**Prepositions "Of," "To," and "For"**

|  |
| --- |
| **Of**  Used for belonging to, relating to, or connected with:   * The secret of this game is that you can’t ever win. * The highlight of the show is at the end. * The first page of the book describes the author’s profile. * Don’t touch it. That’s the bag of my friend’s sister. * I always dreamed of being rich and famous.   Used to indicate reference:   * I got married in the summer of 2000. * This is a picture of my family. * I got a discount of 10 percent on the purchase.   Used to indicate an amount or number:   * I drank three cups of milk. * A large number of people gathered to protest. * I had only four hours of sleep during the last two days. * He got a perfect score of 5 on his writing assignment.   **To**  Used to indicate the place, person, or thing that someone or something moves toward, or the direction of something:   * I am heading to the entrance of the building. * The package was mailed to Mr. Kim yesterday. * All of us went to the movie theater. * Please send it back to me.   Used to indicate a limit or an ending point:   * The snow was piled up to the roof. * The stock prices rose up to 100 dollars.   Used to indicate relationship:   * This letter is very important to your admission. * My answer to your question is in this envelop. * Do not respond to every little thing in your life.   Used to indicate a time or a period:   * I work nine to six, Monday to Friday. * It is now 10 to five. (In other words, it is 4:50.)   **For**  Used to indicate the use of something:   * This place is for exhibitions and shows. * I baked a cake for your birthday. * I put a note on the door for privacy. * She has been studying hard for the final exam.   Used to mean because of:   * I am so happy for you. * We feel deeply sorry for your loss. * For this reason, I’ve decided to quit this job.   Used to indicate time or duration:   * He’s been famous for many decades. * I attended the university for one year only. * This is all I have for today. |

Prepositions are relationship words. They give clues and guidance regarding how the remainder of the sentence fits together. There are several important rules when using prepositions in the context of a sentence. These rules relate to how prepositions can be used, which prepositions can be used when, and where prepositions have to go in the sentence.

**What is a Preposition?**

A preposition is a word that explains the time, space or logical relationship between the other parts of the sentence. In other words, it links all the other words together, so the reader can understand how the pieces of the sentence fit.

There are hundreds of prepositions in the English language. One easy way to remember prepositions is that they are words that tell you everywhere a bunny can run; for example, a bunny can run

* up
* down
* near
* far
* by
* at
* around
* close
* always

All of these words, and many more, are prepositions.

**Preposition Rules**

There are 2 major rules when it comes to the use of prepositions.

1. The first major rule deals with preposition choice. Certain prepositions must follow certain words, and the correct preposition must be used to make relationships between words in the sentences clear.
2. The second major rule deals with the prepositions place in the sentence. Prepositions must be followed by nouns, and prepositions can only go on the end of the sentence in certain situations.

**Preposition Choice**

Determining the correct preposition to use can be a tricky proposition.  This can be especially difficult when dealing with idioms- expressions in the English language that require the use of a certain word, simply because that is the word we have chosen to use.  Idiomatic expressions are expressions you just have to memorize, and when errors are made, they are almost always preposition errors.

Here are some examples of idioms, along with the correct prepositions:

* Able *to*
* Capable *of*
* Preoccupied *with*
* Concerned *by*
* Prohibited *from*

Each of the italicized words are the only acceptable prepositions to follow these words. It would not be grammatically correct to say "able *with*" or "capable *to"*

**Prepositions In the Context of Sentences**

Prepositions must always be followed by a noun or pronoun. That noun is called the *object* of the preposition. A verb can't be the object of a preposition.

* The bone was *for* the dog. This is correct- the preposition *for* is followed by the noun "dog."
* The bone was for walked. This is not correct. The preposition *for* is followed by a verb "walked." Walked can't be the object of a preposition.

This rule may seem confusing at first, because you may have seen words that look like verbs following the preposition *to* in sentences; for example:

* I like *to ski* or These boots are for *skiing*.

However, in these examples, the *ski* and *skiing* are not actually acting as verbs.

* In the first example, *to ski* is part of the infinitive. An infinitive is NOT a verb. An infinitive occurs when a verb is used as a noun, adjective, or adverb. Here, "to ski" is a THING that the person likes doing, not an action that they are doing. It is a verbal noun.
* In the second example, skiing is a gerund. Like an infinitive, a gerund is NOT a verb, but is instead a noun, adjective or adverb.  Here, "skiing" is a thing that the boots are for. No one in this sentence is doing the action of skiing.

**Using Prepositions at the End of Sentences**

Because prepositions must be followed by a noun and have an object, they usually shouldn't be used at the end of a sentence.  For example, it is not correct to say:

* The table is where I put my books on.

However, there are certain circumstances where it is acceptable to [end a sentence with a preposition](http://grammar.yourdictionary.com/parts-of-speech/prepositions/Ending-a-Sentence-with-a-Preposition.html).  These exceptions exist where the preposition is not extraneous. In other words, the preposition needs to be there, and if it wasn't, the meaning of the sentence would change.

In the above example, *"The table is where I put my books on."* the use of the preposition "on" isn't necessary. We could take the "on" out of the sentence and the meaning would be the same. So, the use of the preposition was extraneous or unnecessary and we don't need it.

However, here is an example where it is perfectly acceptable to use a preposition to end a sentence:

* "I turned the TV on."

If you removed the "on" from the end of this sentence, it would change the meaning. Instead of switching on the set, you would be saying that you turned the TV itself. 

