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# BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

## 6 Minute Vocabulary

### Multi-word verbs



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*NB: This is not a word-for-word transcript*

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#### **Catherine**

Hello and welcome to 6 Minute Vocabulary with me, Catherine...

#### **Rob**

And me, Rob. Hello. In this show we're going to **find out about** multi-word verbs.

#### **Catherine**

That's right: we're **looking into** verb phrases that are **made up of** more than one word. And if you'd like an example, Rob and I have used three of them already.

#### **Rob**

It's incredible: we have! Catherine you said **looking into** and **made up of**.

#### **Catherine**

Yep, and Rob you said **find out about**. And some people call this type of multi-word verb a phrasal verb.

#### **Rob**

They do. And in this programme, we'll look at lots of multi-word verbs...

#### **Catherine**

... we'll explain what they mean ...

#### **Rob**

There'll be a quiz ...

#### **Catherine**

And we'll leave you with a top tip for learning vocabulary.

#### **Rob**

So, let's get started by listening to Andre – a student from France who is studying in London.

**Catherine**

Yep, and he's talking about his weekend. And here are two questions for you while you listen. First, did Andre meet up with his friends?

**Rob**

And second, Andre's English is pretty good, but it sounds a bit unnatural. Why is that? Here's Andre.

**INSERT**

**Andre**

I wanted to **rendezvous** with friends at the shopping centre, but I couldn't find them. In the end, I **abandoned** the day. They said they couldn't find me, but I think they just **invented** a story!

**Catherine**

Thank you, Andre. And we asked you if Andre managed to meet his friends.

**Rob**

And sadly he didn't. He said he abandoned the day. Well done if you got that at home. But why did Andre's English sound unnatural?

**Catherine**

Well, we could understand him OK, but some of the words he used were a little bit too formal for everyday natural spoken English.

**Rob**

Yes, that's right. When we're speaking, some words, especially verbs that originally come from Latin – make us sound much too formal. Andre used quite a few of these – for example he said **abandon** the day.

**Catherine**

Yeah - abandon the day. Well, to sound more natural, Andre could use a multi-word verb instead, and say he **gave up on** the day. Now, **give up on something** has a very similar meaning to **abandon** in Andre's sentence – they both mean **stop doing something, because you're not succeeding**. And Andre stopped hoping he would find his friends.

**Rob**

So, **give up on** is a phrasal verb. In English, these are made up of verbs and prepositions.

**Catherine**

Yep so, we've got the verb **give** and the prepositions **up** and **on**. And Andre needs to use more of these phrasal verbs when he's speaking.

**Rob**

So, are we saying that these Latinate verbs are wrong? Or not as good as the multi-word verbs? Can we forget about learning Latinate verbs then?

**Catherine**

Well, that would be good, Rob. But, actually no, you do need to learn them and they're not wrong: it's just a question of context. You'll see a lot more of the Latinate verbs in written English and in formal English, so yep, you do need to learn both types, and use the right one in the right situation. So, for example, Andre said he said he planned to **rendezvous** with friends. Now, if he changes the Latin **rendezvous** to **meet up with**, the meaning doesn't really change, it just makes his speaking sound more natural.

**Rob**

OK, well, let's listen to one more example.

**INSERT**

**Andre**

I think they just invented a story!

**Catherine**

This would sound better as **I think they just made up a story**. When you **make something up**, you say something that isn't true.

**Rob**

And now, let's listen to Andre again, this time with the multi-word verbs...

**INSERT**

**Andre**

I wanted to **meet up with** friends at the shopping centre, but I couldn't find them. In the end, I **gave up on** the day. They said they couldn't find me, but I think they just **made up** a story!

**Catherine**

Well done Andre. That's a lot better.

**IDENT**

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**Rob**

And now it's quiz time! What goes in this gap? I'm going to \_\_\_\_\_ my family next weekend. Is it a) meet on with b) meet up to or c) meet up with?

**Catherine**

The verb is c) meet up with. Number 2. My brother isn't very reliable. He's always a) making on excuses b) making up excuses or c) inventing up excuses.

**Rob**

He's always... b) making up excuses. And number 3. What multi-word verb has a similar meaning to the verb **abandon**?

**Catherine**

And the answer is: **give up on**. Well done if you got those right at home.

That brings us almost to the end of today's programme.

**Rob**

But before we go, here's today's top tip for learning vocabulary: try to learn phrasal verbs and their Latin-based partners in pairs. That way, you'll have the right verb for the right situation. So, we're almost out of time, but Catherine very quickly can you remind us of some of these multi-word verbs we've heard today?

**Catherine**

Most certainly. We had **look into, made up of, find out about, meet up with, give up on** and **made up**.

**Rob**

Thanks. Very useful. There's more about this at [BBC learning English dot com](http://BBClearningEnglish.com). Join us again for more 6 Minute Vocabulary.

**Both**

Bye!

## Vocabulary points to take away

Latin-based verb	Phrasal verb
rendezvous	meet up with
abandon	give up on
invent (a story/an excuse)	make up (a story/an excuse)