

Vocabulary – “Mexer”

The Portuguese verb “mexer” can be translated to various verbs or phrasal verbs in English, depending on the context. Sometimes a preposition is necessary.

to use	She didn't hear, as she was using her cell phone.
to touch	Don't touch my things!
to move	Now, move the mouse to the left.
to fiddle with/ to play with	She always fiddles with her hair during our conversations. She always plays with her hair during our conversations. <i>(Note: we always “fiddle” using our fingers)</i>
to mix	Now, mix the tomatoes with the meat.
to stir	Now, stir the soup for 2 minutes until it's smooth.
to shake	The waiter shook the cocktail before he served it. Come on everybody – shake your bodies!
to tease	Bob always teases his younger brother.
to provoke	Don't provoke the snake, as it's poisonous.
to mess with	My cousin always messes with my head. Workmen always mess with women on the street.
to affect	The pandemic has affected the world economy.

Sometimes you can interchange the verbs, but not always. For example:

She didn't hear, as she was **using** her cell phone.
She didn't hear, as she was **fiddling with** her cell phone.
She didn't hear, as she was **playing with** her cell phone.

Don't **touch** my things!
Don't **fiddle with** my things!
Don't **mess with** my things!

She always **fiddles with** her hair during our conversations.
She always **plays with** her hair during our conversations.
She always **touches** her hair during our conversations.

Bob always **teases** his younger brother.
Bob always **provokes** his younger brother.
Bob always **messes with** his younger brother.

Don't **provoke** the snake, as it's poisonous.
Don't **touch** the snake, as it's poisonous.
Don't **tease** the snake, as it's poisonous.
Don't **mess with** the snake, as it's poisonous.

Exercise. Choose a verb to complete the sentences, and use the preposition 'with' if necessary.

1. You shouldn't _____ objects in your pocket when you give a speech.
2. Please don't _____ your cell phones during the lesson.
3. If you don't _____ the milk, it will burn.
4. I don't like it when you _____ my things.
5. They say that you should never _____ a sleeping animal.
6. I always _____ my sister – that's probably why she doesn't like me.
7. Can you help me? I want to _____ the piano to the other side of the room.
8. I don't like psychologists, they _____ your mind.
9. Please don't _____ the pan – it's very hot, you can burn your hand.
10. A: Where is Martin? B: He is _____ his computer in his bedroom.