##### A preposition is used to link [noun](http://www.spwickstrom.com/nouns/), [pronouns](http://www.spwickstrom.com/pronouns/) and phrases to other words in a sentence. The word or phrase that the preposition introduces is called the object of the preposition. A preposition is used to indicate the temporal, spatial or logical relationship of its object to the rest of the sentence. Here are some examples: The pencil is ON the desk. The pencil is BENEATH the desk. The pencil is leaning AGAINST the desk. The pencil is on the floor BESIDE the desk. He held the pencil OVER the desk. He wrote with the pencil DURING class. You may have noticed that in each of the preceding sentences, the preposition located the noun "pencil" in space or in time. Here are some general rules regarding prepositions: • It is permissible to end a sentence with a preposition. • A preposition is followed by a noun. • A preposition is never followed by a verb. • It is permissible to begin a sentence with a preposition, or a prepositional phrase, but be very careful when you do so.\* • A prepositional phrase always begins with a preposition and ends with a noun or pronoun called the OBJECT of the preposition. • The subject of the sentence can *never* be part of a prepositional phrase. • A verb can never be a part of a prepositional phrase. There is a so-called “rule” about never ending a sentence with a preposition and it comes from Latin grammar. In Latin grammar, the word order of a sentence didn't matter; subjects and verbs and direct objects could appear in any sequence. However, the placement of prepositions was very important. A Latin sentence would quickly become confusing if the preposition did not appear immediately before the object of the preposition, so it became a stylistic rule for Latin writers to have objects always and immediately following prepositions. This Latin grammar "rule" meant that a sentence would never end with a preposition. When English grammarians in the 1500s and 1600s starting writing grammar books, they tended to apply Latin rules to English, even though those rules had never been applicable before. I believe that they wanted to make English a more scholarly language, like Latin. Here is a list of some prepositions:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| aboard | about | above | absent | according to |
| across | after | against | ahead of | all over |
| along | along side | amid/amidst | among | around |
| as | as of | as to | aside | astride |
| at | away from | except | bar | barring |
| because of | before | behind | below | beneath |
| beside(s) | between | beyond | but | by |
| by the time of | circa | close by | close to | concerning |
| considering | despite | down | due to | during |
| except for | excepting | excluding | failing | for |
| from | in | in between | in front of | in spite of |
| in view of | including | inside | instead of | into |
| less | like | minus | near | near to |
| next to | notwithstanding | of | off | on |
| on top of | onto | opposite | out | out of |
| outside | over | past | pending | per |
| plus | regarding | respecting | round | save |
| saving | similar to | since | than | through |
| throughout | till | to | toward(s) | under |
| underneath | unlike | until | unto | up |
| upon | versus | via | wanting | while |
| with | within | without |  |  |

##### \* This is a “rule” that been questioned for many years. Many writers actually do start sentences with prepositions and many college professors have no problems with it. The reason for the “rule” was that a preposition usually indicates the temporal, spatial or logical relationship of its object to the rest of the sentence. Therefore if you start a sentence with a preposition it can appear that you are in the middle of a sentence or thought. If you are careful however, you can start a sentence with a prepostion. The problem is that most people are not careful. Here is an example of a sentence that starts with a prepostition that works: Before going to the store, I always check my list. Many people use prepositions incorrectly at the beginning of a sentence, therefore, the “rule” came to be. You can think of it as more of a “suggestion” than a rule. When you are writing a paper for a school project, it is safer to use the rule. There is a right way and a wrong way to start a sentence with a preposition. Many authors and writers start some of their sentences with prepositions and it works very well for them. You simply have to be careful when starting a sentence with a prepostion, that the sentence does not become fragmented as a reuslt. Here is an example with the preposition up. Correct usage: We ran up the hill. Incorrect: Up the hill we ran. Here is an example with the preposition over. Correct: The rabbit jumped over the log. incorrect: Over the log the rabbit jumped. Here is an example with the preposition aboard. Correct: We got aboard the train to ride down to San Diego. Incorrect: Aboard the train we got to ride down to San Diego. Examples of prepositions at the beginning of a sentence: Despite the rain, we still went jogging. Barring any setbacks, the quarterback will play in the next game. In spite of all the harm it causes, people still smoke cigarettes. Remember that prepositions are connecting words and are generally used to connect a noun or pronoun to another word in a sentence. Beware of the phrase “in terms of” and do not use it. This phrase is a sloppy use of prepositions that should be avoided. Strunk & White, in their book The Elements of Style recommend that this phrase not be used used. They give this example: The job was unattractive in terms of salary. Instead use: The salary made the job unattractive.

##### A preposition is used to link [nouns](http://www.spwickstrom.com/nouns/), [pronouns](http://www.spwickstrom.com/pronouns/) and phrases to other words in a sentence. The word or phrase that the preposition introduces is called the object of the preposition. A preposition is used to indicate the temporal, spatial or logical relationship of its object to the rest of the sentence. Here are some examples of the preposition “to”: Preposition TO Used for expressing motion or direction toward a point, person, place, or thing approached and reached, as opposed to from:

##### The family came to their house.

##### He drove his car to Chicago.

##### Used for expressing direction or motion or direction toward something:

##### She walked from her house to school.

##### He drove his car from St. Louis to Chicago.

##### Used for expressing limit of movement or extension:

##### He grew to six feet.

##### He stood up and stretched his hands to the ceiling.

##### Used for expressing contact or contiguity (on; against; beside; upon):

* He applied pressure to the wound.
* We told him to paint the fence.

##### Used for expressing a point of limit in time (before; until):

* It is now ten minutes to seven.
* Our working hours are from eight to four.

##### Used for expressing aim, purpose, or intention:

* The emergency team is going to the crash site.
* He is studying to pass the exam.

##### Used for expressing destination or appointed end:

* The judge sentenced the criminal to prison.
* He running to win the race.

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* The pencil is on the desk.
* I put the silverware on the kitchen table
* My homework is on the teacher's desk.

##### Used to specify days and dates:

* The garbage truck comes by my house on Thursdays.
* I was born on the 3rd day of August in 1959.
* We're having a big celebration on the fourth of July.

##### Used to indicate a device or machine, such as a phone or computer:

* Robert is on the phone right now.
* Steve has been on the computer since early this morning.
* My favorite TV show will be on tonight.

##### Used to indicate a part of the body:

* The rock struck my car on the windshield.
* She kissed her friend on his cheek.
* I wear a baseball hat on my head

##### Used to indicate the state of something:

* The building across the street is on fire.
* That beautiful blue vase is on sale.
* All the lights in the building have been turned on.

##### Preposition OVER Used to indicate movement from one place to another:

* Can you come over to my house tonight for dinner?
* We need to roll the log over.
* They pushed the boulder over the edge of the cliff.

##### Used to indicate movement downward:

* The maple tree fell over onto the road during the storm.
* I had to bend over to pick up the pencil that fell off my desk.
* I fell over and broke my arm.

##### Used to indicate more than an expected number or amount:

* Children over the age of 12 pay full price.
* The price is over what I am willing to pay.
* The phone rang for over a minute before I could answer it.

##### Used to indicate a period of time:

* I worked for the company for over five years.
* I had to wait for over an hour.
* He has not been home in over a year.

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* I will be there at 12 p.m.
* He reported for duty at 1300.
* My father will be here exactly at 3:30 p.m.

##### Used to indicate a place:

* We will meet at my house.
* There will hundreds of people at the outdoor concert.
* We went to a baseball game at the stadium.
* She is studying at Virginia State University.
* The doctor works at the hospital.

##### Used to indicate a destination:

* The children arrived at school.
* The waiter was at our table to take our order.
* I left the rental car at the dealership.

