

University of Asia Pacific  
IISS 101  
Module#3 Prepositions

❖ Def.- A Preposition is a word placed before a noun or a pronoun to show in what relation the person or thing denoted by it stands in regard to something else. [The word Preposition means 'that which is placed before'.]

1. There is a cow *in* the field. —[ the relation between two things - cow and field]
2. He is fond *of* tea. —[the relation between the attribute expressed by the adjective fond and tea]
3. The cat jumped *off* the chair. —[the relation between the action expressed by the verb jumped and the chair]

The words *in, of, off* are here used as Prepositions.

It will be noticed that-

- in sentence 1, the Preposition joins a Noun to another Noun;
- in sentence 2, the Preposition joins a Noun to an Adjective;
- in sentence 3, the Preposition joins a Noun to a Verb.

❖ The Noun or Pronoun which is used with a Preposition is called its Object.

- A Preposition may have two or more objects; as,  
The road runs *over* hill and plain.
- A Preposition is usually placed before its object, but sometimes it follows it; as,  
Here is the watch *that* you asked for.  
That is the boy (*whom*) I was speaking of.  
What are you looking *at*?  
What are you thinking *of*?  
Which of these chairs did you sit *on*?

❖ We have seen that the object to a Preposition is a Noun or Pronoun. Sometimes, however, the object to a Preposition is an Adverb of Time or Place; as,

- Since *then* (= that time) he has not shown his face.
- Come away from *there* (= that place).
- He must have reached there by *now* (= this time).
- How far is it from *here* (= this place)?

❖ Sometimes the object to a preposition is an Adverbial Phrase; as,

- The noise comes from *across the river*.
- He was not promoted to the rank of a colonel till *within a few months of his resignation*.
- He did not see her till *a few days ago*.
- I was thinking about *how to circumvent him*.

❖ A clause can also be the object to a Preposition; as,

- Pay careful attention to *what I am going to say*.
- There is no meaning in *what you say*.

❖ The object to a Preposition, when it is a relative pronoun, is sometimes omitted; as,  
He is the man I was looking for. [Here *whom* is understood].  
These are the good rules to live by. [Here *which* is understood.]

- ❖ The following Prepositions require special notice:-
  - We can use *in* or *at* with the names of cities, towns or villages. In most cases *in* is used. We use *in* when we are talking about a place as an area; we use *at* when we see it as a point.

We stayed *in* Manchester for five days.

Our plane stopped *at* Dubai on the way to London. (Dubai = Dubai airport)

I have long lived *in* this village?

- We use *at* to talk about group activities and shops/workplaces.

Did you see Sonia *at* the party?

There weren't many people *at* the meeting.

- We use *in* with the names of streets and *at* when we give the house-number.

He lives *in* Church Street.

He lives *at* 45 Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue.

- We use *on* when we think of a place as a surface.

The dog is lying *on* the floor.

Put this picture *on* the wall.

- *Till* is used of time and *to* is used of place; as

He slept *till* eight o'clock.

He walked *to* the end of the street.

- *With* often denotes the instrument and *by* the agent; as,

He killed two birds *with* one shot.

He was stabbed *by* a lunatic with a dagger.

- *Since* is used before a noun or phrase denoting some point of time, and is preceded by a verb in the perfect tenses; as,

I have eaten nothing *since* yesterday.

He has been ill *since* Monday last.

- *In* before a noun denoting a period of time, means *at the end of*; *within* means *before the end of*; as,

I shall return *in* an hour. I shall return *within* an hour.

- *Beside* means at (or by) the side of, while *besides* means in addition to; as,

*Beside* the market, is the beautiful river of Padma.

*Besides* being fined, he was sentenced to a term of imprisonment.

- ❖ We use *by* + noun when we talk about means of transport. We **do not** use *the* or *a/an* before the noun.

We travelled *by* train, (not: by the/a train)

We say *by* bicycle, *by* car/taxi/bus/train, *by* boat/ ship/plane, *by* air/sea.

[NOTE: We do not use *by* when the reference is to a specific bicycle, car, train, etc.

Suresh went there *on* my bike, (not: by my bike)

We travelled *in* Mr. Rahman's car. (not: by Mr. Joshi's car)

They came *in* a taxi.

I'll go *on* the 7.30 bus.

We use *on* to mean a specific bicycle, bus, train, ship or plane, and *in* to mean a specific car, taxi, van, lorry or ambulance.

We say *on* foot (not *by* foot).

He goes to the office *on* foot. (= He walks to the office.)]

