



Business English Co-Teach Series 2
Module 13



General Guideline

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Prepositions

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Preposition is the relationship between two subjects/objects. It links a noun, a pronoun or a phrase to the other words in the sentence. These words/phrases are called the object of the preposition.

E.g.

- Belinda works at Infosys.
- The pen is on the table.



Prepositions are of 2 kinds:-

1. Prepositions of Time



2. Prepositions of Place and Direction



On

For days

- Let's discuss this **on** Monday.
- We went to a movie **on** my birthday.

For dates

- Let's meet for dinner **on** 24th June.

In reference to a place

- The lizard is **on** the ceiling / **on** the wall / **on** the floor/**on** the table

Giving directions

- **on** the left corner of the room...
- **on** the right...
- straight **on**...

In

reference to months,
years or a longer period

- I met Tina **in** May.
- The last earthquake happened **in** 1919.
- No use dwelling over it, it happened **in** the past.

other common
expressions of time

- **in** the morning/evening, (time)
- **in** the classroom/bank/mall...(place)

to indicate time as well as
place.

- When is your wedding?
 - It is **in** June.
 - Where will it be?
 - It will be **in** Cochin.
-

At

for a precise time.

- I met Raj **at** 3 o clock.
- Let us meet tomorrow **at** noon for the final discussion.
- The sky looks beautiful **at** sunset.
- This place is crowded **at** lunchtime.
- The family gathers together **at** Diwali.

other common
expressions of time

- **at** present, **at** the same time...

to indicate place

- He is **at** his mother's house.
 - Rahul lives **at** 110, Alder's court.
 - We met up **at** the discotheque.
-

Since

with specific date and time.

- I have been waiting for you **since** 2 o' clock.
- Sheila has been with Infosys **since** 2004.
- Raj has been waiting for the client's call **since** yesterday.

express the duration of an action

- Raghav is studying law **since** 2009.
This sentence focuses on when Raghav started his studies, which was in 2009. Now that we know that Raghav began studying law in 2009, we also know how long he has been there.

For

duration of action (seconds, minutes, hours, days, months, years) over a period of time.

For+ length of time.

- Tanu waited **for** two hours before she boarded the bus.
- This conflict has been going on **for** five years.

to measure time

- Vikas has been in Assam **for** three years.

in questions that concerns the purpose, destination and beneficiaries.

- Who are you making this **for**?
- I am leaving **for** Mexico tomorrow.
- I have something **for** you.

Other expressions:

Considering:

A negative condition

Connect a fact with its cause

In favor of

- The mall is quite crowded **for** a weekday.
- I would have completed it but **for** the distraction.
- Sam went home, **for** he was unwell.
- I am all for it...

Ago

to express when the action happened in the past.

- Ten years **ago**, he migrated to Canada. (P)
- We got married five years **ago**. (A)

to indicate the amount of time before the present:

- Vikas left the company exactly three years **ago** to this day. (P)

to talk about an action that happened a certain amount of time before the present moment. Quite often we use back to give the same meaning.

- I met her two years back.
- Back is used mostly with the word 'years'.
- **Ago** is sometimes considered an adverb rather than a preposition, as in three years **ago**.

Before

Ago, back or before - all refer to a certain time in the past, however 'before' is slightly different because it would normally refer to some date, occasion or action previously mentioned in the statement.

- Smita had met Ram **before** she decided to go abroad.

Since ago is an adjective, it is preferable to use it to speak about a noun-

- a decade **ago**
- twenty years **ago**
- a century **ago**

Whereas before is an adverb, so use it with a verb-

- **Before** you leave, finish your work.
- Sign the paper **before** you leave
- They rehearsed well **before** the dance.
- Riya left **before** the match.

Until

Until means up to a time or before that time. It is followed by a time expression or an independent clause.

- We did not have our dinner **until** midnight.

