

# List of prepositions in English

Many people have been taught that the prepositions in English constitute a short, fixed list – three or four dozen at most. This is a long way from being correct. The following list contains 244 lexical items that would be classified by *A Student's Introduction to English Grammar* (2nd edition, 2022) and *The Cambridge Grammar of the English Language (CGEL)* as prepositions. You may be surprised at just how many of them you know, at least passively.

A few of these items are spelled with spaces, like *in front* and its mainly AmE opposite *in back*; but we don't list sequences like *in vain* or *on purpose*, since we regard those as idiomatic PPs. Some of the words are borrowings from Latin (*contra*, *cum*, *qua*, *via*) or French (*apropos*, *chez*, *sans*, *vis-à-vis*) or Scots (*anent*, *outwith*). Many belong to other categories as well as preposition; for example, *absent* is an adjective in *You were absent*, but a preposition in *We cannot proceed absent your agreement*. In some cases we indicate commonly used non-NP complements (with annotations like '[+of-PP]'), but we have not tried to be exhaustive about the complements these items license. And remember, *CGEL* includes among the prepositions some items that don't take complements at all (*aloft*; *downstairs*; *skyward*; *upstage*; *home* in its directional sense; etc.).

<i>aboard</i>	<i>apart</i> [+from-PP]	<i>beneath</i>	<i>due</i> [+to-PP]
<i>about</i>	<i>apropos</i> [+of-PP]	<i>beside(s)</i>	<i>during</i>
<i>above</i>	<i>around</i>	<i>between</i>	<i>east</i>
<i>abreast</i>	<i>as</i>	<i>betwixt</i>	<i>eastward(s)</i>
<i>abroad</i>	<i>as for</i>	<i>beyond</i>	<i>effective</i>
<i>absent</i>	<i>as if</i>	<i>but</i>	<i>ere</i> [archaic]
<i>according</i> [+to-PP]	<i>ashore</i>	<i>by</i>	<i>except</i>
<i>across</i>	<i>aside</i> [+from-PP]	<i>by virtue</i> [+of-PP]	<i>excepting</i>
<i>adrift</i>	<i>aslant</i>	<i>chez</i>	<i>excluding</i>
<i>aft</i>	<i>astride</i>	<i>circa</i>	<i>failing</i>
<i>after</i>	<i>at</i>	<i>come</i>	<i>following</i>
<i>afterward(s)</i>	<i>athwart</i>	<i>concerning</i>	<i>for</i>
<i>against</i>	<i>atop</i>	<i>considering</i>	<i>forth</i>
<i>ago</i>	<i>away</i>	<i>contra</i>	<i>forward</i>
<i>ahead</i>	<i>back</i>	<i>counting</i>	<i>forward(s)</i>
<i>akimbo</i>	<i>backstage</i>	<i>cum</i>	<i>from</i>
<i>aloft</i>	<i>backward(s)</i>	<i>despite</i>	<i>given</i>
<i>along</i>	<i>bar</i>	<i>down</i>	<i>granted</i>
<i>alongside</i>	<i>barring</i>	<i>downhill</i>	<i>heavenward(s)</i>
<i>although</i>	<i>because</i> [+of-PP]	<i>downstage</i>	<i>hence</i>
<i>amid</i>	<i>before</i>	<i>downstairs</i>	<i>henceforth</i>
<i>among</i>	<i>beforehand</i>	<i>downstream</i>	<i>here</i>
<i>anent</i> [Scottish]	<i>behind</i>	<i>downward(s)</i>	<i>hereabouts</i>
<i>anti</i>	<i>below</i>	<i>downwind</i>	<i>hereby</i>

