

GRAMMAR

Verbs, adjectives and nouns with prepositions

LEVEL

Upper-Intermediate
(B2)

NUMBER

EN_B2_3102G

LANGUAGE

English

Learning outcomes

- I can accurately combine a wide range of verbs and adjectives with specific prepositions.
- I can use noun phrase collocations to describe a variety of situations.



Phrasal verbs

This lesson will look at verbs using three prepositions: **to**, **on** and **of**. We call these **phrasal verbs**.

to	on	of
refer to	rely on	accuse (somebody) of
object to	congratulate (somebody) on	approve of



to refer to

- **to refer to** (something or someone) means **to look at** something to get **information**.
- We often refer to **dictionaries, websites** or **important documents**.
- A **noun phrase** will always follow this phrasal verb.



If you have any questions, please **refer to** the employee handbook.

Please **refer to** our website for more information.





to object to

- **to object to** something means **to disagree** with someone or something.
- We often follow **object to** with **that**, referring to something **earlier in the sentence** or **previously mentioned**.
- **to object to** can come before a **noun phrase** or a **gerund (-ing)**.



You said my work was poor and I **object to** that.

I **object to** **spending** my own money on a business trip.





Complete the sentences

Complete the sentences with the correct form of the verbs *to refer to* and *to object to*.

1 Please _____ the bottom of the menu for the desserts.

2 Does anyone _____ going for a walk after dinner?

3 Mark _____ splitting the bill evenly, because he didn't order a second drink.

4 I think he did. Do we need to _____ the bill?

5 I _____ the accusation that I'm lying!



They **referred him to** a specialist to find out why he was having stomach issues.

We have already looked at **refer to** in the sense of consulting a source of information.

We also use **refer (someone) to** in the sense of passing something on a higher authority (in the example above, a medical specialist).



to rely on

- If you **rely on** someone or something, you **trust them** to **help** or **support** you when **needed**.
- We often **rely on people, institutions or authorities, technology** and **weather conditions**.
- This phrasal verb takes this structure: **to rely on + noun phrase + (infinitive)**.



I am **relying on** you to finish the report before Tuesday.

I shouldn't have **relied on** the passport authority. They didn't process my application in time.





to congratulate on

- **To congratulate on** means to wish someone **happiness** for something, normally an **achievement**. This shows **respect** and **admiration**.
- We often use **to congratulate on** as a **main verb** after an **auxiliary verb**.
- We put a **noun phrase**, often an **object pronoun**, between **congratulate** and **on**.



I want to congratulate **you on** your success at university.

Can we all congratulate **Dianne on** doing such a great job?



To rely on and to congratulate on

Use the **correct phrasal verb** for each context. Use the given **tense or construction**.

1. A colleague failed to submit an important piece of work on time



Past simple



Want + infinitive

2. You go to a friend's band's concert and they play well

3. You have to announce the employee of the month at a staff meeting



need + infinitive



present continuous

4. You are planning what needs to be done before a party next weekend



to approve of

- **to approve of** something means you **agree with** or **support** it.
- We often use **approve of** with **doesn't/don't** or a **negative modal verb** to express **disapproval**.
- We follow **approve of** with a **noun phrase** or a **gerund**.



I **approve of** your decision to quit your job.

I **don't approve of** gossiping in the office.





to accuse of

- *to accuse (somebody) of* means to say somebody has done **something wrong**.
- **Subject + accuse + noun phrase + of + present participle.**



He **accused me of** taking his chair.

Are you **accusing the student of** cheating in the exam?





Make sentences with *to accuse of* and *to approve of*

You really like your best friend's new partner

Someone said that you stole office equipment

You are frustrated that your colleague spends time online shopping at work

You are watching a story about a crime on the news



Adjectives with specific prepositions

Common combinations of words are called **collocations**.

Match these adjective-preposition collocations to the correct picture.

1



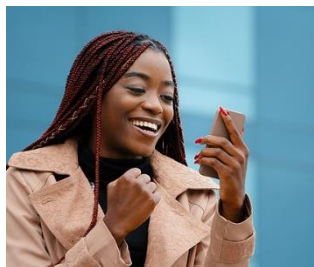
2



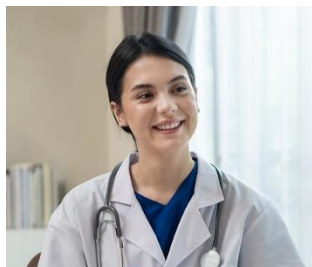
3



4



5



6



a (be) fed up with

b (be) puzzled by

c (be) astonished at/by

d (be) sensitive to

e (be) sensitive about

f (be) enthusiastic about



Adjectives with specific prepositions

Fill the gaps with the correct prepositions and adjectives to make definitions of each collocation.

1 If you are astonished _____ something you are _____ by it.

2 If you are fed up _____ something or someone, you are probably _____.

3 If someone or something is sensitive _____ something, they are _____.

4 To be puzzled _____ means to be _____.

5 He is very enthusiastic _____ music. It is his _____.

surprised

about

with

confused

to

unhappy or bored

passion

responsive to
change

by

at

in agreement and on behalf of

Read the examples and **complete** the blue boxes.

I think we are all **in agreement**.

On behalf of the team, I'd like to wish you a happy birthday!

