

# For

## from [English Grammar Today](#)

*For* is usually a preposition and sometimes a conjunction.

### **For: purpose**

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We use *for* to talk about a purpose or a reason for something:

*I'm going **for** some breakfast. I'm really hungry*

*She leaves on Friday **for** a 15-day cruise around the Mediterranean.*

*I wear these old trousers **for** painting.*

In questions we often use *what ... for* instead of *why* to ask about the reason or purpose of something especially in informal situations:

***What** are you here **for**?*

***What** are they doing it **for**?*

**See also:**

[\*\*For + -ing\*\*](#)

### **For someone**

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We often use *for* to introduce the person or people receiving something:

*She bought a teapot **for** her sister.*

*Mike Cranham and his staff at the hotel cook **for** 800 people a day, on average.*

### **For: duration**

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We use *for* with a period of time to refer to duration (how long something lasts):

*There's a lovely open-air pool near us. We usually go there **for** a couple of hours in the evenings when it's warm enough.*

### Warning:

Don't confuse *for* and *in* when referring to time:

*We're going to Cape Town **for** two months.* (We will spend two months in Cape Town.)

*We're going to Cape Town **in** two months.* (We're leaving to go to Cape Town two months from now.)

After a negative we can use *for* and *in* with the same meaning. *In* is particularly common in American English:

*I haven't seen him **in** five years.* (or **for** five years.)

See also:

[\*For or since?\*](#)

## For: exchange

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We use *for* to refer to an exchange:

[sign in a food shop]

*2 **for** £2 or £1.36 each.* (Two for two pounds or one pound thirty-six each.)

*I got 124 euros **for** 100 pounds at today's exchange rate.*

## For meaning because

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We sometimes use *for* as a conjunction meaning 'because'. We use it in very formal, and often literary, contexts:

*Chasing the white stag through the forests, never catching it, of course, **for** it is a creature of legend.*

## For in multi-word verbs

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We often combine *for* with a verb to form a multi-word verb:

*She's been **caring for** her mother for years.*

*It's not a good time to **look for** it now. We have to go.*

You will find other multi-word verbs with ~~with~~*for* in a good learner's dictionary.

**See also:**

**[Verbs: multi-word verbs](#)**