<i>herein</i>	<i>off</i>	<i>save</i>	<i>underneath</i>
<i>hereof</i>	<i>offshore</i>	<i>saving</i>	<i>unless</i>
<i>hereto</i>	<i>on</i>	<i>seaward(s)</i>	<i>unlike</i>
<i>heretofore</i>	<i>once</i>	<i>seeing</i>	<i>until</i>
<i>hereunto</i> [archaic]	<i>onto</i>	<i>short</i> [+of-PP]	<i>unto</i> [poetic]
<i>herewith</i>	<i>onward(s)</i>	<i>since</i>	<i>up</i>
<i>home</i>	<i>opposite</i>	<i>skyward(s)</i>	<i>uphill</i>
<i>homeward(s)</i>	<i>out</i>	<i>so</i> [purpose/result]	<i>upon</i>
<i>if</i> [conditional]	<i>outdoors</i>	<i>south</i>	<i>upstage</i>
<i>in</i>	<i>outside</i>	<i>southeast</i>	<i>upstairs</i>
<i>in back</i> [+of-PP]	<i>outward(s)</i>	<i>southward(s)</i>	<i>upstream</i>
<i>in case</i>	<i>outwith</i> (BrE)	<i>southwest</i>	<i>upward(s)</i>
<i>in front</i> [+of-PP]	<i>over</i>	<i>speaking</i> [+of-PP]	<i>upwind</i>
<i>in league</i> [+with-PP]	<i>overboard</i>	<i>sub</i>	<i>versus</i>
<i>in virtue</i> [+of-PP]	<i>overhead</i>	<i>supposing</i>	<i>via</i>
<i>including</i>	<i>overland</i>	<i>than</i>	<i>vis-à-vis</i>
<i>indoors</i>	<i>overseas</i>	<i>then</i>	<i>wanting</i>
<i>inside</i>	<i>owing</i> [+to-PP]	<i>thence</i>	<i>west</i>
<i>instead</i> [+of-PP]	<i>pace</i> [= “contra”]	<i>thenceforth</i>	<i>westward(s)</i>
<i>into</i>	<i>past</i>	<i>there</i>	<i>when</i>
<i>inward(s)</i>	<i>pending</i>	<i>thereby</i>	<i>whence</i>
<i>leftward(s)</i>	<i>per</i>	<i>therein</i>	<i>whenever</i>
<i>less</i>	<i>plus</i>	<i>thereof</i>	<i>where</i>
<i>lest</i>	<i>post</i>	<i>thereto</i>	<i>whereabouts</i>
<i>like</i>	<i>pre</i>	<i>therewith</i>	<i>whereas</i>
<i>minus</i>	<i>prior</i> [+to-PP]	<i>though</i>	<i>whereby</i>
<i>modulo</i>	<i>pro</i>	<i>through</i>	<i>wherein</i>
<i>near</i>	<i>provided</i>	<i>throughout</i>	<i>whereto</i>
<i>next</i> [+to-PP]	<i>providing</i>	<i>till</i>	<i>wherever</i>
<i>north</i>	<i>pursuant</i> [+to-PP]	<i>times</i>	<i>whereunto</i> [archaic]
<i>northeast</i>	<i>qua</i> [+bare Nom]	<i>to</i>	<i>whereupon</i>
<i>northward(s)</i>	<i>re</i>	<i>together</i>	<i>wherewith</i>
<i>northwest</i>	<i>regarding</i>	<i>touching</i> [archaic]	<i>while</i>
<i>notwithstanding</i>	<i>respecting</i>	<i>toward(s)</i>	<i>whilst</i>
<i>now</i>	<i>rightward(s)</i>	<i>under</i>	<i>with</i>
<i>o'clock</i>	<i>round</i>	<i>underfoot</i>	<i>within</i>
<i>of</i>	<i>sans</i>	<i>underground</i>	<i>without</i>

For a dictionary that agrees with *CGEL* in its classification of the above items, see the Simple English Wiktionary (online at <https://simple.wiktionary.org>). All the printed dictionaries we know about tend to classify at least some of the above items (wrongly, we think) as adverbs or ‘subordinating conjunctions’ in at least some of their occurrences. See Chapter 7 of *SIEG2* for detailed discussion.