- Finally, there are some **nouns** that we commonly use with specific **prepositions**.
- The examples above allow you to say something when you **think the same** as a **group of people**. When you think the same, you can **speak for** someone else, because you **agree**.

- Which verb is used with **in agreement**?
- Could you structure the second sentence differently? What would change?



More noun phrase collocations

These collocations are useful for **describing data** or forming an **argument**.

Last year, there was a _____ the number of people using our gyms. At the moment, we are not sure about the _____ this reduction. I have to be honest and say that the future of the business is _____.

- **Complete the text** using the correct noun phrase collocation:

- **reduction in**
- **reasons for**
- **in doubt**





Think of a time when...

Think of a time when you did these things and share your story with your classmates.

- 1 You **relied on** someone or something and they let you down...
- 2 You weren't **in agreement with** your colleagues about something important....
- 3 You had to explain your **reasons for** doing something





Your teacher will read the text on **slide 25**.
Complete the listening activity below.

Listen out for and **make note of** the phrasal verbs and collocations we have looked at in the lesson.





End of the lesson

Idiom

What's meant for you won't pass you by

Meaning: If something is fated to happen, it will.

Example: Well, you didn't get the promotion this time. But what's meant for you won't pass you by.



Additional practice



Transform the sentences using collocations



1 This microphone is very responsive.



This microphone is very **sensitive to** quiet sounds.

2 I was surprised by what you told me.



3 You have a real passion for art.



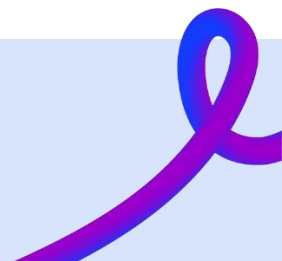
4 Your email made me a little confused.



5 She is so bored with your lies.



6 You know about all the new indie bands on the scene.





Describe a time when...



**...you had to refer to a
an expert for advice**

**...you objected to a
task**

**...you were
astonished by
something you read**

**...you were fed up with
a friend or family
member**

Transcription on personal data protection

See **activity** on slide 19.

Do you **approve of** social media platforms using your personal data? Do you think about this when you write a post to **congratulate** a friend **on** their promotion? You would be **astonished at** how companies use the information we give away for free.

Many of us are **in agreement**: this is worrying, but it doesn't cause a **reduction in** how much we use social media. We **object to** data being used like this, but we also **rely on** social media for a lot of things. What are the **reasons for** this?

On behalf of internet users everywhere, I would like to see stricter laws on data protection. Please **refer to** my pamphlet for more information.





Answer key

P.6: 1. refer to 2. object to 3. objected to 4. refer to 5. object to

P.14: 1. be astonished by 2. be puzzled by 3. be fed up with 4. be enthusiastic about 5. be sensitive about 6. be sensitive to

P.15: 1. at/by; surprised 2. with; unhappy or bored 3. to; responsive to change 4. by; confused 5. about; passion



Summary

To refer to:

- **to refer to** (something or someone) means **to look at** something to get **information**.
- We often refer to **dictionaries, websites** or **important documents**.
- A **noun phrase** will always follow this phrasal verb.
- Please **refer to** our website for more information.

To object to:

- **to object to** something means **to disagree** with someone or something. We often follow **object to** with **that**, referring to something **earlier in the sentence** or **previously mentioned**.
- **to object to** can come before a **noun phrase** or a **gerund (-ing)**.
- I **object to** spending my own money on a business trip.

To rely on:

- If you **rely on** someone or something, you **trust them** to **help** or **support** you when **needed**.
- We often **rely on people, institutions or authorities, technology** and **weather conditions**.
- This phrasal verb takes this structure: **to rely on** + **noun phrase** + **(infinitive)**.
- I'm **relying on** you to finish the report by Tuesday.

To congratulate on:

- **To congratulate on** means to wish someone **happiness** for something, normally an **achievement**. This shows **respect** and **admiration**. We often use **to congratulate on** as a **main verb** after an **auxiliary verb**. We put a **noun phrase**, often an **object pronoun**, between **congratulate** and **on**.
- I want to **congratulate** you **on** your success at university.



Summary (2)

To approve of:

- **to approve of** something means you **agree with** or **support** it. We often use **approve of** with **doesn't/don't** or a **negative modal verb** to express **disapproval**. We follow **approve of** with a **noun phrase** or a **gerund**.
- *I don't **approve of** smoking indoors.*

To accuse of:

- **to accuse (somebody) of** means to say somebody has done **something wrong**.
- **Subject + accuse + noun phrase + of + present participle.**
- *He accused me of taking his chair.*

Adjectives with specific prepositions:

- *(be) astonished at/by; (be) puzzled by; (be) fed up with; (be) enthusiastic about; (be) sensitive about; (be) sensitive (to)*
- *I'm **fed up with** your behaviour.*
- *She's a little **puzzled by** the new systems.*

Noun phrase collocations:

- *I think we are all **in agreement**.; **On behalf of** the team, I'd like to wish you a happy birthday!*
- *Last year, there was a **reduction in** the number of people using our gyms. At the moment, we are not sure about the **reasons for** this reduction. I have to be honest and say that the future of the business is **in doubt**.*



Vocabulary

handbook

to split the bill

to refer somebody to

to gossip

frustrated

