

Prepositions

A Preposition is a word placed before a Noun or Noun - equivalent to show in what relation the person or thing denoted thereby stands to something else. The Noun or Noun-equivalent is called the Object of the Preposition.

e.g.

There is a book on the table.

He died in the morning.

Prepositions can be studied by dividing them into two parts:

- i. Theoretical Part
- ii. Applied Part

Theoretical Part (Some prepositions distinguished)

Some prepositions can be studied in pairs as follows:

At, In:

1. 'At' is used with places usually small towns and villages. It is also used before a definite point of time and definite part of space.

'In' is used with countries and large towns and before a period of time.

e.g.

He lives at Koteswor.

She always gets up at 6 am.

I saw a dead rat at the end of the passage.

He lives in Biratnagar.

She will come in two days.

2. We use 'at' and 'in' in the following cases:

at night, at midnight, at mid-day, at dawn, at dusk, at sunset, at sunrise

BUT

In the morning, in the afternoon, in the evening

In, Into:

'In' denotes rest position inside something. 'Into' denotes motion towards inside from outside.

e.g.

There are two books in my bag, and I put one more into it.

By, With:

'By' is used to indicate the doer or agent of an action. 'With' indicates the material, instrument or tool used in the action.

e.g.

The table was broken by John with a hammer.

He is writing with a black marker.

In, After:

'In' is used with a period of future time. 'After' is used with a period of past time.

e.g.

He will reach there in two days.

She came back after two days.

In, Within:

'In' means at the end of a future period. 'Within' means before the end of a future period.

e.g.

I shall be here in (= at the end of) two hours.

I shall be there within (= before the end of) two hours.

On, Upon:

'On' is used in speaking of things at rest. 'Upon' is used in speaking of things in motion.

e.g.

There are two books on the table.

The tiger came upon the hunter.

The tiger sprang upon the hunter.

Before, Within:

'Before' denotes point of time. 'Within' denotes period of time.

e.g.

The project will be over before next Monday.

He will return from there within two months.

At, About:

'At' denotes a fixed moment. 'About' suggests proximity to a certain time.

e.g.

She left her office at 5 pm.

It is about 8 o'clock.

Between, Among:

'Between' is used for two persons, places or things. 'Among' is used for more than two persons, places or things.

e.g.

Divide this cake between these two children.

Divide this cake among these four children.

Beside, Besides:

'Beside' means 'at the side of'. 'Besides' means 'in addition to'.

e.g.

Come and sit beside me.

He bought a book besides a diary. He bought a book except a diary.

Since, For:

Since + point of time

For + period of time

'Since' is used only in Perfect Tense / Perfect Continuous Tense, but 'For' is used in all other tenses except the Present Continuous Tense.

e.g.

He has been working since 5 am.

He worked in the field for two hours

From, By:

'From' denotes a point of time. It is used with all the tenses. It is followed by to, till, or until either expressed or understood.

'By' refers to a point of future time and denotes some before that time.

e.g.

He started his job from the age of 25.

He works from morning to evening.

She will have reached Nepalgunj by 5 pm.

Applied Part

1. Nouns Followed by Prepositions

acquaintance with: I have no acquaintance with her.

aptitude for: natural ability or skill

Does he have any aptitude for football?

aversion to: strong dislike

He took an immediate aversion to his boss.

advice on: He gave me proper advice on the use of computer.

agreement on something:

They have no agreement on price hike.

agreement with someone:

The manager had an agreement with the employees.

anxiety of something: strong desire for something

Ramesh had anxiety for going abroad.

adherence to: supporting a particular idea, etc.

He has no adherence to old system of rituals in marriage.

apathy toward sb/sth: lack of interest, enthusiasm or concern

His apathy towards her husband increased day by day.

blame for: He accepted blame for the accident.

bar to: obstruction

He created a great bar to her success.

belief in sth/ sb: trust or confidence in sth/ sb

I have no belief in his honesty.

charge of: accusation

She was arrested on a charge of murder.

concern in sth: share

He has a concern in the business.

cure for sth: remedy

Is there a certain cure for cancer yet?

duty to: We owe a duty to our country.

duty on sth: tax charged on certain goods, esp. on imports

One must pay duties on imported goods from foreign countries.

danger to sb/ sth: Smoking is a danger to health.

distrust of: lack of trust

He has a distrust of that lady.

doubt about: He has no doubt about my success.

failure of sth: not functioning as is expected or required

Failure of crops often results in famine.

failure in sth: lack of success

Failure in one examination should not stop you trying again.

fondness for sb/ sth: liking and affection

He had great fondness for his eldest son.

genius of doing sth: exceptional ability for sth

She has a genius for different languages.

