

## **Definition:**

*Definition Prepositions are used to express the relationship of a noun or pronoun (or another grammatical element functioning as a noun) to the rest of the sentence. The noun or pronoun that is connected by the preposition is known as the object of the preposition. Some common prepositions are in, on, for, to, of, with, and about, above, across, against, along, among, around, at, before, behind, below, beneath, beside, between, by, down, from, in, into, near, of, off, on, to, toward, under, upon and within.*

## **Types of prepositions**

### **Intransitive Prepositions**

*Intransitive prepositions do not need to use the complement to complete the thought. For example, “outside” can be used in the following sentence without a complement, “she lived outside.” You could add a complement to this, “She lived outside the city limits,” but it is unnecessary when using it. Traditional grammars believe intransitive prepositions are actually adverbs. The argument for intransitive prepositions parallels the use of transitive or intransitive verbs. “He runs” versus “he runs a marathon.”*

### **Conjunctive Preposition**

*This type of preposition uses a clause as the complement. Traditional grammar may categorize these as subordinating conjunctions instead of conjunctive prepositions. One common example of a conjunctive preposition is the word “because.”*

### **Complex Preposition**

*When two or more words form a preposition, they are a complex preposition. This type of preposition is also referred to as a compound*

*preposition. Aside from being more than one word, it functions essentially the same as any other preposition. “In light of” is an example of a complex preposition. “In light of the recent traffic reports, the man drove a different way to work.” Other examples are in addition to, on behalf of, in the middle of, or across from.*

*Complex prepositions are mostly found at the beginning and the middle of a sentence, but rarely at the end. To find the correct complex preposition to use, focus on the relationship between the beginning and the end of the sentence. When you have determined this relationship, you can identify the proper complex preposition much easier.*

### ***Phrase propositions***

*Prepositions and their objects together form prepositional phrases, which can function as either adjectives or (more commonly) adverbs.*

***For example:*** • “There is a film at noon we could see.”

*(Adjectival, modifying the noun film)*

• “He hit the nail with a hammer.” *(Adverbial, modifying the verb hit)*

*A prepositional phrase always contains at least a preposition and its object (a noun or pronoun), but it can also contain modifiers that add additional meaning to the object. These can even be other prepositional phrases functioning as adjectives.*

***For example:***

• “He arrived to school in a red car.”

• “We keep the lawnmower in the shed out back.”

***Adjective complements:***

*Occasionally, adverbial prepositions are used to modify predicative adjectives to complete or elaborate upon their meaning. When they are used in this way, they function as adjective complements.*

*For example:*

- *“Megan was afraid of thunderstorms.”*
- *“Philip is upset about what was said.”*
- *“We are very pleased with the number of donations we received.”*

### ***Choosing the appropriate preposition***

#### ***Common Prepositional Errors***

*Choosing the appropriate preposition*  
*Common Prepositional Errors*  
*Prepositions can be very difficult to navigate because many of them are used to express multiple kinds of relationships, and it’s easy to use one in the wrong context.*

*For example:*

**✗** *“I had breakfast with cereal and milk.” (incorrect)*

**✓** *“I had cereal and milk for breakfast.” (correct)*

*The first sentence is a common error. It implies that you, the cereal, and the milk all had breakfast together. You can have breakfast with your friends or your family, but not with cereal and milk. However, we can use with to show a connection between cereal and milk, as in:*

**✓** *“I had cereal with milk for breakfast.”*

Another similar error is:

✗ *“I go to work with my car.”*

✓ *“I go to work by car.”*

*In the first sentence, it implies that you and your car go to work together. You can go to work with a person, but when speaking about a means of transportation, we often use the preposition by. If the object is modified by a possessive determiner, we can also use the preposition in, as in:*

✓ *“I go to work in my car.”*

*When choosing the appropriate preposition in a sentence, we must consider their various categories as well as what the prepositional phrase is going to modify.*

### ***Categories of prepositions***

*can be broadly divided into eight categories: time, place, direction or movement, agency, instrument or device, reason or purpose, connection, and origin. The following table highlights the most common categories of prepositions and how they are used to form adjectival or adverbial prepositional phrases in a sentence:*

### ***Category Preposition Example sentences***

<i>English</i>	<i>Usage</i>	<i>Example</i>
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<i>In</i>	<i>room, building, street, town, country</i>  <i>book, paper, etc.</i>  <i>transportation</i>  <i>picture, world</i>	<i>We sleep in our bedroom. We live in Texas.</i>  <i>I live in the United States.</i>  <i>I read about it in Harry Potter.</i>  <i>We are going in a bus to the sports game.</i>  <i>You look great in that picture. Where in the world were you?</i>
<i>At</i>	<i>next to or by an object</i>  <i>for sitting at a table</i>  <i>for events</i>  <i>place where you are to doing something</i>	<i>Leave your shoes at the door.</i>  <i>We have dinner at the table.</i>  <i>I told him I would meet him at school.</i>  <i>We are studying at the library.</i>
<i>on</i>	<i>Attached</i>  <i>being on an object</i>  <i>for a certain side</i>  <i>for a floor in a house</i>  <i>for public transportation</i>  <i>for media</i>	<i>The mirror is on the wall.</i>  <i>The keys are on the desk.</i>  <i>The stage is on the right side.</i>  <i>We live on the first floor.</i>  <i>I talked to him on the bus.</i>  <i>I saw it on Twitter.</i>

