clear up
- d) warm up

8. They stayed inside until the storm had _____ and it was safe to go out.

- a) warmed up
- b) blown over
- c) cooled down
- d) fogged up

Complete the sentence with the correct phrasal verb:

1. After days of rain, we were relieved to see the weather finally _____.
2. The forecast said it would be sunny, but it suddenly _____ and started to rain.
3. The temperature should _____ by the afternoon, so we can go for a walk then.
4. As the evening approaches, it will _____, so bring a jacket.
5. The streets were wet, but they started to _____ once the rain stopped.

6. A cold front _____ overnight, bringing frost and snow.
7. The heavy rain didn't last long and quickly _____.
8. The match was _____ due to the unexpected downpour.
9. When we woke up, we couldn't see outside because the windows had _____.
10. It was pouring earlier, but it looks like the rain is starting to _____ now.

Answer key

Multiple Choice:

1. c) clear up
2. b) cloud over
3. d) rained off
4. a) cool down
5. a) blew in
6. c) dry up
7. b) fog up
8. b) blown over

Fill in the Gaps:

1. clear up
2. clouded over
3. warm up
4. cool down
5. dry up
6. blew in
7. blew over
8. rained off
9. fogged up
10. clear up