She has a genius for making friends.

genius in subject: person who has this ability

Mr. Adhikari was a genius in mathematics.

guess at: Make a guess at the weather.

heir to sth: person with the legal right to receive property etc. when the owner dies.

He is heir to the throne.

invitation to sb/ sth: that which tempts or encourages sb to do sth

An open window is an invitation to burglars.

judgement on sb: misfortune considered to a punishment from God for doing sth wrong

This failure is a judgement on you for being so lazy.

knack for sth: ability for sth

I have a good knack for managerial task.

leniency to: being merciful

You have shown due leniency to him.

lust for sb: strong sexual desire for sb

He has great lust for that lady.

limit to sth: There is no limit to his ambition.

motive for sth: that which causes sb to act in a particular way; reason

The police could not find a motive for the murder.

nomination to sth: She will have nomination to the post of secretary.

objection to sth/ doing sth:

He has a strong objection to getting up so early.

pity on sb: show mercy towards sb

She has pity on weak persons.

preference for sth: liking for sth

She has a preference for blue.

pride in sb/ sth: I take pride in my son because he has stood first in every exam till now.

regret for sth: It's no use living with regret for the past mistake.

remedy for sth: Only he can provide a popular remedy for toothache.

revenge for sth: He has no feeling of revenge for the insult of his own wife.

skill at sth/ doing sth: ability to do sth well.

He has great skill at telling stories.

a slave to sth/ the slave of sth: person whose way of life is dominated by sth

Rahul is a slave to drink.

Satish is the slave to drink.

subscription to: sum of money subscribed

What's your subscription to the Famine Relief Fund?

surprise at sth: He showed his surprise at the successful result of his wife.

taste for sth: liking or preference

She has a taste for foreign travel.

triumph over sb/ sth: He got triumph over his difficulties.

traitor to sb/ sth: person who betrays a friend, his country, a cause, etc.

He is a traitor to his country.

a victim to: She is a victim to fears.

witness to sth: I was a witness to their quarrel.

Ajectives Followed by Prepositions

accomplished in sth: skilled in sth

He is accomplished in music.

accustomed to sth: used to sth

He quickly became accustomed to the local food.

addicted to sth: He's addicted to alcohol.

afflicted with sb/ sth: having pain or distress.

The old man is afflicted with joint pain.

alarmed to sb/ sth: anxious or afraid

He's alarmed to the divorce.

alive to sth: aware of or responsive to sth

He is fully alive to the possible dangers.

amazed at: He is amazed at the change in his appearance.

averse to sth: opposed to sth

He seems to be averse to hard work.

bent on sth: inclined to sth

He is bent on mischief.

beset with sth/ sb: surrounded by sb/ sth on all sides

The young man is beset with gangsters.

blessed with sb/ sth: fortunate in having sth/ sb

He is blessed with good health.

blind to one's fault: He is completely blind to her faults.

boastful of sth: I'm boastful of my achievement.

born of sth/ sb: owing one's existence to sb/ sth

He was born of Mexican parents.

charge with sth: He was charged with murder.

committed to sth: He is committed to his job.

confident of sth: She is confident of victory.

contented with sth: satisfied with sth

I'm fully contented with his behavior.

convicted of sth: guilty of a crime

He's convicted of her murder.

deaf to sth: unwilling to listen to sth

He is deaf to all requests.

deficient in sth: lacking in sth

She is deficient in experience.

deprive of sth: She is deprived of all sorts of rights.

desirous of sth: Everyone is desirous of peace in the country.

devoid of sth: completely lacking in sth

Muna is utterly devoid of conscience.

disqualified of sth: Naresh is disqualified for the post of secretary.

disqualified from sth/ doing sth:

Their team is disqualified from the competition.

eligible of sth: She is eligible for promotion.

engaged to sb: having agreed to marry

He is engaged to Rasmi.

entitled to sth: giving sb a right to have or to do sth

You are not entitled to unemployment benefit if you have never worked.

envious of sb/ sth: He was envious of his brother's success.

exposed to sth: not sheltered

The roof of this house is exposed to rain.

false of sb/ (doing) sth: I've always been very fond of you.

