

Prepositional Idioms - Worksheet #4

The verb “back,” which literally means “to support by material or moral assistance” or “to cause to go back or in reverse,” yields at least nine different meanings when followed by different prepositions.

back up (1) – move backwards or in reverse.

back out of – not keep a promise or deal.

back into – hit something while moving backwards.

back out – renege from a promise or deal.

back of – unspoken self-knowledge about the outcome of something

back off – escape or run away from something.

back away – get out from a previous commitment.

back down – cease defending one’s position in a debate or argument.

back up (2) – provide support to someone or something.

Directions:

Fill in the blank with the correct prepositional verb from the list above.

1. He’s not the type who’ll _____ from a fight because of veiled threats.
2. The investors _____ from the deal for undisclosed reasons.
3. The boxer _____ from the title fight due to disagreements over the prize money.
4. The reporter was asked to _____ his exposé with documentary evidence.
5. She _____ the car so fast that it hit the lamppost.
6. His lawyer _____ of the case the day before the trial.
7. She _____ a lamppost while getting out of the parking slot.
8. The police told the demonstrators to _____ or face dispersal.
9. He decided to fight, but _____ his mind he knew that it was a losing battle.

Answers

back down – cease defending one’s position in a debate or argument.
He’s not the type who’ll *back down* from a fight because of veiled threats.

back away – get out from a previous commitment.
The consortium partner *backed away* from the deal for undisclosed reasons.

back out – renege from a promise or deal.
The boxer *backed out* from the title fight due to disagreements over the prize money.

back up (1) – provide support to someone or something.
The reporter was asked to *back up* his exposé with documentary evidence.

back up (2) – move backwards or in reverse.
She *backed up* the car so fast that it hit the lamppost.

back out of – not keep a promise or deal.
His lawyer *backed out* of the case the day before the trial.

back into – hit something while moving backwards.
She *backed into* a lamppost while getting out of the parking slot.

back off – escape or run away from something.
The police told the demonstrators to *back off* or face dispersal.

back of – unspoken self-knowledge about the outcome of something
He decided to fight, but *back of* his mind he knew that it was a losing battle.