

Prepositions

PREPOSITIONS OF PLACE

Prepositions of Place - Introduction

Prepositions of place refer to the location of objects, people or places.

The most common prepositions of place are 'at', 'on' and 'in'.

Others include 'by', 'near', 'close to', 'next to', 'beside', 'between', 'behind', 'in front of', 'over', 'above', 'below' and 'under'.

Prepositions of Place - at

We use 'at' for specific location or event.

- I will wait for you *at* the cinema entrance.
- Paul is sitting *at* the bar.
- We met the customers *at* the head office.
- Sid's house is *at* the end of the street.
- Everyone had a great time *at* the party yesterday.
- Steve is studying maths *at* university.

Prepositions of Place - on

We use 'on' for surfaces or tops of things.

- The mug is *on* the table.
- Don't sit *on* the grass if it's wet.
- Please leave the drinks *on* the tray.
- Jack hung a picture *on* the wall.
- Don't sit *on* that chair – it's just been painted.

Prepositions of Place - in

We use 'in' for enclosed spaces or geographical locations.

- The plates are *in* the cupboard.
- There are thousands of books *in* the library.
- Most people cook *in* the kitchen.
- London is *in* England.
- We have a meeting *in* Toronto next week.
- In your opinion, what is the best band *in* the world?

Prepositions of Place – by, near, close to

We use 'by', 'near' and 'close to' when the distance between two things is small.

Please note that 'close to' is the only one of these that uses the word 'to'.

- Peter prefer to sit *by* the window when flying.
 - Jane likes to sit *near* the entrance of the cinema.
 - Jane likes to sit *near to* the entrance of the cinema.
 - Don't stand so *close to* me.
-

Prepositions of Place – next to, beside

We use 'next to' and 'beside' for two things that are adjacent.

'Beside' is slightly more formal than 'next to'.

- The bus was empty – why did he have to sit down *next to* me?
- Jenny sits *beside* Mary at school.
- My uncle is standing *next to* my sister in the photo.
- John's house is *beside* the restaurant.

Prepositions of Place – between

We use 'between' when something is in the middle of two things.

- Put a slice of cheese *between* two slices of bread – voila! You now have a cheese sandwich.
- Would you like to sit *between* Tony and Peter?
- Donny is an idiot – nothing *between* his ears at all.
- His house is *between* the Brown's and the Ball's.

Prepositions of Place – behind

We use 'behind' when one thing is at the back of another thing.

It is the opposite of 'in front of'.

- Paul got *behind* the wheel of the car and drove away.
- Peter is standing *behind* Paula in the queue.
- Sadie hung her coat *behind* the door.
- The carpark is *behind* the supermarket.

Prepositions of Place – in front of

We use 'in front of' when one thing is situated before another thing.

It is the opposite of 'behind'.

- The teacher stood *in front of* the class.
- Let's not put the cupboard *in front of* the television.
- The man *in front of* Jim looks a bit like Churchill.
- English people are usually too polite to push *in front of* you.

Prepositions of Place – over

We use 'over' and 'above' when something is higher than something else.

Although they are similar, we use 'over' when something is in direct contact with something else, or when one thing covers another.

- She pulled the blanket *over* her head.
- Hannah held the umbrella *over* both of us.
- I like jelly with cream poured *over* it.
- Put the towel *over* the radiator to dry.

Prepositions of Place – above

We use 'over' and 'above' when something is higher than something else.

Although they are similar, we use 'above' when something is higher, but not directly over something else.

- We walked along the path *above* the lake.
- She hung the picture *above* her bed.
- Not much of Holland is *above* sea level.
- The pupil raised her hand *above* her head to ask a question.

Prepositions of Place – under

We use 'below' and 'under' when something is lower than something else.

We use 'under' when one object covers another.

'Underneath' is another word for 'under'.

- The dog is hiding *under* the bed.
- The boy put the tooth *under* his pillow.
- I found your earring *under* the sofa.
- There is a troll *under* the bridge.

Prepositions of Place – below

We use 'below' and 'under' when something is lower than something else.

We use 'below' when one object is in a lower position.

'Beneath' is another word for below.

- Much of Holland is *below* sea level.
- Her flat is *below* mine.
- The ship is just *below* the horizon.
- I saw a big fish *below* the surface of the water.