She is fond of music.

foreign to sb/ sth: not belonging naturally to sb/ sth

Dishonest is foreign to his nature.

gifted with sth: She is gifted with musical talent.

good at sth: Mrs. Sharma is good at French language.

greedy for sth: Her son is greedy for power.

honest in sth: Be honest in your dealing with your boss.

horrified at sth: We were horrified at the sight.

ill with sth: She is ill with diarrhoea.

indifferent to sb/ sth: She is quite indifferent to me these days.

injurious to sb/ sth: Smoking is injurious to health.

inspired with sth: The man is inspired with the skill of teaching.

intimate with sb: I'm intimate with Roshan.

introduced into a place: Those girls were introduced into that hotel.

irrelevant to sth: What you say is irrelevant to the subject.

liable to sth: subject to sth

Offenders are liable to fines of up to Rs. 1,000.

mad with sth: very excited; wild

Rita is mad with anger.

mistaken for sb/ sth: A man was mistaken for John Abraham in the party.

moved with pity: Mahesh was moved with pity when he saw a caged bird.

notorious for sth: She's notorious for her wild behaviour.

obligated to: He's obligated to you for helping him.

offended with sb: hurting the feelings of sb.

He's offended with his wife.

open to sb/ sth: This garden is open to the public.

partial towards sb/sth: The referee was accused of being partial towards the home team.

polite to sb: She is very polite to him.

polite in sb: He is very polite in his manners.

popular with sb: liked or admired by sb

I'm not very popular with the boss at the moment.

profitable to sb: The deal was profitable to all of us.

proud of sb/ sth: I'm really proud of you.

reconciled with sb: Ultimately she became reconciled with her husband.

reduced to sth: Mr. Sherpa was reduced to begging.

regardless of sth: He continued speaking, regardless of my feelings on the matter.

repentant of one's mistakes:

Ogendra is now repentant of his past mistakes.

respectful to sb: He is not respectful to anybody.

rich in sth: Leafy vegetables are rich in vitamin A.

sacred to sb: regarded with great respect

Her marriage is sacred to her.

serviceable to sb: in usable condition

These clothes are serviceable to children.

short of sth: lacking sth

I'm now short of money.

short on sth: lacking (a certain quality)

He's short on tact.

skilful at sth/ doing sth: He is skilful at inventing excuses.

slow at sth: He is very slow at calculus and coordinate geometry.

subject to sb/ sth: under the authority of sb/ sth

Peasants used to be subject to the local landowner.

steeped in sth: having a thorough knowledge of sth

He is steeped in the literature of ancient Greece and Rome.

true to sb/ sth: faithful to sb/ sth

He is true to his friends.

vain of: useless of

She is vain of her beauty.

vexed with sb: I am vexed with her for disobeying me.

vexed at sth: I am vexed at my repeated failures.

void of sth: lacking sth

Her face was void of all interest.

worthy of sth: deserving sth

Her achievements are worthy of the highest praise.

wanting in sth: lacking in quality or quantity.

His behaviour was wanting in courtesy.

Verbs Followed by Prepositions

abide by sth: act in accordance with sth

You must abide by your promise.

abstain from sth: keep oneself away from sth

Abstain from evil and do good.

accord with sth: agree to sth

His behaviour does not accord with his principles.

adhere to sth: remain faithful to sth

She adheres to her opinions.

allude to sb/ sth: mention sb/ sth briefly or indirectly

You alluded to certain developments in your speech— what exactly did you mean?

avail oneself of sth: take advantage of sth

You must avail yourself of every opportunity to speak English.

bestow sth on sb: present sth as a gift to sb

The king bestowed an honour on her.

break with sb/ sth: end a relationship with sb/sth

He broke with their family traditions.

call for sth: demand or need sth

The situation calls for prompt action.

cling to sb/ sth: stay close to sb/ sth

Small children cling to their mothers.

come by sth: obtain sth, usu by effort

I hope that money is honestly come by.

compensate for sth: Nothing can compensate for the loss of one's death.

comply with sth: obey

The rules must be complied with.

confide in sb: trust sb enough to tell a secret to him.

