Understanding Prepositions of Movement

Prepositions of movement are used to indicate the direction of movement of a person or an object. They are essential in communicating directions and locations. In this section, you will learn about the most common prepositions of movement and how to use them correctly.

To

The preposition “to” is the most common preposition of movement. It is used to describe movement in the direction of something or someone. For example, “I am going to the store” means that you are moving towards the store.

From

The preposition “from” is used to describe movement away from something or someone. For example, “I am coming from the store” means that you are moving away from the store.

Across

The preposition “across” is used to describe movement from one side of an area, surface, or line to the other side. For example, “I drew a line across the paper” means that you drew a line from one side of the paper to the other.

Through

The preposition “through” is used to describe movement from one end of something to the other end. For example, “I walked through the park” means that you walked from one end of the park to the other end.

Over

The preposition “over” is used to describe movement from one side of something to the other side, usually by going up and over it. For example, “I climbed over the fence” means that you went up and over the fence.

Along

The preposition “along” is used to describe movement parallel to something or someone. For example, “I walked along the beach” means that you walked parallel to the beach.

Remember that prepositions of movement are essential in communicating directions and locations. Using them correctly can help you communicate more effectively and avoid confusion.

Prepositions of Movement List

Prepositions of movement show movement from one place to another. There are 9 basic prepositions that pertain to movement:

Prepositions of Movement: To

‘To’ is used when there is a specific destination in mind. The destination can be a number of things:

**A place:**

* *I’m going to the doctor’s.*
* *Can you direct me to the nearest post office?*

**An event:**

* *Are you going to the party?*
* *I have never been to a concert.*

**A person:**

* *She came up to me.*
* *I go to my father for advice.*

**A position:**

* *The bathroom is to your left.*
* *Keep to the left.*

Prepositions of Movement: Towards

‘Towards’ is used in the following instances:

When one has movement in a particular direction in mind, rather than simply a destination:

* *He was walking menacingly towards me.*

Or to refer to a position, in relation to a direction from the point of view of the speaker:

* *He was sitting with his back towards me.*

Prepositions of Movement: Through

‘Through’ refers to the following types of movement:

Within a space, which can be thought of as surrounding, enclosing or around the object:

* *The train went through the tunnel.*

Movement across something, i.e. from one side of it to the other:

* *He cut through the gauze.*

Prepositions of Movement: Into

‘Into’ refers to the following types of movement:

Movement from the outside to the inside of something that can be imagined as surrounding, enclosing or around the object:

* *He got into the car.*

Movement causing something to hit something else:

* *He swerved into the tree.*

Prepositions of Movement: Across

‘Across’ is used to describe:

Movement from one end of something to the other:

* *He walked across the road.*
* *He strode across the bridge.*

Something’s position when it stretches over the surface it is on:

* *There was a barricade across the road.*

To describe something’s position when it is at the opposite end from one’s position:

* *We went to the restaurant across the road.*

Prepositions of Movement: Over

‘Over’ is used in the following instances:

To describe something’s position when it is above something else:

* *The bottle is in the cabinet over the sink in the kitchen.*

To describe something’s position when it covers a surface:

* *A white cloth had been spread over the corpse.*

Prepositions of Movement: Along

‘Along’ is used to describe:

Movement in a line:

* *We walked along the river.*

The collective position of a group of things that are in a line:

* *He lived in one of the houses along the river.*

Prepositions of Movement: In

‘In’ is used in the following instances:

Something’s position in relation to the area or space or place surrounding it:

* *We are going to have our picnic in the park.*
* *I left my car in the garage.*

To express towards the inside of something:

* *Put the pickle in the cabinet.*

Prepositions of Movement: On

‘On’ is used in the following instances:

To describe something’s position in relation to a surface:

* *There was an array of food on the table.*

To describe movement in the direction of a surface:

* *The rain falling on the roof kept me from sleeping.*

Examples of Prepositions of Movement

Here are some more example sentences showing prepositions of movement in context:

* *We’re going****to****town on the bus, okay?*
* *She walked over****to****the window.*
* *We received another invitation****to****a wedding this morning.*
* *She stood up and walked****towards****him.*
* *She kept glancing****towards****the phone.*
* *I walked backwards****towards****the door.*
* *They walked slowly****through****the woods.*
* *He struggled****through****the crowd till he reached the front.*
* *Let’s go****into****the garden.*
* *Stop running around and get****into****bed!*
* *She walked****across****the field/road.*
* *They’re building a new bridge****across****the river.*
* *Helicopters dropped leaflets****over****the city.*
* *I put a shawl****over****my*[*shoulders*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shoulder)*.*
* *We walked****along****the beach collecting small crabs in a bucket.*
* *Cars were parked all****along****the road.*
* *Get****in****the car.*
* *She stepped****in****the batter’s box.*
* *Your suitcase is****on****top of the wardrobe.*
* *They live in that old house****on****the hill.*

Mistakes to Avoid with Prepositions of Movement

When it comes to prepositions of movement, there are some common mistakes that people make. Here are a few things to keep in mind to avoid these errors:

1. Using the wrong preposition

One of the most common mistakes is using the wrong preposition. For example, you might say “I walked on the street” instead of “I walked along the street”. Using the wrong preposition can change the meaning of the sentence or make it sound awkward.

2. Confusing “in” and “into”

Another mistake is confusing “in” and “into”. “In” is used to describe a location or position, while “into” is used to describe movement from one place to another. For example, you might say “The cat is in the box” but “The cat jumped into the box”.

3. Forgetting to use a preposition

Sometimes people forget to use a preposition altogether. For example, you might say “I climbed the ladder” instead of “I climbed up the ladder”. Using the correct preposition is important for conveying the intended meaning.

4. Using the wrong form of the preposition

Another mistake is using the wrong form of the preposition. For example, you might say “I walked onto the stage” instead of “I walked on to the stage”. Using the wrong form of the preposition can make the sentence sound awkward or confusing.

By keeping these common mistakes in mind, you can improve your use of prepositions of movement and avoid errors that can impact the clarity and accuracy of your writing or speech.