##### Used to indicate a direction:

* The dog jumped at the intruder.
* The policeman leaped at the criminal.
* The pitcher threw the baseball at third base.

##### Prepositions IN Used for unspecific times during a day, or a month, or a season, or a year:

* He always drinks a cup of coffee in the morning.
* We are going to married in July.
* In the summer, we have the least amount of rain.
* We went swimming in the ocean last year.

##### Used to indicate, or point out, a location or place:

* The man looked in wallet and pulled out some money.
* While visiting the ocean, we stayed in a rental cottage.
* I live in Chesapeake, Virginia.

##### Used to indicate a shape, color, or size:

* The painting is in the style of Rembrandt.
* The soldiers stood in formation.
* My dog is very small in size.

##### Used to tell us the noun is completely, or partially in an enclosed space (surround or closed off on all sides):

* The cat is hiding in the box.
* The table is in the center of the room.
* I live in the city.

##### Used to indicate the direction of something by adding “to”:

* IN + To = into: signifies movement toward the interior of a volume.
* The frog jumped into the water.

Prepositions are short words (on, in, to) that usually stand in front of nouns (sometimes also in front of gerund verbs).

Even advanced learners of English find prepositions difficult, as a 1:1 translation is usually not possible. One preposition in your native language might have several translations depending on the situation.

There are hardly any rules as to when to use which preposition. The only way to learn prepositions is looking them up in a [dictionary](https://www.ego4u.com/en/lingopad), reading a lot in English ([literature](https://www.ego4u.com/en/read-on/literature)) and learning useful phrases off by heart ([study tips](https://www.ego4u.com/en/cram-up/learning/gap-filling)).

The following table contains rules for some of the most frequently used prepositions in English:

**Prepositions – Time**

| **English** | **Usage** | **Example** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| * on | * days of the week | * on Monday |
| * in | * months / seasons * time of day * year * after a certain period of time *(when?)* | * in August / in winter * in the morning * in 2006 * in an hour |
| * at | * for *night* * for *weekend* * a certain point of time *(when?)* | * at night * at the weekend * at half past nine |
| * since | * from a certain point of time (past till now) | * since 1980 |
| * for | * over a certain period of time (past till now) | * for 2 years |
| * ago | * a certain time in the past | * 2 years ago |
| * before | * earlier than a certain point of time | * before 2004 |
| * to | * telling the time | * ten to six (5:50) |
| * past | * telling the time | * ten past six (6:10) |
| * to / till / until | * marking the beginning and end of a period of time | * from Monday to/till Friday |
| * till / until | * in the sense of *how long something is going to last* | * He is on holiday until Friday. |
| * by | * in the sense of *at the latest* * up to a certain time | * I will be back by 6 o’clock. * By 11 o'clock, I had read five pages. |

**Prepositions – Place (Position and Direction)**

| **English** | **Usage** | **Example** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| * in | * room, building, street, town, country * book, paper etc. * car, taxi * picture, world | * in the kitchen, in London * in the book * in the car, in a taxi * in the picture, in the world |
| * at | * meaning *next to, by an object* * for *table* * for events * place where you are to do something typical (watch a film, study, work) | * at the door, at the station * at the table * at a concert, at the party * at the cinema, at school, at work |
| * on | * attached * for a place with a river * being on a surface * for a certain side (left, right) * for a floor in a house * for public transport * for *television, radio* | * the picture on the wall * London lies on the Thames. * on the table * on the left * on the first floor * on the bus, on a plane * on TV, on the radio |
| * by, next to, beside | * left or right of somebody or something | * Jane is standing by / next to / beside the car. |
| * under | * on the ground, lower than (or covered by) something else | * the bag is under the table |
| * below | * lower than something else but above ground | * the fish are below the surface |
| * over | * covered by something else * meaning *more than* * getting to the other side (also *across*) * overcoming an obstacle | * put a jacket over your shirt * over 16 years of age * walk over the bridge * climb over the wall |
| * above | * higher than something else, but not directly over it | * a path above the lake |
| * across | * getting to the other side (also *over*) * getting to the other side | * walk across the bridge * swim across the lake |
| * through | * something with limits on top, bottom and the sides | * drive through the tunnel |
| * to | * movement to person or building * movement to a place or country * for *bed* | * go to the cinema * go to London / Ireland * go to bed |
| * into | * enter a room / a building | * go into the kitchen / the house |
| * towards | * movement in the direction of something (but not directly to it) | * go 5 steps towards the house |
| * onto | * movement to the top of something | * jump onto the table |
| * from | * in the sense of *where from* | * a flower from the garden |

**Other important Prepositions**

| **English** | **Usage** | **Example** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| * from | * who gave it | * a present from Jane |
| * of | * who/what does it belong to * what does it show | * a page of the book * the picture of a palace |
| * by | * who made it | * a book by Mark Twain |
| * on | * walking or riding on horseback * entering a public transport vehicle | * on foot, on horseback * get on the bus |
| * in | * entering a car  / Taxi | * get in the car |
| * off | * leaving a public transport vehicle | * get off the train |
| * out of | * leaving a car  / Taxi | * get out of the taxi |
| * by | * rise or fall of something * travelling (other than walking or horseriding) | * prices have risen by 10 percent * by car, by bus |
| * at | * for *age* | * she learned Russian at 45 |
| * about | * for topics, meaning *what about* | * we were talking about you |

**Examining Prepositions in Sentence Structure**

Given the list of prepositions above, it’s clear that many sentences can be ended with a preposition and yet sound completely fine and also be grammatically correct. Take a moment to examine the below sentence and then the sentence broken down into a verb/preposition/noun structure.

* “Mary walked along the road.”

Here’s the verb/preposition/noun breakdown of the same sentence:

* “Mary walked (verb) along (preposition) the road (noun).”

The word “along” in the sentence above is a preposition that illustrates the relationship of the verb “walked” to the noun “road.” Mary is walking along a road. Mary isn’t walking on sunshine or on thin air.

Here’s an example of a preposition used in a sentence having an adjective/preposition/pronoun structure:

* “She’s angry with us.”

Here’s the adjective/preposition/pronoun breakdown of the same sentence:

* “She’s angry (adjective) with (preposition) us (pronoun).”

Again, one can see that the preposition in the sentence above, “with,” is a preposition illustrating a relationship between the adjective “angry” and the pronoun “us.” She, whoever she is, is angry WITH us. She’s not angry with something else that may have been implied in a prior sentence and she’s not angry with the weather or something else the writer has possibly already written about. The preposition in this case serves to focus attention on the source of her (the adjectival word “she’s”) anger, and that’s at US.

