

# Prepositions of Time - at, in, on

We use:

- **at** for a PRECISE TIME
- **in** for MONTHS, YEARS, CENTURIES and LONG PERIODS
- **on** for DAYS and DATES

<b>at</b> <b>PRECISE TIME</b>	<b>in</b> <b>MONTHS, YEARS, CENTURIES and LONG PERIODS</b>	<b>on</b> <b>DAYS and DATES</b>
at 3 o'clock	in May	on Sunday
at 10.30am	in summer	on Tuesdays
at noon	in the summer	on 6 March
at dinnertime	in 1990	on 25 Dec. 2010
at bedtime	in the 1990s	on Christmas Day
at sunrise	in the next century	on Independence Day
at sunset	in the Ice Age	on my birthday
at the moment	in the past/future	on New Year's Eve

Look at these examples:

- I have a meeting **at** 9am.
- The shop closes **at** midnight.
- Jane went home **at** lunchtime.
- In England, it often snows **in** December.
- Do you think we will go to Jupiter **in** the future?
- There should be a lot of progress **in** the next century.
- Do you work **on** Mondays?
- Her birthday is **on** 20 November.
- Where will you be **on** New Year's Day?

Notice the use of the preposition of time **at** in the following standard expressions:

Expression	Example
at night	The stars shine <b>at night</b> .
at the weekend*	I don't usually work <b>at the weekend</b> .
at Christmas*/Easter	I stay with my family <b>at Christmas</b> .
at the same time	We finished the test <b>at the same time</b> .
at present	He's not home <b>at present</b> . Try later.

\*Note that in some varieties of English people say "on the weekend" and "on Christmas".

Notice the use of the prepositions of time **in** and **on** in these common expressions:

<b>in</b>	<b>on</b>
in the morning	on Tuesday morning
in the mornings	on Saturday mornings
in the afternoon(s)	on Sunday afternoon(s)
in the evening(s)	on Monday evening(s)

When we say **last, next, every, this** we do not also use **at, in, on**.

- I went to London **last** June. (***not*** in last June)
- He's coming back **next** Tuesday. (***not*** on next Tuesday)
- I go home **every** Easter. (***not*** at every Easter)
- We'll call you **this** evening. (***not*** in this evening)