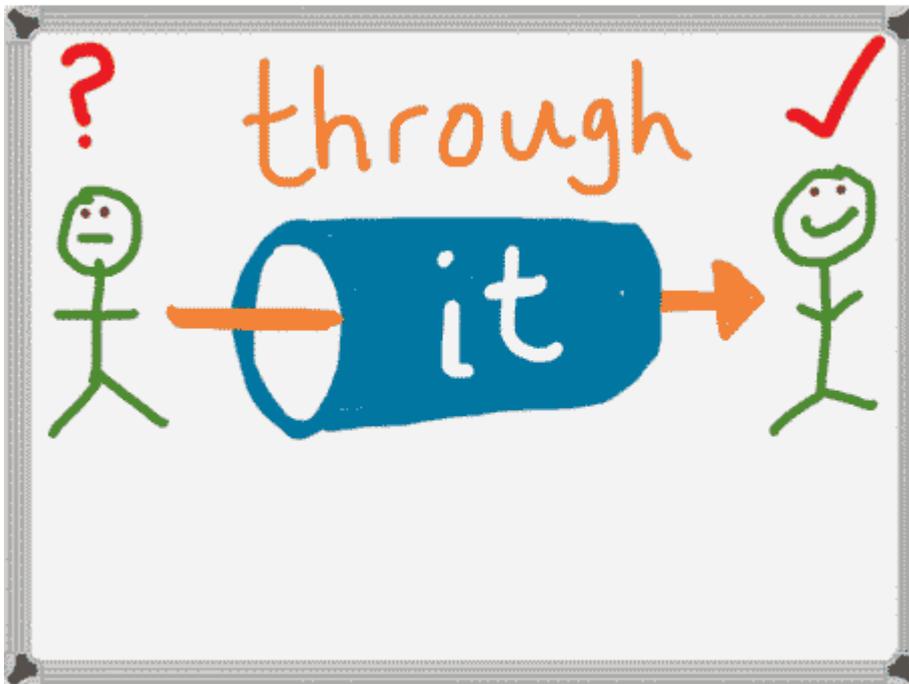


## How to understand phrasal verbs

(by Jane Lawson at DailyStep.com)

Phrasal verbs are basically mental images. You need to understand the image in a phrasal verb in order to understand why the same phrasal verb can have so many meanings. These meanings might seem unrelated at first, but when you see the image, it's easy to understand the various meanings of a phrasal verb.

Take a look at the picture. As you can see, I'm an English teacher, not an artist! But actually the simplicity of the picture shows just how simple mental image is. Today we are looking at the phrasal verb GET THROUGH, but this same image will work for almost any phrasal verb with THROUGH as the particle, such as GO THROUGH, BE THROUGH, PUT THROUGH and so on.



The **big blue IT** here is like a tunnel. The person needs to GET THROUGH the tunnel in order to achieve what he wants. Note that GET here means TRAVEL, or GO (as Get has many meanings!) The meaning of the phrasal verb depends on what the tunnel, the big blue IT, represents.

### Look at 5 common meanings of GET THROUGH:

1. She will have to work very hard **to get through her exams**. (= succeed in her exams"). Here, the IT is her exams.
2. **I have a lot of work to get through** this weekend. (= I have a lot of work to finish) Here, the IT is my work.

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3. He drinks too much coffee – sometimes **he gets through 15 cups per day!** (= sometimes he consumes 15 cups per day) Here, the IT is 15 cups of coffee.
4. The refugees will need our help **to get through the winter.** (= to survive the winter) Here, the IT is the winter, but it could be any difficult experience.
5. I tried to call him on his mobile phone but **I couldn't get through.** (= I couldn't reach him) Here, the IT is the telephone system.

So, in each example we use the same phrasal verb with a completely different meaning – BUT ALWAYS WITH THE SAME MENTAL IMAGE.

Now, **go to the bottom of this blog page for a short QUIZ** to help you learn these meanings, and also a few more meanings. Then try to write your own sentences using GET THROUGH.

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