**Stranded Prepositions**

It’s perfectly fine in some sentences to strand a preposition at the end. Here are a couple examples of prepositions stranded at the end of sentences:

* “Mary has much to be angry about.”

It would sound stilted and even pretentious if one were to write, “Mary has much about which to be angry.”

* “She wondered where he had come from.”

It’s possible to write the above sentence as “She wondered from where he had come” but it sounds overly formal and from another time while the original sentence is clear, concise, modern, and fully descriptive. Attempting to avoid stranding a preposition at the end of a sentence frequently creates overly formal and stilted sentences such as those illustrated in the above examples.

Prepositions in the English language may seem intimidating to use properly at first glance, perhaps because the word itself sounds technical or of an advanced grammatical nature. But prepositions add a great deal to most sentences containing nouns or pronouns. A simple trick for remembering prepositional usage is to learn just what nouns and pronouns are and to insert a preposition before them if it sounds right or reads correctly. Proper business English will also assist you in your career, and this [Udemy course on Business English](https://www.udemy.com/speak-fluent-business-english-volume-i/?tc=blog.listofprepositions&utm_source=blog&utm_medium=udemyads&utm_content=post77772&utm_campaign=content-marketing-blog&xref=blog) will make sure you always sound the part.

The Udemy [advanced English grammar course](https://www.udemy.com/advanced-english-grammar/?tc=blog.listofprepositions&couponCode=half-off-for-blog&utm_source=blog&utm_medium=udemyads&utm_content=post77772&utm_campaign=content-marketing-blog&xref=blog) can teach you many other techniques and devices for proper sentence structure, so don’t hesitate to give it a try. If an advanced course is not what you’re searching for, remember that Udemy offers many basic and advanced English grammar courses. If you’ve finally decided to master use of the preposition in a sentence check out [Udemy’s elements of English grammar course](https://www.udemy.com/the-elements-of-english-grammar/?tc=blog.listofprepositions&utm_source=blog&utm_medium=udemyads&utm_content=post77772&utm_campaign=content-marketing-blog&xref=blog) right away for another great option.

***Rule 1.*** *A preposition generally, but not always, goes before its noun or pronoun. One of the undying myths of English grammar is that you may not end a sentence with a preposition. But look at the first example that follows. No one should feel compelled to say, or even write, That is something with which I cannot agree. Just do not use extra prepositions when the meaning is clear without them.*

***Correct:*** *That is something I cannot agree* ***with.***

***Correct:*** *Where did you get this?*

***Incorrect:*** *Where did you get this* ***at?***

***Correct:*** *How many of you can I depend* ***on?***

***Correct:*** *Where did he go?*

***Incorrect:*** *Where did he go* ***to?***

***Rule 2a.*** *The preposition like means "similar to" or "similarly to." It should be followed by an object of the preposition (noun, pronoun, noun phrase), not by a subject and verb. Rule of thumb: Avoid like when a verb is involved.*

***Correct:*** *You look like your mother.  
That is, you look similar to her. (Mother is the object of the preposition like.)*

***Incorrect:*** *You look like your mother does.  
(Avoid like with noun + verb.)*

***Rule 2b.*** *Instead of like, use as, as if, as though, or the way when following a comparison with a subject and verb.*

***Correct:*** *You look* ***the way*** *your mother does.*

***Incorrect:*** *Do like I ask. (No one would say Do similarly to I ask.)*

***Correct:*** *Do* ***as*** *I ask.*

***Incorrect:*** *You look like you're angry.*

***Correct:*** *You look* ***as if*** *you're angry.* ***(OR as though)***

*Some speakers and writers, to avoid embarrassment, use as when they mean like. The following incorrect sentence came from a grammar guide:*

***Incorrect:*** *They are considered as any other English words.*

***Correct:*** *They are considered as any other English words would be.*

***Correct:*** *They are considered to be like any other English words.*

*Remember: like means "similar to" or "similarly to"; as means "in the same manner that." Rule of thumb: Do not use as unless there is a verb involved.*

***Incorrect:*** *I, as most people, try to use good grammar.*

***Correct:*** *I,* ***like*** *most people, try to use good grammar.*

***Correct:*** *I,* ***as*** *most people* ***do****, try to use good grammar.*

***NOTE***

*The rule distinguishing like from as, as if, as though, and the way is increasingly ignored, but English purists still insist upon it.*

***Rule 3.*** *The preposition of should never be used in place of the helping verb have.*

***Correct:*** *I should have done it.*

***Incorrect:*** *I should of done it.*

*See also* [***COUPLE OF***](http://www.grammarbook.com/homonyms/couple-of.asp)***;*** [***OFF OF***](http://www.grammarbook.com/homonyms/off-of.asp)***;*** [***OUT OF***](http://www.grammarbook.com/homonyms/out-of.asp)***;*** [***OUTSIDE OF***](http://www.grammarbook.com/homonyms/outside-of.asp)*.*

***Rule 4.*** *It is a good practice to follow different with the preposition from. Most traditionalists avoid different than. Although it is an overstatement to call different than incorrect, it remains polarizing: A is different than B comes across as sloppy to a lot of literate readers. If you can replace different than with different from without having to rewrite the rest of the sentence, why not do so?*

***Polarizing:*** *You're different than I am.*

***Unchallengeable:*** *You're different from me.*

*See also* [***DIFFERENT FROM, DIFFERENT THAN***](http://www.grammarbook.com/homonyms/different-from-different-than.asp)*.*

