
PREPOSITIONS

“The plane flew above the cloud, behind the cloud, around the cloud, below the cloud, beneath the cloud, beside the cloud, beyond the cloud, into the cloud, near the cloud, outside the cloud, over the cloud, past the cloud, through the cloud, toward the cloud, under the cloud, and finally dived underneath the cloud.”

A **preposition** is a word that shows the relationship between two things. In the example above, the prepositions show the relationships between a plane and a cloud. Below is a list of most common prepositions:

about	beside	inside	to
above	besides	like	toward
across	between	near	under
after	beyond	of	underneath
against	by	off	until
along	despite	on	up
among	down	out	with
around	during	outside	within
at	except	over	without
before	for	past	
behind	from	since	
below	in	through	
beneath	into	throughout	

Some prepositions consist of more than one word. Here is a list of the most common multiword prepositions:

along with	in place of
because of	in spite of
Due to	instead of
except for	on account of
in addition to	out of
in case of	up to
in front of	with the exception of

Prepositions for Time, Place, and Introducing Objects

Time

- **On** is used with days.

I will see you **on** Monday.
The week begins **on** Sunday.

- **At** is used with noon, night, midnight, and with the time of day.

My plane leaves **at** noon.
The movie starts **at** 6 p.m.

- **In** is used with other parts of the day, with months, with years, with seasons.

He likes to read **in** the afternoon.
The days are long **in** August.
The book was published **in** 1999.
The flowers will bloom **in** spring.

- **Since, for, by, from—to, from—until, during, (with)in** – expresses extended time.

She has been gone **since** yesterday. (She left yesterday and has not returned.)
I'm going to Paris **for** two weeks. (I will spend two weeks there.)
The movie showed **from** August **to/until** October. (Beginning in August, ending in October.)
I watch TV **during** the evening. (For some period of time in the evening.)
We must finish the project **within** a year. (No longer than a year.)

Place

- **In** – describes the point itself.

There is a wasp **in** the room.

- **Inside** – expresses something contained.

Put the present **inside** the box.

- **On** – talks about the surface.

I left your keys **on** the table.

- **At** – talks about a general vicinity.

She was waiting **at** the corner.

- **Over, above** – when the object is higher than a point.

He threw the ball **over** the roof.

Hang that picture **above** the couch.

- **Under, underneath, beneath, below** – when the object is lower than a point.

The rabbit burrowed **under** the ground.

The child hid **underneath** the blanket.

We relaxed in the shade **beneath** the branches.

The valley is **below** sea-level.

- **Near, by, next to, between, among, opposite** – when the object is close to a point.

She lives **near** the school.

There is an ice cream shop **by** the store.

An oak tree grows **next to** my house

The house is **between** Elm Street and Maple Street.

I found my pen lying **among** the books.

The bathroom is **opposite** the kitchen.

Introduce objects of verbs

- **At** – with verbs glance, laugh, look, rejoice, smile, and stare

She took a quick **glance at** her reflection.

(exception with mirror: She took a quick glance **in** the mirror.)

You didn't **laugh at** his joke.

I'm **looking at** the computer monitor.

We **rejoiced at** his safe rescue.

That pretty girl **smiled at** you.

Stop **staring at** me.

- **Of** – with verbs approve, consist, and smell

I don't **approve of** his speech.

My contribution to the article **consists of** many pages.

He came home **smelling of** alcohol.

- **Of/About** –with verbs dream and think

I **dream of** finishing college in four years.

Can you **think of** a number between one and ten?

I am **thinking about** this problem.

- **For** – with verbs call, hope, look, wait, watch, and wish

Did someone **call for** a taxi?

He **hopes for** a raise in salary next year.

I'm **looking for** my keys.

We'll **wait for** her here.

You go buy the tickets, and I'll **watch** for the train.
If you **wish** for an "A" in this class, you must work hard.

Frequently Misused Prepositions

Prepositions may sometimes be confused because of slang and the general informality of talk. Here are some frequently misused prepositions.

- *beside, besides.* Beside means next to, whereas besides means in addition.

The comb is beside the brush.

Besides planning the trip, she is also getting the tickets.

- *between, among.* Generally, between is used when two items are involved; with three or more, among is preferred.

Between you and me, he is among friends.

- *due to.* *Due to* should not be used as a preposition meaning *because of*.

Because of (not due to) his speeding, we were all ticketed.

- *inside of.* The *of* is always unnecessary.

Stay inside the house.

The man stayed outside (not outside of) the post office.