

Prepositions

PREPOSITIONS OF DIRECTION

Prepositions of Direction - Introduction

Prepositions of direction tell us where something or someone moves and where to put something.

They commonly follow verbs of motion.

Common prepositions of direction are 'to', 'onto', and 'into'.

These are related to the prepositions of place 'at', 'on' and 'in'.

Other prepositions of direction include 'at', 'from', 'over', 'above', 'under', 'along', 'around', 'across', 'through', 'out of', 'towards', 'away from', 'off', 'up' and 'down'.

Prepositions of Direction - to

We use 'to' to indicate movement towards a location or person.

- We need to get Bob *to* the hospital now.
- Last weekend, we went *to* London.
- Could you give this letter *to* Peter, please?
- The boy threw the ball *to* his friend.

Prepositions of Direction – onto

We use 'onto' for movement that ends on top of something.

'Onto' corresponds with the preposition of place, 'on'.

- Wreckage from the ship washed up *onto* the shore.
- Bob moved the coffee table *onto* the carpet.
- The builder lowered the roof *onto* the house.
- Laura climbed *onto* the table to reach the lamp.

Prepositions of Direction - into

We use 'into' for movement that ends up in something.

'Into' corresponds with the preposition of place, 'in'.

- The children dived *into* the swimming pool.
- The porter carried the bags *into* the hotel room.
- The junk mail was thrown unread *into* the paper bin.
- The mechanic lowered the engine *into* the car.

Prepositions of Direction - at

We use 'at' to indicate movement towards a location or person.

- The boy threw a stone *at* the girl.
- (compare with: the boy threw the ball *to* his friend)
- The enemy came *at* me from all directions.
- Jim threw a dart *at* the board and hit the bullseye.

Prepositions of Direction - from

We use 'from' for movement with a specific origin.

- It is about 874 miles *from* Land's End to John o'Groats.
- My hamster escaped *from* its cage.
- Here's a birthday present, *from* me to you.
- I cycled *from* home to work today.

Prepositions of Direction - over

We use 'over' for movement higher than and across something.

- The boy threw the ball *over* the house.
- Those birds are flying *over* the trees.
- The burglar jumped *over* the fence and ran away.
- The quick brown fox jumped *over* the lazy dog.

Prepositions of Direction - above

We use 'above' for movement to a point that is higher than something.

- Please put the picture *above* the bed.
- Put your hands *above* your head.
- The waterfall *above* the lake is beautiful.
- The weather improved when we flew *above* the clouds.

Prepositions of Direction - under

We use 'under' for movement that is lower than something.

- The puppy crawled *under* the fence.
- The cat ran *under* the bed to hide.
- We put the presents *under* the tree on Christmas Eve.
- It's fun to swim in the lake *under* the waterfall.

Prepositions of Direction - along

We use 'along' for movement on an edge or straight line.

- There is a picturesque path *along* the river.
- The pupil followed the teacher *along* the corridor.
- The couple went for a romantic walk *along* the beach at sunset.
- The coastal road runs *along* the beach.

Prepositions of Direction - around

We use 'around' for circular movement or along a curved path.

- We walked *around* the church to get more photographs.
- The road is blocked – we'll have to drive *around* the obstacle.
- This door is locked – we'll have to go *around* and use the other door.
- Shall we go for a walk *around* the park tomorrow?

Prepositions of Direction - across

We use 'across' for movement from one end to another, or from one side to the opposite side.

- We had to walk *across* the bridge to get home.
- The silly boy ran *across* the road without looking.
- That boat will take you *across* the river.
- Sam's friend lives *across* the street from him.

Prepositions of Direction - through

We use 'through' for movement from one side of an enclosed space to the other side.

- We drove *through* the tunnel under the river.
- Water runs *through* the pipes to the house.
- The girls were playing and jumping *through* the hoops.
- The kitten crawled *through* a gap in the fence.

Prepositions of Direction – out of

We use 'out of' for movement that finished outside of something.

- The player hit the ball *out of* the park.
- The water's getting cold – you should get *out of* the bath now.
- Take the ingredients *out of* the packet and follow the instructions.
- We've arrived – you can all get *out of* the car now.

Prepositions of Direction – towards

We use 'towards' for movement that brings us closer to something.

- We took our bread and walked *towards* the ducks.
- The defender kicked the ball *towards* the opposition goal.
- The girl laughed and ran *towards* her sister.
- When it started raining I ran *towards* the bus shelter.

Prepositions of Direction – away from

We use 'away from' for movement that takes us further from something.

- The father told the boys to stay *away from* his daughter.
- The cat ran *away from* the dog.
- The truant ran *away from* school.
- Get *away from* me! Come back when you've had a bath!

Prepositions of Direction – off

We use 'off' for movement down or away from something.

- The wind blew the hat *off* his head.
- Please take your feet *off* the table.
- We get *off* the bus at the next stop.
- Remember to take all your bags with you when you get *off* the train.

Prepositions of Direction – up

We use 'up' for movement that takes us higher, or to the north.

- Running *up* that hill was tiring.
- Alan climbed *up* the ladder to fix the roof.
- Time for bed – *up* the stairs you go.
- Why don't you come *up* and visit us next week?

Prepositions of Direction – down

We use 'down' for movement that takes us lower, or to the south.

- The ball rolled *down* the slope.
- Riding *down* a steep hill is great fun.
- The dog shouldn't be on the sofa – make it get *down*.
- Do you want to come *down* next weekend?