Until indicates the time of change of an activity or a situation

- My dog will not stop barking **until** I feed her. (verb + until + beginning of event)
- I decided to wait until 4 o' clock to call him. (verb+ until+ time)

Until is only used with the occurrence of specific times or events taking place – past, present or future-

- We waited **until** 6 o' clock and then left.
 - **Until** is used as a conjunction-
 - We waited at the bus stop **until** Ram arrived.
-

Quick Quiz

(in, on, since, at, before, ago, by, until, during, for)



1. Tim is never late for a meeting, he is always ____ time.
2. They finalized the deal ____ an hour.
3. Tara is busy ____ the moment.
4. We have been ____ the top ____ the last two years.
5. Rohan had to wait ____ two hours to catch the bus.
6. Chris quit the company two years ____.
7. Maya finished her work ____ she left for her vacation.
8. My cellphone rang ____ the meeting.
9. Akhila is on leave ____ Friday.
10. The systems engineer promised to complete the report ____ Friday.

Into/Onto

Into and **onto** are used with verbs showing movement. They show both the direction and the result of the movement. To, into, and onto correspond respectively to the prepositions of location at, in, and on.

IN + TO = into: signifies movement towards...

- Raj ran into the building in a hurry.
- INTO also suggests movement from out side to inside...
- She went into the kitchen to make a cup of coffee.

Beside

Besides and **beside** are both prepositions. These two words are often confused. Grammatically, besides is an adverb or a preposition, and beside a preposition. ...

Beside means next to:

- Rani's house is situated **beside** the mall.
- Sheela sat **beside** her friend at the meeting.

Besides

As a preposition, **besides** means in addition to or apart from

- What are your hobbies **besides** painting? (in addition to)
- Who were present at the meeting **besides** your team? (apart from)

As an adverb, **besides** means as well as or furthermore.

- Hemanth was a cheat. **Besides**, he was lazy and shabby.
- The road to the mountain is steep, **besides**, it is not tarred.

Under

1. Under means at a lower position than something else. For e.g.
 - We sat under the shade of the porch. (verb + under)
2. Under means covered by something else; underneath.
 - Seema concealed the book under the newspaper.(verb +under +noun)
3. Under means less than.
 - Piya was under eighteen and not eligible for a license. (under + noun)
4. Under can indicate control.
 - Don't worry, things are under control.
 - The orphan was put under foster care.
 - He was caught by the police for driving under the influence of alcohol.
5. Under can indicate a current situation or state:
 - The case is under investigation.
6. Under is used to express category...
 - Articulation comes under High Impact Communication.

Below

We use **below** to express notions of an object being lower than a point of reference.

Below means lower in number or degree

The goods at the mall are sold **below** MRP.

Her blood pressure is below normal.

Below can mean lower in rank or level

The car park is **below** the building.

A constable is ranked **below** a sub inspector.

Below can mean farther along

There is a river flowing just **below** the ridge.

Below is also used as an expression

Never think of yourself as **below** anybody.

Through

Through is used to indicate the parts beginning, between and including...

- I had to read from chapter one through chapter four for my test.

Through indicates passage within something.

- As I walked through the door, I saw the painting.

Through could also indicate a gateway between two things

- We went through the huge arch to enter the doorway.

Through can indicate a vision beyond something

- We looked at the clothes put up for sale through the display window.

Through is also used to indicate finish something that required effort

- I was able to get through the housework early.

Quick Quiz



Fill in the blanks with the appropriate preposition:-
(below, into, under, through, beside/s)

1. Kim rushed _____ the room where the meeting was held.
2. The CEO stood _____ the president during the annual dinner.
3. Sally is _____ pressure due to the project release.
4. They found the document hidden _____ the ledge.
5. The PM went _____ the SRS document carefully.
6. I was sitting right _____ my manager in the client meeting.
7. Shekar moved _____ the manager's cabin in a hurry.
8. The group discussed the matter _____ a coffee.
9. I found the report _____ the files in the drawer.
10. _____ reading, I love travelling.