***Rule 5.*** *Use into rather than in to express motion toward something. Use in to tell the location.*

***Correct:*** *I swam in the pool.*

***Correct:*** *I walked into the house.*

***Correct:*** *I looked into the matter.*

***Incorrect:*** *I dived in the water.*

***Correct:*** *I dived into the water.*

***Incorrect:*** *Throw it in the trash.*

***Correct:*** *Throw it into the trash.*

**Prepositions "On," "At," and "In"**

|  |
| --- |
| A preposition is a word that links a noun, pronoun, or noun phrase to some other part of the sentence.  Prepositions can be tricky for English learners. There is no definite rule or formula for choosing a preposition. In the beginning stage of learning the language, you should try to identify a preposition when reading or listening in English and recognize its usage.   * to the office * at the desk * on the table * in an hour * about myself   A preposition is used to show direction, location, or time, or to introduce an object.   Here are a few common prepositions and examples.  **On**  Used to express a surface of something:   * I put an egg on the kitchen table. * The paper is on my desk.   Used to specify days and dates:   * The garbage truck comes on Wednesdays. * I was born on the 14th day of June in 1988.   Used to indicate a device or machine, such as a phone or computer:   * He is on the phone right now. * She has been on the computer since this morning. * My favorite movie will be on TV tonight.   Used to indicate a part of the body:   * The stick hit me on my shoulder. * He kissed me on my cheek. * I wear a ring on my finger.   Used to indicate the state of something:   * Everything in this store is on sale. * The building is on fire.   **At**  Used to point out specific time:   * I will meet you at 12 p.m. * The bus will stop here at 5:45 p.m.   Used to indicate a place:   * There is a party at the club house. * There were hundreds of people at the park. * We saw a baseball game at the stadium.   Used to indicate an email address:   * Please email me at abc@defg.com.   Used to indicate an activity:   * He laughed at my acting. * I am good at drawing a portrait.   **In**  Used for unspecific times during a day, month, season, year:   * She always reads newspapers in the morning. * In the summer, we have a rainy season for three weeks. * The new semester will start in March.   Used to indicate a location or place:   * She looked me directly in the eyes. * I am currently staying in a hotel. * My hometown is Los Angeles, which is in California.   Used to indicate a shape, color, or size:   * This painting is mostly in blue. * The students stood in a circle. * This jacket comes in four different sizes.   Used to express while doing something:   * In preparing for the final report, we revised the tone three times. * A catch phrase needs to be impressive in marketing a product.   Used to indicate a belief, opinion, interest, or feeling:   * I believe in the next life. * We are not interested in gambling. |

# Common Errors in the Use of Prepositions

Incorrect: He loves with me.  
Correct: He loves me.

Incorrect: We discussed about the matter.  
Correct: We discussed the matter.

Incorrect: We reached at the airport at 9 pm.

Correct: We reached the airport at 9 pm.

Incorrect: I have ordered for his dismissal.  
Correct: I have ordered his dismissal.

Incorrect: He married with his friend’s sister.  
Correct: He married his friend’s sister.

Incorrect: She entered into the room.  
Correct: She entered the room.

Incorrect: The child resembles to its mother.  
Correct: The child resembles its mother.

Incorrect: He is intelligence, but he lacks of experience.  
Correct: He is intelligence but he lacks experience

**Explanation**

Verbs such as e**nter, resemble, lack, discuss, marry, reach, order and approach** are normally followed by direct objects without prepositions.

Incorrect: What is the time in your watch?  
Correct: What is the time by your watch?

Incorrect: We traveled in train.  
Correct: We traveled by train.

**Explanation**

We write **by train/car/bike/boat/plane/land/sea/air** etc. But note that **by** is not used if there is an article. For example, we write **in the car, on a bus,** and not **by the car or by a bus.**

Incorrect: He is angry upon me.  
Correct: He is angry with me.

Incorrect: I am pleased at you.  
Correct: I am pleased with you.

Incorrect: He was trembling in rage.  
Correct: He was trembling with rage.

**Explanation**

We use **with** in a number of expressions which say how people express their feelings and sensations. Common examples are: **white with fear/rage, red with anger/embarrassment, green with envy, blue with cold** etc.

Incorrect: Who is in the phone? It is John.  
Correct: Who is on the phone? It is John.

Incorrect: There was an interesting show at TV.  
Correct: There was an interesting show on TV.

**Explanation**

The correct expressions are **on the radio, on TV, on the phone etc.**

Incorrect: She washed her face in water.  
Correct: She washed her face with water.

Incorrect: The snake was killed by a stone.  
Correct: The snake was killed with a stone.

**Explanation**

We use **with** to talk about instruments with which something is done.

Incorrect: I go to school by foot.  
Correct: I go to school on foot.

Incorrect: I congratulated her for her success.  
Correct: I congratulated her on her success.

Read more at http://www.englishpractice.com/common-mistakes/common-errors-prepositions-3/#Y6abcX8Tid1JrAIY.99

# Common Errors with Prepositions

Incorrect: He is ill since last week.  
Correct: He has been ill **since last week.**  
Incorrect: He has been working since two hours.  
Correct: He has been working **for two hours.**  
Incorrect: I have not played cricket since a long time.  
Correct: I have not played cricket **for a long time.**

**Explanation**

When reckoning from a particular date we use **‘since’**. Examples are since last Friday, since May, since morning, since July 8th. But note that we always use ‘**for**’ for a period. Examples are: for a week, for a long time, for two hours etc.

Incorrect: This paper is inferior than that.  
Correct: This paper is **inferior to** that.  
Incorrect: He is junior than me.  
Correct: He is **junior to** me.  
Incorrect: He is superior than you in strength.  
Correct: He is **superior to** you in strength.

**Explanations**

The comparatives **senior, junior, superior, inferior** etc., are followed by **to**, and not **than**.

Incorrect: He rides in a cycle.  
Correct: He rides **on a cycle.**  
Incorrect: He rides on a car.  
Correct: He rides **in a car.**  
Incorrect: He sat in a table.  
Correct: He sat **on a table.**  
Incorrect: The cat is in the roof.  
Correct: The cat is **on the roof.**

**Explanation**

Use ‘**on**’ when the meaning is clearly ‘on top of’. For example, on a horse, on a bicycle, on a table, on the roof etc. Use **in** when ‘on top of’ is not appropriate. For example, in a car, in an airplane etc.

Incorrect: There was a match between team A against team B.  
Correct: There was a match **between** team A **and** team B.  
Incorrect: The meeting will be held between 4 pm to 6 pm.  
Correct: The meeting will be held **between** 4 pm **and** 6 pm.

**Explanation**

**Between** is followed by **and**, not **to** or **against.**

Incorrect: The First World War was fought during 1914 – 18.  
Correct: The First World War was fought **between 1914 and 1918.**  
Incorrect: There was a fight with John and Peter.  
Correct: There was a fight **between John and Peter.**  
Incorrect: England grew prosperous between Queen Victoria’s reign.  
Correct: England grew prosperous **during Queen Victoria’s reign.**

**Explanation**

Two events or people should be mentioned if you want to use **between.**

Read more at http://www.englishpractice.com/grammar/common-errors-prepositions-2/#UqrMZHJRoXMSpvCP.99

## 14 Typical Mistakes With Prepositions

* March 14, 2011
* Posted by [*Mila*](http://www.grammar.net/author/admin)

A preposition tells a reader **when** and **where** something occurred as well as **how** it occurred. English prepositions perform so many functions that their nuances cause quite a bit of confusion. Here are a few examples of prepositions that illustrate 14 of the most common mistakes:

[](http://www.grammar.net/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/Prepositions700x1150.png)

**To/At**  
“**At**” tells where an object or subject is while “to” refers to another location. For example:  
We arrived at the station.  
Mary returned to the store.