There's no one here I can confide in.

conform to sth: keep to or comply with

The building does not conform to safety regulations.

consent to sth: give agreement

I consented to her proposal.

consist of sth: be composed of sth

The committee consists of ten members.

consist in sth: have sth as its chief element

The beauty of the plan consists in its simplicity.

consult with sb: discuss matter with sb

If you have any confusion at this point, consult with your teacher.

cope with sb/ sth: be able to deal with sth

Learn to cope with problems.

correspond with sb: exchange letters

We've corresponded with each other for five years but I've never actually met him.

deal in sth: sell sth

We deal in hardware.

delight in sth/ doing sth: enjoy sth

He delights in murder.

despair of sb/ sth: have lost all hope

Despair of him; he can't keep a job for more than six months.

dispense with sb/ sth: manage without sb/ sth

He is not yet well enough to dispense with the pills.

dwell on/ upon sth: think, speak or write at length about sth

Let's not dwell on your past mistakes.

die of (a disease): He died of diarrhoea.

die by sth: She died by her own hand.

die down: gradually become less strong

The flames are dying down.

embark on sth: start or engage in (esp. sth new or difficult)

He embarked on a new career.

enter upon/ on sth: begin sth

He entered upon a new career.

fall off: decrease in quantity or quality

Attendance at my lecture has fallen off considerably.

fall through: fail to be completed

Our holiday plans fell through because of transport strikes.

fall in: collapse

The roof of the tunnel fell in.

fall away: desert; leave

His supporters fell away as his popularity declined.

flirt with sb: behave in a romantic way.

He enjoys flirting with the girls in the office.

fly at sb: to attack sb; rush

The dog flew at the beggar.

get at sb: criticize sb repeatedly

He's always getting at his wife.

hear of sb/ sth: be told about or have knowledge of sb/ sth

I've never heard of the place.

indulge in sth: allow oneself to enjoy the pleasure of sth

He has indulged in a long hot bath.

inquire after sb: ask about sb's health or welfare

People called to inquire after the baby.

inquire into sth: investigate sth

We must inquire into the matter.

invest in sth: buy sth expensive but useful

I'm thinking of investing in a new car.

jeer at sb/ sth: laugh at or mock at (sb/ sth)

She jeered at a defeated opponent.

jest at sth: speak or act without seriousness

Never jest at sacred ceremonies.

jump at sth: seize (an opportunity, a chance etc) eagerly

If they offered me a job in the USA, I'd jump at the chance.

jump on sb: criticize or challenge sb sharply

Our maths teacher really used to jump on us when we got our answer wrong.

kick at sth: not to accept sth

He kicked at my offer.

kick against sth: protest about or resist at sth

It's no use kicking against the rules.

keep sb on: continue to employ sb

He's incompetent and not worth keeping on.

keep to sth: not wander from or leave.

Keep to the point.

kick sth off : remove sth by kicking

Kick off one's slippers, shoes etc.

labour under sth : be deceived or misled by sth

He labours under the delusion that he is a fine actor.

lament for/over sb/sth : feel or express great sorrow or regret for (sb/sth).

He's lamenting over his misfortunes.

languish in/under sth : live wretchedly

He languished in poverty for years.

lay to sth : We have laid this sin to her charge.

lead to sth : have sth as its result

This misprint led to great confusion.

lean on sb : try to influence sb by threats.

If they don't pay soon, we'll have to lean on them a little.

level with sb : speak or deal with sb in an honest and frank way.

He leveled with me about the problems.

live on sth : depend on sth for financial support.

He is living on his salary.

long for sth : have an intense desire for sth.

The children are longing for the holidays.

look on sb/sth with sth : regard sb/sth in the specified way

I look on him with contempt.

look to sth : be careful about sth.

You should look to your health.

make sth out : understand sth.

I can't make out what she wants.

make up for sth : compensate for sth

Hard work can make up for a lack of intelligence.

make up one's mind : decide

I have made up my mind to go to the party.

marvel at sth : be very surprised

I marvelled at the maturity of such a young child.

meddle in sth : interfere

Don't meddle in my affairs.

meet with sth : encounter sth; experience sth

She has met with such difficulties several times before.

occur to sb : come into (a person's mind).

An idea has occurred to me.

overwhelm with sth : be filled with sth

She is overwhelmed with grief.

part with sth : give away sth

He hates parting with his money.

partake of sth : eat or drink a part or portion of sth

They invited us to partake of their simple meal.

pass over sth : ignore sth; avoid sth

They chose to pass over her rude remarks.

perish with cold : die

She perished with cold in the month of Poush.

pounce on sb/sth : make a sudden attack.

