

Preposition Combinations

Following is a list of common prepositions following verbs and other phrases. The only way to know which preposition to use after the verb is to **MEMORIZE** (or just **REFER TO**) this list.

A

(be) absent from
according to
account for
accuse of
accustomed to
(be) acquainted with
(be) afraid of
agree on something / with someone
(be) angry at/with someone about something
(be) annoyed with
apologize to someone for something
apply to, for
approve of
argue with, about
arrive in, at
ask for
(be) associated with
(be) aware of

B

based on
believe in
belong to
blame (someone) for (something)
blame (something) on (someone)
(be) bored with
borrow from

C

(be) capable of
care about, for
(be) cluttered with
(be) committed to
compare to
complain about
compliment (someone) on
(be) composed of
(be) concerned about
(be) connected to
consent to
consist of
(be) content with
contribute to

(be) convinced of
(be) coordinated with
cover with

D

decide on
(be) dedicated to
depend(ent) on
(be) devoted to
different from
(be) disappointed in, with
(be) discriminated against
distinguish from
(be) divorced from
(be) done with
dream of, about
(be) dressed in
due to

E

(be) encouraged with, by
(be) engaged to someone or in something
(be) equipped with
escape from
excel in
(be) excited about
excuse for
(be) exposed to

F

(be) faithful to
(be) familiar with
famous for
feel like
fight for
(be) filled with
(be) finished with
followed by
(be) fond of
forget about
forgive (someone) for
(be) friendly to
(be) furnished with

MULTILINGUAL

Using Prepositions
Idiomatically

1. Keep in mind typical examples of each preposition.

IN The peaches are *in* the refrigerator.

There are still some pickles *in* the jar.

Here the object of the preposition *in* is a container that encloses something.

ON The peaches are *on* the table.

The book you are looking for is *on* the top shelf.

Here the object of the preposition *on* is a horizontal surface that supports something with which it is in direct contact.

2. Learn other examples that show some similarities and some differences in meaning.

IN You shouldn't drive *in* a snowstorm.

Here there is no container, but like a container, the falling snow surrounds and seems to enclose the driver.

ON Is that a diamond ring *on* your finger?

A finger is not a horizontal surface, but like such a surface it can support a ring with which it is in contact.

3. Use your imagination to create mental images that can help you remember figurative uses of prepositions.

IN Michael is *in* love.

Imagine a warm bath in which Michael is immersed (or a raging torrent, if you prefer to visualize love that way).

ON I've just read a book *on* computer science.

Imagine a shelf labeled COMPUTER SCIENCE on which the book you have read is located.

4. Try to learn prepositions not in isolation but as part of a system. For example, in identifying the location of a place or an event, the three prepositions *in*, *on*, and *at* can be used.

At specifies the exact point in space or time.

AT There will be a meeting tomorrow *at* 9:30 A.M. *at* 160 Main Street.

(Continued on page 702)

www.e
<http://vweb.1.hiway.co.uk/ei/sect9.html>
Go here for many examples of idiomatic use of *in*, *on*, *at*, and other prepositions.

MULTILINGUAL

Understanding
Prepositions and
Prepositional Phrases

(Continued from page 701)

Expanses of space or time within which a place is located or an event takes place might be seen as containers and so require *in*.

IN I arrived *in* the United States *in* January.

On must be used in two cases: with the names of streets (but not the exact address) and with days of the week or month.

ON The airline's office is *on* Fifth Avenue.

I'll be moving to my new apartment *on* September 30.

Prepositions of Movement: *to* and *No Preposition*

We use *to* in order to express movement toward a place.

They were driving *to* work together.

She's going *to* the dentist's office this morning.

Toward and *towards* are also helpful prepositions to express movement. These are simply variant spellings of the same word; use whichever sounds better to you.

We're moving *toward* the light.

This is a big step *towards* the project's completion.

With the words *home*, *downtown*, *uptown*, *inside*, *outside*, *downstairs*, *upstairs*, we use no preposition.

Grandma went upstairs

Grandpa went home.

They both went outside.

Prepositions of Time: *for* and *since*

We use *for* when we measure time (seconds, minutes, hours, days, months, years).

He held his breath *for* seven minutes.

She's lived there *for* seven years.

The British and Irish have been quarreling *for* seven centuries.

We use *since* with a specific date or time.

He's worked here *since* 1970.

She's been sitting in the waiting room *since* two-thirty.

Prepositions of Time: *at*, *on*, and *in*

We use *at* to designate specific times.

The train is due at 12:15 p.m.

We use *on* to designate days and dates.

My brother is coming on Monday.

We're having a party on the Fourth of July.

We use *in* for nonspecific times during a day, a month, a season, or a year.

She likes to jog in the morning.

It's too cold in winter to run outside.

He started the job in 1971.

He's going to quit in August.

Prepositions of Place: *at*, *on*, and *in*

We use *at* for specific addresses.

Grammar English lives at 55 Boretz Road in Durham.

We use *on* to designate names of streets, avenues, etc.

Her house is on Boretz Road.

And we use *in* for the names of land-areas (towns, counties, states, countries, and continents).

She lives in Durham.

Durham is in Windham County.

Windham County is in Connecticut.

Prepositions of Location: *in*, *at*, and *on* and No Preposition

IN	AT	ON	NO PREPOSITION
(the) bed*	class*	the bed*	downstairs
the bedroom	home	the ceiling	downtown
the car	the library*	the floor	inside
(the) class*	the office	the horse	outside
the library*	school*	the plane	upstairs
school*	work	the train	