**For/Since**  
“**For**” measures time while “**since**” refers to a specific period. For example,  
He has been traveling for five years.  
He’s been with the company since it was established.

**Dates and Times**  
Use “**in**” or “**for**” with general measurements and “**on**” or “**at**” for specific dates. For example:  
Muriel has a meeting in the morning.  
The term paper is due at 8:00 AM on the 5th.

**Seasons, Months and Holidays**  
Specific days require the preposition “**on**” or “**for**” while general measurements call for the proposition “**in**“. For example:  
The whole family loves to go sailing in the springtime.  
Are you going to the barbecue on the 4th of July?

**Quantities**  
“**About**“, “**around**” and “**up to**” are used to create approximate quantifications.

**Regions**  
“**In**” refers to geographic regions, continents, counties and towns.

**Roads and Streets**  
When referring to a street or road, “**on**” is the word of choice. For example:  
There’s a bank on Birch Street.

**Specific Places**  
“**At**” refers to specific places and addresses. For example:  
The Andersons live at 144 Byrd Lane.

**Phrases**  
Phrases that require a preposition, include:  
Afraid **of**  
Love **of**  
Concern **for**  
Study **for**  
Worry **about**, etc.

**Missing Prepositions**  
Whenever an infinitive is used, a helping verb is required. For example:  
**INCORRECT**: I would like visit Washington D.C.  
**CORRECT**: I would like to visit Washington D.C

**Unnecessary Additions**  
Some constructions don’t need additional prepositions. For example:  
Off of/off  
Meet up with/meet  
Where are they at?/Where are they?

**Exceptions**  
In some cases, a preposition is unnecessary. For example:  
Go home  
Inside/outside  
Upstairs/downstairs  
Uptown/downtown

**Complex Constructions**  
When making comparisons, the second preposition can be omitted if it’s the same as the first. However, it must be included if the second phrase requires a different preposition. For example:  
The climate in the United States is much different than Norway.  
We drove to the beach and swam in the ocean.

**Ending with a Preposition**  
Although ending a sentence with a preposition is considered incorrect, these constructions are used everyday. As Winston Churchill said, “This is the kind of thing up with which I will not put!”

Roughly half of all preposition-related mistakes are caused by confusion between word usages. After reviewing the rules, comparing the sound and meaning of possible choices are the best methods to determine the right preposition for the job. Have any comments? You’re welcome to share them here.

- See more at: <http://www.grammar.net/prepositions#sthash.11B7N2ih.dpuf>

his page deals with some of the more common mistakes made with prepositions.

**Prepositions and 'Ask'**

Use **'ask'** with **'for'** to ask somebody to give something.  
Use **'ask'** without **'for'** to ask somebody to say something.

* **Mistake:**          He asked a coffee. ('Coffee' is not a person)
* **Correct:**          He asked for a coffee.    (He wanted a coffee)

**Prepositions and 'Prevent'**

Prevent cannot be followed by **'to'**.  It should be followed by 'from' and a verb '-ing' form.

* **Mistake:**          He was prevented to come.
* **Correct:**          He was prevented from coming.
* **Correct:**          The loud noise prevented me from sleeping.

**Prepositions and 'Meet'**

Meet normally means 'come face to face with somebody or something'.  If it is used in this way, it cannot be used with the preposition 'with'.

* Mistake:        I met with your friend.
* **Correct:**        I met your friend.

Meet with - meaning 'to experience'.

* Mistake:       He met misfortune.
* **Correct:**       He met with misfortune.

**Prepositions and 'Insist'**

Insist cannot be followed by to. It is followed by on + -ing form.

* Mistake:        She insisted to pay.
* **Correct:**        She insisted on paying.

**Prepositions and 'Go'**

Go is often used with a verb '–ing' form when we are talking about sporting and leisure activities. No preposition is used in this structure.

* Mistake:        Let's go for riding.
* **Correct:**        Let's go riding.

The structure 'go for a / come for a' is used in a number of fixed expressions referring to sporting and leisure activities.

* Mistake:        We went a walk.
* **Correct:**        We went for a walk.

**Prepositions and time**

To talk about time starting from a specified time in the past and continuing until the present, we use **'since'**.  
Examples are: since last year, since Friday, since morning etc.

To talk about a period of time, in particular when we are describing the duration of a period of time, we use **'For'.**  
Examples are: for two hours, for two months etc.

* Mistake:        This is the first time I have seen a movie since a long time.
* **Correct:**        I haven't seen a movie for a long time.
* **Correct:**        I haven't seen a movie in a long time. (American English)
* Mistake:        I am ill since two weeks.
* **Correct:**        I have been ill for two weeks.
* **Correct:**        I have been ill since January.
* Mistake:        It was the worst storm since ten years.
* **Correct:**        It was the worst storm in ten years.
* **Correct:**        It was the worst storm for ten years.

(In American English, 'In' can be used to talk about duration after negatives and superlative adjectives.)

**Prepositions and the comparative adjectives 'inferior', 'superior', 'senior', 'junior'.**

The comparative adjectives inferior, superior, senior, junior, anterior and posterior are followed by 'to' instead of 'than'.

* Mistake:        Our company's performance is inferior than theirs.
* **Correct:**        Our company's performance is inferior to theirs.
* Mistake:        He is senior than me.
* **Correct:**        He is senior to me.
* Mistake:        He is superior than you in strength.
* **Correct:**        He is superior to you in strength.

**Prepositions and movement**

The prepositions **'at'**, **'on'** and **'in'** are used for position; the preposition **'to'** is used for movement or direction.   
No preposition is used with verbs of movement and the noun 'home'.

* Mistake:        Send this letter on my new address.
* **Correct:**        Send this letter to my new address.
* Mistake:        He goes in the school.
* **Correct:**        He goes to the school.
* Mistake:        He goes on his work.
* **Correct:**        He goes to his work.
* Mistake:        I am going to home.  /  I'm going at home.
* **Correct:**        I am going home.

In this lesson we will take a look at some of the most common mistakes in the use of prepositions.

* Incorrect: The ball rolled slowly in the goal.
* Correct: The ball rolled slowly **into** the goal.
* Incorrect: She ran in the room crying.
* Correct: She ran **into** the room crying.

