



GRAMMAR

PREPOSITIONS OF PLACE AND TIME

What is a preposition?

It is a function word that typically combines with a noun phrase to form a phrase which usually expresses a modification. Among the 8 parts of speech, the preposition is one of the most important parts of a sentence. In its simplest sense, the preposition can be regarded as a locator not only of place, but also of time.

We can classify prepositions in two main groups:

- 1) Prepositions of place
- 2) Prepositions of time

1) Prepositions of place

Preposition of place	Explanation	Example
in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • inside 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I watch TV in the living-room. • I live in New York. • Look at the picture in the book. • She looks at herself in the mirror. • She is in the car. • Look at the girl in the picture. • This is the best team in the world.
at	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • used to show an exact position or particular place • table • events • place where you are to do something typical (watch a film, study, work) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I met her at the entrance, at the bus stop. • She sat at the table. • at a concert, at the party • at the movies, at university, at work

on	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • attached • next to or along the side of (river) • used to show that something is in a position above something else and touching it • left, right • a floor in a house • used for showing some methods of travelling • television, radio 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look at the picture on the wall. • Cambridge is on the River Cam. • The book is on the desk. • A smile on his face • The shop is on the left. • My apartment is on the first floor. • I love travelling on trains /on the bus / on a plane. • My favourite program on TV, on the radio
by, next to, beside, near	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • not far away in distance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The girl who is by / next to / beside the house
between	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in or into the space which separates two places, people or objects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The town lies halfway between Rome and Florence.
behind	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • at the back (of) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I hung my coat behind the door.
in front of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • further forward than someone or something else 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She started talking to the man in front of her.
under	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lower than (or covered by) something else 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The cat is under the chair.
below	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lower than something else 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The plane is just below the the cloud.
over	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • above or higher than something else, sometimes so that one thing covers the other • more than • across from one side to the other • overcoming an obstacle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She held the umbrella over both of us. • Most of the carpets are over \$100. • I walked over the bridge. • She jumped over the gate.
above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • higher than something else, but not directly over it 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a path above the lake
across	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • from one side to the other of something with clear limits/ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She walked across the field/road.

	getting to the other side	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> He sailed across the Atlantic.
through	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> from one end or side of something to the other 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They walked slowly through the woods.
to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> in the direction of bed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We went to Prague last year. I go to bed at ten.
into	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> towards the inside or middle of something and about to be contained, surrounded or enclosed by it 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shall we go into the garden?
towards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> in the direction of, or closer to someone or something 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> She stood up and walked towards him.
onto	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> used to show movement into or on a particular place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I slipped as I stepped onto the platform.
from	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> used to show the place where someone or something starts: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What time does the flight from Amsterdam arrive?

2) Prepositions of time

Preposition of time	Explanations	Example
on	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> days weekend (American English) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many shops don't open on Sundays. What did you do on the weekend?
in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> months / seasons / year morning / evening / afternoon period of time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I visited Italy in July, in spring, in 1994 In the evenings, I like to relax. This is the first cigarette I've had in three years.
at	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> night weekend (British English) used to show an exact or a particular time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It gets cold at night. What did you do at the weekend? There's a meeting at 2.30 this afternoon / at lunch time.

since	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> from a particular time in the past until a later time, or until now 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> England hasn't won the World Cup in football since 1966.
for	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> used to show an amount of time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I'm just going to bed for an hour or so.
ago	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> back in the past; back in time from the present 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The dinosaurs died out 65 million years ago.
before	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> at or during a time earlier than 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> She's always up before dawn.
to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> used when saying the time to mean before the stated hour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It's twenty to six.
past	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> telling the time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> five past ten
to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> until a particular time, marking end of a period of time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It's only two weeks to Christmas.
from	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> used to show the time when something starts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The museum is open from 9.30 to 6.00 Tuesday to Sunday.
till / until	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> up to (the time that) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We waited till / until half past six for you.
by	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> not later than; at or before 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> She had promised to be back by five o'clock.

WORKSHEET

1) Choose the right preposition of place:

- At/ In/ On** the picture, I can see a family **at/ in/ on** a kitchen.
- There is a dish full of fruits **at/ in/ on** the worktop.
- The mother is standing **in front of/ across** her son and daughter.
- She is holding a vase **at/ on/ in** her hand.
- The son and the daughter are sitting **at/ on/ in** the worktop smiling **at/ on/ in** each other.
- There are beautiful cupboards **at/ in/ into/ on** the wall.
- There is a window **behind/ under** the mother.
- The woman is looking **at/ on/ to** her daughter.

2) Choose the right preposition of time:

1. What are you doing **at/ in/ on** Saturday?
2. I am going to the countryside **at/ in/ on** the weekend.
3. I haven't been to the countryside **for/ since/ on** December.
4. What time are you leaving?

I am leaving **at/ in/ on** the afternoon; maybe **at/ in/ on** three o'clock pm. I am coming back **at/ in/ on** Sunday evening. I'll catch the half **to/ past** seven train **on/ at/ in** Sunday. I'll be here **by/ since/ until** nine o'clock.

5. So you'll be there **by/ since/ until/ for** the whole weekend. I'll be missing you!