**Prepositions may be arranged in the following classes :-**

➤ **Simple Prepositions: (Selected examples)**

At,	by,
for,	from,
in,	of,
off,	on,
out,	through,
till,	to,
up,	with.
About,	above,
across,	along,
amidst,	among,
amongst,	around,
before,	behind,
below,	beneath,
beside,	between,
beyond,	inside,
outside,	underneath,
within,	without.

➤ **Phrase Prepositions / Complex Prepositions (Groups of words used with the force of a single preposition.) [Selected Examples]**

according to --	in accordance with --	in place of
agreeably to --	in addition to --	in reference to
along with --	in (on) behalf of --	in regard to
away from --	in case of --	in spite of
because of --	in comparison to --	instead of
by dint of --	in compliance with --	in the event of
by means of --	in consequence of --	on account of
by reason of --	in course of --	owing to
by virtue of --	in favour of --	with a view to
by way of --	in front of --	with an eye to
conformably to --	in lieu of --	with reference to
for the sake of --	in order to --	with regard to

- Barring, concerning, considering, during, notwithstanding, pending, regarding, respecting, touching, and a few similar words which are present participles of verbs, are used absolutely without any noun or pronoun being attached to them. For all practical purposes, they have become Prepositions, and are sometimes distinguished as Participial Prepositions.

### **Relations expressed by Prepositions**

The following are some of the most common relations indicated by Prepositions:-

❖ **Place-**

Went *about* the world;  
 Ran *across* the road;  
 Leaned *against* a wall;  
 Fell *among* thieves;  
 quarreled *among* themselves;  
*at* death's door;  
 stood *before* the door;  
 stood *behind* the curtain;  
 lies *below* the surface;

sat *beside* me;  
 stand *by* me  
 rain comes *from* the clouds;  
*in* the sky;  
 fell *into* a ditch;  
 lies *near* his heart;  
 Kolkata is *on* the Hooghly;  
 the cliff hangs *over* the sea;  
 tour *round* the world;  
 marched *through* the town;

came to the end of the road;  
 put pen to paper;  
 travelled towards Nasik;  
 lay under the table;  
 climbed up the ladder;  
 lies upon the table;  
 within the house.

❖ Time-

After his death;  
 at an early date;  
 arrived before me;  
 behind time;  
 by three o'clock;  
 during the whole day;  
 for many years;  
 from 1st April;  
 in the afternoon;  
 sat watching far on into the

night;

lived under the Moghuls;  
 on Monday;  
 pending his return;  
 since yesterday;  
 lasted through the night;  
 throughout the year;  
 wait till to-morrow;  
 ten minutes to twelve;  
 towards evening;  
 until his arrival;  
 rise with the sun;  
 within a month.

❖ Agency, instrumentality-

Sell goods at auction;  
 sent the parcel by post;  
 was destroyed by fire;  
 heard this through a friend;  
 cut it with a knife.

[Note: It will be seen that the same Preposition, according to the way in which it is used, would have its place under several heads]

❖ Several words are used sometimes as Adverbs and sometimes as Prepositions. A word is a Preposition when it governs a noun or pronoun; it is an Adverb when it does not.

**Adverb**

Go and run about.  
 I could not come before.  
 Has he come in?  
 The wheel came off.  
 Let us move on.  
 His father arrived soon.  
 Take this parcel over to the post-office.  
 I have not seen him since.

❖ Manner-

Dying by inches;  
 fought with courage;  
 worked with earnestness

❖ Cause, reason, purpose-

Laboured for the good of humanity;  
 died of fever;  
 the very place for a picnic;  
 suffers from gout;  
 does it from perversity;  
 retreated through fear of an ambush;  
 shivers with fever;  
 took medicine for cold.

❖ Possession-

There was no money on him;  
 the mosque of Omar;  
 a man of means;  
 the boy with red hair.

❖ Measure, standard, rate, value-

He charges interest at nine per cent.  
 Cloth is sold by the yard.  
 I am taller than you by two inches.  
 It was one by the tower-clock.

❖ Contrast, concession-

After (in spite of,  
 notwithstanding) every effort, one may fail.  
 For one enemy he has a hundred friends.  
 For (in spite of) all his wealth he is not  
 content.  
 With (in spite of) all his faults I admire him.

❖ Inference, motive, source, or origin-

From what I know of him, I hesitate to trust  
 him.  
 The knights were brave from gallantry of spirit.  
 He did it from gratitude.  
 Light emanates from the sun.