The prepositions **in** and **on** are used to show position. To say where things are going, we use **into** and **onto.**

* Incorrect: The train will arrive **within** five minutes.
* Correct: The train will arrive **in** five minutes.

We use **in** to say how soon something will happen. **Within** means ‘inside’ or ‘not beyond’.

* Incorrect: If you don’t live by your income, you will incur huge debts.
* Correct: If you don’t live **within** your income, you will incur huge debts.
* Incorrect: The ball went **to** the window ad fell on the ground.
* Correct: The ball went **through** the window and fell on the ground.

**Through** is used for movement in a three dimensional space.

* Incorrect: He wrote the book in a month’s time.
* Correct: He wrote the book in a month.

The expressions **in a week’s / month’s time** is used to say how something will happen. It is not used to say how long something takes.

* Incorrect: We usually go and see Granny on Sunday.
* Correct: We usually go and see Granny on **Sundays.**
* Incorrect: I don’t **care for** your opinion.
* Correct: I don’t **care about** your opinion.

**Care for** means ‘like’ or ‘be fond of’. If you **care about** something, you feel that it is important or interesting.

**Prepositions: some common mistakes**

August 18, 2013 - [pdf](http://www.englishgrammar.org/wp-content/plugins/post2pdf-converter/post2pdf-converter-pdf-maker.php?id=3106)

Prepositions are words used to describe a relationship between other words in a sentence. They are small words; still, they cause a great deal of confusion. In this lesson we will take a look at some of the most common mistakes in the use of prepositions.

**Since and for**

These prepositions are often confused. **Since** is used to reckon from a particular date. **For** is used for a period.

* Incorrect: I am ill since three months.
* Correct: I have been ill for three months.
* Correct: I have been ill since May.

When **since / for** indicates time, the verb in the main clause should be in the present perfect or past perfect tense.

* Incorrect: This is my first time to play tennis since a long time.
* Correct: I have not played tennis for a long time. / This is my first game of tennis for a long time.

**The adjectives inferior, superior, prior etc**

The adjectives **inferior, superior, senior, junior, prior** etc. take the preposition **to,** not **than**.

* Incorrect: She always felt inferior than her younger sister.
* Correct: She always felt **inferior to** her younger sister.
* Incorrect: This material is superior than that.
* Correct: This material is **superior to** that.

**The verbs resemble, enter, discuss, marry etc.**

The verbs **resemble, enter, discuss, lack, approach** and **marry** are followed by direct objects without prepositions.

* Incorrect: This resembles to that.
* Correct: This resembles that.
* Incorrect: Your mother lacks of tact.
* Correct: Your mother lacks tact.
* Incorrect: We are now approaching to Victoria Terminus.
* Correct: We are now approaching Victoria Terminus.
* Incorrect: He reached to Singapore.
* Correct: He reached Singapore.
* Incorrect: She married to/with her boss.
* Correct: She married her boss.

# Common mistakes in the use of prepositions

February 6, 2013 - [pdf](http://www.englishgrammar.org/wp-content/plugins/post2pdf-converter/post2pdf-converter-pdf-maker.php?id=1650)

Although prepositions are small words, they are very important ones. In this lesson, we will explain some common mistakes in the use of prepositions.

Incorrect: Although he is clever, he lacks of experience.

Correct: Although he is clever, he **lacks experience.**

Incorrect: The train is now approaching to Boston.

Correct: The train is now **approaching Boston.**

Incorrect: We were not allowed to enter into the house.

Correct: We were not allowed to **enter the house.**

**Explanations**

The verbs **lack, approach** and **enter** are directly followed by objects without prepositions. Other verbs that do not normally take prepositions are: **discuss, marry** and **resemble.**

Incorrect: See you on next Friday.

Correct: See you **next Friday.**

Incorrect: I will never forget meeting her on that afternoon.

Correct: I will never forget meeting her **that afternoon.**

**Explanation**

Prepositions are not used before a number of common time expressions beginning **next, last, this, one** etc.

Incorrect: Of what color are her eyes?

Correct: **What color** are her eyes?

Incorrect: He is of just the right height to be a good soldier.

Correct: He is j**ust the right height** to be a good soldier.

**Explanation**

Expressions containing words like **height, weight, length, size, color, age** etc., are usually connected to the subject by the verb **be** without a preposition.

Incorrect: I am going to home.

Correct: I am **going home.**

**Explanation**

We do not use **to** before home.

Incorrect:  To where shall I send it?

Correct: **Where** shall I send it **to?**

**Explanation**

The structures **where …to?, what…like?** and **what…for?** have a fixed word order. It is not possible to move the preposition to the beginning of the clause.

# Common mistakes with prepositions

Posted by [Manjusha](https://plus.google.com/105995388120681372532?%20%20%20rel=author) Filed in [English grammar](http://www.perfectyourenglish.com/grammar/english-grammar.htm)

Incorrect: This is my first time to see a movie **since a long time**.  
Correct: I haven't seen a movie **for a long time.**  
Correct: I haven't seen a movie **in a long time.** (American English)

Incorrect: I am ill **since two weeks**.  
Correct: I have been ill **for two weeks**.  
Correct: I have been ill **since January.**

To reckon from a particular date, we use **since**. Examples are: *since last year, since Friday, since morning* etc. **For** is used with a period of time. Examples are: *for two hours, for two months* etc.

Incorrect: It was the worst storm **since ten years**.  
Correct: It was the worst storm **in ten years**.  
Correct: It was the worst storm **for ten years**.

After negatives and superlatives **in** can be used to talk about duration. This is common in American English.

Incorrect: This fabric is **inferior than** that.  
Correct: This fabric is **inferior to** that.

Incorrect: He is **senior than** me.  
Correct: He is **senior to** me.

Incorrect: He is **superior than** you in strength.  
Correct: He is **superior to** you in strength.

The comparative adjectives **inferior, superior, senior, junior, anterior** and **posterior** are followed by to instead of **than**.

Incorrect: He wrote **me.**  
Correct: He wrote **to me.**

The preposition **to** is used to introduce the indirect direct.

Incorrect: I shall explain **them this**.  
Correct: I shall explain **this to them**.

Incorrect: He suggested **me this**.  
Correct: He suggested **this to me**.

Some verbs are followed by two objects - a direct object and an indirect object. The indirect object usually refers to a person and the direct object usually refers to a thing. In the sentence given above, the direct object is the pronoun **this** and the indirect object is the pronoun **them**.

Note that when both objects are pronouns, the indirect object usually comes last. In other cases, it usually comes before the direct object. When the indirect object comes after the direct object, it takes the preposition **to** or **for.**

Incorrect: Send this letter **on** my new address.  
Correct: Send this letter **to** my new address.