<i>by, next to, beside</i>	<i>left or right of an object or person</i>	<i>The school is next to the church.</i>
<i>under</i>	<i>on the ground or lower than something else</i>	<i>The ants are under the rock.</i>
<i>below</i>	<i>lower than something else</i>	<i>The glasses go below the cups in the pantry.</i>
<i>over</i>	<i>covered by something else</i> <i>meaning more than getting to the other side</i> <i>overcoming an obstacle</i>	<i>Put a blanket over your lap.</i> <i>You can drive if you are over 16 years of age.</i> <i>Drive over the bridge.</i> <i>Climb over the wall.</i>
<i>above</i>	<i>higher than something else, but not directly over it</i>	<i>The plates go above the glasses in the pantry.</i>
<i>across</i>	<i>go to the other side</i>	<i>Walk across the bridge.</i> <i>Swim across the pool.</i>

<i>through</i>	<i>to move from one place to another by entering the inside of something</i>	<i>Drive through the tunnel.</i> <i>Enter through the breezeway.</i>
<i>to</i>	<i>movement to person, building, place or country</i>  <i>can also indicate bedtime</i>	<i>Go to the restaurant.</i>  <i>Go to California.</i>  <i>Go to bed.</i>
<i>into</i>	<i>enter a room or a building</i>	<i>Go into the house. Once there, go into the bedroom.</i>
<i>towards</i>	<i>movement in the direction of something, as opposed to away from it</i>	<i>She walked towards the house.</i>
<i>onto</i>	<i>moving to the top of something</i>	<i>Jump onto the bench.</i>
<i>from</i>	<i>where did object come from</i>	<i>We bought a fruit from the grocery store.</i>

*Prepositions – Time*

<i>English</i>	<i>Usage</i>	<i>Example</i>
<i>on</i>	<i>days of the week</i>	<i>on Friday</i>
<i>in</i>	<i>months / seasons</i> <i>time of day</i> <i>year</i> <i>After a certain period of time (when?)</i>	<i>in September / in autumn</i> <i>in the evening</i> <i>in 2020</i> <i>in thirty minutes</i>
<i>at</i>	<i>for night</i> <i>a certain point of time</i>	<i>at night</i> <i>at half past seven</i>
<i>since</i>	<i>from a certain point of time in the past</i>	<i>since 1999</i>
<i>for</i>	<i>a certain past time until present</i>	<i>for 10 years</i>
<i>ago</i>	<i>a time in the past</i>	<i>4 years ago</i>



<i>before</i>	<i>earlier than a specified date</i>	<i>before 2020</i>
<i>to</i>	<i>telling the time</i>	<i>ten to 10 (9:50)</i>
<i>past</i>	<i>telling the time</i>	<i>ten past five (5:10)</i>
<i>to / till / until</i>	<i>the beginning and end of a period of time</i>	<i>from Wednesday to/till Friday</i>
<i>till / until</i>	<i>how long something is going to last</i>	<i>He is on vacation until Sunday</i>
<i>by</i>	<i>indicating the latest something will happen by  up to a certain time</i>	<i>I will be done with work by 6 o'clock.  By 7 pm, I had finished my chores.</i>

<i>Direction or Movement</i>	<i>to, from, over, under, along, around, across, through, into, out of, toward(s), away</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “The house down the road is being sold.” (adjectival)</li> <li>• “They drove across the</li> </ul>
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	<i>from, onto, off, up, down</i>	<i>country.” (adverbial)</i>
<i>Agency</i>	<i>by, with</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “The book by the famous author is a big hit.” (adjectival)</li> <li>• “Her heart is filled with emotion.” (adverbial)</li> </ul>
<i>Instrument or Device</i>	<i>by, with, on</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “The journey by boat is long and arduous.” (adjectival)</li> <li>• “He hit the nail with a hammer.” (adverbial)</li> </ul>
<i>Reason or Purpose</i>	<i>for, through, because of, on account of, from</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “I have a separate computer for work.” (adjectival)</li> <li>• “They left early because of the storm.” (adverbial)</li> </ul>
<i>Connection</i>	<i>of, to, with</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “A well-written cover letter to employers helps your chances of being hired.” (adjectival)</li> <li>• “I think she decided to go with Victor.” (adverbial)</li> </ul>
<i>Origin</i>	<i>from, of</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Tom is of</li> </ul>

		<i>German descent.” (adjectival) • “We started our trip from Italy.” (adverbial)</i>
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