**Preposition**

Don't loiter about the street.  
 I came the day before yesterday.  
 Is he in his room?  
 The driver jumped off the car.  
 The book lies on the table.  
 After a month he returned.  
 He rules over a vast empire.  
 I have not slept since yesterday.

# Prepositions – Time

## English

- on

- in

- at

- since

- for

- ago

- before

- to

- past

- to / till / until

- till / until

- by

## Usage

- days of the week

- months / seasons
- time of day
- year
- after a certain period of time (*when?*)

- for *night*
- for *weekend*
- a certain point of time (*when?*)

- from a certain point of time (past till now)

- over a certain period of time (past till now)

- a certain time in the past

- earlier than a certain point of time

- telling the time

- telling the time

- marking the beginning and end of a period of time

- in the sense of *how long something is going to last*

- in the sense of *at the latest*
- up to a certain time

## Example

- on Monday

- in August / in winter
- in the morning
- in 2006
- in an hour

- at night
- at the weekend
- at half past nine

- since 1980

- for 2 years

- 2 years ago

- before 2004

- ten to six (5:50)

- ten past six (6:10)

- from Monday to/till Friday

- He is on holiday until Friday.

- I will be back by 6 o'clock.
- By 11 o'clock, I had read five pages.

# Prepositions – Place (Position and Direction)

English	Usage	Example
• in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>room, building, street, town, country</li> <li>book, paper etc. .</li> <li>car, taxi</li> <li>picture, world</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>in the kitchen, in London</li> <li>in the book</li> <li>in the car, in a taxi</li> <li>in the picture, in the world</li> </ul>
• at	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>meaning <i>next to, by an object</i></li> <li>for <i>table</i></li> <li>for events</li> <li>place where you are to do something typical (watch a film, study, work)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>at the door, at the station</li> <li>at the table</li> <li>at a concert, at the party</li> <li>at the cinema, at school, at work</li> </ul>
• on	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>attached</li> <li>for a place with a river</li> <li>being on a surface</li> <li>for a certain side (left, right)</li> <li>for a floor in a house</li> <li>for public transport</li> <li>for <i>television, radio</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the picture on the wall</li> <li>London lies on the Thames.</li> <li>on the table</li> <li>on the left</li> <li>on the first floor</li> <li>on the bus, on a plane</li> <li>on TV, on the radio</li> </ul>
• by, next to, beside	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>left or right of somebody or something</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jane is standing by / next to / beside the car.</li> </ul>
• under	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>on the ground, lower than (or covered by) something else</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the bag is under the table</li> </ul>
• below	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>lower than something else but above ground</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the fish are below the surface</li> </ul>
• over	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>covered by something else</li> <li>meaning <i>more than</i></li> <li>getting to the other side (also <i>across</i>)</li> <li>overcoming an obstacle</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>put a jacket over your shirt</li> <li>over 16 years of age</li> <li>walk over the bridge</li> <li>climb over the wall</li> </ul>
• above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>higher than something else, but not directly over it</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a path above the lake</li> </ul>
• across	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>getting to the other side (also <i>over</i>)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>walk across the bridge</li> </ul>

**English****Usage****Example**

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• getting to the other side</li></ul>                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• swim across the lake</li></ul>                       |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• through</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• something with limits on top, bottom and the sides</li></ul>              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• drive through the tunnel</li></ul>                   |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• movement to person or building</li></ul>                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• go to the cinema</li></ul>                           |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• to</li></ul>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• movement to a place or country</li><li>• for <i>bed</i></li></ul>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• go to London / Ireland</li><li>• go to bed</li></ul> |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• enter a room / a building</li></ul>                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• go into the kitchen / the house</li></ul>            |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• into</li></ul>    |   |  |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• movement in the direction of something (but not directly to it)</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• go 5 steps towards the house</li></ul>               |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• towards</li></ul> |   |  |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• movement to the top of something</li></ul>                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• jump onto the table</li></ul>                        |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• onto</li></ul>    |   |  |
|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• in the sense of <i>where from</i></li></ul>                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• a flower from the garden</li></ul>                   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• from</li></ul>    |   |  |

**Other important Prepositions****English****Usage****Example**

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• from</li></ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• who gave it</li></ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• a present from Jane</li></ul>                                  |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• who/what does it belong to</li><li>• what does it show</li></ul>                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• a page of the book</li><li>• the picture of a palace</li></ul> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• of</li></ul>     |  |  |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• who made it</li></ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• a book by Mark Twain</li></ul>                                 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• by</li></ul>     |  |  |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• walking or riding on horseback</li><li>• entering a public transport vehicle</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• on foot, on horseback</li><li>• get on the bus</li></ul>       |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• on</li></ul>     |  |  |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• entering a car / Taxi</li></ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• get in the car</li></ul>                                       |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• in</li></ul>     |  |  |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• leaving a public transport vehicle</li></ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• get off the train</li></ul>                                    |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• off</li></ul>    |  |  |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• leaving a car / Taxi</li></ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• get out of the taxi</li></ul>                                  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• out of</li></ul> |  |  |