Incorrect: He goes **in** the school.  
Correct: He goes **to** the school.

Incorrect: He goes **on** his work.  
Correct: He goes **to** his work.

The prepositions **at, on** and **in** are used for position; **to** is used for movement or direction.

# Common errors with Prepositions

Posted by [Manjusha](https://plus.google.com/105995388120681372532?%20%20%20rel=author) Filed in [English grammar](http://www.perfectyourenglish.com/grammar/english-grammar.htm)

Though the prepositions are small words, they are very important ones, and their correct usage is a test of your mastery of the language. This article explains the correct usage of some prepositions that often cause confusion.

##### Beside and besides

Students often get confused about the meaning and usage of these two words. **Beside** means 'by the side of' and **besides** means 'in addition to'.

* The house was **beside** the river. (= by the side of the river)
* He stood **beside** me. (= by my side)
* He plays tennis **besides (**in addition to) basketball and football.
* **Besides (**in addition to) being a good speaker, he is also an excellent actor.

##### Since and for

This is another set of prepositions often confused by foreign students. **Since** refers to the starting point of an action. It means 'from a particular point of time in the past' and it should be used with the present perfect tense of the verb.

* He has been absent **since** last Monday. (NOT He is absent since last Monday.)
* It has been raining continuously **since** yesterday morning. (NOT It is raining since yesterday morning.)

**For** is used to talk about duration. It refers to a period of time.

* I have been waiting here **for** two hours.
* We have been living here **for** three years.

A common mistake is to use **since** when referring to a period of time. You must not say 'He has been absent since two days' or 'I have been studying since two hours.'

##### Between and among

We use **between** to say that somebody or something is between two or more clearly separate objects.

* You have to choose **between** these two options.
* I stood **between** John and Peter.
* They marched up the aisle **between** the pillars.
* He shared his money **between** his wife, his daughter and his son.

**Among** is used with more than two people or things.

* The British were able to conquer India because the Indian princes quarreled **among** themselves.
* The United Nations tries to maintain peace **among** the nations of the world.

##### By and with

**By** is used to refer to the doer of an action; **with** is used to refer to the instrument with which the action is done.

* He was killed **by his servant.**
* He was killed **with an axe.**
* The tiger was shot **by me with my new gun.**

##### In and At

**In** is generally used to refer to large places - countries, districts, large cities etc. **At** is generally used to refer to small and unimportant places like villages, small towns etc.

* We shall meet them **at the club** this evening.
* My brother lives **at Mumbai.**

This rule is not very rigidly followed now, and **in** is often used for small places too, though **at** is seldom used for big places.

##### On, in, at and by

While speaking about time **at** indicates an exact point of time, **on** a more general point of time and **in** a period of time.

* I shall be there **at 4 pm.**
* We set out **at dawn.**
* I was born **on May 26.**
* The postman brought this letter **in the morning.**
* I shall visit them **in summer.**
* It is very hot **in the day** and quite cold **at night.**

Note that 'at night' is an exception to this rule.

**By** is used to show the latest time at which an action will be finished. So it is usually used with the future tenses.

* I shall be leaving **by 6 o' clock.**
* I hope to finish the work **by the end of this year.**

##### On and upon

**On** is generally used to talk about things at rest and **upon** to talk about things in motion.

* He sat **on a chair.**
* He jumped **upon his horse.**

However, this rule is not rigidly followed now, and **on** is often used to talk about things in motion too.

##### In and within (time)

**In** means at the end of a certain period; **within** means before the end of a certain period.

* The spacecraft will reach the moon **in three days**. (= at the end of three days)
* The spacecraft will reach the moon **within three days.** (= before the end of three days)
* The loan should be repaid **in a year.**
* The loan should be repaid **within a year**.

Note that this distinction too is not always kept and **in** is often used for **within**.

Presented here are a few English bloopers sent in by our readers -- they are good lesson in the English language!

Let's start off with a few common blunders that reader Sunita R Kamath comes across frequently:

**1**. ~ "It was a blunder mistake."

Correction, people! The word 'blunder' means mistake, so you could say:

~ "It was a blunder," or   
~ "It was a big mistake."

**2**. ~ "It would have been more better."

The word 'better' itself implies that the option in question is superior -- the use of the word 'more' in the sentence is, therefore both inappropriate and unnecessary. Thus the correct sentence would go as follows:

~ "It would have been better."

**3**. ~ "Why don't he get married?"

The term 'don't' applies when discussing a plural subject. For instance, "Why don't they get married?" The right way to phrase that sentence would be:

~ "Why doesn't he get married?"

**4**. ~ "I want two Xeroxes of this card."

The term 'Xerox' is used in North American English as a verb. Actually, 'Xerox' is the name of a company that supplies photocopiers! The correct thing to say, therefore, would be:

~ "I want two photocopies of this card."

**5**. ~ "Your hairs are looking silky today."

This is one of the most common Indian bloopers! The plural of 'hair' is 'hair'! Thus:

~ "Your hair is looking silky today."

Get Ahead reader Nasreen Haque says, "We must realise that English is not the native language of Indians. Having said that, we should tell ourselves, 'Yeah, I could go wrong and I could make innumerable mistakes, but of course there is always room for improvement.'"

Here are a few bloopers Nasreen has across often:

**1**. ~ Loose vs lose

Many people make this mistake. They inevitably interchange the words 'loose' and 'lose' while writing. 'Lose' means to 'suffer a loss or defeat'. Thus, you would write:

~ 'I don't want to lose you," and not ' don't want to loose you.'

'Loose', on the other hand, means 'not firm' or 'not fitting.' In this context, you would write,

~ "My shirt is loose," not "My shirt is lose."

**2**. ~ "One of my friend lives in Kolkata."

This is one of the most common Indian English bloopers ever! The correct way of putting that is:

"One of my friends lives in Kolkata."

Why? Because the sentence implies that you have many friends who live in Kolkata, but you are referring to only one of these friends.

**3**. ~ Tension-inducing tenses.

People often use the wrong tense in their sentences. For instance, someone might say:

~ "I didn't cried when I saw the movie."

Unfortunately, the word 'didn't' is never followed by a past tense verb, in this case 'cried'. The correct way of putting it would be:

~ "I didn't cry when I saw the movie."

**We** [**invited readers**](http://in.rediff.com/getahead/2007/apr/19invite.htm) **to share common English bloopers with us. This is the first in a series of articles featuring your response.**