We saw the tiger about to pounce on the goat.

preside at sth : be chairman at a conference, meeting, etc.

The Prime Minister presides at meetings of the cabinet.

proceed with sth : begin or continue sth

Please proceed with your report.

provide sb with sth : make sth available for sb

The firm have provided me with a car.

provoke sb to anger: make sb angry

He provoked her to anger.

refer to sth/sb : turn to sth/sb for information, etc.

I referred to my watch for the exact time.

reflect on/upon sth : think deeply about.

I need time to reflect on what you offered.

refrain from sth : keep oneself from doing sth

He refrained from criticism.

resolve on : be determined.

She resolves on going there.

result in sth : to have sth as a result.

Our efforts resulted in success.

rid oneself/sb/sth of sb/sth : Try to rid the house of mice.

rob sb/sth (of sth) : I was robbed of my cash and cheque-book.

run into sth : encounter (difficulties, problems, etc.)

The project is running into financial difficulties.

see into sth : investigate

He is seeing into the matter.

see to sth : attend or deal with sth

Will you see to the arrangements for the next committee meeting?

see over sth : visit and examine or inspect (a place) carefully.

I shall need to see over the house before I can make you an offer.

stand by sb : support or help sb.

I'll stand by you whatever happens.

stand by sth : be faithful to sth

She still stands by every word she said.

stand over sb : supervise or watch sb closely.

Don't stand over me while I'm cooking.

take to sb/sth : develop a liking for sb/sth

I took to her the moment I met her.

take sth on : decide to do sth; undertake sth

She took on greater responsibilities when she was promoted.

talk sth over (with sb) : discuss sth

He is talking over the issue with her.

tell on sb : reveal sb's activities, esp to a person in authority.

John caught his sister smoking and told on her.

throw sth off : produce sth or compose sth in a casual way

She threw off a few lines of verse.

throw sb over : desert or abandon sb

When he became rich, he threw over all his old friends.

touch sth up : improve sth by making small changes

I'm going to touch up those scratches with a bit of paint.

trespass on sth : enter sb's land or property without his permission

He accused me of trespassing on his estate.

turn on sb : attack sb suddenly and unexpectedly

His dog turned on him and bit him in the leg.

wait on sb : act as a servant for sb, esp by serving food and drink at a meal

He waited on them well.

wait in : stay in home, esp. because sb is expected

I waited in all day but they didn't arrive.

wink at sth : pretend that one does not notice (bad behaviour, etc.)

His wife has winked at his infidelity for years.

wrestle with sth : struggle to deal with or overcome sth

At present he is wrestling with a big problem.

yearn for sb/sth : desire strongly or with compassion or tenderness

He yearned for his home and family.

yield to sb/sth : allow oneself to be overcome by pressure

The government has not yielded to public opinion.

EXERCISE

Supply the correct prepositions in the following blank spaces:

1. The lady was dressed black.
2. Cows live grass.
3. Sita writes her left hand.
4. He died over-eating.
5. Your suggestion is helpful us.
6. His dress was made silk.
7. He was greedy money.
8. I have no acquaintance that man.
9. He prevented me speaking.
10. What are you laughing ?

11. He is absent the class.
12. He has been absent Monday last.
13. We started the morning of 24th.
14. He travelled a bicycle.
15. Who are you speaking ?
16. He died loss of blood.
17. Here is a girl blue eyes.
18. I rely his help.
19. Do you object my opening the window?
20. He dispensed my services.
21. I was annoyed his brother.
22. I cannot be confident success.
23. He has no control his servants.
24. There is an exception every rule.
25. What is the time your watch?
26. Some people are sensitive criticism.
27. The teacher was popular his students.
28. She is good music.
29. Can you cure him his disease?
30. He dealt his subject length.
31. He soon got his illness.
32. He did not die cholera.
33. He touched the subject of tides.
34. He once put me an obligation.
35. He had a great affection his parents.
36. I disapprove your way working.
37. You will have to answer me your misconduct.
38. I inquired him that matter.
39. Please fill the form ink.

- 40. I sympathized him his sorrow.
- 41. We prefer milk tea.
- 42. I am familiar.... the facts, but the man is not familiar..... me.
- 43. I congratulate you your success the exam.
- 44. They brought a complaint the magistrate their neighbor.
- 45. This stick differs that length two inches.