English	Usage	Example
• by	• rise or fall of something • travelling (other than walking or horseriding)	• prices have risen by 10 percent • by car, by bus
• at	• for <i>age</i>	• she learned Russian at 45
• about	• for topics, meaning <i>what about</i>	• we were talking about you

### Module#3 Preposition Exercises

#### Exercise 1# Fill in the blanks with appropriate Prepositions:-

1. A child is not able to distinguish \_\_\_\_\_ good and evil. Death does not distinguish \_\_\_\_\_ the rich and the poor. Sir Ronald Ross is distinguished \_\_\_\_\_ his medical researches. (between, by, for)
2. On account of his age he is disqualified \_\_\_\_\_ competing. Ill health disqualified the body \_\_\_\_\_ labor and the mind \_\_\_\_\_ study. (for, from, from)
3. Innocence is not proof \_\_\_\_\_ scandal. He was discharged as there was no proof \_\_\_\_\_ his guilt (against, of).
4. He has no good cause \_\_\_\_\_ complaint. Darkness was the cause \_\_\_\_\_ his losing his way (for, of)
5. True charity does not consist \_\_\_\_\_ indiscriminate alms-giving. Brass consists \_\_\_\_\_ copper and zinc (in, of.)
6. I am not concerned for his affairs. I am not concerned for him about that business. He was much concerned at hearing the sad news. His parents are naturally concerned with his safety.
7. He parted \_\_\_\_\_ his friends in high spirits. He parted \_\_\_\_\_ his property and went on pilgrimage to Mecca. (from, with)
8. He acted \_\_\_\_\_ fear. He acted \_\_\_\_\_ my suggestion. He acted \_\_\_\_\_ compulsion (from, under, upon.)
9. He succeeded \_\_\_\_\_ the throne of his uncle. He succeeded \_\_\_\_\_ his object (in, to.)
10. He agreed \_\_\_\_\_ my proposal. He agreed \_\_\_\_\_ me on that question. They could not agree \_\_\_\_\_ themselves (among, to, with.)



**Exercise# 2 Fill blanks with suitable Prepositions:-**

1. The dog ran \_\_\_\_\_ the road. *across*
2. The river flows \_\_\_\_\_ the bridge. *under*
3. The work was done \_\_\_\_\_ haste. *without*
4. He is afraid \_\_\_\_\_ the dog. *of*
5. I am fond \_\_\_\_\_ music. *of*
6. He goes \_\_\_\_\_ Sunday \_\_\_\_\_ church. *on, in*
7. He died \_\_\_\_\_ his country. *for*
8. The steam-engine was invented \_\_\_\_\_ James Watt. *by*
9. The burglar jumped \_\_\_\_\_ the compound wall. *over*
10. The village was destroyed \_\_\_\_\_ fire. *by/with*
11. What is that \_\_\_\_\_ me? *from*
12. It cannot be done \_\_\_\_\_ offence. *without*
13. He spoke \_\_\_\_\_ me \_\_\_\_\_ Urdu. *to, in*
14. They live \_\_\_\_\_ the same roof. *under*
15. I have not seen him \_\_\_\_\_ Wednesday last. *since*
16. He lives \_\_\_\_\_ Hyderabad. He lives \_\_\_\_\_ 48 Merchant Street. *in, at*
17. He started \_\_\_\_\_ six \_\_\_\_\_ the morning. *at, in*
18. He hanged himself \_\_\_\_\_ a piece of cloth. *with*
19. The portrait was painted \_\_\_\_\_ a famous artist who flourished \_\_\_\_\_ the Sixteenth century. *by, in*
20. I must start \_\_\_\_\_ dawn to reach the station in time. *at*
21. I hope to reach the station \_\_\_\_\_ an hour at the outside. *within/in*
22. The child has been missing \_\_\_\_\_ yesterday. *since*
23. The caravan must reach its destination \_\_\_\_\_ sunset. *before/by*
24. The mail train is due \_\_\_\_\_ 3 P.M. *at*
25. He travelled thirty kilometers \_\_\_\_\_ two hours. *in*